

# ROMANS<sup>1</sup>

*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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<sup>1</sup> Title - Romans: A Note to the Reader. The text of the NASB 95 has been incorporated for all chapters, 1-16. A considerable number of footnotes exist throughout the document. I am in the process of editing these footnotes and adding additional footnotes. The author, November, 2024.

# 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>2</sup> of Christ Jesus, 1:1a

D2 Apostle: called *as* an apostle, <sup>3</sup> 1:1b

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<sup>2</sup> Rom. 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](#).

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 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 [Jewish 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 had (Acts 13:9-12; 14:8-10; 16:16-18; 19:11-12; 20:7–12; 28:1-9).

It stands to reason, then, that the whole idea of [Apostolic Succession](#), as claimed, for example, by the [Roman Catholic Church](#), the [Lutheran Orthodox Church](#), the [Antiochian Orthodox Catholic Church](#), and the [Episcopal Church](#), is a myth. No one can possibly meet the qualifications of an [Apostle](#). The [Apostles](#) could pass on their teaching to others, but not their authority.

- D3 Separated to the gospel: set apart <sup>4</sup> for the gospel of God,<sup>5</sup> (1:1c) 1:1c-6
- E1 Promised by God: {2} which He promised beforehand 1:2
- G1 through His prophets <sup>6</sup>
- G2 in the holy Scriptures,<sup>7</sup> 1:2
- E2 About God's Son: {3} concerning His Son,<sup>8</sup> (1:3a) 1:3-5
- G1 Descendant of David: who was born of a descendant

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 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>5</sup> Rom. 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>6</sup> Rom. 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. See the Glossary entry on *Prophets*. See also the article, “*Do Prophets Exist Today?*”

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 1:2 - holy Scriptures: Paul will document, in the course of this letter, OT Scriptures that authenticate Jesus as the *Messiah*.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 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>9</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>10</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>11</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 <sup>12</sup> and

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 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>10</sup> Rom. 1:4 - by the: NASB note: Or *as a result of*

<sup>11</sup> Rom. 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>12</sup> Rom. 1:5 - through whom we have received grace: "We" probably refers corporately to apostles, or, more likely, to Paul and his associates (see, for example, Acts 20:4), who had received special ability and giftedness from God to bring about obedience of faith among all the Gentiles (Rom. 1:5). "Grace" (*charis*, [5485](#)) is here a special ability to serve God, linked as it is with "apostleship" (see the next footnote). Paul was not, by this linkage, stating that all who served with him were apostles, and was *certainly* not saying that all Christians are apostles. Rather he was stating that he himself was called as an apostle (1:1), and thus, that those who served with him were corporately recipients of God's grace and were corporately beneficiaries of his own personal gift of apostleship to reach the Gentiles.

A number of commentators assert that "we" applies to all Christians. To be sure, all Christians have received grace, but certainly, not all Christians have received apostleship. The "we" must therefore limit itself either

apostleship<sup>13</sup>

H 2 The purpose of his apostleship: to bring about the obedience of faith<sup>14</sup> among all the Gentiles<sup>15</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>16</sup> of Jesus Christ; 1:6

to “we apostles” or to Paul and his own helpers. It is unlikely that “we” refers corporately to “we apostles”, since it is not known that any other apostles had been given a unique ministry among the Gentiles. Peter himself, in fact, was a notable exception to that interpretation (Gal. 2:8). Thus, it seems most likely that Paul was here referring to the grace and apostleship given by God to Paul and his associates to bring about obedience of faith among the Gentiles. Paul does not bring his readers into the picture until Rom. 1:6. Consequently, the “grace” (*charis*) of which Paul speaks here is special grace to serve in a unique ministry, not grace generally given to all believers. Paul will shortly refer to that general grace available to all believers in 1:7, and again in 3:24. Paul refers to *charis* (5485) in Romans in the following references: 1:5, 7; 3:24; 4:4, 16; 5:2, 15, 15, 17, 20, 21; 6:1, 14, 15, 17; 7:25; 11:5, 6, 6, 6; 12:3, 6; 15:15; 16:20.

<sup>13</sup> Rom. 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*, 652) and apostleship (*apostole*, 651). See the discussion of “called as an apostle” in 1:1.

<sup>14</sup> Rom. 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 virtually to slap God in the face. 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.

Faith (*pistis*, 4102) is a key word in the NT, with 243 uses. And it is a key word in Romans – Paul used it 40 times! – more than in any other book of the NT. Paul used *pistis* in Romans in 1:5, 8, 12, 17, 17, 17; 3:3, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 30, 31; 4:5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16, 19, 20; 5:1, 2; 9:30, 32; 10:6, 8, 17; 11:20; 12:3, 6; 14:1, 22, 23, 23; and 16:26. Paul uses the word most prominently in the opening section of his letter – the INTRODUCTION (1:1-17) (7X); and in his third section, JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith (3:21-5:21) (20X). Faith (*pistis*) means “trust in” or “reliance upon.” Faith requires an object – it is impossible to have faith in nothing. One's faith must be in something, or someone. In the NT, Biblical faith has as its object God in the following passages: Mark 11:22; Col. 2:12; Heb. 6:1. In the following passages, Biblical faith has as its object Jesus, or Jesus Christ, or the Lord Jesus Christ: Rom. 3:22, 26; Gal. 2:16; 3:22, 26; Eph. 1:15; Col. 1:4. Neither of these lists are exhaustive.

<sup>15</sup> Rom. 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>16</sup> Rom. 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*, (The New International

D2 Beloved of God: {7} to all who are beloved of God <sup>17</sup> 1:7a

D3 In Rome: in Rome,

D4 Called holy: called *as* saints: <sup>18</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

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Commentary on the New Testament – NICNT) (One-volume edition published September, 1968; reprinted September, 1971) 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>17</sup> Rom. 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](#)).

<sup>18</sup> Rom. 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).

- 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>19</sup>

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

- 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>20</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

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<sup>19</sup> Rom. 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.

<sup>20</sup> Rom. 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).



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>21</sup> 1:14
  - E1 Of any language: <sup>22</sup> both to Greeks and to barbarians,<sup>23</sup>
  - E2 Of any culture: both to the wise and to the foolish.<sup>24</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

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<sup>21</sup> Rom. 1:14 - under obligation: NASB note: A literal translation: *debtor*

<sup>22</sup> Rom. 1:14 subtitles - language, culture: Credit to James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 27.

<sup>23</sup> Rom. 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, 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>24</sup> Rom. 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.”



**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**

- D1 The fact of the constant unveiling of God's wrath: {18} For the wrath of God <sup>25</sup> 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

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<sup>25</sup> Rom. 1:18 - wrath of God: "Wrath" translates *orgē* (3709). *Orgē* speaks often of the coming fierce anger of God upon sin and sinners (Matt. 3:7; Luke 3:7; 21:23; John 3:36; Rom. 2:5; 5:9; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 6:16, 17; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15). Here in Rom. 1:18 God's wrath is *presently* being revealed (unveiled, *apokaluptō*, 601) in real time against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. God's wrath here consists of a successive, progressive giving of men over to the hideous offspring of unrighteous – corrupting participation in more and more sin. The judgment is three-fold: first, God gives men over to moral impurity (Rom. 1:24), then He gives them over to perverted moral impurity (Rom. 1:26-27), and finally, He gives them over to a depraved mind (Rom. 1:28-32). See more on those Scriptures below.

**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>26</sup>

G4    The universal culpability: so that they are without excuse. <sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Rom. 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 ....

<sup>27</sup> Rom. 1:20 - without excuse: Man has almost universally rejected the God who has revealed Himself in the constellations, galaxies, and created order. The created order reveals an eternal God of infinite variety, intelligence, wisdom, and power. But man has almost universally rejected that Creator God. But one day, every man, woman, and child will stand before the man Jesus Christ, through whom God created all things (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:1-2), and the one God has appointed to sit in judgment on every human being who has lived (John 5:21-29). And every person who has rejected the Creator God will have no excuse when he stands in shame before Jesus. He will have rejected the footprints God has left behind in the created order, and he will have no excuse to offer in his own defense. The evidence is there. It has been there since the beginning of time. And the evidence has been almost universally rejected and reinterpreted.

- 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>28</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, <sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Rom. 1:21 - honor: NASB note: A literal translation: *glorify*

<sup>29</sup> Rom. 1:22 - Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools: I had the opportunity, some years ago, to attend commencement exercises at the University of Illinois. I sat in the balcony and peered down at the stage below. There were Ph.D's sitting on the stage with various brightly-colored caps and stoles signifying their various disciplines of learning. What an august assembly of human learning! But I wondered to myself, "How many of these professors actually believe in evolution?" – that matter is eternal, that an explosion (the Big Bang) created order, that life comes from non-life, that limited-information cells accidentally produced prodigious-information cells, that personality comes from impersonality, and that purpose and design flows from random chance and mistakes? I thought to myself that they probably all did. Even though these educated professors assembled on stage as the epitome of wisdom, they were, almost to a man, utter fools. Why? Because they have substituted the Creation for the Creator. They have ignored the message of the stars. How sad! "Professing themselves to be wise, 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>30</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>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Rom. 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. [Evolution](#) is a theory about origins. But modern man, in his quest to revolt against God, has blindly rejected clear thinking about the matter of origins. He has adopted [evolution](#) as a FACT, even an unassailable LAW of science, despite the fact that [evolution](#) has enormous problems. Yet, anyone in the academic community who questions [evolution](#) is often summarily ostracized, and in some cases, has been dismissed from his position. The lack of open-mindedness in the scientific community about the matter of origins is appalling, intolerant, and close-minded. It is [evolutionists](#) who are bigoted, not creationists.

The question of origins is, as Paul so deftly points out here, more of a spiritual issue than it is a matter of logic. People fail to give thanks to God, fail to honor Him as God, and consequently invent alternative ways of explaining all that exists. [Evolution](#) is actually a faith-based dogma, not a scientific consensus. [Evolution](#) is based on the assumed belief in [uniformitarianism](#), which insists, without proof, that processes presently at work in nature have always operated, and at the same rate of speed. It assumes that nature, that which one can see with the eye and thus can weigh and measure, is the ultimate reality. By definition, [evolution](#) excludes from discussion spiritual reality. Another source of information, Divine Revelation (the Bible), is automatically removed from any discussion. That is narrow-mindedness and bigotry and illogic and arrogance on display.

Here is the truth about creation. Let us assume for the moment that God did create the heavens and the earth and everything in it. How old would it look? If God created the sun and the moon, as He said, “to separate the day from the night,” and that they should be “for signs and for seasons and for days and years” (Gen. 1:14-15); and if “*He made the stars also*” (Gen. 1:16) all on the Fourth Day of creation, how old would the sun, moon, and stars have been on the Sixth Day of creation, when God made Man? The answer is that they would have been two days old. Adam and Eve would have been able to see the sun, moon, and the stars with their light rays already reaching earth. If an astronomer with a Hubble telescope had appeared on earth on the Sixth Day, he would have stated with certainty that the sun and its solar system were 4.5 billion years old, and that the universe as a whole is between 13 and 14 billion years old. He would be incredibly incorrect, for the true age of the universe would be between 1 and 6 days old. Here is the truth. If God created everything, He created it with an appearance of age that conflicts with its actual age. It is impossible to have creation and not have the created thing appear to be older than it really is. God created the earth and the universe and the stars with an apparent age that vastly overstates its actual age. Man can never look at present processes and determine the actual age of the earth, for creation bypasses normal processes.

It is no wonder that God gives those people who deny the evidence for God in nature, and who invent idolatry or a sophisticated [evolutionary](#) theory for an explanation of nature, over to a damning progression of events. This damning progression Paul describes in Romans 1:24-32. When people have rejected God, He gives them over (1) to immorality (1:24-25), to perverted immorality (1:26-27), and to a depraved mind (1:28-32). I myself have, over the course of my 65 years, witnessed firsthand this degeneration in American society. What a tragedy. Our nation is falling apart, and its leaders do not even know it. And it is because our nation has systematically rejected God and is in the process of prohibiting any discussion about God in the public sector. We are watching, before our very eyes, the demise of the United States of America. Our country has denied God’s existence and discussion, and we have seen God give America over to immorality, to perverted immorality, and to a perverted mind. Again, what a tragedy! See the Glossary Entry on [uniformitarianism](#).

<sup>31</sup> Rom. 1:23 - crawling creatures: NASB note: Or *reptiles*

**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 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<sup>32</sup>
    - G2    The area of judgment
      - H 1    in the lusts of their hearts
      - H 2    to impurity,<sup>33</sup>
    - G3    The result of judgment: so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

<sup>32</sup> Rom. 1:24 - Therefore God gave them over: “gave them over” translates the single word *paradidōmi* (3860), which appears here in the aorist tense, signifying action at a point in time. God’s wrath (Rom. 1:18) reached a breaking point. When man persists in ignoring the message God has placed in the skies, at a point in time God gives man, or a particular society over to judgment. That judgment is actually a deliverance over to increasing and debilitating sin. The farther man strays from God, the more sinful he becomes.

It is not difficult to document that deliverance over to sin in the history of the United States of America. America was founded by people who were devout Christians – people like the Puritans and the Pilgrims. After the founding of America, its constituents were so devout, for example, that the eight of the thirteen British colonies had official or “established” churches. In Connecticut, for example, the salaries of Congregational pastors were paid for by taxing the citizens of a given town.

But gradually this original fervor began to change. One of the biggest reasons for the demise of the worship of God in America has been the advent of the teaching of evolution. As evolution became more widely disseminated in schools across America, there has been a corresponding increase of crime and dysfunctional behavior that is proliferating. The more godless our society has grown, the more dysfunction the behavior of our citizens.

The United States of America is a living laboratory on the rejection of God culminating in more and greater crime and an increasingly dysfunctional society. God is giving America over to the great vices outlined in Romans 1:24-32. Why? Because America has rejected God. It is almost as though God has said, “Reject Me, will you? Then I will plunge your faces into your own disease-producing feces. You will grow sick and ultimately die as a society, and you will be conquered in judgment by a foreign power.”

<sup>33</sup> Rom. 1:24 - God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity: This word translates *akatharsia* (167), which means “uncleanness.” It is typically, in the NASB, translated as “impurity.” It is used in the NT in Matt. 23:27; Rom. 1:24; 6:19; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 2:3; 4:7. Paul used it in a context of sexual immorality in 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; and 1 Thess. 4:7. Given the related topic of homosexual deviancy in Rom. 1:26-27, “impurity” almost certainly means heterosexual immorality in the context of Rom. 1:24-25. This judgment of God could be illustrated many times, but I have chosen to illustrate through the current and progressive demise of the United States of America. America’s obsession with sexual immorality, glorifying it in art, in entertainment, in education, and in practice, is the first step in God’s judgment upon America. In my own lifetime of 65 years I have personally witnessed the change in American attitude toward sexual immorality. (I use America as an example because I am a native-born citizen of this country and because I have witnessed first-hand America’s moral and spiritual decline and God’s ensuing judgment of my country.)

Early in my life, immorality was generally frowned upon. Now it is celebrated as a civil right. The dogma of the “civil right” of “pro-choice” abortion was created so that Americans might be as immoral as they wish, yet without having to suffer the natural consequences of sexual union, which is conception and the birth of children. How ugly and tragic is this abandonment of chastity and morality for the indulgence of the hedonism of fornication, promiscuity, and adultery! As Mother Teresa has so eloquently spoken, “It is a poverty to decide that a child must die so that you may live as you wish.”

- 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,<sup>34</sup>
  - G2 They worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator:
    - H 1 and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,<sup>35</sup>
    - 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;<sup>36</sup> (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

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<sup>34</sup> Rom. 1:25 - they exchanged the truth of God for a lie: This has happened in America and a great many other cultures. In America the exchanging of the truth has been sophisticated. We do not worship the sun God or the moon God. We worship the blind impersonal fiction of the evolution of billions of species from a single-celled animal into multi-cellular species with great intelligence, variety, and creativity. Evolution is a mindless lie that contradicts logic. Yet we worship it. We worship Gaia, Mother Earth, instead of worshipping the God who created the Heavens and the Earth (Gen. 1:1). We worship a lie.

<sup>35</sup> Rom. 1:25 - worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator: This has been the history of America. Founded by God-fearing Puritans and Pilgrims who worshiped the Creator, we have been over-taken by academics and entertainers and leaders and workers who have come to believe the Big Lie – Evolution! We now as a country worship the creature rather than the Creator.

<sup>36</sup> Rom. 1:26 - God gave them over to degrading passions: This is the second of God's judgments as illustrated by the ongoing demise of America. Since we dishonored Him and no longer gave Him thanks, He has abandoned us to the tragic pursuit not only of immorality, but also of perverted immorality. As Paul clearly spells out, He is referring to the tragic pursuit of sexuality between men (homosexuality) and sexuality between women (lesbianism) – an utter defiance of that which God created (Gen. 1-2). This judgment upon America has advanced to the point at which it is now a far greater evil to call the practice of homosexuality “sin” than it is to practice homosexuality. Black has become white, and white has become black. In fact, the practice of homosexuality is now officially embraced. Not content with practicing homosexuality themselves, the leading proponents of this great evil are forcing its acceptance and celebration on the whole of society. God's judgment upon America is strong and forceful. I shudder to think what terrible consequences God has in store for America! If you want to read a first-hand account of the pernicious advance of homosexuality, and of the ultimate judgment from God Himself, you need read no further than the devastating account of the evil of the men of Sodom and the breath-taking judgment of God upon not only that city, but the surrounding cities as recorded in Genesis 18-19.

- 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>37</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,<sup>38</sup>
  - E2 The result of the giving over 1:28b-32

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<sup>37</sup> Rom. 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>38</sup> Rom. 1:28 - God gave them over to a depraved mind: The third judgment against a society that disregards God and invents its own god or gods (in America's case the god of evolution) is the terrible judgment of a depraved mind. This is a mind so bereft of a moral compass that it calls good evil and evil good. The depraved mind is filled with the following devastating character flaws: <sup>29</sup>“being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips, <sup>30</sup>slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup>without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup>and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them” (Rom. 1:28-32).

In my country (America) these character flaws are illustrated by the increasing incidence of divorce, by our slaughter of in excess of 50 million unborn children, by our pursuit of immorality and perverted immorality and violence, glorifying them and condoning them in our entertainment industry and legislation, by our pursuit of the dogma of feminism and the demasculization of our society, by our government's subsidizing and encouragement of promiscuity and fatherlessness through such programs as “Aid to Dependent Children” (which rewards immorality – the more children an unwed, promiscuous mother births, the more we pay her!), by our government's deliberate discouragement of industry, hard work, and self-reliance by such programs as extended unemployment insurance, food stamps, and welfarism without a work requirement, and by the government's pursuit of bribing citizens for their votes through the opiate of Marxism. As we have persistently undermined the importance of marriage and the nuclear family, we have developed more and more dysfunctional homes and individuals. And then we are left scratching our heads with disbelief at a monster who invades a theater or a local elementary school and guns down defenseless victims. But our leaders and the influential people of our society and the common people who have bought their lies and left God out of the equation are all to blame. God is giving us a reprobate mind, a mind that cannot tell the difference between good and evil. And so we are destroying ourselves. Some day we will become the slaves of other nations and peoples, and we will wonder what hit us. We hit ourselves because we have turned our backs on God, and God has given us over to the damnation of reaping our own filthy, heart-rending harvest. May God have mercy on America!



- 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>39</sup> the ordinance of God,
    - 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>40</sup> to those who practice

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<sup>39</sup> Rom. 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 it, but they violate his standard anyway, while at the same time congratulating others for doing the same!

<sup>40</sup> Rom. 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

them.

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

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

- D1 The statement of inexcusability: {1} Therefore you have no excuse,
- D2 The condition of inexcusability: everyone of you <sup>41</sup> who passes judgment,
- D3 The hypocrisy of judgment
  - E1 Their practice of judging: for in that which you judge another,
  - E2 Their self condemnation: you condemn yourself;
  - E3 Their hypocritical practice: for you who judge practice the same things.

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

- D1 God judges all offenders according to truth: {2} And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 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
    - G1 The irrational presupposer: {3} But do you suppose this,
    - G2 His judgmental practice: O man, when you pass judgment <sup>42</sup>

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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.

<sup>41</sup> Rom. 2:1 - everyone of you who passes judgment: Literally, the opening clause reads as follows, "Therefore, inexcusable you are, O man, each [of you who are] the one judging ...." "The one judging" is a present tense participle (of *krinō*, [2919](#)), indicating that the one who is judging others is doing so frequently. In fact, every verb form in 2:1 is present tense. The judging is constant, the condemning of oneself is constant, and the practicing of the same things by the hypocritical man judging is also constant. "You condemn yourself": "condemn" is *katakrinō* ([2632](#)), "to judge against" – in this case to judge against oneself.

<sup>42</sup> Rom. 2:3 - O man, when you pass judgment: Literally, "O man, the one judging" .... "the one judging" is the present active participle of the verb *krinō* ([2919](#)). "Judgment" (of God) at the end of the verse is the noun *krima* ([2917](#)), obviously closely related to the verb *krinō*. Paul's analysis reminds us very much of Jesus' warning in

- G3 The targets of his judgment: on those who practice such things
- G4 His hypocritical practice of the same thing: and do the same *yourself*,
- G5 His irrational conclusion: that you will escape the judgment of God?
- E2 He ignorantly despises God's patience 2:4
  - G1 His ignoring of God's patience: {4} Or do you think lightly of the riches of
    - H 1 His kindness
    - H 2 and tolerance
    - H 3 and patience,
  - G2 His oblivion concerning the goal of God's patience – his own personal repentance! not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?
- E3 He stores up for himself wrath in the coming day 2:5
  - G1 His incorrigible condition
    - H 1 {5} But because of your stubbornness
    - H 2 and unrepentant heart
  - G2 His growing store of the wrath of God: you are storing up wrath for yourself
  - G3 For the day of judgment
    - H 1 in the day of wrath
    - H 2 and revelation of the righteous judgment <sup>43</sup> of God,

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Matthew 7:1-2, {1} “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. {2} “For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.” Judging others invites God's judgment. He will judge us equally as severely as we judge others!

<sup>43</sup> Rom. 2:5 - righteous judgment: These two words translate a single, compound word in Greek, *dikaiokrisia* (1341), used only here in the NT. The two words making up this single word are *dikaio*s (1342), “righteous,” and *krisis* (2920), “judgment” in the sense of “decision” or “sentence.” We men fail miserably in judging our own selves rightly, much less in judging other people accurately. God's final verdict will be ultimately fair, impartial, and righteous.

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

- D1 To each person God will pay back: {6} who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON 2:6a
- D2 According to his works: ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: <sup>44</sup> 2:6b-10
  - E1 To those seeking glory – honor and non-decay 2:7
    - G1 Their persistence: {7} to those who by perseverance in doing good <sup>45</sup> 2:7a
    - G2 Their quest: seek <sup>46</sup>
      - H 1 for glory
      - H 2 and honor
      - H 3 and immortality,
    - G3 Their wages from God: eternal life; 2:7b
  - E2 To those characterized by strife and disobedience God will pay back wrath and indignation 2:8
    - G1 Their characteristics
      - H 1 {8} but to those who are selfishly ambitious
      - H 2 and do not obey the truth,

<sup>44</sup> Rom. 2:6 - WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: Paul here quotes from the last lines of Psalm 62:12 and, with modification, from Proverbs 24:12. This idea is also found in Job 34:11; Psa. 28:4; Jer. 17:10, and, to a lesser extent, in Prov. 12:14. Jesus picks up this idea, applying it to himself in Matt. 16:27 and again in Rev. 2:23. Paul may allude to it in 1 Cor. 3:8.

<sup>45</sup> Rom. 2:7 - to those who by perseverance in doing good: Literally, the phrase reads, “To those who by perseverance in good works ....” If we were to strip Romans 2:7 from the broader context of Romans, especially chapters 3-5, we would conclude that Paul is advocating salvation by good works. But, reading the rest of Romans, as well as statements such as those found in Ephesians 2:8-10, we quickly conclude he cannot be meaning that. Rather, we conclude, he is describing the conduct and destiny of those who have already been saved (by grace through faith). John MacArthur, in his commentary on Romans, states it this way:

Paul is not discussing how a person comes to salvation or how God produces Christlikeness in him. He is describing what the life of a true believer is like, pointing out that those divinely-bestowed qualities will eventuate in the final glory of the divinely-bestowed eternal life.

The “perseverance” aspect of the believer is described in the letter P of the Calvinist acronym TULIP: “The Perseverance of the Saints.” (Incidentally, I subscribe to four of the five points of Calvinism. I reject L – “Limited Atonement” out of hand. Clearly Christ died for the sins of all men, not merely for those of the elect (John 3:16; Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 4:10).

<sup>46</sup> Rom. 2:7 - seek: Paul uses the present tense participle of *dzēteō* ([2212](#)), literally, “seeking.” These people, in their lives, are characterized by continually seeking for glory, honor, and “imperishability” or “undecayability” (*aphtharsia*, [861](#)) – Paul used this word frequently in 1 Cor. 15, the resurrection chapter. It is used sparingly in the NT – in Rom. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:42, 50, 53, 54; Eph. 6:24; 2 Tim. 1:10.

- H 3 but obey unrighteousness,
  - G2 Their reward
    - H 1 wrath
    - H 2 and indignation.
- E3 The universal harvest from perpetrating evil 2:9
  - G1 The harvest
    - H 1 {9} *There will be* tribulation
    - H 2 and distress
  - G2 The perpetrators: for every soul of man who does evil,
  - G3 The universal applicability
    - H 1 of the Jew first
    - H 2 and also of the Greek,
- E4 The universal harvest from perpetrating evil 2:10
  - G1 The harvest
    - H 1 {10} but glory
    - H 2 and honor
    - H 3 and peace
  - G2 The perpetrators: to everyone who does good,<sup>47</sup>
  - G3 The universal applicability

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<sup>47</sup> Rom. 2:10 - to everyone who does good: Again, Paul is not here subscribing to a meritorious “good works” salvation (see his clear statement in Eph. 2:8-10). Rather he is stating that for those whose lives are characterized by “working that which is good” [because they have already been made a new creation in Christ], there is a universal harvest of glory, honor, and peace. John A. Witmer, in his commentary on Romans, *TBKC*, states it this way:

A person’s habitual conduct, whether good or evil, reveals the condition of his heart. Eternal life is not rewarded for good living; that would contradict many other Scriptures which clearly state that salvation is not by works, but is all of God’s grace to those who believe (e.g., Rom. 6:23; 10:9-10; 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). A person’s doing good *shows* that his heart is regenerate. Such a person, redeemed by God, has eternal life. Conversely a person who continually does evil and rejects the truth *shows* that he is unregenerate, and therefore will be an object of God’s wrath.

In other words, Paul is stating universal truths. Living a life of evil will be rewarded with God’s wrath. Living a life of good will be rewarded with God’s eternal blessing. Paul has not yet addressed how one becomes capable of living a life of good. In fact, he will conclude in Romans 3 that all men (in their unredeemed state) are capable only of evil, and not of any good whatever!

H 1 to the Jew first

H 2 and also to the Greek.

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

D1 God's impartiality stated: {11} For there is no partiality with God. 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

G1 Gentiles, who do not have the Law, but yet have sinned, will not be judged by the Law, but they will still perish anyway: {12} For all who have sinned without the Law<sup>48</sup> will also perish<sup>49</sup> without the Law,

G2 Jewish people (and Gentile proselytes), who have access to the Law, and yet have sinned, will be judged by the Law: and all who have sinned under the Law<sup>50</sup> will be judged by the Law;<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Rom. 2:12 - without the Law ... without the Law: In both cases the phrase translates the single Greek word *anomôs* (460), “without law.” It means “without any sort of Law principle derived from God.” These are the only two occurrences of *anomôs* in the whole letter of Romans. Even though many do not have access to any sort of “Law” from God, they will perish anyway because they are sinners.

<sup>49</sup> Rom. 2:12 - perish: Gentiles do not customarily have access to the Law, and they will not be judged, or held accountable by the Law they do not know. Yet, because they have sinned, they will perish anyway. The word “perish” is the future tense, middle voice of the verb *apollumi* (622), and means “be destroyed.” The one believing into Jesus (John 3:16) will not perish (*apollumi*, 622, aorist tense, middle voice) but will instead possess (present tense) life “agelong” – i.e., eternal.

<sup>50</sup> Rom. 2:12 - under the Law: Actually, the text reads “in law,” meaning that these people sinned while being “in the jurisdiction of law.” In other words, they were Jewish. “Law” (*nomos*, 3551) refers here qualitatively to a code of ethics from God because this is an anarthrous construction, meaning Paul does not here use the article “the.” However, in 2:14 Paul does use *nomos* with the article, so we know that he incorporates the particular Law of Moses in his frame of reference. Paul uses the word “law” (*nomos*, 3551), sometimes capitalized and sometimes uncapitalized in English, an impressive 74X in Romans. He uses it most frequently in chapter 7 (23X), almost as frequently here in chapter 2 (19X), and less frequently in chapter 3 (11X). In any other chapter the highest usage is 5X down to 2X. He does not use the word in chapters 1, 11-12, or 14-16. Here are the uses in Romans chapter 2 – 12, 12, 13, 13, 14, 14, 14, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 23, 23, 25, 26, 27, 27. In all of the NT, writers use *nomos* 194X. Most frequently, when Paul uses *nomos* in Romans, he is referring to the specific code of ethics and worship delivered by God to Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai, and through Israel, to the world.

<sup>51</sup> Rom. 2:12 - judged by the Law: Jewish people (and Gentiles who have become proselytes to Judaism) are under Law (there are no articles in 2:12 or 2:13. Those who have sinned (*hamartanō*, 264, aorist tense – which means either that they have sinned at least once at a point in time, or, more likely, looks at their entire life as a point in time characterized by sin) under Law will be judged by Law. One might have expected Paul to say that they would perish under Law, but he does not. But the prospect of having one’s entire life be judged by God as a Law-breaker does not bode well for the sinning Jew or proselyte. It takes only one offense to be guilty of the entire Law (James 2:10)!

- E2 Keepers of law, not possessors of law, are justified (declared righteous) before God 2:13
  - G1 Mere hearers of Law are not “righteous ones” before God: {13} for *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God,<sup>52</sup>
  - G2 Only “doers” of Law will be declared righteous: but the doers of the Law will be justified.<sup>53</sup>
- D3 God's impartiality illustrated 2:14-15
  - E1 Gentiles, who do not have the Law, are a law to themselves 2:14
    - G1 The status of certain Gentiles: {14} For when Gentiles who do not have the Law
    - G2 The practice of certain Gentiles: do instinctively the things of the Law,
    - G3 The legal standard of certain Gentiles: these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,
  - E2 They stand accused or excused by their own consciences 2:15
    - G1 The internalization of the Law: {15} in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts,
    - G2 The activity of their conscience: their conscience bearing witness

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Paul used the word “sinned” (*hamartanō*, [264](#)) sparingly – only 7X in Romans: 2:12; 2:12; 3:23; 5:12; 5:14; 5:16; 6:15. Literally, it means “*miss the mark, be in error*”; figuratively, of offending against God, man, religious or moral law *sin, do wrong, transgress*, opposite *agathapoiēō* (do what is right)” (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the New Testament*). (*Agathapoiēō*, [16](#), is used only once in the NT – 1 Pet. 4:19.) In Rom. 2:12 *hamartanō* means to offend God’s law.

<sup>52</sup> Rom. 2:13 - just before God: Literally, the text reads, “For [it is] not the hearers of Law [who are] just ones before God ....” The plural noun “just [NASB] ones” is *dikaioi* ([1342](#)), and is far more often translated “righteous [ones].” Happily, the translators of the NASB used the noun “just” (*dikaioi*, [1342](#)) to demonstrate its affinity with the verb “justified” (*dikaioō*, [1344](#)) in the next line. Consistency of translation is important here. If the noun is translated “just,” the verb must be “justified.” If the noun is translated “righteous,” the verb must be “declared righteous.”

<sup>53</sup> Rom. 2:13 - doers of the Law will be justified: Literally, the text reads, “but the doers of Law will be declared righteous.” “Will be declared righteous” translates the future tense, passive voice of *dikaioō* ([1344](#)), which is typically translated (in KJV and NASB) as “justified.” The passive voice indicates it is God who declares people righteous. Only consistent doers of Law can be justified or declared righteous by God. The difficulty is that, historically, only one person has ever been able to live under Law perfectly at every point – Jesus the Messiah. Paul will subsequently demonstrate that no mere mortal Jews or proselytes have ever been able to keep Law at all points. Even the zealous and conscientious Paul could not do so (Romans 7).



G3 The function of their thoughts: and their thoughts alternately

H 1 accusing

H 2 or else defending them,

D4 God's impartiality standardized 2:16

E1 The standard of God's judgment: {16} on the day when, according to my gospel,<sup>54</sup>

E2 The thoroughness of God's judgment: God will judge the secrets of men

E3 The agency of God's judgment: through Christ Jesus.

### **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: {17} But if you bear the name "Jew" (2:17a) 2:17-18

E1 and rely upon the Law 2:17b

E2 and boast in God, 2:17c

E3 {18} and know *His* will 2:18a

E4 and approve the things that are essential, 2:18b

E5 being instructed out of the Law, 2:18c

D2 His five areas of priesthood 2:19-20

E1 A guide of the blind: {19} and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, 2:19a

E2 A light in the darkness: a light to those who are in darkness, 2:19b

E3 An instructor of the foolish: corrector of the foolish, 2:20a

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<sup>54</sup> Rom. 2:16 - my gospel: "gospel" is *euangelion* (2098), meaning "good news." What that "good news" is must be identified from the context. In the broader context of Romans, the "good news" of which Paul speaks is the Good News that God will declare righteous in His sight those who place their faith in Jesus, the Jewish King (Messiah). When Paul speaks of "my gospel," he does not mean that he originated the gospel or that it belongs to him. He means that Jesus has made him an agent to dispense this particular good news (Rom. 1:1, 9; 15:19; 16:25). Paul spells out the components of his Good News in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. "According to" means that God will judge even the most private aspects of men's lives on the basis of whether or not they have received the Good News Paul proclaims – i.e., the Good News of salvation and forgiveness through faith in Jesus the King.

- E4 A teacher of infants: a teacher of the immature, 2:20b
- E5 Possessor of knowledge and truth: having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 2:20c

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

- D1 The five hypocrisies of the Jew 2:21-23
  - E1 Teaching: {21} you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? 2:21a
  - E2 Stealing: You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? 2:21b
  - E3 Adultery: {22} You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? 2:22a
  - E4 Idolatry: You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 2:22b
  - E5 The Law: {23} You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? 2:23
- D2 The blasphemous reaction of the Gentiles: {24} For “THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU,” just as it is written.<sup>55</sup> 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
    - G1 Circumcision validated: {25} For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law;
    - G2 Circumcision voided
      - H 1 but if you are a transgressor of the Law,
      - H 2 your circumcision has become uncircumcision.
  - E2 Obedience without circumcision 2:26-27
    - G1 Is accounted as circumcision 2:26
      - H 1 The condition – uncircumcision: {26} So if the uncircumcised man

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<sup>55</sup> Rom. 2:24 - written: Paul quoted (evidently from the LXX – Witmer, *op. cit.*) from the last part of Isa. 52:5.

- H 2 The practice – Law-abiding: keeps the requirements of the Law,
      - H 3 The result – imputed circumcision: will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?
    - G2 Qualifies one to judge the hypocritical circumcised 2:27
      - H 1 The condition – uncircumcision: {27} And he who is physically uncircumcised,
      - H 2 The practice – Law-abiding: if he keeps the Law,
      - H 3 The result – qualification as judge
        - J 1 Liability for judgment: will he not judge you
        - J 2 Meeting external criteria
          - K 1 Possessing the Law: who though having the letter of the Law
          - K 2 Having been circumcised: and circumcision
        - J 3 Violating the Law: are a transgressor of the Law?
- D2 Real Judaism is internal, not external 2:28-29
  - E1 Not essentially external 2:28
    - G1 {28} For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly,
    - G2 nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.
  - E2 But essentially internal 2:29
    - G1 True Jewishness: 29But he is a Jew who is one inwardly;
    - G2 True circumcision
      - H 1 Of the heart: and circumcision is that which is of the heart,
      - H 2 By the Spirit: by the Spirit,

- H 3 Not by keeping the letter of Law: not by the letter;
- H 4 Pleasing God, not men: and his praise is not from men, but from God.
- G3 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
    - G1 {1} Then what advantage has the Jew?
    - G2 Or what is the benefit of circumcision?
  - E2 The answer: Jewish worth consists in a trusteeship of the Scriptures. 3:2
    - G1 {2} Great in every respect.
    - G2 First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles<sup>56</sup> of God.

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<sup>56</sup> Rom. 3:2 - oracles of God: "Oracles" translates *logion* (3051). *Logion*, a noun, means, according to the *NAS Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries* (NASHAGD), a saying, an oracle. It occurs only in the plural in the NT. Three times in the NASB it is translated "oracles" and once, "utterances." It comes from an adjective, *logios* (3052) (used only once), which means learned, eloquent (NASHAGD), literally, "wordy" in a good sense. *Logios*, in turn, comes from *logos* (3056), which means a word (as embodying an idea), a statement, a speech (NASHAGD). Jesus Christ, for example, is portrayed as the eternal *Logos* (Word) of God incarnated in human flesh (John 1:1, 14). In my opinion, "utterances" is a better translation than "oracles" simply because very few people know what "oracle" means. "Sayings" would be better even than utterances, but that sounds a little pedantic. Perhaps, "official pronouncements" would be the best translation, inasmuch as Paul is here speaking of the official Scriptures given to Israel by God through the prophets.

*Logion* occurs in Acts 7:38 (referring to God's giving of the *Torah* to Moses on Mt. Sinai); in Rom. 3:2 (referring to the complete Scriptures of the OT – the Law and the Prophets [Matt. 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Luke 16:16; John 1:45; Acts 13:15; 24:24; 28:32; Rom. 3:21] and the Writings [see Luke 24:44]); Hebrews 5:12 (referring to the basic principles of the Scriptures); and in 1 Peter 4:11 (referring to the Scriptures as taught by teachers and also, perhaps, to the communications of prophets conveying revelation received directly from God).

Paul's point is that the sons of Israel occupied a very privileged position in the world. They, and they alone, were the repositories of the written Word of God from the time of Moses to the last writing prophet, Malachi. The OT Scriptures constituted the official communication of God to Israel and to the Nations (Gentiles) who came in contact with Israel.

- D2 The questioned worth of national promises <sup>57</sup> 3:3-4
- E1 The question: "Does Jewish unbelief cancel God's obligation to be faithful?" 3:3
- G1 The question: {3} What then?
- G2 The true condition: If some did not believe, <sup>58</sup>
- G3 The expected response: their unbelief will not nullify <sup>59</sup> the faithfulness of God, will it?
- E2 The answer: God keeps His promises, though men lie! 3:4
- G1 The horrified expression: {4} May it never be!
- G2 The only thinkable alternative
- H 1 The truth of God: Rather, let God be *found* true,
- H 2 The untruth of every man: though every man be found a liar,
- G3 The Scriptural documentation: <sup>60</sup> as it is written,

<sup>57</sup> Rom. 3:3-4 title - The questioned worth of national promises: This is a question of dispensational premillennial vs. amillennial eschatology! Stated another way, do we take God's promises to the OT saints literally, or do we spiritualize them (treat them metaphorically)? Amillennialism spiritualizes the national promises to Israel and applies them metaphorically to the Church. As metastasis in cancer cells destroys human life, so metaphorism applied to the promises of God to Israel destroys the integrity of God! Paul was a dispensational premillennialist!

<sup>58</sup> Rom. 3:3 - If some did not believe: A first-class condition – "if – and it's true." Paul concedes it is true that some Jewish people did not believe. The meaning is, "Since some did not believe."

<sup>59</sup> Rom. 3:3 - nullify: The verb is the third person singular future indicative active of *katargeō* (2673), which means *to render inoperative, abolish* (NASHAGD). Paul uses *katargeō* six times in Romans (3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6; 7:2, 6). Indeed, outside the Pauline epistles, it is used only twice in the NT – in Luke 13:7 and Heb. 2:14. What Paul is asking is this, literally, "If some disbelieved, their disbelief will not render inoperative the faithfulness of God, (will it)?" The expected answer to this question is, "No."

Sadly, [amillennialism](#), and, to a lesser extent, [historical premillennialism](#), answer this question, "Yes!" They assert that Israel's unbelief in the Jewish Messiah has rendered inoperative God's promises of national blessing and ascendancy to Israel and changed them into promises metaphorically fulfilled in the Church. Thus, they assert that there is only one people of God now. Scripture asserts differently. The OT is replete with passages detailing Israel's [millennial](#) greatness (Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-10; 24:23; 25:1-10; 27:6, 9, 12-13; 59:15b-21; 60:1-22; 61:2b-11; 62:1-12; 65:8-10, 16-25; 66:10-24; Ezek. 40-48; Zechariah 14:16-21.) Snippets of the OT passages cited refer also to eternity. Even throughout eternity there will be the redeemed [nations](#) living upon New Earth (Rev. 21:24-26; 22:2), and redeemed [Israel](#) (Rev. 21:12) and the [Church](#) (Rev. 21:14) head-quartering in New Jerusalem. Indeed, nothing could be more Israeli than New Jerusalem! Jewish unbelief does *not* render inoperative the faithfulness of God. See the Glossary Entries on [Amillennialism](#), [Historical Premillennialism](#), and [Dispensational Premillennialism](#), the most accurate understanding of Scripture, based as it is on a literal, not metaphorical interpretation of prophetic Scripture.

<sup>60</sup> Rom. 3:4 subtitle - documentation: Paul documents his assertion that only God is consistently true by quoting Psalm 51:4b, from David's prayer of confession after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

- H 1 “THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED <sup>61</sup> IN YOUR WORDS,
- H 2 AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.”
- D3 The questioned justice of God's wrath against Israel 3:5-8
  - E1 The implication Godward 3:5-6
    - G1 The question: "If Israel's unrighteousness highlights God's righteousness, is not God disqualified from judging Israel?" 3:5
      - H 1 The true condition: {5} But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God,
      - H 2 The posed response: what shall we say?
      - H 3 The unthinkable conclusion: The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? <sup>62</sup>
      - H 4 The admitted humanity of the debate: (I am speaking in human terms.)
    - G2 The refutation: If God cannot judge Israel, how will He judge the world (as He says He will)? 3:6
      - H 1 The horrified response: {6} May it never be!
      - H 2 The question posed: For otherwise, how will God judge the world? <sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Rom. 3:4 - that You might be justified in Your words: “Justified” is the aorist subjunctive passive of *dikaioō* (1344). Paul is addressing the question posed by Paul’s unseen debater in 3:3, “If some (Jewish people) did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?” His answer (in 3:4) is a horrified, “May it never be! Rather, let God be found true though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, “that You may be justified in Your words, and prevail when You are judged” (quoting Ps. 51:4b). To Paul it is unthinkable that Jewish unbelief would in any way tarnish God’s faithfulness. Scriptures prove that God must “be seen to be righteous” (*dikaioō*, 1344), not a liar! Paul has already used this key theological word in 2:13. 3:4 is his second use of it, and 3:20 his third use. All these appear in the present unit of thought that all of mankind is condemned before God. In the subsequent unit of thought, “Justification: The Declaration of Righteousness by Faith,” he will use it repeatedly in 3:24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5. Most of the time he speaks of the necessity of man’s being declared righteous in God’s sight, while in this instance (3:4) he is concerned that God might be seen to be righteous in man’s sight. For a fuller discussion of *dikaioō*, see the footnote on “being justified” at Rom. 3:24.

<sup>62</sup> Rom. 3:5 God ... not unrighteous, is He?: The question anticipates a solid, “NO!” God is not unrighteous for inflicting wrath upon Israel, even though Israel’s unrighteousness highlights His own righteousness.

<sup>63</sup> Rom. 3:6 - how will God judge the world?: If God is unrighteous for inflicting wrath upon Israel because Israel’s unrighteousness actually highlights God’s righteous, then it is impossible on any account for God to judge the world. But the truth is that God most certainly will judge the world. Therefore God is not unjust in punishing Israel even though, in the process, God’s justness and righteousness is highlighted by Israel’s disobedience.

## 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>64</sup> 3:7

H 1 The true condition – man's dishonesty promotes the truth of God: {7} But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory,

H 2 The follow-up question querying the justice of man's condemnation as a sinner: why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

G2 The accusation of Pauline antinomianism 3:8a

H 1 {8} And why not *say*

J 1 (as we are slanderously reported

J 2 and as some claim that we say),

H 2 "Let us do evil that good may come"?<sup>65</sup>

G3 The refutation by way of their judgment: Their condemnation is just.<sup>66</sup> 3:8b

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<sup>64</sup> Rom. 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>65</sup> Rom. 3:8 - Let us do evil that good may come: This represents a perversion of grace! The deliberate pursuit of evil inevitably brings judgment. The pursuit of lawlessness is called antinomianism.

<sup>66</sup> Rom. 3:8 - Their condemnation is just: "condemnation" translates *krima* (2917), rendered in the NASB as "condemnation" 8X, and as "judgment(s)" 16X. Paul used *krima* 6X in Romans: 2:2, 3; 3:8; 5:16; 11:33; 13:2. Bringing about eventual good is no justifiable reason for pursuing evil, because evil is always catastrophic. The end never justifies the means. 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 horrible destructiveness as God does.



**B 4 The Condemnation of All Men 3:9-20****C 1 The charge of universal condemnation 3:9**

D1 {9} What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; <sup>67</sup>

**C 2 The Scriptural documentation of universal condemnation: {10} as it is written, <sup>68</sup> (3:10a) 3:10-18**

D1 The universality of sin 3:10b-12

E1 No one is righteous: "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; <sup>69</sup> 3:10

E2 None seek God 3:11

G1 {11} THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,

G2 THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; <sup>70</sup>

E3 All have turned away from God 3:12

G1 All have turned from God: {12} ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, <sup>71</sup>

G2 All have become unprofitable: TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;

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<sup>67</sup> Rom. 3:9 - sin: The noun *hamartia* (266) appears 48 times in Romans. In the first five chapters of Romans it appears in 3:9, 20; 4:7, 8; 5:12, 12, 13, 13, 20, 21. It can be defined (1) as "an act, a departure from doing what is right"; (2) "as the moral consequence of having done something wrong" (Acts 3:19); (3) "as the nature of wrongdoing viewed as the rejection of God by self-assertive human beings" (Rom. 5:12, 13); (4) "especially in Johannine usage as a moral condition of human beings in revolt against God" (John 9:34; 15:24); (5) "especially in Pauline usage as an abstract moral principle or force personified as evil in character" (Rom. 6:12); and (6) "especially in Hebrews as a deceiving power personified as leading human beings to guilt and destruction" (Heb. 3:13; 12:1) (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*).

Here in Romans 3:9 "all under sin are" means that the entire human race is afflicted with a propensity to violate God's standards of righteous conduct and character. Paul here uses no article when discussing *hamartia*. So he is not addressing any particular sin or event. Rather he is addressing sin as an attribute that dominates and characterizes the entire human race. That is, both Jews and Gentiles "stand under sin's power and control and under the condemnation that results from it (cf. 1:18; 2:5)" (John A. Witmer, Romans, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty*.)

<sup>68</sup> Rom. 3:10 - as it is written: 3:10-12 quotes Psalm 14:1-3; Psalm 53:1-3.

<sup>69</sup> Rom. 3:10 - none righteous, not even one: Paul rather loosely quotes Ps. 14:1c; 53:1c: "There is no one who does good."

<sup>70</sup> Rom. 3:11 - none who understands ... who seeks for God: Paul recites the sense of Ps. 14:2b; 53:2b.

<sup>71</sup> Rom. 3:12 - all have turned aside, etc.: The entirety of 3:12 accurately translates Ps. 14:3; 53:3.

- G3 Not one performs acts of kindness
  - H 1 THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,<sup>72</sup>
  - H 2 THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”
- D2 The totality of depravity 3:13-18
  - E1 Reflected in men's destructive speech 3:13-14
    - G1 Their **throat** an open grave: {13} “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE,<sup>73</sup> 3:13a
    - G2 Their deceiving **tongues**: WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,”<sup>74</sup> 3:13b
    - G3 Their **venomous** lips: “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”;<sup>75</sup> 3:13c
    - G4 Their **mouth** full of cursing and bitterness: {14} “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”;<sup>76</sup> 3:14
  - E2 Reflected in men's destructive actions 3:15-17
    - G1 Their feet swift to murder: {15} “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,<sup>77</sup> 3:15
    - G2 Their paths full of destruction and misery: {16} DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,<sup>78</sup> 3:16
    - G3 The path of peace they have not known: {17} AND

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<sup>72</sup> Rom. 3:12 - good: Not the normal word for good (*kalos*, [2570](#), 102X in NT), but a seldom-used word, *chrēstotēs* ([5544](#), 10X in NT), rendered in the NASB as “kindness” (9X), and as “good” only once – here. Paul is the only NT writer to use *chrēstotēs*. In Romans he used it 5X: once each in Rom. 2:4 and 3:12; 3X in Rom. 11:22.

<sup>73</sup> Rom. 3:13 - throat ... open grave: quoting Psalm 5:9c. “Throat” translates *larugx* ([2995](#)), which in English we transliterate as larynx. Used only here in the NT.

<sup>74</sup> Rom. 3:13 - tongues ... deceiving: quoting loosely Psalm 5:9d

<sup>75</sup> Rom. 3:13 - poison of asps is under their lips: Probably taken from Ps 140:3b.

<sup>76</sup> Rom. 3:14 - mouth ... cursing ... bitterness: An approximate quotation of Ps. 10:7a

<sup>77</sup> Rom. 3:15 - feet ... blood: quoting the sense of Isa. 59:7a-b

<sup>78</sup> Rom. 3:16 - destruction ... misery ... paths: a loose rendering of Isa. 59:7d

THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.”<sup>79</sup>  
3:17

- E3 Reflected in men's flippant disregard of God: {18} “THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.”<sup>80</sup> 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 3:19
- E1 The communication of the Law: {19} Now we know that whatever the Law<sup>81</sup> says,
  - E2 The targets of the Law: it speaks to those who are under the Law,
  - E3 The effect of the Law
    - G1 Utter silence: so that every mouth may be closed<sup>82</sup>
    - G2 Universal accountability: and all the world may become accountable to God;
- D2 The function of the Law – universal condemnation, not justification 3:20
- E1 The impossibility of being declared righteous by keeping the Law: {20} because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight;
  - E2 The function of the Law – inescapable awareness of sin: for

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<sup>79</sup> Rom. 3:17 - path of peace ... not known: quoting Isa. 59:8a

<sup>80</sup> Rom. 3:18 - no fear of God ... eyes: quoting Ps. 36:1b. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1:7) and wisdom (Prov. 9:10). Sinners do not fear God. That is why they falsely believe they can sin with impunity. They believe there will be no day of reckoning.

<sup>81</sup> Rom. 3:19 - the Law: When Paul first began to refer to “Law” (*nomos*, [3551](#)) in Rom. 2:12, he spoke of the quality of Law and did not use the article. Here in chapter 3:19 he twice uses the article. He is referring, of course to the Law of Moses. In chapter 3, Paul refers to *nomos* 11X – in vv. 19, 19, 20, 20, 21, 21, 27, 27, 28, 31, 31. Paul here describes a novel kind of righteousness – a faith-based righteousness that is independent of any observing of the Mosaic Law. See also the footnote on 2:12 - under the Law.

<sup>82</sup> Rom. 3:19 - that every mouth may be closed: Paul’s thought here may be: “If those under the Law (*nomos*) cannot keep it, surely no one can!” Additionally, Paul has already stated that the Gentiles who do not have access to God’s Law nevertheless sin against the law of their own hearts, for they instinctively acknowledge right and wrong in their own consciences. Yet there is no one who has not violated his own conscience (Rom. 2:11-16). Both Jew and Gentile will one day stand before God speechless. Man’s knee-jerk reaction, when confronted with his own sinfulness, is to excuse himself (see Adam and Eve – Gen. 3:8-13). But at the final judgment, no one will be able to offer an acceptable excuse, and all will fall silent. Jewish people and Gentile proselytes will not have been able to keep the Torah (Law), and Gentiles who do not have access to the Torah will have violated the Law written on their hearts.

through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin.<sup>83</sup>

### A3 JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith 3:21 - 5:21<sup>84</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: {21} But now apart from the Law 3:21
- D2 Its origin – from God: *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, 3:21
- D3 Its authenticity – predicted in Scripture: being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 3:21
- D4 Its terms – faith in Christ: {22} even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ 3:22
- D5 Its universal availability – to all continually believing:
  - E1 for all those who believe;<sup>85</sup>
  - E2 for there is no distinction;<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Rom. 3:20 - through the Law comes the knowledge of sin: Paul here blends two monumental themes he discusses in many parts of his treatise to the Romans – law (*nomos*, [3551](#)) and sin (*hamartia*, [266](#)). Both nouns are anarthrous (no article), so Paul is speaking of the relationship between the attributes of law and sin. Literally, he writes, “for through law – full knowledge of sin.” This reveals a fundamental purpose of Law in any economy of God throughout human history. God historically introduces any sort of Law to provide full knowledge of the awful and deadly character of sin. That was true at the beginning of human history, when God instructed Adam, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die” (Gen. 2:16-17). It was equally true when God through Moses gave the Law to Israel, and through Israel to the entire world (Exod. 19-24 ff.). Law gives “full knowledge” (*epignōsis*, [1922](#)) [not merely “knowledge” (*gnōsis*, [1108](#))] of sin. No statute – no full understanding of the enormity of sin.

Again, this underscores a fundamental purpose of the Law – not to make people righteous, but to reveal the full extent of their unrighteousness! For additional comments on *hamartia*, [266](#), see the note at Rom. 3:9. For additional comments on *nomos*, [3551](#), see the notes at Rom. 2:12; 3:19; 4:13.

<sup>84</sup> Rom. 3:21-5:21 title - Justification: This section deals with "sin as guilt." The next – 6:1 - 8:39 deals with "sin as power."

<sup>85</sup> Rom. 3:22 - for all those who believe: Whether one is a Jew or Gentile proselyte under the Law, or whether one is a Gentile completely outside the jurisdiction of Judaism and the Torah, righteousness through faith (not deeds) is available to all persons in the world believing in Jesus! NASB “believe” translates the present active plural participle of *pisteuō* ([4100](#)). The present tense indicates a continuous action. Those who are continually placing their faith in Jesus are granted the righteousness of God apart from their keeping the Law (Torah). Paul uses the verb *pisteuō* fairly frequently in Romans – 21X. Luke uses it more frequently in Acts – 37X. But the record goes to the Apostle John in the book of John – he used the verb *pisteuō* an astonishing 98X! As Paul clearly indicates in 3:22, the object of this persistent believing must be Jesus the Messiah.

<sup>86</sup> Rom. 3:22 - for there is no distinction: All, whether Jew or Gentile, can access the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ. And all *need* to access God’s righteousness via faith, not works, because all *sinned* (3:23)!

D6 Its universal necessity – all have sinned: {23} for all have sinned<sup>87</sup> and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>88</sup> 3:23

D7 Its Divine motivation – grace: {24} being justified<sup>89</sup> as a gift<sup>90</sup> by

<sup>87</sup> Rom. 3:23 - for all have sinned: Literally, “for all sinned ....” The verb is the third person plural indicative active aorist of *hamartanō* (264). The lexical definition: *to miss the mark, do wrong, sin* (NASHAGD). But here it is the figurative meaning – to offend God (see comments on Rom. 2:12). The aorist tense means that at a point in time all members of the human race sinned. When was that? That event occurred in the Garden of Eden when Adam, the federal and genetic head of the human race sinned (see also the comments on Rom. 5:12). Consequently, each of us humans is guilty before God on three counts – imputed sin, inherited sin, and personal sin. (1) We call this act of sin in Rom. 3:23 “imputed sin.” Adam was our representative, or federal head. As such his sin was charged to our account. (2) Furthermore, genetically, Adam is the father of each of us. Sadly, we inherited from our primordial father a sin nature – a bent to sin. Before we believers were transferred into Christ’s kingdom by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9), “we were *by nature* (emphasis mine) children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3). We call this “inherited sin.” (3) Each of us personally commits acts of sin (1 John 1:10). For these three reasons, Imputed Sin; Inherited Sin; and Personal Sin; each of us stands guilty before God. No amount of good works can mitigate the fact that we are guilty sinners and deserve an eternal death penalty (see comments on Rom. 6:23). For a fuller discussion of man’s guilt before God, see “[Three Reasons Man is Guilty](#).”

<sup>88</sup> Rom. 3:23 - fall short of the glory of God: “Fall short” is the third person plural indicative present passive of the verb *hustereō* (5302), which occurs only here in the letter to the Romans. The present tense indicates a continuous present action. The passive voice indicates that the “falling short” is being forced upon us by an outside (in this case, unnamed) force. The sin was at a point of time in the first moments of human history. The falling short is a present pathetic, repeated series of occurrences of which we are all guilty. Literally, Romans 3:23 reads, “For all sinned and are (continually) being caused to fall short of the glory of God.” Presumably, that which repeatedly is causing us to fall short of the glory of God is the many sins we commit, along with the imputed sin of which we are guilty and the sin nature which contaminates us. Romans 3:23 means that, at a point in time, all sinned through Adam; but presently we are, because of all of the manifestations of our sin, being caused to fall short of the glory of God.

In a sense, to sin is to do something unGodlike. Since God is Life and the source of Life, to do something “other than God” is to do Death and Destruction. We humans consistently do things that are unGodlike, and so we fail to measure up to all the goodness and glory that is God. And inevitably we die, because dying is the consequence of being unGodlike and doing anything unGodlike. If we choose “other than God,” we die and are destroyed.

What is the glory (*doxa*, 1391) of God? It is all the splendor and the goodness that God is. We each are presently and repeatedly being made to fall short of all the majesty and goodness that comprises God. It is our sinfulness which makes us this way. And it is impossible to have fellowship with a holy and pure God who cannot be contaminated by – nor can he in justice tolerate – people who are perpetually being made to fall short of His standard of perfection. No amount of “good works” can cure this dreadful condition!

<sup>89</sup> Rom. 3:24 - being justified: This expresses the nominative masculine plural of the present passive participle of the verb *dikaioō* (1344). The lexical meaning of *dikaioō*: *to show to be righteous, declare righteous* (NASHAGD). In the NASB, *dikaioō* is translated “justified” 24X; “justify” 4X; “justifies” 2X; “justifier” 1X; “freed” 3X; “vindicated” 3X; “acquitted” 1X; “acknowledged...justice” 1X. The verb *dikaioō* (1344) comes from the adjective *dikaios* (1342), in the NASB translated as some form of “righteous” 64X; “right” 7X; “just” 6X; “justice” 1X; and “innocent” 1X.

The significance of the present tense is that those who are continually placing their faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:22) are continually being justified, or declared righteous. The significance of the passive voice is that we cannot declare ourselves righteous. But we are constantly being declared righteous by God because of our faith in His Son.

This is an extremely important theological verb, occurring 39X in the NT, but most of the time (27X) in Paul’s letters. It is used 7X in the Gospels: Matt. 11:19; 12:37; Luke 7:29, 35; 10:29; 16:15; 18:14. It is used 2X in Acts: Acts 13:38, 39. Paul used it 15X in Romans alone: Rom. 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7; 8:30, 30, 33. One can quickly observe that justification is the theme of the latter part of Romans 3 through the early part of Romans 5. Our outline reflects that fact: A3. “JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith (Romans 3:21-5:21).” Elsewhere in the Pauline epistles, he has used *dikaioō* in 1 Cor. 4:4; 6:11; Gal. 2:16, 16, 16, 17; 3:8, 11, 24; 5:4 (8X in Gal.); 1 Tim. 3:16; and Titus 3:7. James is the only other NT writer to use the verb: James 2:21, 24, 25.

In the present context, even though it is true that all sinned in Adam and thus are presently being caused to fall short of the glorious good that God is (Rom. 3:23), nevertheless, man is offered the gift of constantly being declared

His grace <sup>91</sup> 3:24

D8 Its basis - Christ's redemption: through the redemption <sup>92</sup> which is in Christ Jesus; 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 “Mercy Seat”: {25} whom God displayed publicly <sup>93</sup> as a propitiation <sup>94</sup> in His blood through

righteous (by God) by grace through the redemption found in the Messiah, Jesus (Rom. 3:24)! Paul has already made it clear that this declared righteousness is accessed through faith of Jesus, Messiah – unto *all* the ones continually believing (Rom. 3:22a). And all *need* that declared righteousness, for, without distinction (Rom. 3:22b), *all sinned* in Adam and are presently being caused to fall short of the glorious good that God is (Rom. 3:23)!

<sup>90</sup> Rom. 3:24 - as a gift: These three words translate the single Greek adverb, *dōrean* (1431). *Dōrean* comes from the verb *didōmi* (1325) “to give.” In keeping with its adverbial sense, a better translation would be “freely,” or perhaps, in this context, “without cost.” The translation (of Rom. 3:24a) would thus read, “Being (continually) declared righteous without charge.” Declared righteousness is a total gift from God. We can never pay for our justification, no matter how many good works we perform (Eph. 2:8-10)!

<sup>91</sup> Rom. 3:24 - by His grace: Grace (*charis*, 5485) is a noun that reinforces the non-meritorious nature of God’s justification of those who trust in His Son. Those who do so are continually being declared righteous without charge, in view of God’s favor. That God should view with favor sinners rebelling against Him is beyond human comprehension! Grace (*charis*) is a noun of enormous theological significance, occurring 155X in the NT, 24X in Romans alone, the NT book with the most frequent usage. This is Paul’s third use of “grace” in Romans. The other passages include Romans 1:5, 7; 3:24; 4:4, 16; 5:2, 15, 17, 20, 21; 6:1, 14, 15, 17; 7:25; 11:5, 6, 6, 6; 12:3, 6; 15:15; 16:20.

<sup>92</sup> Rom. 3:24 - through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: “Redemption” is the noun *apolutrōsis* (629), another word of great theological significance in the NT. It comes from the verb *apolutroō*, which means *to release on payment of ransom*. *Apolutrōsis*, therefore, means *a release effected by payment of ransom* (NASHAGD). In the NASB it is translated “redemption” 9X; and “release” 1X.

The significance is that, even though this being declared righteous by God is without charge to us and is motivated by God’s favor which He bestows on sinners, it does not come without cost. We have this saying, “There is no such thing as a free meal.” What we mean by that is that, even though this person or that person may not have to pay for a meal provided by the government, someone has to pay for it! It’s not really free. And that is equally true of God’s justification. It is provided at no cost to the sinner, but at great cost to God and His Son. Through Jesus’ sacrificial, substitutionary death, God paid the ransom necessary (death) to warrant declaring righteous sinners who trust in His Son and the latter’s sacrifice. God did not pay this ransom to Satan, but to His own eternal LAW OF JUSTICE. From the beginning of time God warned that the inevitable consequence of sin was death (Gen. 2:17). Paul will repeat that principle in Rom. 6:23. To ransom (redeem) sinful men from their sin and declare them righteous, someone of impeccable character and infinite worth had to die in their place. That person was Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal Logos (Word) of God become flesh (human) (John 1:1-18).

<sup>93</sup> Rom. 3:25 - displayed publicly: The word is the aorist tense (action at a point in time) of *protithēmi* (4388), used only three times in the NT (Rom. 1:13, “I have planned”; 3:25, “displayed publicly”; and Eph. 1:9, “He purposed”). It means literally, “to set before,” and in a derived sense, to plan or purpose (ahead of time). It is a compound word – *pro*, meaning before, and *tithēmi*, to place. Here, Paul is using it in its literal sense, that God, at a point in time (the crucifixion on Golgotha) “placed” Jesus “before” all the world and Himself so that all the world might be declared righteous through faith in Jesus and His sacrificial blood, which alone can pay for man’s sin. God publicly provided for man’s redemption.

<sup>94</sup> Rom. 3:25 - propitiation: The word is *hilastērios* (2435), an adjective, used here as a noun. It’s only other use in the NT is in Hebrews 9:5, where it is properly translated “mercy seat,” the place between the two cherubim on the lid of the ark of the covenant where God’s glory dwelt. In its adjectival sense, *hilastērios* could be literally translated “merciful.” So a very literal translation would read, concerning Jesus, “whom God displayed publicly merciful through faith in His blood ...” This translation is confirmed in the Greek translation of the OT, the Septuagint (LXX). There, repeatedly, the noun *hilastērion* is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *kapporeth* (3727),



faith.<sup>95</sup> 3:25a

D2 The necessity of God's provision of Jesus as "Mercy Seat" 3:25b-26

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

G1 God's provision of Jesus as "Mercy Seat" demonstrated His righteousness: *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness,<sup>96</sup> 3:25b

always translated "mercy seat" in the NASB. The 27 uses of *hilastērion* in the LXX are as follows: Exod. 25:17, 18, 19, 20, 20, 21, 22; 31:7; 35:12; 38:5, 7, 7, 8; Lev. 16:2, 2, 13, 14, 14, 15, 15; Num. 7:89; Ezek. 43:14, 14, 14, 17, 20; Amos 9:1. The 27 uses of *kapporeth* in the Hebrew Bible are as follows: Exod. 25:17, 18, 19, 20, 20, 21, 22; 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6, 7, 8, 9, 9; 39:35; 40:20; Lev. 16:2, 2, 13, 14, 14, 15, 15; Num. 7:89; 1 Chron. 28:11.

God condescended to live amongst His people Israel, but He could only do so, being "merciful," if Israel's sin was atoned for annually on the Day of Atonement. In my opinion, it would make a great deal more sense if the editors of the NASB would have translated *hilastērios* here as "mercy seat" or "merciful," for that is what the word is. God displayed Jesus publicly as "Mercy Seat," accessed by any and all who exercise faith in Jesus' blood.

There is another word properly translated "propitiation," and that is the related word(2433). But *hilasmos* is used only in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10.

So the meaning in Rom. 3:25 is that God displayed Jesus publicly as His "Mercy Seat" where God's wrath at man's sin could be appeased through the infinitely effective blood of His infinitely righteous Son, Jesus the King. The high priest could enter the Holy of Holies only once a year, on the annual Day of Atonement. There he would sprinkle the blood of a bull and then of a goat on the "Mercy Seat" to expiate God's wrath against sin (Lev. 16:14-15). But in the case of Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, only one sacrifice needed to be made (Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26, 28; 10:10). Jesus' death was effective in displaying God's merciful character from that point on throughout eternity. No more sacrifices needed be offered.

It should be understood that the sacrifices to be offered in the [Millennial Temple](#) (Ezek. 40-46) by the Levitical priests who are sons of Zadok (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11) are memorial, not efficacious. The same is true of the bread and the wine of which we presently partake in our communion services in this Church Age – they are memorial in nature, not efficacious (Luke 22:19).

<sup>95</sup> Rom. 3:25 - in His blood through faith: The Greek word order is actually, "Whom God displayed (as) mercy seat through faith in His blood".... In reality, God grants us access to His Mercy Seat (which is Jesus Himself) in Heaven's Holy of Holies, provided we trust in Jesus' blood. More personally, I am saved from the wrath of God and experience His mercy when I believe that Jesus shed His blood to pay for *my* sins!

Faith is *pistis* (4102), used 243X in the NT, and 40X in Romans alone. Other notable uses of *pistis* in a single book include Hebrews (32X) and Galatians, which, despite its smaller size, still uses *pistis* 22X. Paul used *pistis* in Romans in 1:5, 8, 12, 17, 17, 17; 3:3, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 30, 31; 4:5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16, 19, 20; 5:1, 2; 9:30, 32; 10:6, 8, 17; 11:20; 12:3, 6; 14:1, 22, 23, 23; and 16:26.

<sup>96</sup> Rom. 3:25 - to demonstrate His righteousness: "Righteousness" is *dikaosunē* (1343). It means rightness, justice – that which adheres to the highest standard of rectitude and ethical behavior. God was eager to maintain justice in passing over sins. (For more on that subject see the subsequent footnote on Rom. 3:25 - in the forbearance of God.)

There are many politicians and political activists who feel their cause is so just they can violate laws and eschew ethical behavior in order to pass a bill or win an election. To them, the end justifies the means. But God is not like that. God can break no rules to achieve a noble end. When God decreed to Adam, in the Garden of Eden, that violating His rules would earn him catastrophic death, He could never go back on that eternal consequence. Either man must pay the consequence himself, or someone completely righteous must necessarily pay the consequence on his behalf. That substitute is none other than Jesus. In order for God to forgive man his sins, someone still had to pay the death penalty. That someone is Jesus. In the process of redemption and salvation, God violated no rules, and He swept nothing under the carpet. God can only do things that are completely just and upright. He cannot break rules.

By way of reverse illustration, when the housing market collapsed back in 2008, banks were left holding toxic assets, and the banking industry was in danger of collapse. Then President George W. Bush authorized the Targeted Asset Relief Program (TARP), through which the U.S. Government bailed out the biggest of the banks. When confronted with the notion that TARP violated the principles of capitalism, which Bush ostensibly supported, he replied, "Sometimes you have to violate capitalism to rescue capitalism." God would never say or do anything like that. To rescue man, God had to keep inviolable rules.



- G2 This demonstration of righteousness was necessary because of God's past policy of passing over sins: because in the forbearance<sup>97</sup> of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 3:25c
- G3 Because of the substitutionary death of Jesus, God's present righteousness is clearly demonstrated: {26} for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness<sup>98</sup> at the present time, 3:26a
- E2 To demonstrate God's justice in His present policy of declaring righteous those who believe in Jesus 3:26b

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<sup>97</sup> Rom. 3:25 - in the forbearance of God: Forbearance (*anochē*, [463](#)) is used only here and in Rom. 2:4. It means *a delaying, forbearance* (NASHAGD). NASB editors translated it "forbearance" in Rom. 3:25 and "tolerance" in 2:4. God's past policy was one of forbearance or tolerance of men's sins. His past policy is demonstrated in this plaintive query in Psalm 130:3, "If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?" This forbearing policy demonstrated His mercy, but did not clearly demonstrate His justice. (How can a just God prevent man from experiencing the full penalty and consequences of his sin?)

However, God, in His infinite, eternal knowledge, knew that the full payment for human sin was coming in the death of His own Son. Thus, He could, in the past, tolerate the sins of mankind because He knew justice would finally be served through the sacrificial death of His Son. When the eternal *Logos* voluntarily permitted Himself to be made man (John 1:1-14), that made Him mortal, able to die. When He lived a perfect life, but voluntarily submitted to being killed for sins that all others committed, His death was so valuable it paid for the sins of the past, the present, and the future. Jesus' death is infinitely valuable in paying for all the sins of the world for all time. It was for that reason that God could exercise His policy of tolerating sin in the past without at the same time being charged with injustice for being too lax. The horrible prospect of God the Son dying for human sin shows the ferocity of the wrath of God against evil, and yet also demonstrated God's mercy and grace.

It can be seen that God, with His infinite perfection, is able to operate with His Divine attributes perfectly in balance. His love, for example, does not overwhelm His justice. Nor does His justice prevent His mercy.

Man, on the other hand, seems never able to balance justice and mercy. The Democratic Party in American politics is a good illustration. Democrats claim to love people and care for them. Their generosity is commendable. Unfortunately, Democrats are generous with other peoples' money. They rob those who work hard and earn an income in order to give to those who have not earned the benefits of the income they are receiving. Those who receive benefits without paying for them many times grow lazy and slothful. Work and personal responsibility is disincentivized. They develop a most ungrateful "Entitlement" mentality. (I am reminded of the woman who boasted of possessing 200 Obama-phones.) Stripped of the necessity of hard work and personal responsibility, the recipients become slaves on the Government Plantation. And thus they are deprived of the ability to care for themselves. They would rather be "Fed" than "Free." And so the ostensible compassion of the Democratic Party inevitably degenerates into a self-serving ploy for re-election and control. The more the Party bribes the citizenry with confiscated handouts, the more votes they assure themselves at election time. At the same time, those who continue to have the fruits of their hard work and ingenuity confiscated become disillusioned and bitter. Ultimately, they become less industrious. Why should they work harder for less pay?

As the 2012 election just concluded shows us, America has become the nation who voted for Santa Claus. U.S. no longer stands for "Uncle Sam," but for "Uncle Santa." In fairness, the Republican Party cannot escape condemnation. It was, after all, a Republican president who expanded Medicare to include prescription drugs, and, in October of 2008, signed into law the "Troubled Asset Relief Program." Republicans are Santa Claus Lite.

Thankfully, God's love does not violate His justice. He is perfect. We humans, even in our best moments, fall woefully short of God's glorious goodness (Rom. 3:23). God knew the full price of forgiveness had to be paid. So He paid it Himself. But God's offer of forgiveness is not given without regard to human responsibility. We are obligated to trust in God, and especially to trust in His Son, who died for us. No one with an unthankful, "entitlement" mentality will make it to heaven. Not one of us deserves forgiveness. Only those who trust in God's mercy through the blood of Jesus will be forgiven and granted eternal life.

<sup>98</sup> Rom. 3:26 - His righteousness: As in 3:25, the word here in 3:26 is *dikaioṣunē* ([1343](#)), meaning righteous, ethical character and behavior. The reader should be aware that the noun "righteousness" (*dikaioṣunē*, [1343](#)), the adjective "just" (*dikaioṣ*, [1342](#)), and verb (participle) "justifier" (*dikaioō*, [1344](#)), are all very closely-related words. That fact is not readily apparent in the English language, except for the latter two words.

G1 God as just: so that He would be just <sup>99</sup>

G2 God as justifier: and the justifier <sup>100</sup> of the one who has faith in Jesus. <sup>101</sup>

### 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

E1 The question of boasting: {27} Where then is boasting?

E2 The exclusion of boasting: It is excluded.

E3 The principle of exclusion: By what kind of law?

G1 Not excluded by a principle of works: Of works? <sup>102</sup>

G2 But excluded by a principle of faith: No, but by a law of faith. <sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Rom. 3:26 - so that He would be just: "Just" translates the adjective *dikaïos* (1342). It means *correct*, *righteous*, by implication *innocent* (NASHAGD). If God declares someone righteous, God Himself must be righteous in that act. In everything God does, He must preserve, and He does preserve His own integrity. To God, the end never justifies the means. An ethical end can only be achieved through the use of ethical means. When God declares someone righteous, He can only do so if He preserves His own righteousness, His own "justness."

<sup>100</sup> Rom. 3:26 - justifier: This word is the singular masculine present tense participle of the verb *dikaioō* (1344), to declare someone righteous. The point Paul is making is that, in the act of providing His own Son as Mercy Seat for all people, God is able to preserve His own condition of being righteous while He at the same time is the One constantly declaring righteous the one who possesses faith in Jesus. God pursues ethical ends through ethical means. No mere human is able to do that consistently, for each of us is a sinner, possessing tainted motives and compromising our means.

<sup>101</sup> Rom. 3:26 - faith in Jesus: "Faith" is *pistis* (4102), occurring here in the genitive case. Literally, the phrase reads about God "that He might be righteous and One declaring righteous the one (who is) of faith of Jesus." But the genitive case cannot mean, as it ordinarily would, that Jesus possesses faith. (See, for example, the reference to "the faith of Abraham" – Rom. 4:16.) By the analogy of faith, as John Murray suggests (*The Epistle to the Romans*, TNICOTNT, single-vol. edition, 1971, p. 121), Paul, in Rom. 3:26, must mean that if Jesus is the object of one's faith, God declares him righteous. See more comments on "faith" in the footnote at Rom. 1:5.

<sup>102</sup> Rom. 3:27 - of works?: Literally, the text reads, "By what law? The one of works?" So Paul is referring to a specific law, which is the Scroll of the Covenant of Moses, the initial giving of the Law (Ex. 24:4-7), later supplemented by Moses' commentary on the Law, "the scroll of this Law" (Deut. 28:58, 61; 29:20-21, 27; 30:10; 31:9, 24). All of Moses' writings he presumably incorporated into a single scroll before he died, for now we have but the one scroll, the Torah Scroll, which contains the complete corpus of literature from Genesis to Deuteronomy. It is this larger corpus to which Paul is here referring. He calls it "the Law of works." And his conclusion is that boasting could not be excluded if the basis of being declared righteous was one's ability to keep perfectly "the Law of Works." Paul has already concluded that is impossible. Boasting is, however, excluded by virtue of a different law that is at work – a law or principle based on faith. Faith is non-meritorious – it is simple reliance upon the provision God has made – offering Jesus as the only Mercy Seat by which His own sense of righteousness can be effectively and eternally vindicated.

<sup>103</sup> Rom. 3:27 - a law of faith: NASB translators carefully omitted any article in front of "law" – there is none. There is no formal document entitled "The Law of Faith." Rather, Paul is thinking here of a principle of faith that is operative – all who exercise faith in King Jesus God declares righteous. He does so by virtue of their reliance upon His ultimate Mercy Seat – Jesus! And his point is that no one can boast about believing. Believing is not, as Harold Camping falsely proclaims, a work. There is nothing to brag about merely believing. Boasting is excluded. A

- E4 Paul's main thesis of justification – man is declared righteous by virtue of his faith apart from performing any works of the Mosaic Law: {28} For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.<sup>104</sup>
- D2 Justification (declared righteousness) extends to believing Gentiles as well as to believing Jews 3:29-30
  - E1 The question – does God justify Jewish people only? {29} Or is God *the God* of Jews only?
  - E2 The corollary question – does not God also declare Gentiles as righteous? Is He not *the God* of Gentiles also?
  - E3 The conclusion – yes, God also declares Gentiles righteous: Yes, of Gentiles also,
  - E4 The unity of the God who declares righteous by virtue of faith both those who have been circumcised and those who have not been circumcised: {30} since indeed God who will

drowning man in a raging sea cannot boast about the fact that he reached for the life-preserver his rescuer tossed to him – he can only hang on for dear life. If he boasts at all, he will boast about his rescuer.

<sup>104</sup> Rom. 3:28 - a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law: Here Paul clearly states the crucial element of the mechanics of salvation – man is declared righteous by simply trusting in Jesus. This declaration of righteousness is wholly gracious, and non-meritorious. It is accessed by grace, through faith, as Paul so clearly states in Ephesians 2:8-10. Works are the result of salvation, not the cause of it.

How are we to reconcile Paul's statement here in Romans 3:28 with the statement of James that both Abraham (James 2:21) and Rahab (James 2:25) were justified by works? Let us examine James' statement in James 2:21. What we conclude about his comments in regard to Abraham will also apply to his comments about Rahab.

In James 2:21 we read, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar?" "Justified" is the [Aorist](#) tense, passive voice of the verb *dikaioō* (1344). "Works" is the genitive plural of the noun *érgon* (2041). James goes on to assert through his question (which expects a "yes" answer) that Abraham was justified by works "when he offered up his son Isaac upon the altar" (James 2:21). James alludes to the historical event found in Genesis 22:1-19. I believe James was using the word "justified" in the sense of "shown to be righteous" or "demonstrated to be righteous."

Some have interpreted this to mean that James is asserting that Abraham was saved by works, not by faith. But that cannot be James' meaning, because years earlier in Abraham's life, he had believed God's promise that he would be given as many descendants as the stars he could see up in the heavens (Gen. 15:1-5). Moses had then declared, in Gen. 15:6, "Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." So Abraham had already been *justified*, or *accounted as righteous*, by virtue of his faith, apart from any works before he ever offered his son Isaac on the altar years later. That is the point that Paul made in Romans 4:1-5. There, Paul concluded, in Rom. 4:5, "But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness," (*dikaíosunē*, 1343).

So James cannot be taken to mean that people are saved by their works, or that works can in any way contribute to one's salvation. He is using a slightly different shade of meaning of the verb "justified" (1344). What James means is that Abraham was *vindicated* or *demonstrated to be righteous* by his works when he offered up Isaac upon the altar. As Zane Hodges explains (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 826), "Works serve as the barometer of justification, while faith is the basis for justification."

For lexical documentation, Paul, in Romans 4:1-5, was using "justify" "(5) as a religious technical term; (a) of imputed righteousness, as God's judging and saving activity in relation to persons *justify, declare righteous, put right with* (himself) Rom. 3:24)" ([Friberg](#)). James was using the same verb with a slightly different nuance "(3) as demonstrating that someone is *dikaíos* [righteous, 1342] *vindicate, show to be right* (Luke 10:29)" ([Friberg](#)).

We are saved by grace through faith, apart from any works. But if we are saved, we will produce the good works in which God has pre-ordained us to walk. This is the assertion of Paul in Ephesians 2:8-10. In all fairness, I would have to say that the footnote in the Catholic Bible at James 2:14-26 is not inaccurate. I would probably state it somewhat differently, but the footnote as it stands is not inaccurate (The New American Bible, [footnote 6](#) on James 2:14-26).

justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.<sup>105</sup>

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

- E1 The question raised – does God’s declaration of people as righteous by virtue of their faith in Jesus render the Mosaic Law inoperative? {31} Do we then nullify<sup>106</sup> the Law through faith?
- E2 The adamant disclaimer: May it never be!
- E3 The truth of the matter – declaring people righteous by virtue of their faith in Christ actually establishes the purpose of the Mosaic Law: On the contrary, we establish

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<sup>105</sup> Rom. 3:30 - circumcised ... and ... uncircumcised through faith: God declares Jewish people as righteous provided they trust in the Messiah, Jesus, and God declares Gentiles as righteous provided they trust in the Messiah, Jesus. In that sense, God is an “affirmative action” Savior, but not in the sense of the American “Civil Rights” movement. By that I mean that God is “affirmative action” in that He reaches out both to Jewish people and to Gentiles with salvation. But He is unlike the “Civil Rights” movement in that when He saves humans from eternal destruction (1) He does not favor one race above another; (2) He doesn’t save people on the basis of any particular human merit (such as skin color or race); (3) He most certainly does not ignore standards of justice when He saves people – the Death Penalty must be paid. And in the vast storehouse of God’s mercy, God pays the Death Penalty Himself in the Person of His own Son; (4) There is no human-based percentage or quota of people whom God saves. In fact, God deliberately chooses whom He will save for reasons known only to Him. These reasons are not based on supposed human merit, for no one merits salvation. To the contrary, we all merit the Lake of Fire. See the Glossary entry on [Election](#).

<sup>106</sup> Rom. 3:31 - nullify the Law through faith: Paul uses the verb *katargeō* ([2673](#)), which means “to render inoperative.” Paul is wondering aloud if the principle of justification by faith renders the Law inoperative. Paul answers the question with, “May it never be!” To the contrary, the principle of justification by faith was a major purpose for which the Law was instituted. The Law was never meant to declare someone righteous. It was meant to provide knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7). It was given to prove to man it was impossible for him to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law – in fact he never could keep the Law perfectly. One major purpose of the Law was to reveal to man that he was sinful, and that he could not keep the Law, and that, consequently he could never be saved by keeping the Law (Rom. 3:20); nor could he be sanctified by keeping the Law (Rom. 7:14-25). That inability shut man up to helpless dependence on the mercy of God. And God, in His mercy, provided Jesus the Messiah as His Mercy Seat, accessed not by works, but by faith. In that sense, the principle of justification by faith establishes the purpose of the Law.

On the other hand, as Paul would elsewhere reveal, the cross of Christ, and the faith required to access it, rendered the Law inoperative as a means of obtaining righteousness (Rom. 7:1-6; 8:2; Eph. 2:15). That reality, however, does not overturn the fact that, for nearly 1500 years, the Law existed as a mechanism to direct people seeking salvation to the refuge of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). So the Law fulfilled its purpose perfectly – it was a schoolmaster designed to lead people to Christ (Gal. 3:24).

When Paul stated that Christ was the end (*teleios*, [5056](#)), or purpose of the Law (Rom. 10:4), he meant that the purpose of the Law was to lead us to Christ (Gal. 3:24). Saved Jews (Jews who place their trust in Jesus as the Jewish King) are not under an obligation to continue to live by the Law. Nor are saved Gentiles (non-Jewish people who have placed their trust in Jesus as the Jewish King and their own King) under an obligation to continue to live by the Law. If either Messianic Jews or Messianic Gentiles choose voluntarily to live under the Law, that is their prerogative. But neither is obligated to do so. The Bible makes it clear that we have died to the Law by virtue of our identification with Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection. Paul makes that abundantly clear in Romans 6:1-19; 7:1-6; 8:2. Consequently, Christians who believe they are bound to continue to live by the Law are not to condemn those Christians who do not believe they are bound to live by the Law. Moreover, those Christians who do not believe they are bound to live by the Law are not to hold with contempt those Christians who do believe they are bound to live by the Law (Rom. 14:1-23).

At the Jerusalem Council, Peter admitted that Jewish people have never been able to keep the Law (Acts 15:10). The decision of the Jerusalem Council was not to require saved Gentiles to observe the Law, but rather to instruct them to abstain from four things that were apparently problematic to Jewish people, namely, from things contaminated by idols, from fornication, from that which is strangled, and from blood (Acts 15:19-22).

the Law.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Rom. 3:31 - we establish the Law: “Establish” is the word *histēmi* ([2476](#)), occurring here in the present tense (durative action). Faith does not render the Law inoperative, but rather continually establishes or fulfills the Law in this sense: God gave the Law to Israel in order to prove, in a working laboratory, that no one, whether Jew or Gentile, was able to keep it. That whole process was designed to shut man up to faith in Jesus as the Sacrificial King, God’s ultimate provision for declaring man righteous. In that sense, the Law consistently finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

Paul does not mean, as D. Thomas Lancaster of First Fruits of Zion argues in his book, *Restoration: Returning the Tora of God to the Disciples of Jesus* (First Fruits of Zion, 2005, 193 pp.), that Messianic Jews and Messianic Gentiles are obligated to keep the Law as a way of life now. That cannot be true, as is stated in the previous footnote. It is impossible to keep the Law perfectly, and whoever offends in one point is guilty of all (James 2:10). Ariel Ministries takes a more balanced approach, that Messianic Jews and Gentiles may opt to observe aspects of the Law if they choose to. But it should be made clear that no one can keep the Law perfectly. That is because there is no central sanctuary in Jerusalem. If one takes the position he is obligated to keep the Law, then he is guilty of the whole Law because he has failed in the matter of sacrifices.

The Scriptures are clear that one day, sacrifices will again be offered at the Temple in Jerusalem. It should be understood that the sacrifices to be offered in that Millennial Temple (Ezek. 40-46) by the Levitical priests who are sons of Zadok (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11) will be memorial, not efficacious. The same is true of the bread and the wine of which we presently partake in our communion services in this Church Age – they are memorial in nature, not efficacious (Luke 22:19).



**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 Abraham as an appropriate example 4:1-3

E1 Paul's use of Abraham as an example: {1} What then shall we say that Abraham,<sup>108</sup> our forefather according to the flesh,<sup>109</sup> has found? 4:1

E2 Justification by works implies grounds for boasting 4:2

G1 The hypothetical supposition – that Abraham was declared righteous by virtue of his works: {2} For if Abraham was justified by works,

G2 In that case Abraham has the right to boast: he has something to boast about,<sup>110</sup>

G3 That is, to boast before man, but not before God: but not before God.

E3 But the record states justification by faith 4:3

G1 The appeal to Scripture: {3} For what does the Scripture say?

G2 The quotation of Genesis 15:6: "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."<sup>111</sup>


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<sup>108</sup> Rom. 4:1 - Abraham: Paul begins a lengthy discussion of Abraham. Paul uses Abraham as a clear-cut example of someone who was justified (declared by God to be righteous) by faith rather than by works. This is especially significant in view of the fact that Abraham was declared righteous by virtue of his faith before circumcision was instituted (Rom. 4:9-12) and, of course, before the Law was given (Rom. 4:13-16). These are exceedingly important points that Paul makes.

<sup>109</sup> Rom. 4:1 - our forefather according to the flesh: Paul is speaking as a Jew, and includes those among his audience who are Jewish when he designates Abraham as "our forefather according to the flesh."

<sup>110</sup> Rom. 4:2 - he has something to boast about: If any is declared righteous on account of his good works, he has grounds for boasting, at least among fellow humans, if not before God. But since, in the Counsel of God, no one is ever declared righteous on account of his deeds, there is no grounds for boasting whatever. In fact, it is safe to say that there will be no braggarts inhabiting New Earth and New Jerusalem for eternity. Only those who are grateful for God's condescension to declare them righteous on the grounds that they have believed whatever God asked them to believe.

<sup>111</sup> Rom. 4:3 - Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness: Paul quotes from Genesis 15:6. In this most remarkable account (Gen. 15:1-6), which takes place after Abram had rescued his nephew Lot from raiders, yet had kept nothing of the plunder that he had confiscated from the raiders for himself, Yahweh spoke to Abram. He assured him that He would be a shield to Abram, and that his reward would be very great. Abram accepted this assurance but asked for some specifics. He asked, in effect, "How will my reward be very great if, in fact, I have no biological heir, but Eliezer of [Damascus](#) (evidently his most trusted slave) is slated to be my heir?" Yahweh replied that one born from his own body was to be his heir. To illustrate, Yahweh took Abram outside and

- 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
      - H 1 Condition assumed – in regard to the one working: {4} Now to the one who works,
      - H 2 His wage is not reckoned according to grace: his wage is not credited as a favor,
      - H 3 But according to debt: but as what is due.
    - G2 Believing implies grace 4:5
      - H 1 Condition assumed –but in regard to the one not working: {5} But to the one who does not work,
      - H 2 But believing upon the one declaring as righteous the ungodly: but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly,
      - H 3 The gracious conclusion – his faith is reckoned as righteousness! his faith is credited as righteousness,
  - E2 The grace principle documented 4:6-8
    - G1 The gracious imputation of righteousness 4:6
      - H 1 The documentation: {6} just as David also speaks
      - H 2 The Divine blessing: of the blessing on the man to whom

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asked him to gaze into the heavens. He said, “If you can count the stars in the heavens, you will be able to count your descendants!” In response to this graphic promise, the text states simply, “Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6).

There are some who desperately seek to place Jesus as the object of faith in every event in the Old Testament. But such is not the case here. What is true is that God promised Abram a great many descendants. Abram believed God. God counted Abram as righteous.

It is true that man has always been saved by grace through faith. But it is not true that the content of that faith has always been Jesus. The content of the faith is described by the context of each account. But what has always been true is that man has been saved by grace through faith. Man has always been saved by believing whatever God has said. In this era, we are told that we must place our trust in God’s Son, Jesus. That is all we have to do to be saved. As Paul put it so plainly to the Philippian jailer, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household” (Acts 16:31) The more we mature in our faith, the more, of course, we understand about Jesus. We understand that He is the Messiah, God’s anointed King. We understand that He is God incarnate. We understand that God’s eternal Logos, His Son, became flesh to die to pay for our sins and was resurrected on the third day to secure our justification and our resurrection. But all that is required is that we place our trust in Jesus (John 3:16). Even a child can do that. I did so myself at the age of four years. I didn’t understand much about Jesus, but I did place my trust in Him.

- H 3 The gracious credit of righteousness: God credits righteousness
- H 4 The absence of works: apart from works:
- G2 The gracious non-imputation of sin 4:7-8
  - H 1 The blessedness of forgiveness: {7}  
“BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN,”<sup>112</sup>
  - H 2 The blessings of atonement: AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.<sup>113</sup>
  - H 3 The blessings of non-imputation: {8}  
“BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”<sup>114</sup>

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

- D1 The question of the availability of justification to the uncircumcised 4:9
  - E1 The question of circumcision (and uncircumcision) in relation to imputation: {9} Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also?<sup>115</sup>
  - E2 The quotation in question: For we say, “FAITH WAS

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<sup>112</sup> Rom. 4:7-8 - Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, etc.: The Apostle Paul, in these two verses, quotes from Psalm 32:1-2a. He does so to document from Scripture the theological truth that God is justified in crediting the person who believes with righteous instead of crediting righteousness to the person who performs good works. To Paul, to document a NT truth from OT Scripture was to establish its accuracy with absolute certainty. Paul had an extremely high view of Scripture, one which a great many Bible scholars of today would do well to emulate!

<sup>113</sup> Rom. 4:7 - covered: I have chosen the word “atonement” to reflect the Hebrew word in Psalm 32:1, which is *kasah* (3680), and which literally means “covered.” The verb “make atonement” (as in Leviticus 17:11) is actually *kaphar* (3722). But both verbs, when used in the context of a sin or offense, have to do with “covering.” Animal blood can “cover” a human sin, but never actually provide forgiveness. (How can animals pay for human sin?) That real forgiveness awaited the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, which alone could pay for human sin.

<sup>114</sup> Rom. 4:8 - will not take into account: In Psalm 32:2a, the NASB translation of the Hebrew verb *chashab* (2803) is actually “impute,” as in “does not impute iniquity.” The Greek word Paul used in Rom. 4:8, as in (not) “take into account” is *logidzomai* (3049), and which means to *account*, to *reckon*, or to *consider* (NASHAGD).

<sup>115</sup> Rom. 4:9 - Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? Paul is asking, “Is the blessing of being declared righteous (being justified) – because of one’s faith in Jesus – limited to a certain group of people in its application? Is it limited only to observant Israelites (who have been circumcised) and proselyte Gentiles (who have joined Judaism and have been circumcised)? And are Gentiles who believe in Jesus as their Messiah, but have never been circumcised, thus excluded from the blessing of justification?” In reality, Paul has already answered that question in Romans 3:30, where he stated, “since indeed God will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.” The answer to Paul’s proposed question is resounding: God extends the blessing of justification (being declared righteous) to everyone who believes, regardless if he has been circumcised or if he remains uncircumcised!



CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”<sup>116</sup>

D2 The timing of Abraham's circumcision in relation to his justification – he was justified while he was uncircumcised! 4:10

E1 The question asked: {10} How then was it credited?

G1 The condition of circumcision: While he was circumcised,

G2 The condition of uncircumcision: or uncircumcised?

E2 The answer given

G1 Not circumcision: Not while circumcised,

G2 But uncircumcision: but while uncircumcised;<sup>117</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Rom. 4:9 - faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness: Once again, Paul is quoting from Genesis 15:6.

<sup>117</sup> Rom. 4:10 - Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised: Paul is arguing from history. God declared Abraham as righteous by virtue of his faith in God's "star promise" in Genesis 15:6. Abram was at that time uncircumcised. God did not impose circumcision as a sign upon Abraham and all the males of his household until Genesis 17. As we observe (see the footnote on Rom. 4:11), God required circumcision more than fourteen years after he had already credited Abram with righteousness because of his faith. So Paul is accurately stating the historical sequence of events – Abraham was declared righteous because of his faith while he was uncircumcised. The clear implication, then, is that one does not have to become circumcised in order to be declared righteous because of his faith in Jesus! What a blessing!

Paul discusses the topic that one does not have to be *circumcised* in order to be blessed with salvation by grace through faith in Romans 4:9-12. He next discusses the topic that one does not need to *observe the Law of Moses* in order to inherit the world in Romans 4:13-16. In Romans 4:16-18 Paul discusses the fact that Abraham is the spiritual father of all of us who believe.

But we must not disregard the fact that, even while discussing Abraham's "spiritual fatherhood" of those who believe, Paul does not ignore that Abraham was the *physical father* of certain descendants. This can be seen in Paul's statement that God "gives life to the dead" (Rom. 4:17); in his mention that Abraham's body was "as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old" (Rom. 4:19); and in his description of "the deadness of Sarah's womb" (Rom. 4:19). If Abraham, through Sarah, had not given physical birth to a physical descendant, Isaac, and if Isaac had not had a physical descendant, Jacob, and if Jacob had not had twelve physical sons, the sons of Israel, and if there were no Israelis alive today to inherit a physical piece of real estate, the land of Israel, God's promises would have been compromised, and His integrity shattered.

Here is the truth. If God had planned, all along, that only the spiritual descendants of Abraham were what mattered, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve sons of Israel need never have been born. Sarah and Abraham as a couple could just as well have remained infertile and childless. To ignore Abraham's physical seed, the Jews, and to focus solely on the spiritual seed of Abraham, is not only unbiblical, it amounts to theological suicide.

Notice the unbiblical conclusions of a [proponent of Covenant Theology](#), who denies that his interpretive framework teaches "Replacement Theology":

[Covenant Theology](#) does not see a sharp distinction between Israel and the Church. Israel constituted the people of the God in the OT, and the Church (which is made up of Jew and Gentile) constitutes the people of God in the NT; both just make up one people of God (Ephesians 2:11-20). The Church doesn't replace Israel; the Church is Israel and Israel is the Church (Galatians 6:16). All people who exercise the same faith as Abraham are part of the covenant people of God (Galatians 3:25-29).

Notice his blurring of Israel and the Church: "the Church is Israel and Israel is the Church (Galatians 6:16)." This statement defies the clear teaching of the OT and the NT. Paul's phrase "the Israel of God" in Gal. 6:16 is not a reference to the Church. Nowhere in the NT does "Israel" refer to the Church. Here (in Gal. 6:16) it is a reference to believing Israelis, the physical descendants of Jacob who are also believers in Jesus. These Messianic Jews are citizens of two different entities – they are members of the Church, and they are citizens of believing Israel. They have dual citizenship.

The Church will endure throughout eternity as the Bride of Christ. But the land of Israel will also endure in

- D3 The significance of Abraham's circumcision: a sign, not a means of justification (cf. Gen. 17:11) 4:11a
- E1 Abraham's receipt of circumcision: {11} and he received the sign of circumcision,
- E2 After his being reckoned by God as righteous on account of his faith: a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised,<sup>118</sup>
- D4 The results of Abraham's circumcision 4:11b-12
- E1 He is father of all who believe, though uncircumcised 4:11b
- G1 His father-hood of uncircumcised believers: so that he might be the father of all who believe<sup>119</sup> without

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perpetuity, as well as will the believing physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Both the Church and redeemed Israel will co-exist side by side in New Jerusalem. Redeemed Gentiles who are neither part of the Church nor part of Israel will inhabit New Earth throughout eternity (Rev. 21:1 - 22:5). See the Glossary Entry on [Replacement Theology](#). Also see the Glossary Entry on [New Jerusalem](#).

<sup>118</sup> Rom. 4:11 - the faith which he had while uncircumcised: Abraham believed God's promise about how many descendants he would have many years prior to his being circumcised. The time markers in Abraham's life are as follows: He was 75 when he departed from Haran (Gen. 12:4); 85 when he took Hagar as a surrogate mother for his anticipated heir (Gen. 16:3); 86 when Hagar bore Ishmael (Gen. 16:16); 99 when Yahweh imposed circumcision as a sign of the covenant He had made with Abram (Gen. 17:1). So Yahweh's promise that Abram would have as many descendants as the stars of the night heavens was issued at an indeterminate time somewhere between his being 75 and 85. In other words Abram's faith in Yahweh's "star promise" (Gen. 15:6) took place in excess of 14 years prior to Yahweh's command of circumcision.

<sup>119</sup> Rom. 4:11 - father of all who believe, though uncircumcised: One feature of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) was **universal** blessing! – Gen. 12:1-3 – “in you all the families of the earth will be blessed”; 22:18 – “in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”! This promise was extended to Isaac (Gen. 26:4) and to Jacob (Gen. 28:14). So there is a sense in which Abraham is the (spiritual, not physical) father of all who believe in Jesus. Paul expanded this theme in Rom. 4:16-25; Gal. 3:7. In fact, Paul concluded, in Gal. 3:29, “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise.”

Sadly, a great many Bible scholars have taken what Paul has said and used it as a license to employ a non-literal hermeneutic (method of interpreting the Bible) in many great OT and NT prophetic passages. I am speaking of passages which teach unequivocally a glorious future for the saved nation of Israel. These scholars, with their faulty, non-literal hermeneutic, have concluded that there is no future for the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who believe in Jesus as their Messiah *as part of the nation of Israel*. These scholars have erroneously absorbed all believing Israeli peoples solely under the banner of the Church. Thus, they mistakenly deny the literal fulfillment of scores of passages which teach a glorious future for the physical descendants of Abraham who believe in Jesus as their Messiah. I include, for example, such great passages as **Genesis** 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:5-21; 17:1-8, 15-16; 18:10, 18-19; 22:15-18; 24:60; 25:23; 26:1-5, 12-14, 23-25; 27:27-29; 28:3-4, 13-15; **2 Samuel** 7:8-16; **Psalms** 2; 18:50; 47; 48; 53:6; 67; 68; 72; 89:1-4; 89:20-37; 93; 96; 97; 98; 99; 110; 132; 149; **Isaiah** 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; 19:18-25; 24:14-16, 23; 25:1-12; 26:1-9; 27:6, 9, 12-13; 32:1-6, 15-20; 35:1-10; 40:1-11; 41:8-16, 17b-20; 42:1, 4; 43:1-7; 44:3-5, 21-23; 46:3-4, 13; 49:6-26; 51:3, 6b, 8b, 11; 52:1-2, 7-13; 54:1-17; 55:3-5, 13-13; 56:1-8; 57:13b-16, 18-19; 58:8-9a, 10b-12; 59:15b-21; 60:1-22; 61:2-11; 62:1-12; 65:8-10, 16-25; 66:10-24; **Jeremiah** 3:14-18; 30:8-11, 17-22; 31:1-14, 20-40; 33:14-26; 51:19-23; **Ezekiel** 20:33-44; 34:11-31; 36:6-15, 22-38; 37; 40-48; **Daniel** 2:44; 7:13-14; **Hosea** 14:4-7; **Joel** 2:18-29; 3:17-21; **Amos** 9:11-15; **Obadiah** 1:17, 19-21; **Micah** 4:1-8; 5:2b, 3b-5a, 7-9; **Zephaniah** 3:9-20; **Zechariah** 2:1-13; 3:8-10; 6:12-13; 8:1-8, 11-13, 20-23; 10:3b-12; 12:10-13:1, 9b; 14:4, 8-11, 16-21; **Malachi** 3:1-4, 17-18; 4:1-3; **Matthew** 19:28; 25:31-46; 26:26-29; **Luke** 1:32-33; **Acts** 1:6-11; **Romans** 9:1-11:36; **Revelation** 19:11-20:6. This unbiblical view of Israel is called “[Supersessionism](#),” or “[Replacement Theology](#).”

For more on the topic, go to the Glossary Entry on [Replacement Theology](#).

For the opposing view, that the Church *has* superseded Israel, see “[An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel](#).” [WordExplain](#) disagrees profoundly with parts of this document.

being circumcised,

G2 The imputation of righteousness: that righteousness might be credited to them,

E2 He is father of all who, being circumcised, also **believe** 4:12

G1 His father-hood of those circumcised: {12} and the father of circumcision

G2 The requisition not only of circumcision: to those who not only are of the circumcision,

G3 But also of faith: but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham <sup>120</sup> which he had while uncircumcised.

### 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

G1 The targets of the promise

H 1 Abraham: {13} For the promise to Abraham

H 2 Abraham's descendant: or to his descendants<sup>121</sup>

G2 The content of the promise: that he would be heir of the world

G3 The terms of the promise

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<sup>120</sup> Rom. 4:12 - follow in the steps of ... Abraham: Though most Jewish people today decisively reject Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah, one day that will change dramatically. Zechariah speaks of a time in the future when Jewish people will look on Him whom they have pierced and will mourn for Him (Zech. 12:10-13:1). The returning Messiah will weed out all rebels from Israel who reject Him. They will not enter the land. But ultimately the whole house of Israel will serve God in the land of Israel (Ezek. 20:33-44; Rom. 11:26)!

<sup>121</sup> Rom. 4:13 - descendants: The Greek word is *sperma* (4690) and it appears here in singular number, as it does again in Rom. 4:16 and Rom. 4:18. Literally, the word means "seed." However, even though Paul used "seed" in the singular, it has a corporate, plural connotation. This can be seen in Paul's description of part of the seed of Abraham as being "the ones" (plural) along with "heirs" (also plural). The one specific descendant Paul had in mind is Jesus of Nazareth. It is through Jesus, the Ultimate Seed of Abraham, that all the world would be blessed. Through faith in Jesus, all spiritual descendants of Abraham will inherit the world. But the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant are never nullified. Those who inherit the land of Canaan, or Israel, must be not only spiritual descendants of Abraham but also physical descendants.

- H 1 Negatively: was not through the Law, <sup>122</sup>
- H 2 Positively: but through the righteousness of faith.
- E2 The negative effect of hypothesized dependence 4:14
  - G1 Israel's faith would be emptied 4:14a
    - H 1 Legal heredity: {14} For if those who are of the Law are heirs,
    - H 2 Nullification of faith: faith is made void
  - G2 God's promise would be rendered inoperative: and the promise is nullified; <sup>123</sup> 4:14b
- E3 The reason for the negative effect - Law has to do with wrath against Law-breakers 4:15
  - G1 The function of the Law: {15} for the Law brings about wrath, <sup>124</sup>
  - G2 The non-existence of law: but where there is no law,

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<sup>122</sup> Rom. 4:13 - not through the Law: The Greek text reads literally as follows: "For not through Law (*nomos*, [3551](#)) the promise to Abraham or to his seed the heir him to be of world (*kosmos*, [2889](#)), but through righteousness of faith." This is Paul's topic sentence for this paragraph (4:13-16). The contrasting words in Romans 4:13-16 are Law and faith. Paul's point: It is not through Law, but through faith that Abraham and his heirs will inherit the world. God's promise to Abraham and his seed that they would inherit the world was made hundreds of years before Israel received the Law at Sinai. (In chapter 4 Paul uses *nomos* ([3551](#)) 5X – in vv. 13, 14, 15, 15, and 16. For more comments on *nomos* ([3551](#)) see Romans 2:12 and 3:19.)

The promise to Abraham that he would inherit the world is evidently related to his being, through his seed, a blessing to "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18) (see John MacArthur, *New Testament Commentary*, Romans; see also John A. Witmer, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Romans.) It is true that Abraham, through his seed, would have a beneficent influence on the world. Much, but not all, of that blessing has to do with the Messiah who would bless the world. But Paul's statement, "heir of the world," goes far beyond being merely a beneficent influence. "Heir of the world" means possessing the world, controlling the world. It was no accident that Jesus said, "Blessed are the gentle (or humble, meek), for they shall inherit the earth" (*gē*, 1093) (Matt. 5:5).

The believing nation of Israel will inherit the world during the Millennium (Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; 49:6-26; 56:6-8; 59:17-19; 60:1-22; 61:5-6; 62:1-2, 6-12; 66:12, 18-22). But all who are of the faith of Abraham are the spiritual descendants of Abraham. These will also inherit the world (Rom. 4:16-17; 11:12). The world they will inherit is, for all practical purposes, New Earth (Rev. 21:24-26; 22:1-5).

<sup>123</sup> Rom. 4:14 - the promise is nullified: The word "nullified" is *katargeō* ([2673](#)). If "those who are of the Law are heirs" God's promise to Abraham and to his seed is rendered inoperative. It is null and void. Paul had in mind the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), made with Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. The untenable position, that Israel's failure to keep the Law has nullified the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is precisely the erroneous position held by amillennialism and covenant theology. It is a theologically incorrect position, as Paul here demonstrates. Abraham, through his greatest seed, Jesus the Messiah, will indeed inherit the world, and so will all believing Jewish people. This will take place during the [Millennium](#) and also during the eternal state.

<sup>124</sup> Rom. 4:15 - for the Law brings about wrath: The purpose of the Law (*nomos*, [3551](#)) was never salvatory or redemptive. Rather, the Law was given as a fulcrum for the exhibition of God's wrath against sin. The reason? Man in his fallen condition can never keep the Law. The Law was given to show the futility of human effort and ultimately, and to shut us up to Christ, who alone can provide redemption, forgiveness, and the power for Godly living (Gal. 3:24-25).

- G3 The non-existence of violation: there also is no violation.
- 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
    - G1 The promise is accessed by faith: {16} For this reason *it is* by faith,
    - G2 Which operates on the principle of grace: in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace,<sup>125</sup>
    - G3 Providing a guarantee to all Abraham's descendants: so that the promise will be guaranteed<sup>126</sup> to all the descendants,
  - E2 So the promise could extend to all Abraham's seed who believe 4:16b
    - G1 Both to Israelis: not only to those who are of the Law,
    - G2 And to Gentiles who believed as did Abraham: but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham,
    - G3 For Abraham is the father of all who believe: who is the father of us all,<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Rom. 4:16 - grace: Grace (*charis*, [5485](#)) is an oft-found theme in Romans. *Charis*, here referring to God's unmerited favor, appears 24X in Romans, more than in any other book of the NT. (It appears 18X in 2 Corinthians and 17X in Acts, for second and third places.) Faith and grace are inseparable. If you trust, you can access God's grace. On the other hand, works go hand in hand with a sense of entitlement and braggadocio. If I can earn my way into God's good favor, then I am entitled to it, and I have grounds for boasting (Rom. 4:2; Eph. 2:8-9). That, of course, can never be the case, for man is an inveterate sinner. No amount of good works can undo the fatal effects of sin (Rom. 3:23; 6:23a).

<sup>126</sup> Rom. 4:16 - guaranteed: *bebaios* ([949](#)), an adjective, is used 8X in the Greek NT (UBS 4). In the NASB it is used 9X, translated variously, firm (2X), certain (1X), firmly grounded (1X), guaranteed (1X), more sure (1X), steadfast (1X), unalterable (1X), valid (1X). The disparity between 8X (UBS 4) and 9X (NASB) comes about because in Heb. 3:6 NASB follows the later Textus Receptus, which includes a variant of *bebaios* in Heb. 3:6, while in the same passage the UBS 4 follows earlier MSS, including p<sup>13,46</sup>, which do not include *bebaios*.

The main idea behind *bebaios* in Rom. 4:16 is that God's promise to Abraham's seed is reliable, certain, sure, and thus (NASB) – guaranteed. It should be noted that only grace can be guaranteed, because grace depends on God's good character, not upon fallen man's ability to obey! By way of application, if our salvation depends upon redeemed, but fallen, man's ability to obey, not one of us can stay saved! If, however, our salvation depends on God's grace to all who believe, then salvation can be guaranteed to all who believe. And that latter scenario certainly fits not only this Scripture, but many others! Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9. And in view of that, we perform good works which God has planned from eternity past (Eph. 2:10).

<sup>127</sup> Rom. 4:16 - who is the father of us all: Again, Paul's statement should be taken in the sense that Abraham is the spiritual (but not physical) father of all who believe in Jesus. But that understanding cannot be misconstrued to maintain that the Church has either superseded or replaced Israel. God still has plans for the nation of Israel that incorporate (1) a specific piece of real estate (the land of Israel), (2) a specific group of physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – those who also believe in Messiah Jesus, and (3) a physical, material, and spiritual



D3 God's promise to Abraham had to be believed 4:17-25E1 The **object** of Abraham's faith 4:17

G1 The content of God's promise to Abraham: {17} (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU")<sup>128</sup> 4:17a

G2 The object of Abraham's faith: in the presence of Him whom he believed, 4:17b

G3 The power of God who made the promise 4:17c

H 1 Resurrecting the dead: *even* God, who gives life to the dead<sup>129</sup>

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blessing to the nations of the earth through Jesus that will include, on this present earth, and, I believe, on [New Earth](#), a global regime of peace and prosperity with Israel as the leader of all nations.

Thus, it is not true that there is only one people of God, and that all other distinctions have been obliterated, subsumed under the Church. The Church is not "spiritual Israel." The Church, in the eternal plan of God, is but one sector of the people of God. People among Old Testament nations and post-Church nations who are believers also have an eternal part in God's eternal plan. And believing Israel has an eternal part in God's eternal plan. And of course, the Church has an eternal part in God's eternal plan. This can be most easily seen in John's representation of [New Jerusalem](#) and [New Earth](#) in Revelation 21-22.

Evidently [New Jerusalem](#) is the capital city of redeemed Israel throughout eternity future. Israel is represented in [New Jerusalem](#) by virtue of the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel written on the twelve gates of the city (Rev. 21:12). It should also be recognized that the twelve apostles of the Lamb, whose names appear on the twelve foundation stones (Rev. 21:14), are nothing if not Jewish. Furthermore, the very name of the Capital City – [New Jerusalem](#) – is distinctively Jewish. The city is not named New York or New Delhi, for example, but [New Jerusalem](#). Nor is it named Al Quds. You can't get more Jewish than "[New Jerusalem](#)"!

Evidently [New Jerusalem](#) is also the capital city of the Church, the Bride of Christ, throughout eternity future. The Church is represented in [New Jerusalem](#) by virtue of the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb inscribed on the twelve foundation stones of the city (Rev. 21:14). It should be no surprise that the Church, the Bride of Christ, has special access to and a place of prominence in [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17).

Evidently redeemed Pre-Church and Post-Church nations live on [New Earth](#), and have ready access to the capital city, [New Jerusalem](#), whose gates are open around the clock (Isa. 60:11; Rev. 21:25; 22:14-15). It seems that [New Jerusalem](#), in all its luminous glory, is a satellite city of enormous proportions that orbits [New Earth](#) and replaces the light of the sun. Is it a geo-synchronous orbit, in which the city is forever positioned above the land of Israel on [New Earth](#)? Or is it more like our present moon, which has a traveling orbit? We do not presently know. But we do know that the nations who are not part of the Church will live on [New Earth](#). They will "walk" (live and work) by the light of the celestial city (Rev. 21:24). "The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it" (i.e. [New Jerusalem](#) – Rev. 21:24; cf. Ps. 72:8-17; Isa. 60:1-18; 61:3-11). They will have round-the-clock access to the city, for its gates will never be closed (Rev. 21:25). "[A]nd they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it" (Rev. 21:26). Furthermore, these among the redeemed of the nations living on [New Earth](#) will have ready access to the Tree of Life and its beneficent foliage (Rev. 22:2, 14-15).

So there is not one people of God throughout all of time. God has always worked with different peoples in different ways at different times. He will continue to do that throughout eternity.

I should mention this, that Messianic Jews of today have "dual citizenship." They are an integral part of the Church, but they also remain an integral part of the believing "Remnant" of Israel (Rom. 9:27; 11:5).

<sup>128</sup> Rom. 4:17 - a father of many nations have I made you: A quotation of Gen. 17:5. Abraham is the spiritual father of all who believe. But that does not invalidate his role as the physical forbear of Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve sons of Jacob. For the physical descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob – those descendants who believe – there is a glorious future, first, in the Millennium; second, in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#).

<sup>129</sup> Rom. 4:17 - gives life to the dead: In context, a reference to God's giving life to Sarah's dead womb and Abraham's all-but-dead body (Rom. 4:19). There is, however, a deeper application. God gave life to Jesus' dead body, and He will give life to our dead bodies to live forever with Him! For more on the topic of resurrection, see "[When Will the Resurrection Take Place?](#)"

- H 2 Creating out of nothing: and calls into being that which does not exist.<sup>130</sup>
- E2 The **obstacles** to Abraham's faith 4:18-19
  - G1 The hopelessness of the situation 4:18
    - H 1 The hopelessness of his faith: {18} In hope against hope he believed,
    - H 2 The goal of his faith: so that he might become a father of many nations
    - H 3 The basis of his faith – the promise of God: according to that which had been spoken, “SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE.”<sup>131</sup>
  - G2 The deadness of Abraham's body 4:19a
    - H 1 The tenacity of his faith: {19} Without becoming weak in faith
    - H 2 His awareness of his own body: he contemplated his own body,
    - H 3 The deadness of his body: now as good as dead
    - H 4 His approximate age: since he was about a hundred years old,
  - G3 The deadness of Sarah's womb: and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 4:19b
- E3 The **tenacity** of Abraham's faith 4:20-21
  - G1 He did not discriminate in unbelief against God's promise 4:20a
    - H 1 His focus on God's promise: {20} yet, with respect to the promise of God,
    - H 2 His unwavering faith: he did not waver in unbelief

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<sup>130</sup> Rom. 4:17 - calls into being that which does not exist: Perhaps a reference to God's creation of the heavens and earth *ex nihilo* – out of nothing.

<sup>131</sup> Rom. 4:18 - so shall your descendants be: Paul once again quotes a fragment of Genesis 15:6.

- G2 He believed in the person of God 4:20b
  - H 1 His increasing faith: but grew strong in faith,<sup>132</sup>
  - H 2 His crediting God: giving glory to God,
- G3 He believed in the promise of God 4:21
  - H 1 The promise of God: {21} and being fully assured that what God had promised,
  - H 2 The performance of God: He was able also to perform.
- E4 The results of Abraham's faith 4:22-25
  - G1 Abraham was justified: {22} Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.<sup>133</sup> 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
      - J 1 Not merely for Abraham's sake: {23} Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him,
      - J 2 But also for the sake of subsequent believers: {24} but for our sake also,<sup>134</sup> to whom it will be credited,
    - H 2 The focus of faith 4:24b-25
      - J 1 God, who resurrected Jesus: as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 4:24c
      - J 2 Jesus, who died a substitutionary death: {25} *He* who was delivered

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<sup>132</sup> Rom. 4:20 - grew strong in faith: This should be the mark of a believer. As life progresses, he grows stronger in faith.

<sup>133</sup> Rom. 4:22 - it was also credited to him as righteousness: Once again Paul quotes from Genesis 15:6.

<sup>134</sup> Rom. 4:23 - but for our sake also: The truth that, because Abraham believed God's promise, God credited his faith as righteousness, was not stated in Genesis 15:6 for Abraham's benefit alone. It is a timeless truth. When people believe God, he credits their faith as righteousness. The content of faith may change, but never the necessity of faith. Abraham believed in God's promise that he would have as many descendants as the stars of the heavens. I call that God's "Star Promise." We today are not asked to believe in the "Star Promise" for ourselves. Rather, we are asked to believe in what I call the "Gospel Promise." What promise is that? It is the promise that, if we place our trust in Jesus, God will forgive us our sins and give us eternal life. That promise is contained in simple form in such passages as John 1:12; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 6:40; 11:25-26; Acts 13:38-39; 16:31; 1 Cor. 15:1-8.



over because of our transgressions,  
<sup>135</sup> 4:25a

J 3 Jesus, whose resurrection  
 accomplished our justification: and  
 was raised because of our  
 justification. 4:25b

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

#### C 1 Peaceful relationship with God 5:1

D1 The justified condition: {1} Therefore, having been justified by  
 faith,<sup>136</sup>

D2 The primary benefit: we have peace with God<sup>137</sup> through our Lord  
 Jesus Christ,

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<sup>135</sup> Rom. 4:25 - because of our transgressions: “because of” translates the preposition *dia* (1223), here probably used in its normal, retrospective sense. So the likely meaning is that Jesus “was delivered over (crucified) ‘because of’ or ‘on account of’ our transgressions...” *Dia* occurs twice in this verse. [Thomas Constable](#) argues that the second occurrence of *dia* is to be taken in a prospective sense. In that case, the second member of the verse would be translated, “and was raised ‘with a view to’ or ‘in order to achieve’ our justification.” If [Constable](#) is correct, he would not agree with the NASB’s translation of the last half of v. 25 nor with the NIV’s translation of the first half. NIV takes both occurrences of *dia* in the prospective sense “for,” or “anticipating,” while NASB translates them both in the more typical, retrospective sense, “because of.”

The difficulty with the NASB’s translation is this: In what sense was Jesus raised because we had already been justified? We could not be justified until after Jesus had been raised. Christ’s resurrectionless death would have been utterly futile, as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.

The difficulty with the NIV’s translation is this: In what sense could Jesus’ crucifixion anticipate future sins, when the human race had already been sinning for thousands of years. Furthermore, the prospective translation of *dia* is rarer than the more typical, retrospective sense.

In short, [Constable’s](#) compromise view is probably the best, though not without problems of its own.

<sup>136</sup> Rom. 5:1 - having been justified by faith: Paul here assumes the reality of all believers in Christ having been declared righteous before God on account of their faith. Now he proceeds to list the incredible benefits of standing in this marvelous condition!

<sup>137</sup> Rom. 5:1 - peace with God: The first benefit of being declared righteous is that the believer in Jesus enters into a state of peace with God. In subsequent verses in this chapter, Paul describes the unjustified persons as being “helpless” (5:6), “ungodly” (5:6), “sinners” (5:8), deserving of “the wrath of God” (5:9), and even “enemies” of God (5:10)! Too often we humans have an exalted view of ourselves. But, as Paul thundered in Romans 3, “There is none righteous, not even one” (3:10); “There is none who seeks for God” (3:11); “There is none who does good, there is not even one” (3:12); “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (3:18). In short, they are enemies of God. Men in their fallen state are “dead” in their “trespasses and sin” (Eph. 2:1), dominated by the world, blinded and influenced by Satan (Eph. 2:2), indulging the flesh, and children destined for wrath (Eph. 2:3). In short, fallen man exists in a state of enmity against God!

Only when men choose to trust in Jesus, God’s marvelous sacrifice for sin, can God’s anger against sin be placated, and men can enter the sublime state of being at peace with God. Only those who are at “peace *with* God” (Rom. 5:1) can hope to have the “peace *of* God” fill their hearts and lives (Phil. 4:6-7). And only those who are at “peace *with* God” (Rom. 5:1) hope to live “*at* peace” with their fellow man (Rom. 12:18).

**C 2 In the place of the blessing of God 5:2a**

D1 Granted access: {2} through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith <sup>138</sup>

D2 Standing in grace: into this grace in which we stand; <sup>139</sup>

**C 3 Exulting in the future glory of God: and we exult in hope of the glory of God <sup>140</sup> 5:2b****C 4 Exulting in tribulations: {3} And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, <sup>141</sup> 5:3a**

<sup>138</sup> Rom. 5:2 - by faith: These words (*tê pistei*) are bracketed in the latest critical edition of the Greek text. According to Bruce M. Metzger, in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1994, p. 452, "It is doubtful whether the words *tê pistei* belong to the text or not, for the weight of external evidence is almost evenly balanced between their inclusion ... and their omission ...." Metzger goes on to say, "Furthermore, the sense is not materially changed by their presence or their absence, for Paul has previously declared that faith is necessary for justification ..." (JTB – see Rom. 5:1, for example). As a matter of fact, the mss that omit *tê pistei* are, as a whole, marginally earlier mss than those that retain it, many of the latter dating in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>139</sup> Rom. 5:2 - into this grace in which we stand: Paul is specific here about grace – he calls it "the grace - this - in which we have come to stand." Grace (*charis*, [5485](#)) here describes God's stance of good will or kindness toward those who have accepted for themselves King Jesus' substitutionary death and resurrection on their behalf; "in which we stand" translates the perfect tense of *histēmi* ([2476](#)). The perfect tense indicates that at some time in the past we entered the state of existing in God's favor and grace, and we remain there up through the present time. See also footnotes on "grace" (*charis*, [5485](#)) at 3:24 and 4:16.

<sup>140</sup> Rom. 5:2 - we exult in hope of the glory of God: This is the first time in Romans Paul speaks of hope (*elpis*, [1680](#)) as the possession of the Church-Age believer. (The previous two occurrences [Rom. 4:18] referred to the hope of Abraham.) This is the first of three occurrences in Romans 5. As believers, we (1) exult in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2); (2) experience hope as the byproduct of tribulation, perseverance, and proven character (Rom. 5:4); and (3) are motivated by this hope that leaves us with no fear of disappointment "because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 5:5).

In 5:2, we as Christians boast or take pride (*kauchaomai*, [2744](#)) in the glory of God. In this present age (as in all bygone ages), the cause of God has been blasphemed by evil men. On a human level, sometimes we Christians cringe and almost are tempted to despair as we see evil men and evil plans ascend into primacy and popularity. But the thoughtful Christian does not despair. Instead he takes pride in the fact that, long-term, it is God's cause that will prevail. And the time will come when God will receive from all His own (from men, from angels, and even from nature itself) the credit and praise He alone deserves. And when God occupies His rightful place of glory throughout all the created universe, God's elect will bask in His reflected glory. In the end, God wins, and because He wins, His angels win, and His redeemed humans win, and God will create [New Heavens](#) and [New Earth](#) in which exist only righteousness (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

All references to hope (*elpis*, [1680](#)) in Romans include Romans 4:18, 18; 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20, 24, 24, 24; 12:12; 15:4, 13, 13. A brief perusal reveals that God most certainly wants us Christians to live a life of hope, not one of despair! Faith and hope walk hand-in-hand in the Christian life.

<sup>141</sup> Rom. 5:3 - we also exult in our tribulations: Most people find tribulations (*thlipsis*, [2347](#)) – tribulations, afflictions, troubles, pressures – dismaying. The well-taught Christian boasts, or glories (*kauchomai*, [2744](#)) in them! Why? – because he knows they will produce endurance and proven character and hope in his life (5:3-5)!

Most of the tribulations described in the NT are troubles inflicted upon Christians precisely because they are Christians. Jesus stated, for example, "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33b). Here is a fairly complete list of NT references to tribulation which Christians endure because they are Christians: Matt. 13:21; Mark 4:17; John 16:33; Acts 11:19; 14:22; 20:23; Rom. 8:35; 12:12; 2 Cor. 1:4, 8; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4; 7:4; 8:27; Eph. 3:13; Php. 1:17; 4:14; Col. 1:24 (implied); 1 Thess. 1:6; 3:3, 7; 2 Thess. 1:4; Heb. 10:33; Rev. 1:9; 2:9-10.

There exists also, in the NT, however, a technical use of *thlipsis*. This is a yet future time of great, unprecedented trouble that is to afflict those who dwell on the earth. After Jesus comes to retrieve His Bride, the Church, from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-53), a time of trouble known popularly as "[The Tribulation](#)" will engulf the earth over a period of seven years. The [Tribulation](#) period takes place during [Daniel's](#)

## C 5 Understanding the value of hardship 5:3b-4

- D1 Understanding the benefit of tribulation – perseverance: knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;<sup>142</sup>
- D2 Perseverance: {4} and perseverance,
- D3 Proven character: proven character;<sup>143</sup> and proven character,

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[Seventieth Seven](#) (of Years) (Dan. 9:27 – see the context of Dan. 9:24-27). Much of what Jesus described in Matthew 24 refers to the future [Tribulation](#) period. John described the disasters of the [Tribulation](#) period in Revelation 6–18. Jesus (Matt. 24:21) described this event as “tribulation – great” (*thlipsis megas*). He also described it as a time of *unprecedented* trouble in the annals of world history, whether past, present, or future (Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19)! One of the 24 elders, in speaking with the Apostle John, described an innumerable multitude of white-robed, palm-branch waving, multi-national people he saw as “the ones coming out of the tribulation – the great” (Rev. 7:14. See the context of 7:9-17). These are, most-likely, post-Church-Age believers who were martyred during the [Tribulation](#) for their faith in Jesus and refusal to submit to worshipping the “Beast” (Revelation 13).

The Church will be exempted from the “[Great Tribulation](#)” (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:3-5. 9; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 3:10). Other arguments include (1) Paul’s discussion of the [Rapture](#) (1 Thess. 4:13-18) prior to his discussion of the “Day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:1-11); (2) Paul’s careful distinguishing between the [Rapture](#) (2 Thess. 2:1) and the apostasy, “Man of Lawlessness” and judgment connected with the “Day of the Lord” (2 Thess. 2:2-12); (3) John’s upward call into heaven (Rev. 4:1) as symbolizing the [Rapture](#) of the Church to heaven; (4) The remarkable total absence of any reference to the church (*ekklēsia*, 1577) on earth between Rev. 3:22 and 22:16; (5) The denial of the doctrine of the imminence of Christ’s return for the Church if, in fact, He returns after the [Tribulation](#) period (1 Cor. 1:7; Php. 3:20; 4:5; 1 Thess. 1:10; Titus 2:13; Jude 1:21; (6) The implausibility of comfort to be found in the [Rapture](#) if the Christians addressed were first having to endure the [Tribulation](#) and likely martyrdom (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11); (7) The repeated resort to a non-literal hermeneutic to justify a Post-Tribulation Rapture by many who teach it. [Not all who hold to a Post-Tribulation Rapture employ a non-literal hermeneutic, but a great many do. See, for example, Gregory K. Beale and his comments on 1 Thess. 4:13-18 in his commentary on 1, 2 Thessalonians.]; (8) Insurmountable logistical problems presented by a Post-Tribulation Rapture: Millennial passages teach the existence of children, birth, and death during the Millennium (Isa. 65:18-25). But if Christ returns only at the end of the [Tribulation](#), all surviving believers will be given immortal resurrection bodies (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Who will be left in a natural body to be married, to bear children, and to die? Who will be left with a natural body to be deceived by Satan and rebel against Christ (Rev. 20:7-10)? The answer is a resounding, “No one!” Conclusion: A [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#) is a much more plausible explanation of the data regarding Christ’s return than is a Post-Tribulation Rapture. For more information on this topic, see “[Why a Post Tribulation Rapture is Not Credible.](#)”

<sup>142</sup> Rom. 5:3 - perseverance: The first benefit of tribulation in the life of a Christian is perseverance. The noun “perseverance” (*hupomonē*, [5281](#)), “remaining under,” is a notable quality of genuine believers. In Jesus’ parable of the Four Soils (Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23; Mark 4:13-20; Luke 8:11-15), only one type of soil, the good soil, persevered, and bore fruit. The other three types either never received the message or else, for various reasons, did not persevere in it. I believe, unequivocally, that genuine believers do not lose their salvation, as Paul clearly teaches in Romans 8:26-39. There are some who appear to be believers, but really are not. Genuine believers will persevere in trouble, even though they may struggle and experience some relapses. When all is said and done, genuine believers will persevere in their walk with God.

It is not up to us to judge whether someone is a genuine believer. In another parable Jesus told, He pointed out that if it were left up to us who help in the sowing of seed to determine who is a genuine believer and who is not, we would inevitably send some believers to hell (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43)! Only Jesus possesses the ability to discern what is really in someone’s heart (Isa. 11:1-5). Only He possesses the authority to assess all of mankind on the day of judgment (John 5:24-30; 2 Cor. 5:10).

<sup>143</sup> Rom. 5:4 - proven character: The second benefit of tribulation in the life of a Christian is proven character. “Proven character” translates the single Greek word *dokimē* ([1382](#)). It means “maturity,” or “character that has been proven by a testing process.” The testing process consists of the troubles or tribulations we are required, by the providential hand of God, to endure. There is no verb in this phrase – the reader is to supply *katergazomai* ([2716](#)) “brings about” or “works” or “produces” from v. 3. Joseph, Job, and Daniel are three OT heroes who, in my estimation, demonstrated “proven character” in the midst of great tribulation.

D4 Hope: hope; <sup>144</sup>

## C 6 Recipients of God's love 5:5-8

D1 The non-disappointment of hope: {5} and hope does not disappoint, <sup>145</sup> 5:5a

D2 The anchor – the immeasurable love of God poured out within us: because the love of God <sup>146</sup> has been poured out within our hearts 5:5b

D3 The method – through the Holy Spirit – Himself a gift: through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. <sup>147</sup> 5:5c

<sup>144</sup> Rom. 5:4 - hope: “Hope” (*elpis*, [1680](#)) is the third benefit of tribulation. *Elpis* refers to an expectation and awaiting of good. It is to be distinguished from an English concept of hope in which one wishes for something good without possessing any guarantee whatever that the expectation will eventuate. In Biblical terms, hope is based on the promises of God, and therefore, through the eye of faith, one expects that the promised good will come about. So a Biblical hope carries with it the flavor of confidence that what is hoped for will actually occur because it is based on the trustworthiness and power of God.

Without hope, there is despair. Indulging in despair can lead to suicide. Christians who live Biblically see tribulations as an opportunity to boast (about God and His ability to extricate us from our trials); to practice perseverance; to mature in character; and to exercise a positive expectation (hope) that God will bring about good in the end (Rom. 8:28) because He loves us, as proven by His having given us His Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5)!

<sup>145</sup> Rom. 5:5 - hope does not disappoint: This is the third and final reference to hope (*elpis*, [1680](#)) in Romans 5. The Christian (1) hopes in the final glory of God (5:2); (2) experiences hope as the byproduct of troubles, perseverance, and proven character (5:4); and (3) finds that Christian hope never leaves one disappointed, because it grabs hold of the love of God poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit God has irrevocably given us (5:5).

This positive outlook is not based so much on experience, but rather upon the certainty revealed by God in His Word. (1) Every Christian has been – at the moment of his salvation by grace through faith, baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). (2) Consequently, the Holy Spirit indwells each believer (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19; 12:13). (3) Every Christian has been born again of the Spirit (John 3:1-21 [see esp. v. 8]). (4) Every Christian has been saved by the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). (5) Every Christian has been sealed with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). (6) The Holy Spirit, therefore, is the pledge, down payment, or guarantee of our inheritance, which God is preserving for us until the time for its redemption (Eph. 1:14). (7) The Holy Spirit, at His discretion, gives to each believer in Jesus a spiritual gift or gifts, that being a special ability to serve God (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28-30; Eph. 4:4-16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11). (8) God commands each Christian to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:17). (9) If Christians walk (live their lives) by means of the Holy Spirit, they will not fulfill the sordid lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16-21), but will, instead, exhibit the gracious fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

<sup>146</sup> Rom. 5:5 - love of God: The Christian's hope (*elpis*, [1680](#)) is based upon the overwhelming love (*agapê*, [26](#)) of God. This is the first time Paul used *agapê* (the noun “love”) in Romans. Here in Romans 5:5, God's love poured out in the hearts of us believers is demonstrated by His having given us the Holy Spirit. Sadly, a great many Christians are ignorant of the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Consequently they are oblivious of the extent of God's love for them. Elsewhere in Romans 5, God constantly demonstrates His love toward us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died on our behalf (Rom. 5:8). A profound truth is that nothing can separate us believers from the love of God found in Christ Jesus, our Master (Rom. 8:39). It should be remarked that God's love (*agapê*, [26](#)) is always self-sacrificing, seeking the good of the object loved (John 3:16). The same is true of human love modeled after the love of God (Eph. 5:1-2, 25-27).

<sup>147</sup> Rom. 5:5 - through the Holy Spirit who was given to us: God, at some time in the past, with results that continue to the present time, poured out his love for us within our hearts. He did so through the Holy Spirit, literally, “the one having been given to us.” The word “given” is the aorist passive participle of the verb *didômi* ([1325](#)). At a point in past time the Holy Spirit was given to us (plural). That, it seems to me, can only refer to the gift of the Spirit to the entire Church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Of course, each individual Christian himself receives the gift of the Holy Spirit at conversion – the moment he trusts in Jesus. It is at the moment of faith that each Christian is born of the Spirit (John 3:1-8, 16-18), renewed by the Spirit (Titus 3:4-7); baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13); sealed by the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30); and indwelt by the Spirit (Rom. 8:9; 1

## D4 Our circumstances – when we were... 5:6-7

- E1 Helpless: For while we were still helpless,<sup>148</sup> 5:6a
- E2 Ungodly: at the right time<sup>149</sup> Christ died for the ungodly.<sup>150</sup> 5:6b
- E3 Unjust: {7} For one will hardly die for a righteous man; 5:7a
- E4 Not good: though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 5:7b
- E5 Sinners: {8} But God demonstrates His own love toward us,<sup>151</sup> in that while we were yet sinners,<sup>152</sup>

Cor. 6:19).

In the early days of the Church, there was sometimes a delay in the giving of the Spirit (e.g. Acts 8:4-17; 19:1-7). But these delays can all be explained in that there was an initial transition from an entirely Jewish Church in Acts 2 to an increasingly Gentile Church by Acts 28. For a summary discussion of the transitional nature of the early church, especially as it relates to the gifts of speaking in tongues and prophecy, see "[Part L: Evaluation and Conclusion](#)."

<sup>148</sup> Rom. 5:6 - helpless: *asthenês* (772) typically means simply "weak" (literally, "not strong"). The context reveals the area particular area of weakness. Frequently *asthenês* means "sick," as in Matthew 25:43, 44; Acts 4:9; 5:15, 16. In Rom. 5:6 *asthenês* means "powerless" (to save ourselves from sin).

<sup>149</sup> Rom. 5:6 - at the right time: God, in His infinite wisdom, knew precisely the most propitious time in human history (Gal. 4:4-5) to send the Eternal Word (*Logos*, 3056) of God (John 1:1-3, 14, 18), His only-born Son (John 3:16-18) to die for the sins of all mankind.

<sup>150</sup> Rom. 5:6 - Christ died for the ungodly: "Ungodly" is *asebês* (765), usually translated as "ungodly." It refers to an irreverent or godless person. [Reformed Theology](#) teaches a [Limited Atonement](#) – meaning that, though Christ's death was infinitely valuable, His intent was to die only for the elect, or chosen ones. Paul, in Romans 5:6, disputes that theological misconception. Christ died for *all* mankind, for all were ungodly. It is true that only those chosen will take advantage of the salvation Christ provided, but Jesus did truly die for the sins of all people, for all are ungodly. God loved the entire world and gave His only-born son (John 3:16). Jesus even died for false prophets and false teachers (2 Pet. 2:1)! [Limited Atonement](#) is refuted by other Scriptures, including Matt. 1:21; John 1:29; 3:17; 4:42; Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:2; 4:14. If a [Limited Atonement](#) were true, Paul, to be accurate in Romans 5:6, would have needed to state that Christ died for the chosen ungodly. That He did not say. He stated simply that Christ died for the ungodly.

<sup>151</sup> Rom. 5:8 - God demonstrates His own love toward us: In Romans 5:5 Paul stated that God had poured out (perfect tense – an action in past time with results continuing to the present) His love (*agapê*, 26) within our hearts by the agency of the Holy Spirit whom He (at a point in time) gave to us. Here (5:8), Paul states that God (continually – present tense – durative action) demonstrates His own love toward us in that, while we were constantly (present tense) existing as sinners, the Anointed King died (at a point in time) on our behalf. This is only the second time in the entire book of Romans that Paul used the noun love (*agapê*, 26). See the comments on love (*agapê*, 26) at 5:5.

<sup>152</sup> Rom. 5:8 - while we were yet sinners: "Sinners" is *hamartôlos* (268), an adjective. A more accurate translation is thus, "while we were yet sinful ones ...." In the immediate context, being a sinful person (5:8) is opposed to being a good person (5:7). "Sinners" are frequently lumped together with "tax collectors" (Matt. 9:10, 11, 19; Mark 2:15, 16; Luke 5:30; 7:34; 15:1; 18:13; 19:7). Jesus described the chief priests and elders who would hand Him over to Pilate as "sinners" (Matt. 26:45; Mark 14:41; Luke 24:7). Conversely certain Pharisees called Jesus a "sinner" because, they maintained, He healed people on the Sabbath day and thus violated the Law (John 9:16, 24, 25). The amazing thing is that God demonstrates His love toward us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!

Natural, human love is very often based on the attractiveness of the other person. I developed a relationship



D5 The cost – the substitutionary death of the Messiah: Christ died for us.<sup>153</sup> 5:8b

## C 7 More assured protection from the future wrath of God 5:9-10

D1 The statement of our future protection 5:9

E1 The qualifier of future protection: Much more then,

E2 The fact of our justification: having now been justified<sup>154</sup>

E3 The grounds of our justification: by His blood,

E4 The certainty of our preservation from God's wrath: we shall be saved from the wrath *of God*<sup>155</sup>

E5 The agent of our justification: through Him.

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with the young woman who later became my wife because I found her to be attractive in a number of ways. But God's love is not based on our attractiveness. God loved us when we were (1) helpless, not strong (5:6); (2) ungodly, irreverent (5:6) (3) sinful people, not good (5:8); (4) and finally (in this passage) even His enemies, unfavorably disposed against Him (5:10)!

<sup>153</sup> Rom. 5:8 - Christ died for us: As Paul wrote this brief clause, it is dramatic – Christ (the One anointed to be King) on behalf of us died! It is all the more amazing, for He did so – “yet sinners being – us!” Clearly, “for” or “on behalf of” (*huper* [5228] plus the genitive case) states clearly Christ's substitutionary death for all sinners (and not merely for elect sinners).

<sup>154</sup> Rom. 5:9 - having now been justified: This marks the final time in Paul's discussion of “justification” (Rom. 3:21 - 5:21) that he uses the word (*dikaioō*, 1344). He uses it here as an aorist passive participle, “having been declared righteous” (at a point in time). In 5:9 Paul is in the midst of describing the seventh benefit of having been declared righteous (which benefits he states in 5:1-11). The seventh benefit is protection from the future wrath of God.

<sup>155</sup> Rom. 5:9 - we shall be saved from the wrath *of God* through Him: “We shall be saved” is the future tense indicative passive of *sōdzō* (4982). The words “of God” are in italics in the NASB because they do not appear in the Greek text. They are not inaccurate, however. Paul was specific. He stated, literally, “Much more therefore, having been justified now in the blood of Him, we shall be saved through Him from the wrath.”

“Wrath” is *orgē* (3709), and appears, in the case of God, at least, to be a settled state of anger against His enemies for their injustice, opposition, and antipathy. By comparison, “rage” (*thumos*, 2372) is a precipitous flaring up of outrage at injustice or slight. Descriptive examples of *thumos* include the translation “rage” (Luke 4:28; Acts 19:28) and “outbursts of anger” (Gal. 5:20). Elsewhere, unfortunately, both *orgē* and *thumos* are often translated as “wrath” in the NASB, which makes it impossible to distinguish the two in the English text. *Thumos* is frequently translated as “wrath” in the book of Revelation, where it is used ten times, more than in any other NT book. This is instructive, because God's settled wrath (*orgē*) throughout long ages now, in the book of Revelation, erupts into the more passionate and volatile outrage (*thumos*).

Even though those of us who have trusted in Jesus are presently saved from the present wrath (*orgē*, 3709) of God against sin (Rom. 1:18), that is not Paul's point here. He is looking at our salvation from the *future* wrath of God (Rom. 2:5), thus, the future tense. Certainly, we Church-Age believers in Jesus will be saved from God's eternal wrath (John 3:36; 5:24; Rom. 8:1), which is demonstrated terribly and tragically in the Second Death, the Lake of Fire and Brimstone (Rev. 20:11-15). But we also will be saved from God's wrath (*orgē*) which He will exhibit upon the earth during the Great Tribulation period (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). “Believers will never be condemned to hell (John 5:24; Rom. 8:1) nor will they be the objects of God's coming Tribulation wrath (1 Thes. 1:10; 5:9)” John A. Witmer, *Romans, The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty*, NT, 457).

## D2 The logic of our future protection 5:10

- E1 The present reality – past reconciliation, while enemies, through the death of God's Son 5:10a
  - G1 The time of our reconciliation: {10} For if <sup>156</sup> while we were enemies, <sup>157</sup>
  - G2 The fact of our reconciliation: we were reconciled to God <sup>158</sup>
  - G3 The means of our reconciliation: through the death of His Son,
- E2 The future guarantee – future salvation, as reconciled ones, through the life of God's Son 5:10b
  - G1 The reality of our having been reconciled: much

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<sup>156</sup> Rom. 5:10 - For if: "If: (*ei*, [1487](#)) is a first class condition. It is assumed to be true that we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, etc. It would be accurate to substitute the word "since" for "if."

<sup>157</sup> Rom. 5:10 - while we were enemies: There are a great many people in Christendom who abhor the idea of a literal hell and try to reinterpret it in such a manner that it is either not as awful or not as permanent as the Bible portrays it. (One such person is Rob Bell, who wrote *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*.) Most people who reinterpret, redefine, or deny an eternal, literal hell do so because they also deny the fact that people who have not placed their trust in Jesus are *enemies* of the Triune God.

The term "enemies" (*echthros*, [2190](#)) is a very strong word. God is a righteous God, and anyone who has not availed himself of Christ's death on his behalf remains an enemy of God, not just a nice, slightly flawed person with good intentions (2 Thess. 1:8-9). All God's enemies will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire (Matt. 3:12; 25:31-46; Mark 9:42-48; Luke 3:17; Rev. 20:10-15). The amazing truth is that God loved us humans so much that He offered His only begotten Son to die a sacrificial death for all mankind *while we were still His enemies!*

<sup>158</sup> Rom. 5:10 - reconciled to God: "Reconciled" – *katallasô* ([2644](#)) – is an aorist tense, passive verb. Paul's statement is amazing. The aorist tense means the reconciliation occurred at a point in time – the death of Christ. The passive voice means that we humans were unable to achieve reconciliation with God. The initiative rested solely with Him. The death of Christ on the cross was, in God's view so successful, that, even while we (all of mankind) were still God's enemies, we were reconciled to God through Jesus' death. "Reconciled" is a powerful word. It means the restoration or re-establishment of a relationship previously held but now broken. Something was done to remove the enmity and hostility between two estranged parties. The fact that we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son while we were still God's enemies is remarkable. It means that, though we were at enmity with God, the death of Jesus provided God with sufficient grounds no longer to be at enmity with us humans. That Jesus' death provided that all men (not merely the elect) were reconciled to God is clearly taught in Romans 5:10. It is undergirded by this statement in 2 Cor. 5:19, "that God was in Christ reconciling *the world* to himself" (emphasis mine). The misconception of "Limited Atonement" – that Christ died only for the sins of the elect – simply cannot be true.

From a pragmatic point of view, our having been reconciled to God through the death of His Son demands a response on man's part. Most, in fact, do not take advantage of the reconciliation. Believing men have "the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18), and to us has been committed "the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19). So we are "ambassadors for Christ," begging people to "be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). In fact, *katallasô* in 2 Cor. 5:20 is an aorist passive imperative, i.e. a command – "we command you to be reconciled with God!" As Paul stated it elsewhere, God "is the Savior of all men, especially of believers" (1 Tim. 4:10). In other words, for reconciliation to be eternally effective, men must trust in Jesus, God's only sacrifice for sin. A proper response to God's stance is both begged and commanded!

*Katallasô* ([2644](#)) is used only six times in the NT: Rom. 5:10; 5:10; 1 Cor. 7:11; 2 Cor. 5:18; 5:19; 5:20. Five of those six times it is used with reference to God and man. Once (1 Cor 7:11) it is used between a woman estranged from her husband.

more,<sup>159</sup> having been reconciled,<sup>160</sup>

G2 The significance of our having been reconciled: we shall be saved by His life.<sup>161</sup>

## C 8 Pride in God because of reconciliation 5:11

D1 Our boasting in God: And not only this, but we also exult in God<sup>162</sup>

D2 The means of our boasting in God: through our Lord Jesus Christ,

D3 Our present reception of reconciliation: through whom we have now received the reconciliation.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Rom. 5:10 - much more: Paul is here comparing the relative benefits of the *death* of Christ and the present *life* of Christ. Paul's point is that, since it is true that we were reconciled to God by Christ's *death*, far much more certain is the fact that we will, in the future, be saved by Christ's *life*. Christ's life refers to His present existence, which, of course, assumes the reality of His resurrection after His death.

<sup>160</sup> 5:10 - having been reconciled: "Having been reconciled" translates the single word *katallasô* (2644), which appears here as an aorist passive participle. Just as Paul, in the first member of 5:10 is, by virtue of his use of *ei* (1487), asserting a truth, so he is, in the second member of 5:10, asserting a corollary truth. In other words, "If – and it's true" – governs both members of 5:10. In both cases Paul is asserting the truth that we have, in actual fact, been reconciled to God at a point in time – namely, the death of Christ.

<sup>161</sup> Rom. 5:10 - we shall be saved by His life: Once again (see 5:9), "we shall be saved" is the future tense indicative passive of *sôdzô* (4982). Just as, in Paul's previous use of *sôdzô* (5:9), Paul anticipated future salvation from the wrath of God, so it is true here. Similarly the wrath of God from which Paul asserts we will be preserved is both the ultimate wrath of God and also the wrath of God to be exhibited in the future Tribulation period.

<sup>162</sup> Rom. 5:11 - we also exult in God: Here Paul states the final benefit of justification – we exult in God. In all there are eight benefits of justification – being declared righteous – that Paul states: (1) We enjoy a peaceful relationship with God (5:1); (2) We are in the place of God's blessing (5:2a); (3) We exult or boast in the future glory of God (5:2b); (4) We boast in tribulations (5:3a); (5) We appreciate the value of hardship (5:3b-4); (6) We are recipients of God's love (5:5-8); (7) We enjoy protection from the wrath of God (5:9-10); and (8) We take pride in God because we have received, through Jesus, reconciliation (5:11).

"Exult" is the present participle of *kauchaomai* (2744), indicating "we [are] constantly boasting" in God. The reader is to supply the understood missing verb "are" (*eimi*, 1510). *Kauchaomai* means to "glory," "exult," or "take pride" in a thing or person. It is used 5X in Romans. In 2:17, Paul states Jewish people "boast" in God; in 2:23 they "boast" in the Law, yet break it. In 5:2, Christians "exult" in the glory of God; in 5:3 we Christians "exult" in our tribulations; and here in 5:11, the last time this word is used in Romans, we Christians "exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Christians may "boast" in the Lord (1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17) and in Jesus Christ (Php. 3:3), but not in men (1 Cor. 3:22). Certainly no one will be able to boast before God (1 Cor. 1:29; Eph. 2:9). There is an appropriate (Jas. 1:9) and an inappropriate (Jas. 4:6) boasting. Paul did not boast in his strengths, but in his weaknesses (2 Cor. 11:30; 12:9). *Kauchaomai* appears the most times (20X) in any single book in 2 Corinthians, where he uses it often in specialized contexts because of his often torturous relationship with the authority-resistant and fleshly Christians in Corinth.

<sup>163</sup> Rom. 5:11 - received the reconciliation: It is through Jesus that we have been able to receive this reconciliation Paul has been discussing. Paul used the noun "reconciliation" (*katallagê*, 2643) only 4X: Rom. 5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18; 5:19). [He used the verb "reconcile" (*katallassô* 2644) 6X (see the footnote on 5:10 - "reconciled to God).] *Katallagê* means "literally *exchange, profit from exchange*; figuratively in the NT, as the reestablishing of personal relations *reconciliation, change from enmity to friendship* (2C 5:18, 19) (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). Reconciliation with God through Jesus is available to all, but it takes effect only in those who have received it by receiving Jesus (see John 1:10-13).



## B 4 The Supreme Success of Declared Righteousness in Contrast to the Defeat of Condemnation <sup>164</sup> 5:12-21

### C 1 The *universality* of condemnation (death from sin) despite no Law 5:12-14

D1 Just as Adam's sin directly affected every man, so did death 5:12

E1 It was through the action of the one man Adam that sin entered the world: {12} Therefore, just as through one man<sup>165</sup> sin entered into the world,<sup>166</sup>

E2 It was through Adam's sin that death entered the world: and death through sin,<sup>167</sup>

<sup>164</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 descended upon all through the one man Adam. (2) The grace in justification **surpasses** the death and condemnation in sin.

<sup>165</sup> Rom. 5:12 - just as through one man: Paul is making a profound theological statement based upon the historical existence and action of a single person who, according to Genesis chapters 1-3, was created by God five days following the beginning of the space-time-matter continuum. To deny the historicity of the one man, Adam (5:12-14a), is to deny the efficacy of the contributions of the one Man, Jesus Christ (5:14b-15). Indeed, in the whole of Romans 5:12-21, Paul inextricably intertwines Theology with History. To deny the History of Genesis 1-3 is to invalidate the Theology of Romans 5:12-21. One cannot hold to evolution on the one hand without chipping away at soteriology on the other. Dr. Bruce Waltke has identified himself as a theistic evolutionist in his massive *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach*. He has described the evidence in favor of evolution as being "overwhelming." Yet, because he is an outstanding Hebrew scholar who believes in the Hebrew Scriptures, he attempts to espouse both theistic evolution (he calls it "guided" evolution) and the historicity of Adam and Eve. To me, those two positions are mutually exclusive. His statements have neither intellectually satisfied Young Earth Creationists, nor will they ultimately satisfy the scientific community. In fact, in April of 2010, his offer to resign from Reformed Theological Seminary over publicity surrounding his views on theistic evolution was accepted. (He is now Distinguished Professor of Old Testament at Knox Theological Seminary.)

Waltke is not alone in his views, of course. Nearly 450 U. S. churches in most mainline Protestant denominations, including Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Unitarian, Congregationalist, United Church of Christ, and even Baptist celebrated "[Evolution Sunday](#)" on February 12, 2006. The Roman Catholic Church is sympathetic to [theistic evolution](#). "Under Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the [International Theological Commission](#) published a paper accepting the big bang of 15 billion years ago and the evolution of all life including humans from the microorganisms that formed approximately 4 billion years ago". Cardinal Ratzinger later became Pope Benedict XVI.

To most of the scientific community, any thought of God being the Creator as expressed in a literal understanding of Genesis 1-11 is laughable. Sadly, the same can be said of a great many in the Christian Community. WordExplain unapologetically holds to [Young Earth Creationism](#). I do not believe the evidence in favor of any sort of macroevolution is "overwhelming." In fact, I believe the reverse is true. The evidence for recent special creation and for a global deluge that left the entire earth littered with fossils and sedimentary layers is overwhelming. I believe that the Bible should guide our understanding of so-called science, and that so-called science should not govern our interpretation of the Bible.

<sup>166</sup> Rom. 5:12 - through one man sin entered the world: Literally, the text reads as follows: "On account of this, just as through one man the sin into the world entered ...." Paul is very specific. He speaks of the agency of "one man" – Adam; he speaks of a specific aggregate phenomenon – "the sin." He speaks of a specific event – "the sin into the world entered" (*eisērchomai*, [1525](#), "entered," appears here in the aorist tense – meaning action at a point in time), referring to Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:6). Paul utters his statements as sober history, not as a theological metaphor. Since Adam was the head of all mankind (including Eve), when he sinned, sin entered the world.

<sup>167</sup> Rom. 5:12 - and death through sin: Literally, "and through the sin – the death..." Death (*thanatos*, [2288](#)) appeared the first time in Romans in 1:32, and now more extensively in Rom. 5:10, 12, 14, 17, 21. In Rom. 1:32 Paul referred primarily to physical death. In Rom. 5:10 Paul spoke of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. But

- E3     Death spread to all men: and so death spread to all men,
- E4     Because all sinned in Adam's sin: because all sinned—<sup>168</sup>
- D2     Sin before the Law was not imputed 5:13
- E1     Sin already existed in the world before the Law was given:  
        {13} for until the Law<sup>169</sup> sin was in the world,
- E2     But sin cannot be charged to a person's account when there  
        is no Law: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.<sup>170</sup>

here (Rom. 5:12) he speaks somberly of the particular death coming as a consequence of the particular sin – the sin of Adam. It seems that Paul, in Rom. 5:12, is speaking of “the death” in all its aspects – [Spiritual Death](#) (separation of man from God); [Physical Death](#) (separation of man's spirit from his body, coming as a consequence of [Spiritual Death](#)); and ultimately [Second Death](#) (man's eternal separation from God in the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (Rev. 20:10-15)). For a fuller discussion, see “[The Three Different Kinds of Death](#).”

<sup>168</sup> Rom. 5:12 - because all sinned: “Sinned” is the plural aorist tense of *hamartanô* (264), which means that at a point in time all men sinned. This can only mean that when Adam ate the forbidden fruit he represented all mankind. He did so on two similar, but separate levels. First, he was their seminal or biological head (representative). Second, he was their federal head. When Adam as our federal head, and as our genetic ancestor sinned, we all sinned.

It is not difficult to demonstrate the seminal or genetic headship of Adam. The best example is that Levi, in the loins of Abraham his father, paid tithes to Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-10). Similarly, when Adam sinned, we were in his loins, and his sin nature was passed on genetically to us.

The reality of Adam's federal headship can be demonstrated by a theological truth and illustrated by an example. As for the theology, Paul spelled out clearly, in Romans 5:18-19, the reality of federal headship in Christ. Christ's righteousness is imputed to the account of all who trust in Him, even though we are not biological descendants of His. How can that be true? It is because of Christ's federal headship. He was our representative. When He died, we died. Similarly, when Adam, our federal head sinned, all men sinned.

Federal headship can be illustrated on the basketball court. Our team is behind by two points. Our star player took a last-second desperation shot beyond the three-point line. It did not go in, but he was fouled in the act of shooting. He stands at the free throw line with three foul shots. If he makes them all, our whole team wins. If he makes two of the three, the game will be tied, and we will go into overtime. If he misses two or three shots, the game is over, and our whole team loses. The destiny of the whole team hangs in the balance on the performance of one individual. The destiny of a whole nation rides on the decision of one King or President or Prime Minister. The destiny of a child rides on the decisions of his parents. Federal headship is a reality in much of life, whether we like it or not, agree with it or not, think it is “fair” or not. Thank God for the federal headship of Jesus the King!

In reality, then, there are three reasons why we humans are guilty before God. (1) [Inherited sin](#); (2) [Imputed sin](#); (3) and acts of [Personal sin](#). (See “[Three Reasons Man is Guilty](#).”)

Incidentally, this passage (Rom. 5:12-21) provides an understanding of the role of the Mosaic Law (see Rom. 5:20 in particular). It was given to Israel, to be sure, but it also serves, in God's view, as a universal code of ethics by which He judges all men. This is true even though He calculates the access men have to that Law (see Romans 2:12-16). (See additional notes on *hamartanô* (264) at Rom. 2:12 and Rom. 3:23.)

<sup>169</sup> Rom. 5:13 - for until the Law: Literally, Paul states, “For until law sin was existing in world; sin, however, [is] not being imputed, [there] not being law.” Both instances of “law” (*nomos*, 3551) are anarthrous (no article). Paul was speaking, of course, of the event of God's giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19-24 ff.). But he is making the point that prior to that event, man was under no generally applicable law from God. This points to the fact that God's giving of the Law at Sinai not only impacted Israel, but it also impacted the entire world. Once God had, through Moses, given the Law to Israel, He had given it to the world. From that point on the world became culpable in a way that it had not been prior to that event. This is Paul's first use of *nomos* (3551) in Romans 5, where he uses it only 3X (in Rom. 5:13, 13, 20). For other footnotes on [nomos](#) see Rom. 2:12; 3:19; 4:13.

<sup>170</sup> Rom. 5:13 - but sin is not imputed when there is no law: “Imputed” is *ellogēō* (1677), occurring here in present tense, passive voice. There are only two instances of *ellogēō* in the NT – Romans 5:13 and Phm 1:18. It means “to charge to the account of.” Paul's point is that, in the absence of any humanity-wide law from God, He did not charge individuals with having broken a law which did not exist. This is true even though God all but destroyed the entire human race for their great evil as expressed in Genesis 6-7. But Genesis 4 - Exodus 19 reveals that, even in the absence of a humanity-wide Code of Ethics from God, and God's *non-imputation of personal sin*, people died

- D3 Yet death reigned as king over people anyway 5:14
- E1 Nevertheless, death reigned over all people prior to the giving of the Law: {14} Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses,<sup>171</sup>
- E2 Even though people did not sin with the same accountability to which Adam was held in the Garden of Eden: even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam,<sup>172</sup>
- E3 Adam is a type of Jesus: who is a type<sup>173</sup> of Him who was

anyway! On what basis, then did they die? It was on the basis that Adam was their representative, both federally and biologically. Up until the Law was given to Moses, with one exception, Enoch (Gen. 5:24), all men died. They did not die for their own personal sins, but because of Adam's one sin.

<sup>171</sup> Rom. 5:14 - Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses: Literally, "But reigned the death from Adam until Moses ...." Despite the fact that "until law sin was existing in world; sin, however, [is] not being imputed, [there] not being law" (Rom. 5:13), "but reigned the death from Adam until Moses" (Rom. 5:14) anyway. Why did people die even before the giving of the Law at Sinai? Because "sin was existing in world." People were not personally culpable for having broken the Law of Moses, for it had not been given. Nevertheless, people died anyway (1) because they had inherited Adam's sin and (2) because Adam's sin had been imputed to every member of the human race and (3) because each man personally committed acts of sin.

This is not a particularly good illustration, but it depicts the truth: There is no law on the books anywhere that one is not to eat cyanide. But if one does, he will die because it is an axiomatic truth that cyanide is deadly. God stated the axiomatic truth at the beginning of time: "but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Paul is quick to point out that "the death reigned" over all men, from Adam to Moses, even though they had not sinned after the likeness of the transgression of Adam (Rom. 5:14). In other words, they were not under the jurisdiction of God's edict that they were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Garden of Eden was no longer accessible, and neither was the tree (Gen. 3:22-24). Nevertheless "reigned the death" over them anyway. They had inherited Adam's sin, Adam's sin was charged (imputed) to their account, and therefore they committed acts of sin. They continued to eat the cyanide, and they died.

Sin is a great evil, and death is a great enemy. Paul stated, "but reigned (*basileuō*, 936) the death." Paul used *basileuō* in the aorist tense. Its corresponding noun is *basileus* (935), king. So we might translate the verb *basileuō* as "to reign as king" although that is redundant. The point I am making is that, throughout human history, from Adam onward to the giving of the Law at Sinai, "The Death," in all its ominous significance (*Spiritual Death*, *Physical Death*, and the yet future *Second Death*), has "reigned as king" over all mankind, even over those who were neither capable of nor culpable for breaking the Edenic law prohibiting the eating of the fruit of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. The aorist tense of *basileuō* views death's endless reign as a singular event. Man's state is deplorable. All people sin. And death reigns as King over all people. No amount of good works can save man from Death. Only God can rescue man from the reign of Death. He has chosen to rescue those who place their faith in the substitutionary death and resurrection of the Great King, Jesus, who is both God and at the same time Man.

<sup>172</sup> Rom. 5:14 - those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam: The restriction on eating fruit in the Garden of Eden could only apply to those who had access to the Garden of Eden – Adam and Eve. Once humanity was banned from the Garden, that restriction no longer applied to the first couple's descendants. Nevertheless death reigned over them anyway because they were sinners, for reasons already stated.

"Offense" is *parabasis* (3847) – "wrongdoing in relation to law *overstepping, transgression, disobedience*" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). *Parabasis* is used 7X in the NT – Rom. 2:23; 4:15; 5:14; Gal. 3:19; 1 Tim. 2:14; Heb. 2:2; 9:15. In every case it refers to a violation of God's standards or Law. In the present case, it refers to Adam's violation of God's prohibition of eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:14-17; 3:1-24).

<sup>173</sup> Rom. 5:14 - type: NASB footnote: "Or *foreshadowing*." The noun "type" is *týpos* (5179), "image, pattern, example, sign; type" (*Accordance*). According to Stifler, "Adam is a figure of Christ in just this respect: that as his one sin brought death to all, even when there was no personal sin, so Christ's one act of obedience brings unflinching righteousness to those who are in Him, even when they have no personal righteousness" (James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Moody Press, 1960, p. 97).]

to come.

## 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
- E1 The dissimilarity of grace-based salvation and the transgression of Adam: {15} But the free gift <sup>174</sup> is not like the transgression. <sup>175</sup>
- E2 Through Adam's one transgression, the many incurred the death penalty: For if by the transgression of the one the many died,
- E3 The abundance of the grace of God: much more did the grace of God <sup>176</sup>
- E4 The abundance of the gracious gift of God of the one Man Jesus, Anointed King: and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, <sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Rom. 5:15 - free gift: "Free gift" translates *charisma* (5486), used 17X in the NT, 6X in Romans – 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6. Paul uses it frequently in discussing "spiritual gifts" (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31). By *charisma* Paul is here referring to the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross to pay for the sins of all mankind. This was God's loving gift to the world (John 3:16). See also the end of the next footnote.

<sup>175</sup> Rom. 5:15 - But the free gift is not like the transgression: Literally, "But not as the transgression, so also the free gift." "Transgression" is *paraptōma* (3900) "a deviation from living according to what has been revealed as the right way to live *false step, sin, transgression*; used of serious offenses against both God (Eph. 1:7) and man (Matt. 6:15)" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). *Paraptōma* (3900) is used 19X in the Greek NT, 9X in Romans – Rom. 4:25; 5:15, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20; 11:11, 12. By *paraptōma* Paul here is referring to the one transgression of Adam. The careful reader will note that, in Rom. 5:14, Paul used the word *parabasis* (3847), "offense" to refer to Adam's one sin, while here in Rom. 5:15 he used the word *paraptōma* (3900), "transgression" to refer to Adam's one sin. The two words, in context, are synonymous. Perhaps, as René A. Lopez suggests (*Romans Unlocked* [21<sup>st</sup> Century Press, 2005], p. 117, following James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 279), "Paul may have switched words to create phonetic parallels ... so they all end with *-ma* that follow from vv 15-19 [sic] ...."

These "*-ma*" words include *paraptōma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:15); *charisma* (5486) ("free gift") (Rom. 5:15); *dōrēma* (1434) ("gift") (Rom. 5:16); *krima* (2917) ("judgment") (Rom. 5:16); *katakrima* (2631) ("condemnation") (Rom. 5:16); *charisma* (5486) ("free gift") (Rom. 5:16); *paraptōma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:16); *dikaiōma* (1345) ("justification") (Rom. 5:16); *paraptōma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:17); *paraptōma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:18); *katakrima* (2631) ("condemnation") (Rom. 5:18); and *dikaiōma* (1345) ("act of righteousness") (Rom. 5:18).

"Free gift" translates *charisma* (5486), and here refers to God's gracious gift of His Son as the propitiatory sacrifice (1 John 2:2) reconciling His enemies, men, to Himself (Rom. 5:10). See also the previous footnote.

<sup>176</sup> Rom. 5:15 - grace of God: "Grace" (*charis*, 5485) is used 155X in the NT, 24X in Romans. Grace here refers to God's favorable attitude toward man whereby He sacrificed His Son for the salvation and redemption of mankind. God's grace has been exhibited to all. But rejecting God's grace in Jesus brings about certain retribution and eternal damnation (John 3:16-18, 36; Rom. 1:18-20; 2:8; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; Rev. 20:11-15). Paul's point here is that the amount of **grace** far surpassed the amount of **condemnation**.

<sup>177</sup> Rom. 5:15 - and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ: Literally, the extended clause reads, "much more, the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ unto the many overflowed." Again, the phrase, "the grace (*charis*, 5485) of God" refers to God's general disposition of goodwill towards mankind (cf. Luke 2:14), whom He created in His own likeness and image (Gen. 1:26-27), even despite the fact that we have rebelled against Him, are sinners, and have become His enemies (Rom. 5:8, 10).



- E5 The target of God's abundant grace in Jesus – "the many":  
abound to the many.<sup>178</sup>
- D2 The superiority of the **capacity** of grace to cope with a quantity of  
sin 5:16
- E1 The dissimilarity of the one sinning to the gift: {16} The  
gift<sup>179</sup> is not like *that which came* through the one who  
sinned;
- E2 The origin of judgment: for on the one hand the judgment<sup>180</sup>  
*arose*
- G1 Its single source: from one *transgression*<sup>181</sup>
- G2 It's result: resulting in condemnation,<sup>182</sup>

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But the grace of God was not passive; that is, it could not and did not exist in a vacuum. The grace (*charis*) of God concretely expressed itself in "the gift (*dōrea*, 1431) in the grace (from *charis*, 5485) of the one man Jesus Christ." So not only did God exhibit grace (*charis*, 5485) toward "the many (people)," but so did "the one man, Jesus Christ. If grace (*charis*, 5485) is a general disposition of goodwill, "the gift" (*dōrea*, 1431) is the act of Jesus Christ in which he forsook the glories and prerogatives of existing in "the form of God" and "equality with God" and took "the form of a slave" to be made in the likeness of men (Php. 2:6-7). But Jesus' gift (*dōrea*, 1431) did not stop there. He also "humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Php. 2:8). So in summary, the "grace" (*charis*, 5485) of both God and His Son issued in Jesus' gift (*dōrea*, 1431) in grace (from *charis*, 5485) of Himself on behalf of "the many."

<sup>178</sup> Rom. 5:15 - abound to the many: Literally, "unto the many abounded." Obviously, the phraseology "the one man, Jesus Christ" stands in contrast to "the many." But the gracious gift of the one man, Jesus Christ, which abounded to the many also stands in sharp contrast to the transgression of the one man, Adam, through whose single transgression "the many died!" "The many" references all of mankind.

But the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, did not just barely eke out a remedy for the horrific, deadly effect of the transgression of the one man, Adam. It abounded! It overflowed! It surpassed! These words all translate the Greek word *perisseuō*, 4052, used in the aorist tense. So at a point in time (the incarnation-crucifixion-resurrection of Christ) Jesus' gift in grace exceeded all the deadly effects of Adam's sin upon all of mankind!

<sup>179</sup> Rom. 5:16 - The gift: Paul used the word *dōrēma* (1434), which appears only twice in the NT – here and in James 1:17. In both cases it refers to a gift which God gives. Elsewhere in Romans, Paul uses "free gift" (*charisma*, 5486) (Rom. 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6); and "gift" (*dōrea*, 1431), a synonym, twice in Romans (Rom. 5:15, 17). Perhaps Paul used *dōrēma* and *charisma* to continue the assonance of words ending in *ma* as suggested above.

<sup>180</sup> Rom. 5:16 - judgment: The word is *krima* (2917), used 27X in the NT, and 6X in Romans – 2:2, 3; 3:8; 5:16; 11:33; 13:2. It is used "(1) as an administrative decree, the result of *krinō* (evaluate, judge) 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. 2:7)." Here, the word might best be translated in its most basic sense of "verdict" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*).

<sup>181</sup> Rom. 5:16 - from one *transgression*: The NASB text correctly supplies the neuter noun "transgression" (*paraptōma*, 3900), which, while not stated, corresponds with the neuter pronoun "one" (*henos* from *eis* (1520)). In other words, Paul was not here referring to the one person (Adam), which would have required a masculine pronoun, but to the one transgression of Adam, which requires a neuter pronoun.

<sup>182</sup> Rom. 5:16 - resulting in condemnation: Paul used the noun *krima* (2917), verdict, earlier in Rom. 5:16. Here he uses *katakrima* (2631) "as a legal technical term for the result of judging, including both the sentence and its execution *condemnation, sentence of doom, punishment*" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). *Katakrima* (2631) is used only 3X in the NT, all in Romans – Rom. 5:16, 18; 8:1, and is translated "condemnation" on each occasion. Paul's point is that one sin resulted in universal condemnation, whereas the free gift of Christ's redemptive sacrifice had the enormous capacity to deal with a great many transgressions, resulting in declared

- E3     The origin of the free gift: but on the other hand the free gift *arose* <sup>183</sup>
- G1     Its manifold source: from many transgressions
- G2     Its salvatory result: resulting in justification. <sup>184</sup>
- D3     The superiority of the **result** of grace compared to the result of condemnation 5:17
- E1     The solitary offense: {17} For if by the transgression of the

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righteousness (for all who believe).

<sup>183</sup> Rom. 5:16 - the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification: Here is what Paul is saying in Rom. 5:16 – first, that there is a dissimilarity between the result that came about through the agency of the one having sinned (at a point in time, namely, Adam, who transgressed in Eden) and the gift (*dôrêma*, [1431](#)).

For on the one hand, a verdict (*krima*, [2917](#)) [arose] from one [false step - *paraptôma*, [3900](#)] unto condemnation (*katakrima*, [2631](#));

but on the other hand, free gift (*charisma*, [5486](#)) [arose] out of many false steps (*paraptôma*, [3900](#)) unto a declaration of righteousness (*dikaiôma*, [1345](#)).

Several observations are in order: (1) First, Paul is using very finely-tuned and closely-reasoned logic to argue the superiority of God's grace in Jesus when compared to the devastating effects of Adam's transgression. One cannot "speed-read" through this material and hope to understand it. (2) Using good Greek, Paul writes economically – that is to say – elliptically. The reader is constantly required to supply assumed, but absent, words. Above (and below), I have indicated supplied words with brackets [ ]. (3) There are three pairs of contrasts in the latter 2/3 of Rom. 5:16. They can be graphically displayed as follows:

judgment (verdict) ( <i>krima</i> )	out of one [false step ( <i>paraptôma</i> )]	condemnation ( <i>katakrima</i> )
free gift ( <i>charisma</i> )	out of many false steps ( <i>paraptôma</i> )	declared righteousness ( <i>dikaiôma</i> )

The **first contrast** is between verdict and gift. Adam's one offense brought a Divine sentence or verdict. In contrast, God's response was a free gift by which the Divine verdict could be averted!

The **second contrast** is between one [supply "false step"] and many false steps. Murray (p. 196) explains as follows:

What the judgment unto condemnation took into account was simply the one trespass; the sentence needed only the one trespass to give it validity and sanction; in fact, the one trespass demanded nothing less than the condemnation of all. But the free gift unto justification is of such a character that it must take the many trespasses into its reckoning; it could not be the free gift of justification unless it blotted out the many trespasses. Consequently, the free gift is conditioned as to its nature and effect by the many trespasses just as the judgment was conditioned as to its nature and effect by the one trespass alone. In this way we can perceive the identity which the apostle has in view and we can see how the magnitude of grace is exhibited by the manifold trespasses with which grace reckons.

The **third and final contrast** is between the results of the verdict and free gift. The verdict resulted in condemnation, while the free gift resulted in declared righteousness. John Murray (p. 196) states:

But in Rom. 5:16 it is upon the antithesis between the one and the many that the thought turns. Judgment and condemnation take into account only one sin of one man and the whole race is condemned. But the free gift and justification take into account the many sins, the multitudinous sins of a great multitude. How aggravated must sin be and how unspeakable grace must be!

In other words, Paul applauded the superiority of the **capacity** of grace, through one free gift (Christ's incarnation and substitutionary death for the sins of all) to cope with a large quantity of sin and bring about declared righteousness.

<sup>184</sup> Rom. 5:16 - resulting in justification: Justification (*dikaiôma*, [1345](#)) is used sparingly in the NT, and most often, in Romans – Luke 1:6; Rom. 1:32; 2:26; 5:16, 18; 8:4; Heb. 9:1, 10; Rev. 15:4; 19:8). *Dikaiôma* speaks "(1) of God's requirements ordinance, *regulation, commandment* (Luke 1:6); (2) of fulfillment of a legal requirement *righteous deed, act of justice*, by Christ (Rom. 5:18), by God (Rev. 15:4), by saints (Rev. 19:8); (3) as an act of justification equivalent to *dikaiôsis* ([1347](#)) *removal of guilt, acquittal* (Rom. 5:16)" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). Here, in Rom. 5:16, we could translate *dikaiôma* as "a declaration of acquittal."

- one,<sup>185</sup>
- E2 The resultant Kingdom of Death: death reigned<sup>186</sup> through the one,<sup>187</sup>
  - E3 The greater position of those who receive abundant grace and righteousness: much more those who receive
    - G1 the abundance of grace<sup>188</sup>
    - G2 and of the gift of righteousness
  - E4 Their resultant participation in the Kingdom of Life: will reign in life
  - E5 The One through whom access to the Kingdom of Life is obtained: through the One, Jesus Christ.

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

- D1 In regard to **one act** and its universal application 5:18
  - E1 One transgression and its universal application
    - G1 Through one transgression: {18} So then as through one transgression
    - G2 Condemnation resulted upon all: there resulted condemnation to all men,
  - E2 One act of righteousness and its universal application
    - G1 One act of righteousness: even so through one act of righteousness
    - G2 The availability to all of declared righteousness resulting in life: there resulted justification of life to all men.

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<sup>185</sup> Rom. 5:17 - by the transgression of one: “transgression” is the [Dative](#) of *paráptōma* (3900), “trespass” ([Accordance](#)); “I. to fall beside or near something II. a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness 1. a sin, misdeed” ([OBU](#)). This refers to [Adam’s](#) sin in the [Garden of Eden](#).

<sup>186</sup> Rom. 5:17 - death reigned: lit., “the death reigned,” wherein “the death” (*thánatos*, 2288) looks at [Death](#) in all its aspects throughout history; “reigned” is the [Aorist](#) of *basileúō* (936), “to reign or rule as king” ([JTB](#)). Through all of life beginning from [Adam](#) and extending to the present time, death has ruled as king. I have a friend who has given up on [creationism](#) and [Flood](#) geology. He has made the statement, “In the end, science always wins.” He is dead wrong. Just when humans need science to win – at the end of life – science fails miserably. Science cannot prevent us from dying and science can give no answers whatever to what happens after death. Death reigns as king!

<sup>187</sup> Rom 5:17 - through the one: i.e., through [Adam](#).

<sup>188</sup> Rom. 5:17 - the abundance of grace: lit., “the abundance of the grace,” wherein “abundance” is *perisseía* (4050), “abundance, pre-eminence” (adapted from [OBU](#)); “the grace” is *cháris* (5485), “the free gift of good-will and forgiveness from God inhering to all who believe in the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ” ([JTB](#)).

- D2 In regard to **one man** and its cosmic effects 5:19
  - E1 As Adam's disobedience: {19} For as through the one man's disobedience
  - E2 Produced many sinners: the many were made sinners,
  - E3 So, Christ's obedience: even so through the obedience of the One
  - E4 Will produce many righteous: the many will be made righteous.

**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: {20} The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; 5:20a
- D2 In response to increased sin, He super-increased grace: but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 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: {21} so that, as sin reigned in death, 5:21a
  - E2 So, through Jesus Christ's one redemptive act, grace reigned as king through righteousness unto eternal life 5:21b
    - G1 The reign of grace: even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life
    - G2 The means of grace: through Jesus Christ our Lord.



## A4 **SANCTIFICATION: The Out-working of Righteousness in the Believer's Experience** <sup>189</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 6:1

E1 The summary-driven question: {1} What shall we say then?

E2 The context-driven question: Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? <sup>190</sup>

##### D2 The answer stated: May it never be! 6:2a

##### D3 The reason stated through yet another question: How shall we who died to sin still 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

H 1 The danger of ignorance: {3} Or do you not know

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<sup>189</sup> Romans 6:1 - 8:39 Title - Sanctification: The previous section, Justification, Rom. 3:21 - 5:21, dealt with "sin as guilt." The present section, Sanctification, 6:1 - 8:39, deals with "sin as power."

<sup>190</sup> Rom. 6:1 - Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? This question arises logically from the facts that Paul has laid out. First Paul has revealed in "The Supreme Success of Declared Righteousness in Contrast to the Defeat of Condemnation" (5:12-21). He has spoken (1) of "The *universality* of condemnation (death from sin) despite no Law" (Rom. 5:12-14); (2) of "The *superiority* of grace over condemnation" (Rom. 5:15-17); (3) of "The *similarity* of grace and condemnation" (Rom. 5:18-19) (a) "In regard to **one act** and its universal application" (Rom. 5:18), and (b) "In regard to **one man** and its cosmic effects" (Rom. 5:19); and (4) of God's super-gracious *response* to the deadly condemnation from Adam's sin (Rom. 5:20-21). The conclusion of a logically-thinking person could easily be drawn as follows, "If the more I sin, the more God's grace super-increases," "Shouldn't we be continuing (*epimenō*, [1961](#), durative, present tense action) in the sin so that the grace might increase (*pleonadzō*, [4121](#), punctiliar action)?"

There were already, perhaps, people who were arguing a conclusion that fits human logic in a surface sort of way, but actually is self-defeating. Some were anti-nomians, no doubt, but others were well-meaning Christians who looked at justification by faith as being so fraught with license that they concluded, "If more sin means more grace, then I guess I may as well sin more so I incur more grace!" Their argument essentially was, "Grace breeds lawless living; therefore grace cannot be right. I must earn my way to heaven by being more righteous." In fact, they would complain, "Salvation by grace inherently degenerates logically into licentious living." Therefore "salvation by grace through faith cannot be a correct doctrine!"

This sort of logic reminds me of some Christians who argue, "The doctrine of election cannot possibly be correct; otherwise there would be no need to evangelize!" And so they argue against Biblical teaching from pragmatic grounds simply because it does not fit into the parameters of their own soteriological or ecclesiological framework.

It is always better, of course, to argue the veracity of Scripture, and then to adjust our own practices to fit into that doctrine so clearly taught in Scripture.

- H 2 The universality of Christian baptism: that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus
    - H 3 The reality of baptism into Jesus' death: have been baptized into His death?
  - 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
      - J 1 The reality of our union with Christ in his death: {4} Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death,
      - J 2 The reality of Christ's resurrection: so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father,
      - J 3 Our obligation to walk a new life: so we too might walk in newness of life.
    - H 2 Implying, in the future, a conformity to Christ's resurrection 6:5
      - J 1 The reality of our union with Christ in His death: {5} For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death,
      - J 2 The certainty of our future union with Him in His resurrection: certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,
- E2 Believers must know the implications of baptism into Christ's death 6:6-8
  - G1 The co-crucifixion of the old nature: {6} knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, 6:6a
  - G2 The overthrow<sup>191</sup> of the body<sup>192</sup> of sin: in order that our body of sin might be done away with, 6:6b
  - G3 The cessation of serving sin: so that we would no

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<sup>191</sup> Rom. 6:6 subtitle - overthrow: "Overthrow" in the sense of paralysis.

<sup>192</sup> Rom. 6:6 subtitle - body: "Body" = the instrument through which sin works.

- longer be slaves to sin; 6:6c
- G4 Justification from sin: {7} for he who has died <sup>193</sup>is freed <sup>194</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>195</sup> with Him, 6:8
- E3 Believers must know the implications of Christ's resurrection from death 6:9-10
- G1 He need never die again: {9} knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; 6:9a
- G2 Death no longer holds power over Him: death no longer is master over Him. 6:9b
- G3 He died in respect to sin permanently: {10} For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; 6:10a
- G4 He lives in respect to God: but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 6:10b
- 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>196</sup> yourselves to be dead to sin,
- G2 Alive to God: but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- E2 Believers must not let sin continually reign as king in their bodies 6:12
- G1 The forbidding of the reign of sin: {12} Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body

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<sup>193</sup> Rom. 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>194</sup> Rom. 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>195</sup> Rom. 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).

<sup>196</sup> Rom. 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.

- G2 The prevention of obedience to the lusts of sin: so that you obey its lusts,
- E3 Believers must not continually present the parts of their bodies as weapons of unrighteousness: {13} and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments<sup>197</sup> of unrighteousness; 6:13a
- E4 Believers must decisively present themselves to God as those who from among dead ones are now living: but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead,
- E5 Believers must decisively present the parts of their bodies to God as weapons of righteousness: and your members *as* instruments<sup>198</sup> of righteousness to God. 6:13b
- D6 The answer summarized 6:14
  - E1 The summary stated: {14} For sin shall not be master<sup>199</sup> over you, 6:14a
  - E2 The summary explained: for you are not under law but under grace.<sup>200</sup> 6:14b
- C 2 **The question of believers “committing an act of sin”<sup>201</sup> in view of their freedom from Law 6:15-23**
  - D1 The question asked: {15} What then? 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

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<sup>197</sup> Rom. 6:13 - instruments of unrighteousness: The word for “instruments” is *hoplon* (3696), which really means “weapons.” See its 6 uses in John 18:3; Rom. 6:13 (twice); 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4. NASB editors retain the reading “weapons” in footnotes (in the Bible Gateway online edition), while Holman Christian Standard Bible correctly (I believe) retains “weapons” in the main text. We are, after all, in a war between God and Satan; between good and evil (see Eph. 6:10-18).

<sup>198</sup> Rom. 6:13 - instruments of righteousness: The word for “instruments” is *hoplon* (3696), which really means “weapons.” See the preceding footnote on 6:13 - instruments of unrighteousness.

<sup>199</sup> Rom. 6:14 - be master (over you): The verb is *kurieuō* (2961), meaning “to be lord over someone,” much as a slave owner (*kurios*, 2962) would order his slave around.

<sup>200</sup> Rom. 6:14 - not under law but under grace: Believers of the NT era do not operate under a regime of law, but under a regime of grace. Living under a regime of law provides no power to overcome sin. As those who are united by [Spirit baptism](#) with Jesus, we operate under a regime of grace, and we have power to do the right things. Indeed, we have an obligation to do the right things.

<sup>201</sup> Rom. 6:15-23 title - “committing an act of sin”: The verb tense is aorist, meaning an act at a point in time.

- G1 The condition asked: {16} Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience,
- G2 The reality stated: you are slaves of the one whom you obey,
- G3 The outcomes specified
  - H 1 The outcome of slavery to sin: either of sin resulting in death, 6:16a
  - H 2 The outcome of slavery to obedience: or of obedience resulting in righteousness?
- E2 The principle elaborated from experience 6:17-18
  - G1 Their past enslavement to sin: {17} But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, 6:17a
  - G2 Their heartfelt obedience to the truth of the apostles: you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 6:17b
  - G3 Their subsequent enslavement to righteousness 6:18
    - H 1 Their freedom from sin: {18} and having been freed from sin,
    - H 2 Their slavery to righteousness: you became slaves of righteousness.
- 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>202</sup> your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness,
    - G3 Past result: 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>203</sup> your members as slaves to righteousness,

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<sup>202</sup> Rom. 6:19 - presented: This was a decisive act.

<sup>203</sup> Rom. 6:19 - present: This also is to be a decisive act.

- G2 The anticipated result: 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 Their past condition: {20} For when you were slaves of sin, 6:20a
    - G2 Their freedom from righteousness: you were free in regard to righteousness. 6:20b
    - G3 The query about past benefit: {21} Therefore what benefit were you then deriving 6:21a
    - G4 Their present shame: from the things of which you are now ashamed? 6:21b
    - G5 The realized end – death: For the outcome of those things is death. 6:21c
  - E2 Present results of slavery to God 6:22
    - G1 Their present status: {22} But now having been freed from sin
    - G2 Their present slavery: and enslaved to God,
    - G3 Their present benefit: you derive your benefit,
    - G4 Their present sanctification: resulting in sanctification,
    - G5 The ultimate outcome: and the outcome, eternal life.
  - E3 The contrasting results summarized 6:23
    - G1 The wages of sin: {23} For the wages of sin is death,<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Rom. 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death: Literally, “For the wages of the sin is death.” To sin is to do something unGodlike. God is the essence of Life and Goodness. To do anything other than what God is steps into the inescapable quagmire of Death and Evil and Destruction. There are three kinds of Death. (1) The death with which we are most familiar is [Physical Death](#). The soul is separated from the body. But [Physical Death](#) is merely symptomatic of a greater and more sinister kind of death - (2) [Spiritual Death](#). [Spiritual Death](#) is separation of man from God. This can be illustrated in the Garden of Eden. The moment man sinned against God, he no longer wanted fellowship with God. In fact he hid from God (Gen. 3). [Spiritual Death](#) causes us to die physically. (3) The worst kind of death is [Second Death](#) (Rev. 20:10-15). [Second Death](#) occurs when man is separated from God forever in an abominable place called “[The Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#).” For a fuller discussion, see “[The Three Different Kinds of Death](#).”

Because “the wages of sin is death,” it is futile to think that any amount of good works can compensate for one’s sin. It is sort of like believing that if a man is dying of cancer, going around and doing good for other people will cure him of the cancer. No amount of good works will cure the man of his cancer, and he will inevitably die unless the cancer cells are removed. Only God can remove the cancer of sin from our lives. He will do that if we trust in God’s Son, who died in our place to atone for our sins (John 3:16-18).

G2 The free gift of God: but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **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

E1 The addressees of the question: {1} Or do you not know, brethren

E2 The presumption of legal familiarity: (for I am speaking to those who know the law), <sup>205</sup>

E3 The limit of legal jurisdiction: that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?

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

E1 Marriage is binding until death 7:2

G1 Marital jurisdiction for a woman is life-long: {2} For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living;

G2 Spousal death releases a wife from marital jurisdiction: but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

E2 Remarriage before death is adultery 7:3a

G1 The contemplation of a pre-death remarriage: {3} So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man,

G2 The resultant immorality: she shall be called an adulteress;

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<sup>205</sup> Rom. 7:1 - speaking to those who know the law: Literally, Paul states, "for to those knowing Law I am speaking ...." It is imperative that the reader understand that every statement Paul makes in Romans 7 is flavored with the background of "Law" (*nomos*, [3551](#)). Paul used *nomos* 74X in Romans. He uses it an astonishing 23X in Romans 7 alone! (Elsewhere in Romans, the only chapter that comes close is Romans 2:12-27, in which Paul uses *nomos* 19X.) In the early part of Romans 7 (7:1-13), Paul argues that the believer in Jesus Christ has been freed from the Law, no matter how holy and good the Law might be. But in Romans 7:14-25, Paul is arguing that, no matter how good and holy the Law of God is, there is another Law working in his body and in his flesh that makes it impossible for him to keep the Law of God. In other words, there is a "Law of sin" working in his body (even as a believer) that makes it impossible for him to keep the Law of God! The only solution available to the believer, Paul will argue in Romans 8, that gives him the power to do what God wants him to do, is the power of the Holy Spirit.

My whole point here in chapter 7, however, is that the Law of God, no matter how holy and good it is, does not provide any power to do what is right. That is true because empowerment is not the purpose of the Law. Indictment is its purpose! Christians who misunderstand this important point may fall under the belief that it is important for Christians to keep the Law now! (Adherents of [First Fruits of Zion](#), for example, believe this.) But the Law is a hopeless vehicle to achieve sanctification, even for those who are Christians. It is a ministry of condemnation not meant for Church Age believers to follow. This point cannot be emphasized strongly enough.



- E3 Remarriage after death is lawful 7:3b
  - G1 The contemplated death of her husband: but if her husband dies,
  - G2 Her freedom from the law as it relates to marriage
    - H 1 Her freedom from the law: she is free from the law,
    - H 2 Her non-indictment as an adulteress: so that she is not an adulteress
    - H 3 Despite her remarriage to another: though she is joined to another man.
- D3 The principle of jurisdiction applied 7:4-6
  - E1 The **fact** of co-death: "Believers have died to the Law through the body of Christ." 7:4a
    - G1 The application made: {4} Therefore, my brethren,
    - G2 The reality of believers' co-death to the Law: you also were made to die to the Law
    - G3 The profound effect of union with Christ: through the body of Christ,
  - E2 The **purpose** of co-death 7:4b
    - G1 To permit remarriage to the risen Christ:
      - H 1 The remarriage: so that you might be joined to another,
      - H 2 The resurrected nature of the bridegroom: to Him who was raised from the dead,
    - G2 The fruit of the union: in order that we might bear fruit for God.
  - E3 The **fruit** of the old marriage 7:5
    - G1 The time of the "old marriage": {5} For while we were in the flesh,
    - G2 The arousal of "the passions of the sins" in our "old marriage": the sinful passions, which were *aroused* by the Law,
    - G3 The persistent targets of "the passions of the sins: in our "old marriage": were at work in the members of our body

G4 The persistent, deadly offspring of “the passions of the sins” in our “old marriage”: to bear fruit for death.

E4 The **condition** after co-death 7:6

G1 Released from the Law: {6} But now we have been released from the Law, 7:6a

G2 Having died to the Law: having died to that by which we were bound, 7:6b

G3 Spiritual service: 7:6c

H 1 In newness of the Spirit: so that we serve in newness of the Spirit <sup>206</sup>

H 2 Not in oldness of the letter: and not in oldness of the letter.

## 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: {7} What shall we say then? 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

H 1 Specific statement: On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law;

H 2 Specific example: for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

G2 The action of sin under the Law – production of lust: {8} But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; 7:8a

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<sup>206</sup> Rom. Rom. 7:6 - Spirit: NASB footnote – “Or spirit”

- G3 The state of sin under the absence of Law 7:8b-9a
  - H 1 Sin was dead: for apart from the Law sin *is* dead. 7:8b
  - H 2 I was living: {9} I was once alive apart from the Law; 7:9a
- G4 The effect of the arrival of the Law 7:9b-11
  - H 1 Sin became alive: but when the commandment came, sin became alive 7:9b
  - H 2 I died: and I died; 7:9c
  - H 3 The net effect – the commandment of life resulted in my death
    - J 1 The commandment of life: {10} and this commandment, which was to result in life,
    - J 2 Was instrumental to my death: proved to result in death for me;
  - H 4 The Law turned into an instrument of death through sin 7:11
    - J 1 Sin deceived me: {11} for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me 7:11a
    - J 2 Sin slew me: and through it killed me. 7:11b
- E4 The verdict about the Law 7:12
  - G1 The Law is holy: {12} So then, the Law is holy, 7:12a
  - G2 The Commandment is holy, just, good: and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. 7:12b
- D2 The Law does not cause death -- sin does 7:13
  - E1 The Question: {13} Therefore did that which is good become a *cause of* death for me? 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: Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good,
- G2 So the commandment shows the surpassing sinfulness of sin: so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.

**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: {14} For we know that the Law is spiritual, 7:14a
- E2 The slavery to sin in the area of the flesh of the one under the Law 7:14b
  - G1 Paul's own fleshliness: but I am of flesh, <sup>207</sup>
  - G2 Paul's own slavery: sold into bondage to sin. <sup>208</sup>

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
    - H 1 Paul's perplexity: {15} For what I am doing, I do not understand;
    - H 2 Paul's inability, as a Christian, to do what He wants to do: for I am not practicing what I *would* like to do,

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<sup>207</sup> Rom. 7:14 - but I am of flesh: Better, "But I am fleshly." Sarkinos (4560) is an adjective of the nominative case, not genitive. Paul is not saying, "I am of flesh," for that would require the genitive case. Rather he is making a statement of flat-out equivalence, "but I am fleshly" .... Elsewhere, as MacArthur observed correctly, Paul has already stated (Rom. 7:5) that we believers, before we became Christians, were "in the flesh" (*sarx*, 4561), but now no longer are and that "the ones existing 'in flesh' – God – are unable to please" (Rom. 8:8).

<sup>208</sup> Rom. 7:14 - sold into bondage under sin: "Sold into bondage" translates the one Greek word, *pipraskō* (4097) (perfect participle), "having been sold." The language is of a human sold as a slave to someone (or in this case something) else. To whom or what has Paul been sold? – "under the sin." What Paul is saying is remarkable. Even though a person has become a Christian, unaided, he is powerless to resist the pull of his own fleshliness – he is yet in bondage under "the sin." "The sin" is not a reference to a particular sin (such as immorality) to which Paul is in bondage, but rather refers to "the principle of sin." It is important to observe that in Romans 14, Paul is talking about the helplessness even of a believer left to his own devices. The antidote to the believer's powerlessness to the sin principle is the Holy Spirit, which Paul will begin to discuss in great depth in chapter 8. It must be noted that in chapter 7, Paul is stating the truth that, without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, even a redeemed believer is still someone who exists as "having been sold under the (principle of) sin!"

- H 3 Paul's propensity, as a Christian, to do that which he hates: but I am doing the very thing I hate.
  - G2 The implication about the Law – it is good 7:16
    - H 1 Paul's thwarted desire as a Christian: {16}  
But if I do the very thing I do not want *to do*,
    - H 2 His agreement with the Law: I agree with the Law, *confessing* that the Law is good.  
7:16b
  - G3 The implication about the acts he is performing – it is not self, but indwelling sin at work 7:17
    - H 1 It is not Paul acting: {17} So now, no longer am I the one doing it,
    - H 2 It is the principle of indwelling sin that is acting: but sin which dwells in me.
- 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 any good in the flesh: {18}  
For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; 7:18a
    - H 2 The inability to perform desired good 7:18b-19
      - J 1 The presence of desire: for the willing is present in me, 7:18b
      - J 2 The absence of performance: but the doing of the good *is* not. 7:18c
      - J 3 His inability to perform good that he desires: {19} For the good that I want, I do not do,
      - J 4 His propensity to perform evil that he despises: but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

- G2 The restated implication about the act – it is not self, but indwelling sin at work 7:20
  - H 1 The reality of his performance of sin which he does not wish to perform: {20} But if I am doing the very thing I do not want,
  - H 2 His tacit admission of his domination, even as a Christian, by the law of sin that dwells within him! I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.
- 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
    - G1 His sad admission of evil: {21} I find then the principle<sup>209</sup> that evil is present in me,
    - G2 Contradicting his desire to do good: the one who wants to do good.
  - E2 The elaboration of the principle of conflict 7:22-23
    - G1 Paul's inner man's delight in the Law of God: {22} For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 7:22
    - G2 The principle of the Law of sin at work in the members of the body 7:23
      - H 1 His awareness of a different law within: {23} but I see a different law in the members of my body,
      - H 2 The onslaught of this different law against his mind: waging war against the law of my mind
      - H 3 The imprisoning effect of this different law: and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

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<sup>209</sup> Rom. 7:21 - principle: This is really the word law (*nomos*, [3551](#)), and should so be translated. Paul is talking about two different laws – the good Law of God, and the evil Law of sin that abides even within a redeemed believer. Paul will shortly argue (Romans 8) that only the Holy Spirit can give a Christian the power to do what God wants!

- E3 The reaction to the principle of conflict 7:24
  - G1 His cry of despair: {24} Wretched man that I am! 7:24a
  - G2 His plea for deliverance from the human body dominated by death: Who will set me free from the body of this death? 7:24b
  - G3 His gratitude for deliverance that can come only through Christ (not the Law): {25} Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! 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: So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God,
  - G2 He serves the Law of sin with his flesh: but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

### **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 {1} Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.<sup>210</sup> 8:1
  - E2 The reason for the absence of condemnation: {2} For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus<sup>211</sup> has set you free

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<sup>210</sup> Rom. 8:1 - Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus: Perhaps no sweeter words can be found in all of Scripture. For the ones who are "in the Anointed One, Jesus, there is, at the present time no condemnation. "Condemnation" is *katákrima* (2631), used "as a legal technical term for the result of judging, including both the sentence and its execution *condemnation, sentence of doom, punishment*" (Friberg). Since I have placed my trust completely in Jesus, I am under no sentence of judgment or punishment for eternity! What a relief! The absence of judgment for my sins is not because I am sinless or because I am a good person. It is because Jesus is perfect, and He perfectly paid the death penalty I was under because of all my sins. What a relief!

*Katákrima* is used but three times, all in Romans. Paul writes, "...for on the one hand the judgment (*kríma*, 2917) arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation ..." (*katákrima*) (Rom. 5:16); "So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation (*katákrima*) to all men ..." (Rom. 5:18; and then, here in Rom. 8:1.

<sup>211</sup> Rom. 8:2 - For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus: The term "law" (*nómos*, 3551) here could be translated as "principle." It is probably accurate to say that "the principle of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus" is Paul's reference to the New Covenant, which Jesus ratified at His death (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; Heb. 9:15) and made possible by His resurrection. We must remember that the New Covenant was made with the entire houses of



from the law of sin and of 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:  
{3} For what the Law could not do, weak as it was  
through the flesh, 8:3a

G2 The ability of God's Son to condemn sin in the flesh  
8:3b

H 1 The action of God: God *did*:

H 2 His sending of His Son: sending His own  
Son

J 1 in the likeness of sinful flesh

J 2 and *as an offering* for sin,

H 3 His condemnation of sin: He condemned sin  
in the flesh,

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

G1 The fulfillment of the Law: {4} so that the  
requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us,

G2 The identity of those who fulfill the Law

H 1 Negatively: who do not walk according to  
the flesh

H 2 Positively: but according to the Spirit.

E2 The comparison of the flesh and the Spirit 8:5-10

G1 In relation to orientation 8:5

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[Israel](#) and Judah (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8). Because God promised Abraham that He would bless all the families of the earth through him (Gen. 12:3), God has provided some preliminary benefits of the [New Covenant](#) to the [Church](#), which began on the Day of Pentecost with the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). But much fuller benefits of the [New Covenant](#) will be evidenced with the national conversion of [Israel](#) in connection with Christ's [Second Coming](#) (Jer. 31:31-34; Isa. 59:20-21; Rom. 11:26-27) and Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#). The fullest benefits of the [New Covenant](#) for [Israel](#), for the [Church](#), and for redeemed [Gentiles](#) who are part of neither, will take place in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#). (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

- H 1    Flesh concentrates on flesh: {5} For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, 8:5a
- H 2    Spirit concentrates on Spirit: but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 8:5b
- G2    In relation to outcome 8:6
  - H 1    The mind-set of the flesh – death: {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, 8:6a
  - H 2    The mind-set of the Spirit – life and peace: but the mind set on the Spirit is 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
      - K 1    The hostility: {7} because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God;
      - K 2    The insubordination: for it does not subject itself to the law of God,
      - K 3    The inability: for it is not even able *to do so*,
    - J 2    Unable to please God: {8} and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 8:8
  - H 2    Those in the Spirit 8:9-10
    - J 1    Identified by the indwelling Spirit 8:9
      - K 1    The essential reality: {9} However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit,
      - K 2    The assumed indwelling: if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.
      - K 3    The assumption of non-

possession of the Spirit: But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ,

K 4 The alienation from Christ: he does not belong to Him.

J 2 Defined as to state 8:10

K 1 The assumed indwelling: {10} If Christ is in you,<sup>212</sup>

K 2 The deadness of the body: though the body<sup>213</sup> is dead because of sin, 8:10a

K 3 The vitality of their spirit: yet the spirit is alive<sup>214</sup> because of righteousness. 8:10b

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

E1 The assumed condition – being indwelt by the powerful, life-giving Spirit: {11} But if<sup>215</sup> the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus<sup>216</sup> from the dead dwells in you,

E2 The life-giving corollary: He who raised Christ Jesus from

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<sup>212</sup> Rom. 8:10 - if Christ is in you: “You” is plural. Paul is speaking to all the Romans corporately. This is a first-class condition clause – he assumes Christ is in them.

<sup>213</sup> Rom. 8:10 - body: “Body” is singular. He is addressing them corporately (“you”); but he now applies his truths to each of them individually. Even though Christ is living in them corporately, yet in this life, the body of each one of them is dead on account of the presence of sin. Every Christian has a sin nature that defiles his body and eventually causes it to fail and die.

<sup>214</sup> Rom. 8:10 - spirit is alive: “Spirit” is the word *pneuma* (4151). Most frequently in this chapter *pneuma* refers to the Holy Spirit of God. Here, I would agree with the editors of the NASB – it refers to the human spirit of the individual believer, made alive by the regenerating Spirit of God.

The translation “alive” certainly captures Paul’s meaning. But “alive” is an adjective, whereas *dzōē* (2222, “life”) is a noun, not an adjective. So more accurately, “the [human] spirit is life” (on account of the righteousness that has been assigned to the believer on the basis of his having placed his faith in the crucified and risen Messiah).

<sup>215</sup> Rom. 8:11 - if: The Greek text is a first-class condition, which assumes the truth of the apodasis, the initial truth being advanced. It is true that the Holy Spirit of God the Father, the One who raised Jesus from among the dead ones, dwells within Church-Age believers.

<sup>216</sup> Rom. 8:11 - Him who raised Jesus: the reference is to God the Father, who raised Jesus from among the dead ones. God the Father raised God the Son (Jesus) from among the dead ones by means of God the Spirit. A clear reference to the cooperative activity of the Trinity acting in concert.

the dead <sup>217</sup> will also give life to your mortal bodies <sup>218</sup>

E3 through <sup>219</sup> His Spirit who dwells in you. <sup>220</sup>

## 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

G1 The non-obligation of believers – to live according to the dictates of the flesh: {12} So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—

E2 The deadly consequence of living according to the flesh: {13} for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; 8:13a

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

E1 The obligation of the believer to live by means of the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit: but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

E2 To live as sons of God 8:14-16

G1 Proven by the Spirit's leading 8:14

<sup>217</sup> Rom. 8:11 - He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead: Referring to God the Father.

<sup>218</sup> Rom. 8:11 - will also give life to your mortal bodies: God the Father will give life to the mortal bodies Church-Age believers at some time in the future. This does not happen when the believer dies. At that point, his mortal body remains in the ground to decay and return to dust. He himself, meanwhile is given a temporary “spirit body” in which to function in the heavenly spirit world. This seems clear from such passages as Luke 16:22-31, which depicts both Abraham and Lazarus, pre-Church believers, as having recognizable bodies in the afterlife; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8, which depicts Church-Age believers anticipating, when they die, access to a “building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1); and Revelation 6:9-11, which depicts post-Church-age (Tribulation saints) having been martyred, existing “underneath the altar.” They are said to exist as “souls” (Rev. 6:9, *psuchē*, [5590](#)) who, nevertheless possess sufficient corporeality (at least of a heavenly, celestial variety) to be granted robes to wear (Rev. 6:11). Ghosts or specters cannot put on a white robe.

But Paul is not here thinking of temporary bodies. He anticipates the time when God the Father will grant immortal, resurrected life to all the mortal, corruptible bodies of Church saints. This will happen at the event popularly called “the [Rapture](#).” At the point King Jesus returns to Earth to claim His bride, the Church for Himself, He will give life to the mortal bodies of all Church-Age believers who have died during the Church Age. Moreover, He will grant celestial life to the mortal bodies of those Christians who remain alive when returns. This marvelous truth is most clearly pointed out in two central passages: 1 Corinthians 15:50-53 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. If one employs the literal method of interpreting Scriptures and pieces together all the details, it makes the most sense to identify this event as the [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#) of the Church.

<sup>219</sup> Rom. 8:11 - through: NASB footnote: “One early mss reads *because of*”

<sup>220</sup> Rom. 8:11 - through His Spirit who dwells in you: The means through which God the Father will give life to the mortal bodies of Church-Age believers is the Holy Spirit, dwells within Church-Age believers.

- H 1     The criterion: {14} For all who are being led  
          by the Spirit of God,
- H 2     The truth: these are sons of God. 8:14
- G2     Accomplished by positional adoption 8:15
  - H 1     That which Church-age believers have not  
          received: {15} For you have not received a  
          spirit of slavery leading to fear again,
  - H 2     That which Church-age believers have  
          received: but you have received a spirit of  
          adoption as sons
  - H 3     The effect of family familiarity: by which  
          we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

- G3 Confirmed by the Spirit's witness: {16} The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 8:16
- E3 As heirs with Christ of God: {17} and if children, heirs also,
  - G1 heirs of God
  - G2 and fellow heirs with Christ, 8:17a
- E4 As sufferers with Christ anticipating glory 8:17b
  - G1 The assumed condition: if indeed we suffer with *Him*
  - G2 The ultimate purpose: so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

#### **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
  - E1 The present sufferings: {18} For I consider that the sufferings of this present time
  - E2 The incomparable glory: are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
- 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
    - G1 The anxious longing: {19} For the anxious longing of the creation
    - G2 The eager expectation: waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.
  - E2 The past curse upon the creation: the deprivation of purpose 8:20
    - G1 The subjection: {20} For the creation was subjected to futility,
    - G2 The unwillingness: not willingly,
    - G3 The cooperation: but because of Him who subjected

it, in hope <sup>221</sup>

- E3 The future prospect of the creation 8:21
  - G1 Future redemption: {21} that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption
  - G2 Future freedom and glory: into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 8:21
- E4 The present agony of the creation 8:22
  - G1 Groaning in the agony of slavery: {22} For we know that the whole creation groans 8:22a
  - G2 Travailing in the birth pains of the new creation: and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 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: {23} And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, 8:23a
    - G2 Based on the groaning expectation of completed adoption – the redemption of the body by resurrection 8:23b
      - H 1 Our groaning: even we ourselves groan within ourselves,
      - H 2 Our eager expectation
        - J 1 Adoption: waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons,
        - J 2 Redemption: the redemption of our body.
  - E2 The necessity of the believer's hope 8:24-25
    - G1 Hope is an essential element in salvation: {24} For in hope we have been saved, 8:24a
    - G2 Hope is incompatible with that which is visible 8:24b

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<sup>221</sup> Rom. 8:20, 21 - in hope that the creation: NASB Footnote: “Or *in hope; because the creation*”



- H 1 If one can see something, hope is irrelevant: but hope that is seen is not hope;
    - H 2 It is impossible to hope for something already visible: for who hopes for what he *already* sees?
  - G3 Hope triumphs over the invisible 8:25
    - H 1 Hope focuses on the unseen: {25} But if we hope for what we do not see,
    - H 2 Hope is upbuilding
      - J 1 It perseveres: with perseverance
      - J 2 It waits: we wait
      - J 3 It is filled with enthusiasm: eagerly for it.
- 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: {26} In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; 8:26a
      - G2 Mindful of human ignorance: for we do not know how to pray as we should, 8:26b
      - G3 Participating by groaning in human agony: but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; 8:26c
    - E2 Effective intercession 8:27
      - G1 Because of Divine communication: {27} and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, 8:27a
      - G2 Because of Divine cooperation: because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of* God. 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 content of the hope – God works together all things for good: {28} And we know that God <sup>222</sup> causes all things to work together for good 8:28a
- G2 The beneficiaries of the hope – those loving God: to those who love God, <sup>223</sup> 8:28b
- G3 The perspective of the hope – for the benefit of those called according to God's purpose: to those who are called according to *His* purpose. 8:28c
- E2 The achievement of the hope 8:29-30 - made possible by God's
- G1 Foreknowledge: {29} For those whom He foreknew, <sup>224</sup> 8:29a

<sup>222</sup> Rom. 8:28 - God: NASB Footnote: "One early ms reads *all things work together for good*"

<sup>223</sup> Rom. 8:28 - to those who love God: The literal word order and reading of the Greek text is as follows: "Moreover, we know that, to the ones loving God, all things work together for good – to the ones according to purpose being called." I do not take "the ones loving God" as restrictive of certain Christians, but as descriptive of all genuine believers. Furthermore, the final clause, "to the ones according to purpose being called," I also take as descriptive of genuine believers, not limited to a certain class of believers. It is true that all believers love God and it is true that they are called according to God's purposes (not their own). Because both these are true, "all things work together for good."

It should be pointed out that there are events and conditions in life that are not good in and of themselves. But God is so powerful and so wise He can cause everything in concert in a believer's life to work together for good.

It should also be pointed out that one primary reason God can work all things together for good in a believer's life is that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us believers with groanings too deep for words, praying for us according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26-27).

<sup>224</sup> Rom. 8:29 - foreknew: The verb is the aorist 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of *proginōskō*, [4267](#). Aorist speaks of point action. The very nature of the verb (pro), "before" – means that at some point in eternity past God knew certain people (as His own). It is used in Acts 26:5; Rom. 8:29; 11:2; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:17).

In Acts 26:5 Paul asserted before Agrippa that the Jewish leaders have known Paul for a long time. In Rom. 8:28 it means that at some time in eternity past God knew certain people as being His own. In Romans 11:2, Paul will say that God has not rejected His (Jewish) people, whom He foreknew (aorist, at a point in time). In 1 Peter 1:20, Peter says about Jesus that He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, having been manifested in the last times for your benefit. In 2 Pet. 3:17 Peter writes, "You therefore, beloved ones, knowing this ahead of time, be on your guard "so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness." Let the reader beware that sometimes *proginōskō* refers to facts that are known, but that at other times it refers to people who are known. The emphasis in Romans 8:29 is that God foreknew certain people ahead of time.

Many try to dilute this word in Rom. 8:29 by saying it means only that God knew in advance which people would respond to Him, and thus He adjusted His subsequent actions toward them accordingly. This is wrong on two counts. First, this interpretation makes God's choices subject to man's actions, and that is not what this text is saying. Second, the text does not say that God foreknew facts about people – who would and who would not accept Him; rather, the text implies that God knew certain people as His own from eternity past without any merit on their part. This Scripture (Rom. 8:29) teaches that God foreknows certain 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 implication is, therefore, that the only reason we respond to God in faith is precisely because He

## G2 Predestination 8:29b

H 1 The fact of predestination: He also predestined<sup>225</sup>

foreknew us and, as the next clause indicates, "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, dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), walking "according to the course of this world" (Eph. 2:2), walking "according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2), living "in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3), man is powerless 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 God did not take the initiative to know us and choose us and predestine us, not one of us would ever choose God! We would be powerless to do so!

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.

The Scriptures are uniform in declaring that God works all things according to the counsel of His own will (Ephesians 1:11), and yet, that every man will be forced to give an account of himself to God (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:25-29; Rom. 2:16; 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15). Both of these are true, and neither can be denied.

<sup>225</sup> Rom. 8:29 - predestined: *prooridzō* ([4309](#)): "to predetermine, foreordain" (NASHAGD). In the NASB, *prooridzō* is translated as "predestined" all six times: Acts 4:28; Rom. 8:29, 30; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11. Paul used this verb in the aorist tense, meaning that, at a point in time, God predetermined that those whom He had foreknown as His own would be conformed to the image of His Son! This is truly amazing!

It should be noted that there are five verbs in this passage, all of which occur in the aorist tense, which specifies action taking place at a point in time. These five verbs, which describe God's actions on behalf of each and every Church-Age believer, are "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, [4267](#)) (8:29); "predestined" (*prooridzō*, [4309](#)) (Rom. 8:29, 30); "called" (*kaleō*, [2564](#)) (Rom. 8:30, 30); "justified" (*dikaioō*, [1344](#)) (Rom. 8:30, 30); and "glorified" (*doxadzō*, [1392](#)) (Rom. 8:30). Since each of these verbs appears in the aorist tense (which delineates action at a point in time), and since God, being eternal, is not bound by time, from His perspective He decreed all five of these actions for every believer at some dateless point in eternity past. Because God has decreed them, all five actions are inevitable for each believer. Logically, from a human perspective, the first two occurred in the dateless past – God **foreknew** us and He **predestined** (ahead of time) that each of us would become conformed to the image of His Son. Logically, from a human perspective, God **called** each of us believers to Himself at some point during our lives here upon earth. Logically, from a human perspective, God **justified** us (declared us righteous) at the precise moment we placed our trust in God's Son, Jesus. But there is a human problem with the last verb. God has **glorified** us. That means we have been given a glorified, sin-free, immortal, resurrection body which we will inhabit for eternity. From a logical, human point of view, of course, this has not yet happened. To be glorified, we await the Rapture of the Church (1 Cor. 15:50-53; 1 Thess. 4:13-18), when we will either be resurrected or our bodies will be transformed into resurrection bodies without having to die first. But from God's point of view, all five of these verbs have already taken place (for they are all aorist tense). God **foreknew** us, **predestined** us, **called** us, **justified** us, and **glorified** us. In the vernacular, all five of these verbs are a "done deal." Finished. Accomplished. Irreversible. This is the bedrock of the Church Age believer's eternal security.

It should be noted, furthermore, that there is no leakage from this Divinely-forged chain of events. There is no individual that God **foreknew** that is not also **predestined** to become conformed to the image of God's Son. And there is no individual who is **predestined** whom God does not also **call**. And there is no individual whom God **calls** that does not become **justified** in God's sight. And there is no individual whom God has **justified** (declared righteous) that God does not also **glorify** (grant a resurrection body replete with righteousness and immortality). There is *no leakage*. There are *no casualties* along the way!

Of course I can take the reader of the New Testament to numerous passages which require faithfulness and perseverance on the part of the individual believer. And those passages are all true. Faithfulness and perseverance are required for each believer. *But the final outcome is never in doubt*, for it depends not upon our human frailty, but upon the eternal initiative and will of God! No stronger statement could possibly be made than Romans 8:29-30 regarding the inevitable progress of each believer in the mind of God from being **foreknown** to being **predestined**, to being **called**, to being **justified**, to being **glorified**. The language permits no other outcome! Praise God, from

- H 2 The focus of predestination: *to become* conformed to the image of His Son,
- H 3 The purpose of predestination: so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;
- G3 Calling: {30} and these whom He predestined, He also called; 8:30a
- G4 Justification: and these whom He called, He also justified; 8:30b
- G5 Glorification: and these whom He justified, He also glorified. 8:30c

### 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 and eternal preservation of us believers 8:31-32
  - E1 The reflective, introductory question asked: {31} What then shall we say to these things? 8:31a
  - E2 The question further answered by a question about the believer's safety 8:31b
    - G1 The premise assumed to be true: If God *is* for us, <sup>226</sup>
    - G2 The logical impossibility: who *is* against us? <sup>227</sup>
  - E3 The question answered further by yet a question 8:32
    - G1 The explanatory statement – God has already given

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whom all blessings flow!

<sup>226</sup> Rom. 8:31 - If God is for us: Literally, the text reads as follows – “If God is on our behalf,” The question being asked begins with a first-class condition, the correctness of which is assumed. It could literally be translated, “Since God is on our behalf...”

<sup>227</sup> Rom. 8:31 - who *is* against us? Paul answers the previous protasis (assumed condition which is foundational to the concluding question) – “If [since] God is on our behalf,” – with an apodasis (necessary logical conclusion, presented in the form of a question) – “Who is there who can possibly be against us?” The logic goes like this: “If God is on our side and is working perpetually and eternally for our ultimate salvation, who or what is there of any meaningful consequence who could possibly mount any significant opposition to us?” The question asked answers itself with a resounding, “NO ONE!” The implication, therefore, is this: THE BELIEVER IN JESUS IS ETERNALLY SAFE IN GOD!!! This passage proclaims through all eternity the [Eternal Security](#) of the one who believes in Jesus!

For the sake of completeness, I need to mention that the Arminian/Wesleyan/Holiness tradition, along with the [Assemblies of God](#) who grew out of it, reject the Biblical doctrine of [Eternal Security](#). (See, for example, the Position Paper of the [Assemblies of God](#) entitled, “[Assurance of Salvation](#).”) Clearly, Paul did not reject the doctrine, and is among the most articulate spokesmen on its behalf.

us the ultimate gift - His Son:

H 1 God's historical love in not sparing His own Son: {32} He who did not spare His own Son,

H 2 God's historical deliverance of His own Son to be crucified on our behalf: but delivered Him over for us all,

G2 The logical follow-up question – Would God logically refuse to give us lesser gifts necessary for our complete salvation?: how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? <sup>228</sup>

D2 The question of bringing legal charges against God's chosen ones 8:33

E1 The question asked: {33} Who will bring a charge against God's elect? <sup>229</sup>

E2 The answer given: God is the one who justifies; <sup>230</sup>

<sup>228</sup> Rom. 8:32 - freely give us all things? Implication: THE BELIEVER IN JESUS IS ETERNALLY THE RECIPIENT OF ALL GOD'S GOOD GIFTS! This passage proclaims through all eternity the Eternal Security of the one who believes in Jesus!

<sup>229</sup> Rom. 8:33 - God's elect: The word is *eklektos* (1588), an adjective, occurring here in the plural. Obviously the editors of the NASB chose not to translate the word, instead transliterating it into English. But it simply describes "chosen ones" (here in the plural). The word *eklektos* is a very unpopular word to many (especially, I have observed, certain Southern Baptists, who see this Biblical truth as a disincentive to evangelism). But these well-meaning people need to face the truth. It is true that God chooses certain people to be saved. It is an undeniable, foundational truth of Christianity even though they do not believe it to be true. If God had not chosen anyone to be saved, none ever would be. Those who reject the doctrine of election misunderstand and underestimate the deadliness of sin. Without Divine assistance, it is impossible for sinners to choose the Savior!

Here are the 22 occurrences of *eklektos* (1588) in the NT: Matt 22:14; Matt 24:22; Matt 24:24; Matt 24:31; Mark 13:20; Mark 13:22; Mark 13:27; Luke 18:7; Luke 23:35; Romans 8:33; Romans 16:13; Col 3:12; 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; 1 Peter 2:4; 1 Peter 2:6; 1 Peter 2:9; 2 John 1:1; 2 John 1:13; Rev 17:14.

The Scriptures affirm that God, from eternity past, chooses certain people to be His own. He does so out of the goodness of His own heart, not on account of any perceived merits of those whom He chooses. In fact, God chooses those who are fallen, depraved, dead in trespasses and sins. They are, in fact morally and constitutionally repugnant to Him – for they are dying because they are all sinners who deserve the eternal consequence of the Lake of Fire and Burning Sulfur (Rev. 20:11-15). The fact that God chooses any for Himself is a triumphant and eternal testimony to the goodness and generosity of God despite the abject moral culpability of man! God's choosing of some for salvation is a necessary corollary to the great, eternal truth, "For God so loved the world." How could it be argued that God is morally unfit for not choosing every human to be saved? That is like arguing for the moral culpability of the husband who chooses only one woman out of all the women in the world to be his bride! For a Glossary entry on election, go to the Glossary Entry, "Elect, Election, Chosen." For a more extensive discussion, go to God's Part in Salvation – Election.

<sup>230</sup> Rom. 8:33 - God is the one who justifies: The question goes like this – "Who is the one who, in the future, will possibly be able to bring a legal charge against the ones chosen by God?" The answer is given in the electric truth, "NO ONE! – for God is the One declaring believers righteous (present participle of *dikaōō*, 1344). The present tense is one of eternal reality. Right now and on and on throughout eternity, God is the one perpetually declaring as righteous those who have trusted in His Son. If God throughout eternity keeps declaring believers righteous, who is

- D3 The question of rendering a verdict of condemnation<sup>231</sup> 8:34
  - E1 The question: {34} who is the one who condemns?<sup>232</sup>
  - E2 The answer – Christ won’t...
    - G1 Are there offenses? Christ died for them: Christ Jesus is He who died,
    - G2 Is there need of life? Christ was raised for our benefit: yes, rather who was raised,<sup>233</sup>
    - G3 Do we need representation and influence in court? Christ is at God's own right hand: who is at the right hand of God,
    - G4 Do we in hours of transgression and weakness need a Lawyer? Christ constantly intercedes for us: who also intercedes for us.<sup>234</sup>
- D4 The question of our separation from the love of Christ 8:35-39
  - E1 The question asked: {35} Who will separate us from the love of Christ?<sup>235</sup> 8:35a
  - E2 The possibilities explored 8:35b
    - G1 Will tribulation,
    - G2 or distress,

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there who can possibly bring a charge of sinfulness against a single one of them??? The implication: THE BELIEVER STANDS ETERNALLY UNACCUSABLE BEFORE GOD! The logic is this: To accuse the ones declared righteous is to accuse the Judge who declared them righteous! This passage proclaims through all eternity the [Eternal Security](#) of the one who believes in Jesus!

<sup>231</sup> Rom. 8:34 title - The question of rendering a verdict of condemnation: See James Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary Logical and Historical*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1969, 256 pp.

<sup>232</sup> Rom. 8:34 - who is the one who condemns: Lit., “who is the one condemning?” wherein “the one condemning” is the [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *katakrinō*, 2632. It means “I. to give judgment against, to judge worthy of punishment I. to condemn ...” (excerpted from [OBU](#)). The logic of the entire verse is that Jesus won’t condemn us – He died for us, rose again for us, ascended to the right hand of the Father for us, and there is constantly interceding for us. He is our attorney for our defense! Jesus certainly won’t bring any charges against us! And if He doesn’t who is left to bring charges? The answer is, “No one!” The implication is this: IN CHRIST, THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY FREE FROM CONDEMNATION!

<sup>233</sup> Rom. 8:34 - raised: NASB Footnote: “One early mss reads *raised from the dead*.” JTB addition: See Paul’s point in Romans 5:10.

<sup>234</sup> Rom. 8:34 - intercedes: Christ’s intercession is mentioned also in John 17 and I John 2:1.

<sup>235</sup> Rom. 8:35 - Christ: NASB Footnote: “Two early mss read *God*”

- G3 or persecution,
- G4 or famine,
- G5 or nakedness,
- G6 or peril,
- G7 or sword?
- E3 The likelihood of participation confirmed: {36} Just as it is written, 8:36
  - G1 “For Your sake we are being put to death all day long;
  - G2 We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”
- E4 Super-victory assured because of Christ's act of love on our behalf 8:37
  - G1 The invincibility of our conquest: {37} But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer
  - G2 The means of our conquest: through Him who loved us.
- E5 Conclusion reached 8:38-39
  - G1 The options closed: {38} For I am convinced that (8:38a) 8:38-39a
    - H 1 neither death, 8:38b
    - H 2 nor life,
    - H 3 nor angels,
    - H 4 nor principalities,
    - H 5 nor things present,
    - H 6 nor things to come,
    - H 7 nor powers,
    - H 8 {39} nor height, 8:39a
    - H 9 nor depth,
    - H 10 nor any other created thing,



G2 The inviolability of God's love: will be able to separate us from the love of God,<sup>236</sup> 8:39b

G3 The focus of God's love: which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. 8:39c

## **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

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<sup>236</sup> Rom. 8:39 - will be able to separate us from the love of God: Implication: THE BELIEVER IS [ETERNALLY SECURE](#) IN GOD'S LOVE IN CHRIST.

- 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>237</sup> 9:16

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<sup>237</sup> Rom. 9:16 - but on God who has mercy: God's mercy is His alone to give, independent of human desire or effort.

- 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<sup>238</sup> 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 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

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<sup>238</sup> Rom. 9:18 - He hardens: the 3<sup>rd</sup> Singular Present Indicative Active of the verb *sklērúnō* (4645), "I. to make hard, harden II. metaphorically A. to render obstinate, stubborn ...." This is the active sense here. With the example of Pharaoh, God renders the hearts of some people to be obstinate and stubborn against Himself. Sadly, I know of a small number of people who once called themselves Christians, but now have turned their backs on God and Jesus. Assuming they make no changes in their lives before they die, they are among those whom God has deliberately hardened against himself. They never actually were believers in Jesus, and their hardened hearts now apparently demonstrate that. God is Sovereign, and He has the right to make some containers for honorable purposes (like a drinking glass) and others for common purposes (like a commode) (Rom. 9:21).

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>239</sup> (Isa.

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<sup>239</sup> Rom. 9:29 - Sodom ... Gomorrah: - without the election of a remnant, all Israel would be destroyed. The word translated "posterity" is the noun *spérma* ([4690](#)), "seed, offspring" ([Accordance](#)).

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 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>240</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 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>241</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,

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<sup>240</sup> Rom. 10:14-15 Title - the "universal communication" implications of righteousness by faith: 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.

<sup>241</sup> Rom. 10:16 - who has believed our report? 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."

- G2 The source of hearing: and hearing by the word of Christ.
- D2 Israel's failure was not a lack of hearing (cf. Ps. 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>242</sup> TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD." <sup>243</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?
      - 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

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<sup>242</sup> Rom. 10:18 - words: The sound is intelligible -- the term is, in Hebrew in Ps. 19:5 *milah* ([4405](#)), "word, speech, utterance" ([OBU](#)); in Greek in Rom. 10:18, *hrema* ([4487](#)) the word for *words* or *terms* or *verbal utterances* (excerpted and adapted from [OBU](#)). The book of Psalms is speaking about the message of the stars. God has communicated His creative power and craftsmanship in the stars. It is plain for all to see and understand, unless they take a biased view against God and in favor of blind chance, the false "god" of [Evolution](#).

<sup>243</sup> Rom. 10:18 - and their words to the ends of the world: 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! God has communicated His existence through the stars. If people choose not to listen, that is their fault. In Rom. 1:18-20, people earn God's wrath for refusing to decipher His message in creation -- "they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20)!

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>244</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>245</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 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

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<sup>244</sup> Rom. 10:20 - I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me: 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>245</sup> Rom. 11:1-10 Title - The present rejection of Israel is not total: **Stifler**, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

- 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>246</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?<sup>247</sup>

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;<sup>248</sup>

J 2 The holy tree: and if the root be holy, the branches are too.<sup>249</sup>

### 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

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<sup>246</sup> Rom. 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>247</sup> Rom. 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.)

<sup>248</sup> Rom. 11:16 - "The first piece of dough (firstfruits) describes the believing remnant in Israel now, Christian Jews. The "lump" or "batch" refers to the whole nation, Israel. God has consecrated both groups to Himself" ([Constable](#)).

<sup>249</sup> Rom. 11:16 - if the root be holy, the branches are too: Paul moves from a baking metaphor – dough – to a horticultural metaphor – an olive tree. The way Paul uses this metaphor, the "root" refers to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as being blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant. The "branches" refer to the nation of Israel. Paul here states that the root (the blessed patriarchs) was holy. If that be true, the branches (the individual components of the nation of Israel) are also holy.

This chapter constitutes one of the strongest defenses of the dispensational view that God has an ongoing program for the nation of Israel. [The Church has not replaced Israel](#). If God set apart Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for special blessing (they are holy), then God has just as surely set apart the nation of Israel for special blessing (they are holy). As Paul will state a few paragraphs later, "All Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26).

The foundation for Paul's statement is the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3). The Abrahamic Covenant is the foundational covenant of God's redemptive program throughout human history.

- 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, <sup>250</sup> 11:17a
- G2     The grafting in of wild olive branches (elect among the nations): and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them <sup>251</sup> 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, <sup>252</sup> 11:17c

<sup>250</sup> Rom. 11:17 - some of the branches were broken off: The branches of the olive tree that were broken off refer to non-elect Israelis, broken off from the sphere of God's blessings because they did not believe. In Paul's use of the olive tree, the natural branches refer to national Israel, and the "rich root of the olive tree" refers to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who believed and were blessed by God. The branches that were broken off refer to non-elect Israelis who do not believe. The wild olive branches that were grafted in refer to believing Gentiles. It is important to understand that the wild olive branches remain wild olive branches. They do not become natural branches. So the wild olive branches do not become Israel, either physically or spiritually. They become partakers of the rich root of the olive tree – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Since God promised that through them, all the nations of world would be blessed, it is in that way that the Gentiles participate in God's blessings by being grafted in as wild olive branches.

Not only is it not accurate to say that believing Gentiles become Israel, it is also not accurate to say that the olive tree is the Church. [Thomas Constable](#) states it this way:

... The olive tree is not the church, or the so-called the "new Israel," in which God has united Jewish and Gentile believers in one body (Eph. 3:6). This is the view of many amillennialists and covenant theologians. The branches from the "wild olive tree" (v. 24) retain their own identity as wild branches (Gentiles) even though they receive blessings that come through the Jews (e.g., the Messiah, the Scriptures, etc.). Some believe that the grafted in branches represent specifically all who profess to be Christians (i.e., Christendom), saved and unsaved alike. I prefer the view that they are Gentiles.

Another common misunderstanding of this figure is that the olive tree is a symbol of all believers throughout history: all the people of God. If the tree represents all believers, this must mean that some believing Jews have ceased to be part of the people of God. This, of course, is not true.

<sup>251</sup> Rom. 11:17 - and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them: "Paul said that God grafted Gentiles in among the Jews. They became partakers with the Jews of the blessings that come through the roots. Paul did not say that the Gentiles became part of Israel, only that they partake with Israel of the blessings of the root. This is a very important point" ([Constable](#), from a previous edition of his commentary on Romans).

The root is not Israel, but are rather the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who are prophesied to be the conduits for blessing the world through the Abrahamic Covenant, the foundational covenant of the entire Bible and of God's redemptive program for mankind. The Abrahamic Covenant promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob blessings to the Nation of Israel, but it also promised through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, blessings to all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3). It is a mistake to say believing Gentiles are grafted into Israel. They are not, but rather remain distinct entities throughout history. What is accurate is to say that believing Gentiles are grafted into the root – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the conduits of blessing – i.e. the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant.

<sup>252</sup> Rom. 11:17 - became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree: According to [Constable](#) (from a previous edition of his notes on Romans), "The rich root of the cultivated tree, Israel, probably corresponds to the Abrahamic Covenant from which all God's blessings and the very life of the nation sprang."

While I believe the Abrahamic Covenant is key to God's blessing both Israel and the Gentiles, I do not agree

- 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;<sup>253</sup> 11:18a
  - G2 Reason given - The root (the patriarchs) 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.<sup>254</sup>
- 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

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that a covenant, in the context, can be identified as "the rich root." If the branches, both the natural branches and the wild branches grafted in are people, then the root also has to refer to people, not promises made to people. So, as even Constable himself admits in the same context, "Another view is that the rich root refers to the patriarchs themselves: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." I prefer this latter view, for it is more consistent with the context. God covenanted blessings to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God covenanted, through them, to bless even the Gentile nations of the earth. God promised this to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:15-18); to Isaac (Gen. 26:1-5); and to Jacob (Gen. 28:10-15).

<sup>253</sup> Rom. 11:18 - do not be arrogant toward the branches: Tragically, the great bulk of Christianity has defied the Apostle's warning and has become arrogant toward the branches (the nation of Israel). Most of Christianity has declared Israel to be irrelevant, and even an impediment to God's blessing of the world. Most of Christianity has adopted [Replacement Theology](#), the view that the Church has replaced or superseded Israel – the view that the Church is the [New Israel](#). How arrogant, and how tragic. The vast extent of this arrogance is outlined in the book, [Future Israel](#), by Barry E. Horner.

<sup>254</sup> Rom. 11:18 - remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you: Once again, the root refers to the patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

conceited,<sup>255</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 natural branches, neither will He spare you.<sup>256</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>257</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.

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<sup>255</sup> Rom. 11:20 - conceited: The implication – Faith means that grace, not works is in operation. There can then be no pride in human merit.

<sup>256</sup> Rom. 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>257</sup> Rom. 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.

- 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 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>258</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)

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<sup>258</sup> Rom. 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)!



- 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."
    - 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>259</sup>
    - E2 Because He is the Be-All and the End-All of all things 11:36a

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<sup>259</sup> Rom. 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.

- 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.  
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>260</sup> I urge <sup>261</sup> you,

E2 The addressees: brethren,<sup>262</sup>

E3 The motivation: by the mercies <sup>263</sup> of God,

<sup>260</sup> Rom. 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 (Rom. 12:1); continually refuse to be conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2); but rather to be transformed by the renewing of the mind (Rom. 12:2).

<sup>261</sup> Rom. 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>262</sup> Rom. 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>263</sup> Rom. 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 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

- E4     The objective: to present <sup>264</sup> your bodies <sup>265</sup>
  - G1     a living <sup>266</sup>
  - G2     and holy sacrifice,
- E5     The assessment
  - G1     acceptable <sup>267</sup> to God,
  - G2     which is your spiritual <sup>268</sup> service of worship.<sup>269</sup>

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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>264</sup> Rom. 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>265</sup> Rom. 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>266</sup> Rom. 12:1 - living: *dzaō* ([2198](#)) (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>267</sup> Rom. 12:1 - acceptable: *euairestos* ([2101](#)) literally, “to God, well-pleasing.” See more comments on the same word in Rom. 12:2.

<sup>268</sup> Rom. 12:1 - spiritual: the reasonable (*logikos* - [3050](#)), rational, logical

<sup>269</sup> Rom. 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>270</sup> to this world, <sup>271</sup> 12:2a
- D3 The commitment to continual inner transformation 12:2b
- E1 The process: but be transformed <sup>272</sup>
- E2 The method: by the renewing <sup>273</sup> of your mind,
- E3 The goal: so that you may prove <sup>274</sup> what the will <sup>275</sup> of God

<sup>270</sup> Rom. 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>271</sup> Rom. 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>272</sup> Rom. 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>273</sup> Rom. 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>274</sup> Rom. 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>275</sup> Rom. 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

is,

G1 that which is good <sup>276</sup>

G2 and acceptable <sup>277</sup>

G3 and perfect. <sup>278</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>276</sup> Rom. 12:2 - good: *agathos* (18). Here, *agathos* is a neuter adjective used to describe the will of God. It is a *good* will! 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).

In the end it takes a commitment of faith and trust in God to believe that what happens in our lives is good. But if we take the three steps outlined above, we can, indeed, be assured that God’s will for us is good!

<sup>277</sup> Rom. 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>278</sup> Rom. 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>279</sup> given to me
  - E2 The scope of his communication: I say to everyone <sup>280</sup> among you
  - E3 The prohibition against inflated self-esteem: not to think more highly of himself <sup>281</sup> than he ought to think;
  - E4 The recommendation of proper self-esteem: but to think so as to have sound judgment, <sup>282</sup>
  - E5 The source of proper self-esteem: as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. <sup>283</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Rom. 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>280</sup> Rom. 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>281</sup> Rom. 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>282</sup> Rom. 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>283</sup> Rom. 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>284</sup>
    - G2 The variety of the functions of the human body's organs: and all the members do not have the same function,<sup>285</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>284</sup> Rom. 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>285</sup> Rom. 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>286</sup>  
are one body in Christ,<sup>287</sup>

G2 The interdependence of the many members of  
Christ's Body: and individually members one of  
another.<sup>288</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>289</sup> that differ

G2 The reason – God's differing distribution of grace:

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<sup>286</sup> Rom. 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>287</sup> Rom. 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>288</sup> Rom. 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>289</sup> Rom. 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>290</sup>

E2 The importance of exercising the gifts: each of us is to exercise them accordingly:<sup>291</sup> 12:6b-8

G1 Of prophecy according to faith: if prophecy,<sup>292</sup>

<sup>290</sup> Rom. 12:6 - gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: All Christians have been gift 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>291</sup> Rom. 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>292</sup> Rom. 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>293</sup> 12:6b

G2 Of ministry (service): if service, in his serving;<sup>294</sup>  
12:7a

G3 Of teaching: or he who teaches, in his teaching;<sup>295</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>293</sup> Rom. 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>294</sup> Rom. 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 *serving*, *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 *serving* (*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 *serving* (*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>295</sup> Rom. 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 earlier

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>296</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>297</sup> be

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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>296</sup> Rom. 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>297</sup> Rom. 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>298</sup>

G2 The command of discerning love<sup>299</sup>

H 1 Fleeing moral evil: Abhor what is evil;<sup>300</sup>

H 2 Adhering to moral good: cling to what is good.<sup>301</sup>

E2 Family-brotherly love: Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;<sup>302</sup> 12:10a

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<sup>298</sup> Rom. 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>299</sup> Rom. 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>300</sup> Rom. 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>301</sup> Rom. 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>302</sup> Rom. 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”. 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!

- E3 Reciprocal honoring: give preference to one another in honor;<sup>303</sup> 12:10b
- D2 Serving intensely 12:11
  - E1 Unslothful zeal: not lagging behind in diligence,<sup>304</sup>
  - E2 Burning inner drive: fervent in spirit,<sup>305</sup>
  - E3 Serving the Master: serving the Lord;<sup>306</sup>
- D3 With a positive, prayerful attitude 12:12
  - E1 Rejoicing in hope for the present and future: rejoicing in hope,<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Rom. 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 *timē* ([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>304</sup> Rom. 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>305</sup> Rom. 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>306</sup> Rom. 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>307</sup> Rom. 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>308</sup>
- E3 Constantly praying: devoted to prayer,<sup>309</sup>
- D4 Helping others 12:13
  - E1 Materially, financially: contributing to the needs of the saints,<sup>310</sup>
  - E2 Opening up one's home: practicing hospitality.<sup>311</sup>
- D5 Upbuilding others with one's speech 12:14-15
  - E1 Blessing one's persecutors 12:14

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<sup>308</sup> Rom. 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>309</sup> Rom. 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>310</sup> Rom. 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>311</sup> Rom. 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 from *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>312</sup>
- G2 bless and do not curse.<sup>313</sup>
- E2 Rejoicing with the overjoyed: Rejoice with those who rejoice,<sup>314</sup> 12:15a
- E3 Sharing the sorrow of those in tears: and weep with those who weep.<sup>315</sup> 12:15b
- D6 Upbuilding others with one's realistic humility 12:16

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<sup>312</sup> Rom. 12:14 - Bless those who persecute 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 Rom. 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>313</sup> Rom. 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>314</sup> Rom. 12:15 - rejoice with those who rejoice: Rejoice is the present infinitive of *chairo* (5463). We are “to rejoice continually”. “Those who rejoice” translates the present plural participle of *chairo*. 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>315</sup> Rom. 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>316</sup>
- E2     The forbidding of arrogance: do not be haughty in mind,<sup>317</sup>
- E3     The command of humble association: but associate with the lowly.<sup>318</sup>
- E4     The command of humble self-esteem: Do not be wise in your own estimation.<sup>319</sup>

<sup>316</sup> Rom. 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 imperative 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>317</sup> Rom. 12:16 - do not be haughty in mind: Haughty translates the adjective *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>318</sup> Rom. 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>319</sup> Rom. 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

**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>320</sup> 12:17a
- D2 Foresight – Plan to be good: Respect<sup>321</sup> what is right<sup>322</sup> in the sight of all men. 12:17b
- D3 Lifestyle – Seek peace 12:18
  - E1 The contingency: If possible,<sup>323</sup> so far as it depends on you,
  - E2 The goal: be at peace with all men.<sup>324</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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Murray, *Romans*, Vol. II, p. 137.

<sup>320</sup> Rom. 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>321</sup> Rom. 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>322</sup> Rom. 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>323</sup> Rom. 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>324</sup> Rom. 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>325</sup> beloved,

G2 The command to yield to God's wrath: but leave room for the wrath of God,<sup>326</sup>

G3 The documented assurance: for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> Rom. 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>326</sup> Rom. 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>327</sup> Rom. 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. *shillēm* ([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, [c] 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 [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>328</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>329</sup>

## D5     General policy: Defeat evil with good 12:21

## E1     The prohibition against allowing oneself to be controlled by

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

<sup>328</sup> Rom. 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](#)).

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 (Matt. 5:39). (4) If anyone sues you for your shirt, let him have your cloak also (Matt. 5:40). (5) If a Roman soldier forces you to help carry his baggage for one mile, carry it for him another (Matt. 5:41). (6) Give to the one who wishes to borrow from you (Matt. 5:42). (7) Love your enemies and pray for them (Matt. 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 (Matt. 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? (Matt. 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 (Matt. 5:48)!

<sup>329</sup> Rom. 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.



evil: Do not be overcome by evil,<sup>330</sup>

E2 The **command** to control evil with good: but overcome evil with good.<sup>331</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>332</sup> 13:1a

<sup>330</sup> Rom. 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 *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>331</sup> Rom. 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 to 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>332</sup> Rom. 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

D2 The **reasons** for subjection 13:1b, c

- E1 All governmental authorities are from God: For there is no authority except from God,<sup>333</sup> 13:1b
- E2 Existing governmental authorities have been pre-ordained by God: and those which exist are established by God.<sup>334</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>335</sup> 13:2a

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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).

(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>333</sup> Rom. 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>334</sup> Rom. 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>335</sup> Rom. 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 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 flaunted. Again, Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:17-29). The Council eventually flogged them before releasing them. (Acts 5:33-40). Ultimately the Apostle James paid with his life (Acts 12:1-2), and Peter almost did also (Acts 12:3-11). 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 Boissin, 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. Boissin 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 Boissin's legal fees or his seven years of emotional duress. Moreover, the law remains on the books. (See [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



- E2 Those who resist receive judgment: and they who have opposed will receive condemnation <sup>336</sup> upon themselves. 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>337</sup>
      - H 2 Co-operate with the government's fear-principle 13:3b
        - J 1 Do you want to have no fear of authority? <sup>338</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>339</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; 13:4b
      - H 2 The instrument of fear - capital punishment:

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was perceived to be a tyrannical U. S. Government? There are no easy answers!

<sup>336</sup> Rom. 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.

<sup>337</sup> Rom. 13:3 - good behavior, but for evil: Literally, “Rulers are not a fear to the good work but to the evil.”

<sup>338</sup> Rom. 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>339</sup> Rom. 13:4 - good: The government authority is a servant of God to you to encourage good.

for it does not bear the sword <sup>340</sup> for nothing;  
13:4c

H 3 The function of the government authority in fear -- wrath: for it is a minister of God, an avenger <sup>341</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>342</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> Rom. 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 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>341</sup> Rom. 13:4 - avenger: The government authority is God's servant to avenge God's wrath against the one practicing evil.

<sup>342</sup> Rom. 13:6 - For rulers are servants of God: There is reassurance for a Christian who is paying his taxes that his payment of taxes is 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?

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

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>343</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

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<sup>343</sup> Rom. 13:11 - salvation: NASB note: *Or our salvation is nearer than when*

- 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****C 1    The Principle of Non-Judgmental Acceptance 14:1-13a <sup>344</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>345</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>346</sup>
  - E3    The command to refrain from mutual judgment 14:3a
    - G1    The command to the tolerant: Let not him who eats

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<sup>344</sup> Rom. 14:1-13a Subtitle – The Principle of Non-Judgmental Acceptance: 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>345</sup> Rom. 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>346</sup> Rom. 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.

- regard with contempt <sup>347</sup> him who does not eat,
- G2     The command to the restrictive: and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats,<sup>348</sup>
- D2     The reasons for mutual acceptance 14:3b-12
- E1     Because God has accepted the (tolerant) brother: for God has accepted him.<sup>349</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>350</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>351</sup>
- H 2     for the Lord is able to make him stand.
- G3     The necessity of individual decision 14:5

<sup>347</sup> Rom. 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.

<sup>348</sup> Rom. 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>349</sup> Rom. 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>350</sup> Rom. 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>351</sup> Rom. 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.

- H 1 The restrictive view of one: One man regards<sup>352</sup> one day above another,
- 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>353</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.

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<sup>352</sup> Rom. 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 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>353</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.



- 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
    - 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>354</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)

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<sup>354</sup> Rom. 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.

H 1 “As I live, says the Lord; every knee shall bow to Me,

H 2 “and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

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>355</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>356</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>357</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>358</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

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<sup>355</sup> Rom. 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>356</sup> Rom. 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>357</sup> Rom. 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 and of itself. That is the correct, and therefore preferred doctrinal position (see 1 Timothy 4:3-5).

<sup>358</sup> Rom. 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.

- H 1 The unfeeling use of liberty: For if because of food your brother is hurt,<sup>359</sup>
- H 2 The absence of love in one's lifestyle: you are no longer walking according to love.<sup>360</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>361</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>362</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>363</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Rom. 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>360</sup> Rom. 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>361</sup> Rom. 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>362</sup> Rom. 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>363</sup> Rom. 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>364</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>365</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>366</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>367</sup>
    - H 2 but they are evil <sup>368</sup> for the man who eats and

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<sup>364</sup> Rom. 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>365</sup> Rom. 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>366</sup> Rom. 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>367</sup> Rom. 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>368</sup> Rom. 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>369</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>370</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>371</sup> 14:22b

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<sup>369</sup> Rom. 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>370</sup> Rom. 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>371</sup> Rom. 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>372</sup>  
14:23
- J 1     Because he is unable to believe:  
because his eating is not from faith;<sup>373</sup>  
14:23a
- J 2     The absence of faith is sin: and  
whatever is not from faith is sin.<sup>374</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>375</sup> ought to bear the weaknesses<sup>376</sup>  
of those without strength<sup>377</sup> 15:1a
- E2     The strong ought not to live to please themselves: and not

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<sup>372</sup> Rom. 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>373</sup> Rom. 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>374</sup> Rom. 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>375</sup> Rom. 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>376</sup> Rom. 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>377</sup> Rom. 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>378</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>379</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>378</sup> Rom. 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>379</sup> Rom. 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>380</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>381</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>382</sup> 15:7a

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

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<sup>380</sup> Rom. 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>381</sup> Rom. 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>382</sup> Rom. 15:7 - accept one another: "Accept" (plural imperative of *proslambano*, [4355](#)) is another in a series of imperatives. Paul used *proslambano* also in Rom. 14:1 ("accept the one who is weak in the faith") and Rom. 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" (Rom. 14:1). (2) "The one who eats **is not to regard with contempt** the one who does not eat" (Rom. 14:3). (3) "...the one who does not eat **is not to judge** the one who eats" (Rom. 14:3). (4) "Each person **must be fully convinced** in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5). (5) "...**let us not judge** one another anymore" (Rom. 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" (Rom. 14:13). (7) "**Do not destroy** with your food him for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14:15). (8) "Therefore **do not let** what is for you a good thing **be spoken of as evil**" (Rom. 14:16). (9?) "So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another" (Rom. 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" (Rom. 14:20). (11) "The faith which you have, **have** as your own conviction before God" (Rom. 14:22). (12) "Each of us **is to please** his neighbor ..." (Rom. 15:2). (13) Therefore, **accept** one another" (Rom. 15:7).



12

- 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>383</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>384</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Rom. 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. 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”. How tragic!

<sup>384</sup> Rom. 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

15:8b

- G2 For the nations: and for the Gentiles <sup>385</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>386</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>387</sup> 15:10 (cf. Deut.

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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). 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](#) and [Characteristics of the Millennium](#). Read the Glossary Entry concerning the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). This URL also links to a more extensive discussion

<sup>385</sup> Rom. 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>386</sup> Rom. 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>387</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.

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>388</sup> PRAISE HIM.”

G4 The prediction by Isaiah of Jesse's offspring to rule the nations 15:12 (cf. Isaiah 11:10) <sup>389</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>390</sup>

J 2 AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, <sup>391</sup>

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 was always God's plan to grant “[born in Zion](#)” status to multitudes of Gentiles!

<sup>388</sup> Rom. 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>389</sup> Rom. 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](#)”.

<sup>390</sup> Rom. 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>391</sup> Rom. 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; and His resting place will be glorious.” It is eminently clear that today, the earth is not full of the knowledge of the

- H 2     Messiah as being the hope of the nations: “IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE.”<sup>392</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>393</sup> fill you with all
- G1     joy
- G2     and peace in believing,
- E2     that you may abound in hope<sup>394</sup> by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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>392</sup> Rom. 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>393</sup> Rom. 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>394</sup> Rom. 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 all joy and peace in believing so that they will abound in the hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13).

**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>395</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>396</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 of God, <sup>397</sup> 15:16b

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<sup>395</sup> Rom. 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>396</sup> Rom. 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 time 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).

<sup>397</sup> Rom. 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

- G3 His acceptable offering to God – the nations: that my offering of the Gentiles <sup>398</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>399</sup>
      - H 2 In wonders (awe-producing miracles): and

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occurrences of *euaggelion* in the book of Romans.

<sup>398</sup> Rom. 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>399</sup> Rom. 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 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).



## 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>400</sup> 15:19c
- G6 Their function – the fulfillment of the gospel of Christ: I have fully preached<sup>401</sup> the gospel of Christ.<sup>402</sup> 15:19d

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<sup>400</sup> Rom. 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>401</sup> Rom. 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>402</sup> Rom. 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.

### 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>403</sup> not where Christ was already named,<sup>404</sup> 15:20a
- D2 His *purpose* – to avoid building on another's foundation: that I might not build upon another man's foundation;<sup>405</sup> 15:20b
- D3 His *motive* – to fulfill Scripture – Those untold about Him will see and understand: but as it is written,<sup>406</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

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<sup>403</sup> Rom. 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>404</sup> Rom. 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, Paul had never visited them. He is explaining his absence.

<sup>405</sup> Rom. 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>406</sup> Rom. 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](#).”



reason I have often been prevented from coming to you;<sup>407</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 Spain<sup>408</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>409</sup> 15:26-27a
- H 1    for the poor

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<sup>407</sup> Rom. 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).

<sup>408</sup> Rom. 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>409</sup> Rom. 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).

- 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>410</sup> 15:27b
  - 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

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<sup>410</sup> Rom. 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 amillennialists say, these promises will be fulfilled in Christ's spiritual, political kingdom here on this present earth. See "[Characteristics of the Millennium](#)."

- E1 For his protection from disobedient Jews: that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea,<sup>411</sup> 15:31a
- E2 For the acceptance of the collection by the Jewish saints in Jerusalem: and that my service for Jerusalem may prove 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>412</sup> 16:1a
  - E2 As a servant in the church at Cenchrea: who is a servant <sup>413</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Rom. 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!

<sup>412</sup> Rom. 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.

**Note:** For a complete listing of names in Romans 16, please go to Appendix I at the end of the Document.

<sup>413</sup> Rom. 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

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
  - 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

D1 Priscilla and Aquila: Greet <sup>414</sup> Prisca and Aquila, <sup>415</sup> 16:3-5

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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.

<sup>414</sup> Rom. 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](#)). All the instances of "Greet" (*aspodzomai*, [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 *aspodzomai*) when passing along greetings from others to the Romans. There are 21 occurrences of some form of *aspodzomai* ([782](#)) in Romans 16!

<sup>415</sup> Rom. 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 (Rom. 16:9) and Timothy (Rom. 16:21) also as his fellow-workers. Here is a brief history of the couple. Dates are derived from the Ryrie 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

- 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,
  - G2 but also all the churches of the Gentiles;<sup>416</sup>
- E3 (Greet also) the church in their home: also greet the church that is in their house.<sup>417</sup> 16:5a
- D2 Epaphroditus – beloved first convert in Asia: Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert<sup>418</sup> to Christ from Asia. 16:5b

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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](#).”

<sup>416</sup> Rom. 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>417</sup> Rom. 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 Rom. 16:15 for reference to another probable house church, though that term is not there used.

<sup>418</sup> Rom. 16:5 - first convert: Epaphroditus 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, Epaphroditus had, since his conversion, moved from Asia to Rome. Paul called him “my beloved” (*agapetos*, [27](#)). MacArthur (in his commentary on Romans) hypothesizes that Epaphroditus 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).

- D3 Mary – hard worker for them: Greet Mary, who has worked hard <sup>419</sup> for you. 16:6
- D4 Andronicus and Junias: Greet Andronicus and Junias,<sup>420</sup> 16:7
- E1 Relatives: my kinsmen <sup>421</sup>
- E2 Fellow-prisoners: and my fellow prisoners,<sup>422</sup>
- E3 Well known by the Apostles: who are outstanding among

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<sup>419</sup> Rom. 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*, [2041](#)) 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>420</sup> Rom. 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.

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).” 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 original [apostles](#) (see James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p.. 246).

<sup>421</sup> Rom. 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>422</sup> Rom. 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, *sunaiichmalotos*, [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.



the apostles,<sup>423</sup>

- E4 Long-time Christians: who also were in Christ before me.<sup>424</sup>
- D5 Ampliatus – beloved of Paul: Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the 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>425</sup> in Christ. 16:10
- D8 Those of the household of Aristobulus: Greet those who are of the *household*<sup>426</sup> of Aristobulus. 16:10

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<sup>423</sup> Rom. 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 Rom. 16:7 for a further discussion of Andronicus and Junias.

<sup>424</sup> Rom. 16:7 - in Christ before me: James Stifler (*The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 246) comments, "This note, together with that about Epaphroditus 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).

<sup>425</sup> Rom. 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>426</sup> Rom. 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).

- D9 Herodion (relative) and those of Narcissus' household who are Christians 16:11
- E1 Greet Herodion, my kinsman.<sup>427</sup>
- E2 Greet those of the *household* of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.<sup>428</sup>
- D10 Tryphaena and Tryphosa ("presently working hard in the Lord"): Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord.<sup>429</sup> 16:12a
- D11 Persis 16:12b
- E1 Beloved: Greet Persis the beloved,<sup>430</sup>
- E2 Very hard worker in the Lord: who has worked hard<sup>431</sup> in the Lord.
- D12 Rufus ("chosen in the Lord") and his ("motherly") mother: Greet

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<sup>427</sup> Rom. 16:11 - Herodion, my kinsman: See the note on Andronicus and Junias (16:7).

<sup>428</sup> Rom. 16:11 - Greet those who are of the *household* of Narcissus, 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 Lord." 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 Lord", meaning, "in Christ." Presumably only a portion of Narcissus' household were Christians.

<sup>429</sup> Rom. 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 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>430</sup> Rom. 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 (Stiffler, p. 248). To the contrary, he compliments her 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 Lord."

<sup>431</sup> Rom. 16:12 - worked hard: See the previous footnote on Persis (16:12).



Rufus,<sup>432</sup> a choice<sup>433</sup> man in the Lord, also his mother and mine.  
16:13

D13 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas<sup>434</sup> and the brethren with them. 16:14

D14 Greet Philologus and Julia,<sup>435</sup> Nereus and his sister,<sup>436</sup> and Olympas<sup>437</sup> and all the saints who are with them. 16:15

D15 Each other: Greet one another with a holy kiss.<sup>438</sup> 16:16a

<sup>432</sup> Rom. 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>433</sup> Rom. 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>434\*\*\*</sup> Rom. 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.

<sup>435</sup> Rom. 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 Rom. 16:15. Presumably they were husband and wife (see the distinction in the next pair of names). "The scribes of C\* F G<sup>BT</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>436</sup> Rom. 16:15 - Nereus and his sister: Nereus is never mentioned elsewhere. They came from the same community of believers as the others in Rom. 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>437</sup> Rom. 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 Rom. 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 Rom. 16:5), but occasionally fellowshipped 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>438</sup> Rom. 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

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>439</sup> 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>440</sup> 16:19

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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>439</sup> Rom. 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 (*dichostasia*, [1370](#)) (Rom. 16:17).

(2) They stake out traps (*skandalon*, [4625](#)) to deceive and ensnare the unsuspecting.

(3) They operate outside of the teaching (*didachē*, [1322](#)) of the apostles which the Romans had learned.

(4) They do not serve as slaves (*douleuō*, [1398](#)) of our Lord Christ (Rom. 16:18).

(5) Rather, they serve as slaves of their own appetites (*koilia*, [2836](#)).

(6) They use smooth talk (*chrēstologia*, [5542](#)) and flattery (eulogía, [2129](#)) 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 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>440</sup> Rom. 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 he wrote to the church at Corinth, he gave them a brief commendation (1 Cor. 1:1-9), but 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).

- 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>441</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
  - E1 Timothy <sup>442</sup> my fellow worker greets you,

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<sup>441</sup> Rom. 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, [Notes on Romans](#)).

<sup>442</sup> Rom. 16:21 - Timothy: Timothy, whom Paul found in Lystra on his second missionary journey, appears several times in the Acts narrative: (Acts 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 (Rom. 16:3). (2) Paul asked the Romans to greet Urbanus, “the fellow worker of us” (Rom. 16:9). (3) “Timothy, the fellow worker of me, greets you” (Romans) (Rom. 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 (Rom. 16:6), Tryphaena and Tryphosa (Rom. 16:12), and Persis (Rom. 16:12).

- E2      and so do Lucius<sup>443</sup> and Jason<sup>444</sup> and Sosipater,<sup>445</sup> my kinsmen.<sup>446</sup>
- D2      Tertius the letter writer: I Tertius,<sup>447</sup> who write this letter, greet you in the Lord. 16:22
- D3      Gaius ("the host of Paul and of all the church"): Gaius,<sup>448</sup> host to me

<sup>443</sup> Rom. 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>444</sup> Rom. 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>445</sup> Rom. 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>446</sup> Rom. 16:21 - kinsmen: There are six who are identified as Paul's kinsmen (*suggenes*, 4773): Andronicus and Junias (Rom. 16:7), Herodion (Rom. 16:11), and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater here (Rom. 16:21). I take it they are actual relatives, not merely fellow Jews. See the note on Andronicus and Junias (Rom. 16:7).

<sup>447</sup> Rom. 16:22 - Tertius: A Latin personal name meaning "Third" (perhaps "Third [son]" - so *Holman Bible Dictionary* (HBD). Somewhere I have heard that Tertius (Rom. 16:22) and Quartus (Rom. 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. 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)."

<sup>448</sup> Rom. 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.

and to the whole church, greets you. 16:23a

D4 Erastus (the city treasurer) and Quartus (the brother): Erastus,<sup>449</sup> the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus,<sup>450</sup> the brother. 16:23b

**C 5 For the Romans to be continual recipients of the grace of the Lord Jesus:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.<sup>451</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

(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>449</sup> Rom. 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](#):

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>450</sup> Rom. 16:23 - Quartus, the brother: See the note on Tertius, 16:22.

<sup>451</sup> Rom. 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 Rom. 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 Rom. 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.

- 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>452</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 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>453</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>454</sup> **16:27c**

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<sup>452</sup> Rom. 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). This note is no longer valid. Here is the [same passage exegeted by Constable in 2024](#).

<sup>453</sup> Rom. 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>454</sup> Rom. 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 Cenchrea 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



### Appendix 1: Names in Romans 16

This appendix lists those greeted or greeting or otherwise mentioned by name in Romans 16. For those of you are keeping score (!), this list is segregated by gender:

Men	Indeterminate	Women
Aquila. 16:3 Epaenetus. 16:5 Andronicus. 16:7 Ampliatius. 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.)

### Appendix 2: The Nature of Baptism in Romans 6:1-10

1. Note: An indeterminate number of reasons why the baptism under discussion here is "Spirit baptism", not "water baptism" have been borrowed from J. Dwight Pentecost, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary. If memory serves me correctly, I culled his views from notes I took from his class on the Book of Romans many decades ago.
  - a. No water is mentioned.
  - b. βαπτίζω does not necessarily require water as the agent (1 Cor. 10:2; 12:13; 15:29).
  - c. This is real death here, not a picture of death.
  - d. Romans 6:1-6 is the Divine perspective, not personal experience.
  - e. Water baptism is prominent in Acts (the external is emphasized), whereas Spirit baptism is emphasized in the epistles (the internal is emphasized).
  - f. The only baptism that is said to place us in Christ is the Spirit's baptism (1 Cor. 12:13).



- g. Colossians 2:12 is a parallel passage and it clearly speaks of Spirit baptism. ??
- h. A mere outward ordinance has never been a deterrent to sin.
- i. Outward rituals can only **mirror**, but can never **achieve** inward spiritual realities (JTB).

## 2. Arguments for Water Baptism and against Spirit Baptism

- a. The word "Spirit" (*pneuma*, 4151) is never once used in Romans 6.
- b. One might assume that, when the verb baptize (*baptidzō*, 907) occurs by itself without any qualifier, such as "Spirit" (*pneuma*, 4151), one would normally think of baptizing by means of water.

## 3. Arguments for Spirit Baptism and against Water Baptism

- a. How can a mere rite accomplish a spiritual reality?
    - i. 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!
    - ii. There are many different kinds of baptism in Scripture. The chief meaning is one of identification:
    - iii. Jesus' baptism (Matt. 20:3) evidently spoke of His coming crucifixion. No water here!
      - (1) The Israelites were baptized into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2) at Dead Sea. Only ones who got wet were the dead Egyptians!
  - b. 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)
  - c. Water baptism in the New T. follows Spirit Baptism (Acts 10:47, 48)
  - d. 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)
4. Here are a list of passages, all of which, in my opinion, convey the idea of Spirit Baptism as opposed to water baptism.
- a. Matthew 3:11. John the Baptist speaking: "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
  - b. Mark 1:8. John the Baptist speaking: "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
  - c. Luke 3:16. John the Baptist speaking: John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

- d. John 1:33. John the Baptist speaking: “I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’”
  - e. Acts 1:4-5. Jesus speaking: <sup>4</sup>Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”
  - f. Acts 11:15-16. Peter speaking: <sup>15</sup>“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup>“And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”
  - g. Romans 6:3-4. Paul writing: <sup>3</sup>Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
  - h. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. Paul writing: <sup>12</sup>For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup>For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
  - i. Galatians 3:26-27. Paul writing: <sup>26</sup>For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup>For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.
5. Conclusion: For the reasons given above, I maintain that baptism in Romans 6:1-10 is Spirit Baptism as identified by John the Baptist (in Matthew 3:11-13; Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:16-17; John 1:32-34) and as identified by Paul (in 1 Cor. 12:13).

## EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

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