

ROMANS

Part 1: Romans 1:1 - 8:39

[Link to Romans, Part 2](#)

Romans 9:1 - 16:27

An Expanded Analysis based on the [New American Standard Version, 1995 Edition](#)

"GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS"

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘BUT THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.’”
Romans 1:16-17

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

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ROMANS

"GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS"

A1 INTRODUCTION 1:1-17

B 1 Paul's Salutation 1:1-7

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

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

D2 Apostle: called *as* an apostle, ² 1:1b

¹ 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](#).

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

³ 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”).

⁴ 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.]

⁵ 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?](#)”

⁶ Rom. 1:2 - holy Scriptures: Paul will document, in the course of this letter, OT Scriptures that authenticate Jesus as the [Messiah](#).

⁷ 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 ⁸ 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 ⁹ 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 ¹⁰ 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 ¹¹ and

⁸ 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.

⁹ Rom. 1:4 - by the: NASB note: Or *as a result of*

¹⁰ 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).

¹¹ 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

apostleship¹²

H 2 The purpose of his apostleship: to bring about the obedience of faith¹³ among all the Gentiles¹⁴ 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 called¹⁵ 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.

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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!

¹⁵ 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 ¹⁶ 1:7a

D3 In Rome: in Rome,

D4 Called holy: called *as* saints: ¹⁷

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

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](#))).

¹⁶ 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](#)).

¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

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,¹⁹
 - 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

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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 ²⁰ 1:14

E1 Of any language: ²¹ both to Greeks and to barbarians, ²²

E2 Of any culture: both to the wise and to the foolish. ²³

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

²⁰ Rom. 1:14 - under obligation: NASB note: A literal translation: *debtor*

²¹ Rom. 1:14 subtitles - language, culture: Credit to James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 27.

²² 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.”

²³ 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 ²⁴ 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

²⁴ 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,²⁵

G4 The universal culpability: so that they are without excuse.²⁶

²⁵ 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,

¹The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. ²Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. ³There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. ⁴Their 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

²⁶ 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 ²⁷ 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, ²⁸

²⁷ Rom. 1:21 - honor: NASB note: A literal translation: *glorify*

²⁸ 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 ²⁹ in the form of
- H 1 corruptible man
- H 2 and of birds
- H 3 and four-footed animals
- H 4 and crawling creatures.³⁰

²⁹ 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](#).

³⁰ 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 ³¹
 - G2 The area of judgment
 - H 1 in the lusts of their hearts
 - H 2 to impurity, ³²
 - G3 The result of judgment: so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

³¹ 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.”

³² 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,³³
 - G2 They worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator:
 - H 1 and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,³⁴
 - 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;³⁵ (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

³³ 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.

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ 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.³⁶ 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,³⁷
 - E2 The result of the giving over 1:28b-32

³⁶ 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.

³⁷ 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: ²⁹“being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips, ³⁰slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; ³²and 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 ³⁸ 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 ³⁹ to those who practice

³⁸ 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!

³⁹ 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 ⁴⁰ 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 ⁴¹

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.

⁴⁰ 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.

⁴¹ 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 ⁴² of God,

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!

⁴² 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: ⁴³ 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 ⁴⁴ 2:7a
 - G2 Their quest: seek ⁴⁵
 - 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,

⁴³ 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.

⁴⁴ 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).

⁴⁵ 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,⁴⁶
 - G3 The universal applicability

⁴⁶ 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 Law⁴⁷ will also perish⁴⁸ 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 Law⁴⁹ will be judged by the Law;⁵⁰

⁴⁷ 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.

⁴⁸ 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.

⁴⁹ 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.

⁵⁰ 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,⁵¹
 - G2 Only “doers” of Law will be declared righteous: but the doers of the Law will be justified.⁵²
- 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

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.

⁵¹ 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.”

⁵² 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,⁵³

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

⁵³ 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.⁵⁴ 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

⁵⁴ 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: {29} But 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 oracles⁵⁵ of God.

⁵⁵ 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 ⁵⁶ 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, ⁵⁷
- G3 The expected response: their unbelief will not nullify ⁵⁸ 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: ⁵⁹ as it is written,

⁵⁶ 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!

⁵⁷ 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."

⁵⁸ 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.

⁵⁹ 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 ⁶⁰ 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? ⁶¹
 - 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? ⁶²

⁶⁰ 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.

⁶¹ 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.

⁶² 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?⁶³ 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"?⁶⁴
 - G3 The refutation by way of their judgment: Their condemnation is just.⁶⁵ 3:8b

⁶³ 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!

⁶⁴ 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.

⁶⁵ 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; ⁶⁶

C 2 The Scriptural documentation of universal condemnation: {10} as it is written, ⁶⁷ (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; ⁶⁸ 3:10

E2 None seek God 3:11

G1 {11} THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,

G2 THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ⁶⁹

E3 All have turned away from God 3:12

G1 All have turned from God: {12} ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, ⁷⁰

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

⁶⁶ 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*.)

⁶⁷ Rom. 3:10 - as it is written: 3:10-12 quotes Psalm 14:1-3; Psalm 53:1-3.

⁶⁸ Rom. 3:10 - none righteous, not even one: Paul rather loosely quotes Ps. 14:1c; 53:1c: "There is no one who does good."

⁶⁹ Rom. 3:11 - none who understands ... who seeks for God: Paul recites the sense of Ps. 14:2b; 53:2b.

⁷⁰ 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,⁷¹
 - 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,⁷² 3:13a
 - G2 Their deceiving **tongues**: WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,”⁷³ 3:13b
 - G3 Their **venomous** lips: “THE POISON OF ASPES IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”;⁷⁴ 3:13c
 - G4 Their **mouth** full of cursing and bitterness: {14} “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”;⁷⁵ 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,⁷⁶ 3:15
 - G2 Their paths full of destruction and misery: {16} DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,⁷⁷ 3:16
 - G3 The path of peace they have not known: {17} AND

⁷¹ 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.

⁷² 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.

⁷³ Rom. 3:13 - tongues ... deceiving: quoting loosely Psalm 5:9d

⁷⁴ Rom. 3:13 - poison of asps is under their lips: Probably taken from Ps 140:3b.

⁷⁵ Rom. 3:14 - mouth ... cursing ... bitterness: An approximate quotation of Ps. 10:7a

⁷⁶ Rom. 3:15 - feet ... blood: quoting the sense of Isa. 59:7a-b

⁷⁷ Rom. 3:16 - destruction ... misery ... paths: a loose rendering of Isa. 59:7d

THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.” ⁷⁸
3:17

E3 Reflected in men's flippant disregard of God: {18} “THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.” ⁷⁹ 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 ⁸⁰ 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 ⁸¹

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

⁷⁸ Rom. 3:17 - path of peace ... not known: quoting Isa. 59:8a

⁷⁹ 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.

⁸⁰ 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.

⁸¹ 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.⁸²

A3 JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith 3:21 - 5:21⁸³

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;⁸⁴
 - E2 for there is no distinction;⁸⁵

⁸² 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.

⁸³ 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."

⁸⁴ 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.

⁸⁵ 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 sinned⁸⁶ and fall short of the glory of God,⁸⁷ 3:23

D7 Its Divine motivation – grace: {24} being justified⁸⁸ as a gift⁸⁹ by

⁸⁶ 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](#).”

⁸⁷ 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!

⁸⁸ 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 ⁹⁰ 3:24

D8 Its basis - Christ's redemption: through the redemption ⁹¹ 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 ⁹² as a propitiation ⁹³ 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)!

⁸⁹ 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)!

⁹⁰ 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, 15, 17, 20, 21; 6:1, 14, 15, 17; 7:25; 11:5, 6, 6, 6; 12:3, 6; 15:15; 16:20.

⁹¹ 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).

⁹² 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.

⁹³ 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.⁹⁴ 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,⁹⁵ 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).

⁹⁴ 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.

⁹⁵ 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 forbearance⁹⁶ 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 righteousness⁹⁷ 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

⁹⁶ 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.

⁹⁷ 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 ⁹⁸

G2 God as justifier: and the justifier ⁹⁹ of the one who has faith in Jesus. ¹⁰⁰

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? ¹⁰¹

G2 But excluded by a principle of faith: No, but by a law of faith. ¹⁰²

⁹⁸ 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."

⁹⁹ 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.

¹⁰⁰ 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.

¹⁰¹ 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.

¹⁰² 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.¹⁰³
- 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.

¹⁰³ 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.¹⁰⁴

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 nullify¹⁰⁵ 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

¹⁰⁴ 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](#).

¹⁰⁵ 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.¹⁰⁶

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,¹⁰⁷ our forefather according to the flesh,¹⁰⁸ 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,¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ 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).

¹⁰⁷ 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.

¹⁰⁸ 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."

¹⁰⁹ 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.

- 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.” ¹¹⁰
- 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,

¹¹⁰ 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 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 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
 - 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,”¹¹¹
 - H 2 The blessings of atonement: AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.¹¹²
 - H 3 The blessings of non-imputation: {8}
“BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”¹¹³

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

¹¹¹ 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!

¹¹² 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.

¹¹³ 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).

- 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? ¹¹⁴
 - E2 The quotation in question: For we say, “FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” ¹¹⁵
- 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; ¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ 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 Israelis (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!

¹¹⁵ Rom. 4:9 - faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness: Once again, Paul is quoting from Genesis 15:6.

¹¹⁶ 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.

- 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,¹¹⁷
- 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 believe¹¹⁸ without

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 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](#).

¹¹⁷ 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.

¹¹⁸ 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,

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 ¹¹⁹ 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

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.

¹¹⁹ 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)!

descendants¹²⁰

- G2 The content of the promise: that he would be heir of the world
- G3 The terms of the promise
 - H 1 Negatively: was not through the Law, ¹²¹
 - 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; ¹²² 4:14b

¹²⁰ 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.

¹²¹ 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).

¹²² 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

- 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,¹²³
 - G2 The non-existence of law: but where there is no law,
 - 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,¹²⁴
 - G3 Providing a guarantee to all Abraham's descendants: so that the promise will be guaranteed¹²⁵ to all the descendants,

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.

¹²³ 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).

¹²⁴ 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).

¹²⁵ 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^{13, 46}, 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).

- 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,¹²⁶
- D3 God's promise to Abraham had to be believed 4:17-25
 - E1 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

¹²⁶ 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 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).

MADE YOU”) ¹²⁷ 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 ¹²⁸

H 2 Creating out of nothing; and calls into being that which does not exist. ¹²⁹

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.” ¹³⁰

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

¹²⁷ 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](#).

¹²⁸ 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?”](#)

¹²⁹ 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.

¹³⁰ Rom. 4:18 - so shall your descendants be: Paul once again quotes a fragment of Genesis 15:6.

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
 - G2 He believed in the person of God 4:20b
 - H 1 His increasing faith: but grew strong in faith,¹³¹
 - 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.¹³² 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

¹³¹ Rom. 4:20 - grew strong in faith: This should be the mark of a believer. As life progresses, he grows stronger in faith.

¹³² Rom. 4:22 - it was also credited to him as righteousness: Once again Paul quotes from Genesis 15:6.

also,¹³³ 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 over because of our transgressions,¹³⁴ 4:25a
- J 3 Jesus, whose resurrection accomplished our justification: and was raised because of our justification. 4:25b

¹³³ 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.

¹³⁴ 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.

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,¹³⁵
- D2 The primary benefit: we have peace with God¹³⁶ through our Lord Jesus Christ,

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 faith¹³⁷
- D2 Standing in grace: into this grace in which we stand;¹³⁸

C 3 Exulting in the future glory of God: and we exult in hope of the glory of God¹³⁹ 5:2b

¹³⁵ 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!

¹³⁶ 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).

¹³⁷ 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*, 2nd 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 11th and 12th centuries.

¹³⁸ 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.

¹³⁹ 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

C 4 Exulting in tribulations: {3} And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, ¹⁴⁰ **5:3a**

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

D1 Understanding the benefit of tribulation – perseverance: knowing

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.

¹⁴⁰ 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; 8:2?; 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 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 worshiping 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 (*ekklesia*, 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](#).”

that tribulation brings about perseverance;¹⁴¹

D2 Perseverance: {4} and perseverance,

D3 Proven character: proven character;¹⁴² and proven character,

D4 Hope: hope;¹⁴³

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

D1 The non-disappointment of hope: {5} and hope does not disappoint,¹⁴⁴ 5:5a

¹⁴¹ 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).

¹⁴² 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.

¹⁴³ 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)!

¹⁴⁴ 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,

- D2 The anchor – the immeasurable love of God poured out within us: because the love of God ¹⁴⁵ 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. ¹⁴⁶ 5:5c
- D4 Our circumstances – when we were... 5:6-7
- E1 Helpless: For while we were still helpless, ¹⁴⁷ 5:6a
- E2 Ungodly: at the right time ¹⁴⁸ Christ died for the ungodly. ¹⁴⁹ 5:6b

instead, exhibit the gracious fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

¹⁴⁵ 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).

¹⁴⁶ 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 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](#)."

¹⁴⁷ 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).

¹⁴⁸ 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.

¹⁴⁹ 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.

- 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,¹⁵⁰ in that while we were yet sinners,¹⁵¹
- D5 The cost – the substitutionary death of the Messiah: Christ died for us.¹⁵² 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 justified¹⁵³
 - E3 The grounds of our justification: by His blood,
 - E4 The certainty of our preservation from God's wrath: we shall

¹⁵⁰ 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.

¹⁵¹ 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 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)!

¹⁵² 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).

¹⁵³ 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 (*dikaioô*, [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.

be saved from the wrath *of God*¹⁵⁴

E5 The agent of our justification: through Him.

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 if¹⁵⁵ while we were enemies,¹⁵⁶

G2 The fact of our reconciliation: we were reconciled to God¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ 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 *sôdzô* (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 *orgê* (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 *orgê* 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 (*orgê*) 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 (*orgê*, 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 (*orgê*) 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).

¹⁵⁵ 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.”

¹⁵⁶ 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!*

¹⁵⁷ 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

- 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 more,¹⁵⁸ having been reconciled,¹⁵⁹
- G2 The significance of our having been reconciled: we shall be saved by His life.¹⁶⁰

C 8 Pride in God because of reconciliation 5:11

- D1 Our boasting in God: And not only this, but we also exult in God¹⁶¹

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.

¹⁵⁸ 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.

¹⁵⁹ 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.

¹⁶⁰ 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.

¹⁶¹ 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

- 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.¹⁶²

B 4 The Supreme Success of Declared Righteousness in Contrast to the Defeat of Condemnation¹⁶³ 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 man¹⁶⁴ sin entered into the world,¹⁶⁵

(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.

¹⁶² 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).

¹⁶³ 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.

¹⁶⁴ 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

- E2 It was through Adam's sin that death entered the world: and death through sin,¹⁶⁶
- E3 Death spread to all men: and so death spread to all men,
- E4 Because all sinned in Adam's sin: because all sinned—¹⁶⁷
- D2 Sin before the Law was not imputed 5:13
- E1 Sin already existed in the world before the Law was given:

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.

¹⁶⁵ 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” (*eiserchomai*, [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.

¹⁶⁶ 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, 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 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](#).”

¹⁶⁷ 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.)

{13} for until the Law ¹⁶⁸ 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. ¹⁶⁹

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, ¹⁷⁰

E2 Even though people did not sin with the same accountability to which Adam was held in the Garden of

¹⁶⁸ 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.

¹⁶⁹ 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 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.

¹⁷⁰ 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.

Eden: even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam,¹⁷¹

- E3 Adam is a type of Jesus: who is a type¹⁷² of Him who was 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 gift¹⁷³ is not like the transgression.¹⁷⁴
- E2 Through Adam's one transgression, the many incurred the death penalty: For if by the transgression of the one the many died,

¹⁷¹ 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).

¹⁷² Rom. 5:14 - type: NASB footnote: "Or *foreshadowing*." The noun "type" is *túpos* (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 unfailing 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).]

¹⁷³ 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.

¹⁷⁴ 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 *paraptôma* (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*). *Paraptôma* (3900) is used 19X in the Greek NT, 9X in Romans – Rom. 4:25; 5:15, 16, 17, 18, 20; 11:11, 12. By *paraptôma* 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 *paraptôma* (3900), "transgression" to refer to Adam's one sin. The two words, in context, are synonymous. Perhaps, as René A. Lopez suggests (*Romans Unlocked* [21st 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 *paraptôma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:15); *charisma* (5486) ("free gift") (Rom. 5:15); *dôrêma* (1434) ("gift") (Rom. 5:16); *krima* (2917) ("judgment") (Rom. 5:16); *katakrima* (2631) ("condemnation") (Rom. 5:16); *charisma* (5486) ("free gift") (Rom. 5:16); *paraptôma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:16); *dikaiôma* (1345) ("justification") (Rom. 5:16); *paraptôma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:17); *paraptôma* (3900) ("transgression") (Rom. 5:18); *katakrima* (2631) ("condemnation") (Rom. 5:18); and *dikaiôma* (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.

- E3 The abundance of the grace of God: much more did the grace of God ¹⁷⁵
- 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, ¹⁷⁶
- E5 The target of God's abundant grace in Jesus – “the many”: abound to the many. ¹⁷⁷
- 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 ¹⁷⁸ is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned;
- E2 The origin of judgment: for on the one hand the judgment ¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ 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**.

¹⁷⁶ 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).

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.”

¹⁷⁷ 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!

¹⁷⁸ 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.

¹⁷⁹ 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,

arose

G1 Its single source: from one *transgression* ¹⁸⁰

G2 It's result: resulting in condemnation, ¹⁸¹

E3 The origin of the free gift: but on the other hand the free gift *arose* ¹⁸²

the word might best be translated in its most basic sense of “verdict” (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*).

¹⁸⁰ 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.

¹⁸¹ 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 righteousness (for all who believe).

¹⁸² 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 (*dōrēma*, [1431](#)).

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

but on the other hand, free gift (*charisma*, [5486](#)) [arose] out of many false steps (*paraptōma*, [3900](#)) unto a declaration of righteousness (*dikaiōma*, [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>paraptōma</i>)]	condemnation (<i>katakrima</i>)
free gift (<i>charisma</i>)	out of many false steps (<i>paraptōma</i>)	declared righteousness (<i>dikaiōma</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!

- G1 Its manifold source: from many transgressions
- G2 Its salvatory result: resulting in justification.¹⁸³
- 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 one,¹⁸⁴
 - E2 The resultant Kingdom of Death: death reigned¹⁸⁵ through the one,¹⁸⁶
 - E3 The greater position of those who receive abundant grace and righteousness: much more those who receive
 - G1 the abundance of grace¹⁸⁷
 - 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

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.

¹⁸³ Rom. 5:16 - resulting in justification: Justification (*dikaiōma*, [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). *Dikaiōma* 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 *dikaiōsis* ([1347](#)) *removal of guilt, acquittal* (Rom. 5:16)” (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). Here, in Rom. 5:16, we could translate *dikaiōma* as “a declaration of acquittal.”

¹⁸⁴ 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](#).

¹⁸⁵ 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 *basileuō* ([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!

¹⁸⁶ Rom 5:17 - through the one: i.e., through [Adam](#).

¹⁸⁷ Rom. 5:17 - the abundance of grace: lit., “the abundance of the grace,” wherein “abundance” is *perisseia* ([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](#)).

- 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.
- 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** ¹⁸⁸ 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? ¹⁸⁹

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 Immersion Principle 6:3-10

E1 Believers must know the implications of immersion into Christ (Note: See E4 and E5 below!!) 6:3-5

G1 Immersion into Christ includes immersion into Christ's death 6:3

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

¹⁸⁸ 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."

¹⁸⁹ 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 ¹⁹⁰
- H 3 The reality of baptism into Jesus' death: have been baptized into His death? ¹⁹¹
- 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, ¹⁹²
 - J 2 The reality of Christ's resurrection: so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father,

¹⁹⁰ Rom. 6:3 - have been baptized into Christ Jesus: A better translation is "were immersed into [Christ Jesus](#)," wherein "were immersed" is the 1st Plural [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of the verb *baptidzō* (907), "to dip ..., to immerse, to submerge" (excerpted from [OBU](#)). It should be noted that the English term "baptize" is NOT a translation – it is a transliteration. As such, "baptized" here in Rom. 6:3 is unacceptable as a translation.

Elsewhere, in 1 Cor. 12:13, [Paul](#) states that "by means of one [Spirit](#) we all – into the [body of Christ](#) – were immersed." The only Agent adequate to immerse all [believers](#) in [Jesus](#) into the [body of Christ](#) is the [Holy Spirit](#). Being immersed in water is insufficient to accomplish such a stupendous spiritual reality. Water is insufficient to wash away anyone's sins, and water is insufficient to immerse anyone into the [Body of Christ](#). [Paul](#) is speaking, in Romans 6:3, I firmly believe, of the [Holy Spirit's](#) immersing [believers](#) into [Christ Jesus](#). For a more lengthy discussion, see Appendix 1 at the end of this present document. ****

¹⁹¹ Rom. 6:3 - have been baptized into His death: More literally, "into the death of Him we were immersed," wherein "death" is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *thánatos* (2288), here referring to the separation of [Jesus'](#) soul from His body ([Physical Death](#)) (Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37-38; Luke 23:44-46; John 20:30) and also [Jesus'](#) separation from God ([Spiritual Death](#)) (Matt. 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-34);

"we were immersed," is the [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of the verb *baptidzō* (907), "to dip ..., to immerse, to submerge" (excerpted from [OBU](#)). This means that at the moment we placed our [faith](#) in [Jesus](#), the [Holy Spirit](#) performs a "time warp" with us and, transporting us backwards in time, immerses us into the [body of Christ](#), which includes our participation with Him in both His [physical](#) and [spiritual death](#) on the cross. This is a real spiritual event, and it carries with it some exceedingly rich spiritual realities, which [Paul](#) will continue to detail momentarily.

¹⁹² Rom. 6:4 - Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death: Literally, "We have been buried with, therefore, Him through the immersion into the death," wherein "we have been buried with" is the First Plural [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of the verb *suntháptō* (4916), "to bury together with" ([OBU](#)), used only twice in the [NT](#), in Rom. 6:4 and Col. 2:12;

"through the immersion" – *dià tou baptísmatos* – wherein the final word of the triad is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *báptisma* (908), "immersion, submersion" (excerpted from [OBU](#)), used 19X in the [NT](#). "The immersion" refers to the particular immersion by means of the [Holy Spirit](#) of all [believers](#) during the [Church Age](#) into the [Body of Christ](#) (Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 12:13);

"into the death" translates *eis tòn thánaton*, wherein the final word of the triad is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *thánatos* (2288), referring back specifically to the [spiritual](#) and [physical death](#) of [Jesus](#) on the cross.

[Paul's](#) point here is that, by means of our co-crucifixion with [Christ](#) on the cross, we were also *co-buried* with Him. His next point will be that we also participate with [Christ](#) positionally in His [resurrection](#), enabling us to live our lives in newness of life in the here and now. ****

- 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 ¹⁹³ of the body ¹⁹⁴ 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 longer be slaves to sin; 6:6c
 - G4 Justification from sin: {7} for he who has died ¹⁹⁵ is freed ¹⁹⁶ from sin. 6:7
 - G5 Life with Christ: {8} Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live ¹⁹⁷ 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,

¹⁹³ Rom. 6:6 subtitle - overthrow: "Overthrow" in the sense of paralysis.

¹⁹⁴ Rom. 6:6 subtitle - body: "Body" = the instrument through which sin works.

¹⁹⁵ 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!

¹⁹⁶ 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.

¹⁹⁷ 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).

- 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 ¹⁹⁸ 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
- 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 ¹⁹⁹ 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*

¹⁹⁸ Rom. 6:11 - consider: to reckon, or count as true. Consider is the [present](#) tense, [middle](#) voice [imperative](#) mood of the verb *logízomai* (3049), “to reckon, count, compute, calculate, account” (excerpted and adapted from [OBU](#)); “to count, think, calculate” ([Accordance](#)). We are commanded continually to consider or account ourselves as being dead to sin and alive to God.

¹⁹⁹ 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).

instruments ²⁰⁰ of righteousness to God. 6:13b

D6 The answer summarized 6:14

E1 The summary stated: {14} For sin shall not be master ²⁰¹ over you, 6:14a

E2 The summary explained: for you are not under law but under grace. ²⁰² 6:14b

C 2 The question of believers “committing an act of sin” ²⁰³ 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

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

²⁰⁰ 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.

²⁰¹ 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.

²⁰² 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.

²⁰³ Rom. 6:15-23 title - “committing an act of sin”: The verb tense is aorist, meaning an act at a point in time.

- 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 ²⁰⁴ 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 ²⁰⁵ your members as slaves to righteousness,
 - 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

²⁰⁴ Rom. 6:19 - presented: This was a decisive act.

²⁰⁵ Rom. 6:19 - present: This also is to be a decisive act.

- 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,²⁰⁶
 - 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

²⁰⁶ 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).

those who know the law),²⁰⁷

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;

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

²⁰⁷ 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.

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 ²⁰⁸

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

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

²⁰⁸ Rom. Rom. 7:6 - Spirit: NASB footnote – “Or spirit”

- 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) 7:14-25D1 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, ²⁰⁹
 - G2 Paul's own slavery: sold into bondage to sin. ²¹⁰

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,

²⁰⁹ 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).

²¹⁰ 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 principle²¹¹ 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.

²¹¹ 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.²¹² 8:1
 - E2 The reason for the absence of condemnation: {2} For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus²¹³ has set you free

²¹² 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.

²¹³ 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

[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,²¹⁴

K 2 The deadness of the body: though the body²¹⁵ is dead because of sin, 8:10a

K 3 The vitality of their spirit: yet the spirit is alive²¹⁶ 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 if²¹⁷ the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus²¹⁸ from the dead dwells in you,

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

²¹⁴ 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.

²¹⁵ 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.

²¹⁶ 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).

²¹⁷ 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.

²¹⁸ 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 ²¹⁹ will also give life to your mortal bodies ²²⁰

E3 through ²²¹ His Spirit who dwells in you. ²²²

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

²¹⁹ Rom. 8:11 - He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead: Referring to God the Father.

²²⁰ 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.

²²¹ Rom. 8:11 - through: NASB footnote: “One early mss reads *because of*”

²²² 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 ²²³
- 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

²²³ Rom. 8:20, 21 - in hope that the creation: NASB Footnote: “Or *in hope; because the creation*”

- 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
 - 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 ²²⁴ causes all things to work together for good 8:28a
- G2 The beneficiaries of the hope – those loving God: to those who love God, ²²⁵ 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

²²⁴ Rom. 8:28 - God: NASB Footnote: "One early ms reads *all things work together for good*"

²²⁵ 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).

foreknew,²²⁶ 8:29a

G2 Predestination 8:29b

H 1 The fact of predestination: He also
predestined²²⁷

²²⁶ Rom. 8:29 - foreknew: The verb is the aorist 3rd 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 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.

²²⁷ 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,

- 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

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 whom all blessings flow!

- G1 The premise assumed to be true: If God *is* for us,²²⁸
- G2 The logical impossibility: who *is* against us?²²⁹
- E3 The question answered further by yet a question 8:32
 - G1 The explanatory statement – God has already given 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?²³⁰
- 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?²³¹

²²⁸ 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...”

²²⁹ 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.

²³⁰ 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!

²³¹ 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

- E2 The answer given: God is the one who justifies;²³²
- D3 The question of rendering a verdict of condemnation²³³ 8:34
- E1 The question: {34} who is the one who condemns?²³⁴
- 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,²³⁵

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](#).

²³² 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 *dikaoō*, [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 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!

²³³ 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.

²³⁴ 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!

²³⁵ Rom. 8:34 - raised: NASB Footnote: “One early mss reads *raised from the dead*.” JTB addition: See Paul’s point in Romans 5:10.

- 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.²³⁶
- 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? ²³⁷ 8:35a
 - E2 The possibilities explored 8:35b
 - G1 Will tribulation,
 - G2 or distress,
 - 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

²³⁶ Rom. 8:34 - intercedes: Christ's intercession is mentioned also in John 17 and I John 2:1.

²³⁷ Rom. 8:35 - Christ: NASB Footnote: “Two early mss read *God*”

- 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,²³⁸ 8:39b
- G3 The focus of God's love: which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. 8:39c

Appendix 1: 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, late 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.

²³⁸ 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.

- 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: ⁴Gathering 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; ⁵for 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: ¹⁵“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶“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: ³Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore 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: ¹²For 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. ¹³For 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: ²⁶For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷For 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, PART 1. Romans 1:1 - 8:39

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Romans 9:1 - 16:27