

ROMANS

Romans
All Who Have Been Justified
Are Being Sanctified and Will Be Glorified -
Guaranteed!

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To Yeshua,
Creator, Judge, Messiah, Savior, King, Master,
Friend

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Introduction

All my books can be read online free at wayneodonnell.com. “Freely you have received, freely give” (Mt. 10:8).

This booklet is included in and comprises one section of my book *Physical and Spiritual Salvation: Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, the Messianic Kingdom, & Ezekiel’s Temple in Ezekiel 40-48, Matthew, Romans, & 1 John*.

Like most books and passages in the Bible, the topic is given in the first few verses. “The Gospel [good news] of God,” Rom. 1:1. More specifically the “salvation” (Rom. 1:18) God provided us. The main proposition of Romans is that all who have been justified, are being sanctified, and will be glorified - guaranteed, because of the way in which they were justified by having been joined in union with Messiah and thus sharing without fail in both forgiveness through his death and the power of his resurrection life. “We were buried with him by [union] into [his] death, so that ... we will also walk in [his] newness of [resurrection] life,” Rom. 6:4. “The gospel ... is the power of God to [all of] salvation [justification, sanctification, and glorification] to every one that believes ..., because therein is revealed the righteousness of God [justification],” Rom. 1:16-17. Our sanctification and glorification are guaranteed because of our justification.

The salvation God provided to us in Jesus (Yeshua in Hebrew, which means ‘salvation’), is also comprised of both spiritual and physical parts.

Justification and sanctification are spiritual; but glorification, like also resurrection, is physical. God's workings with Israel are also in the physical realm. "Israelites; to whom pertains the [national] adoption, and the [shekinah] glory, and the [Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New] covenants, and the giving of the [Mosaic] law, and the [temple] service of God, and the promises [throughout the Old Testament]; ... and of whom as concerning the flesh Messiah came," Rom. 9:4-5. The realm where genealogies matter. "I ... am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin," Rom. 11:1. So much misinterpretation of scripture, like that of Reformed Theology, is due to their felt need to leave the principle of literal interpretation of scripture because of their failure to differentiate between things like personal spiritual salvation and national physical salvation.

Spiritual Salvation: "Having been justified by faith [past spiritual event of justification], we have had our access ... into this grace wherein we stand [present spiritual process of sanctification];"
 Physical Salvation: "and rejoice in hope of the glory of God [future physical event of glorification],"
 Romans 5:1-2.

Most of this booklet consists of Bible surveys presented at Tioga Heights Christian Church in Philadelphia on fifth Sundays from September 2007 through August 2009, and previously published in 2010 in a book entitled *Matthew / Romans*.



Romans 1-4: Justification

Recorded March 30, 2008

Romans 1:1-17. Introduction

Today we are going to survey Romans 1 through 4, about the doctrine of justification. But first we will look at the introduction to the book in verses 1 - 17.

In verse 1, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,” Rm1:1. The theme of the book of Romans, is “the gospel of God”. The word “gospel” is from the old English “good spiel,” meaning “good telling” or “good news”. And it’s good news because it’s the

gospel of God, not of man. It's about something God has done for man. If it were about something man has to do for God, that wouldn't be good news. But it's about God's work, not man's work.

“Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,” Rm1:2-3. It's God's gospel; it's good news from him. It's incorrect to picture Jesus as trying to persuade the Father to forgive us, because the gospel was God the Father's idea from the beginning. You notice it says “He had promised ... by his prophets ... concerning his Son,” Rm1:2-3.

In Romans 1:16-17, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it's the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, ... for therein is the righteousness of God revealed.” Our English words “righteousness,” “justice,” and “justification” are all translated from the same Greek word. The phrase “the righteousness of God” refers to justification. It does not refer to the fact that God is righteous, though he is. But it refers to a righteousness from God, that he provides to man, in contrast to man's own unrighteousness. And he provides it to “every one that believeth,” who trust in Christ, rather than in their own self-righteousness.

The book of Romans is about salvation, “the power of God unto salvation.”. Salvation is comprised of three parts: justification, sanctification, and glorification. The first half of chapter 1 is an introduction to the book. Then Paul covers justification in chapters 1 - 4; and sanctification and glorification, in chapters 5 - 8. Chapters 9 - 11 are about the national salvation of Israel. And chapters 12 - 16 are about sanctification again, but this time

from a practical, rather than a doctrinal, perspective.

Now, believing in the gospel, directly results only in justification; that is, in receiving the “righteousness of God.” But because of the way in which we are justified, justification always results in glorification and sanctification. So that is the main proposition of the book of Romans, that “All who have been justified will be glorified, and all who have been justified are being sanctified, because of the way in which they were justified.”

So the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation,” all of salvation - justification, glorification, and sanctification - “for [because] therein is the righteousness of God,” justification, revealed. And justification, in turn, always results in the other two, sanctification and glorification. So the gospel is the power of God unto complete salvation, because it’s the power of God unto justification. That is the main proposition of the book of Romans.

So that was the introduction to the book, and in verse 18, Paul begins the section on justification.

Romans 1:18-32. The Unrighteousness of Men

The first subsection here is about the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. And Paul starts out in verse 18, “For the wrath of God ...” How many of us would start our presentation of the good news with the wrath of God? But, you know, if there is no wrath of God, there is no need for the gospel. And the wrath of God is the biggest problem that every person that comes into this world faces. It’s not our

finances. It's not our health. It's not our family problems. It's, how are you going to deal with the wrath of God?

Why doesn't God just stop being angry? That would solve the whole thing, right? Well, he is angry because he is a just judge. He is angry, as it says here, "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Rm1:18.

You notice the order is ungodliness and then unrighteousness. The order is important because ungodliness results in unrighteousness. You can't have morality apart from godliness.

What is ungodliness? Romans 1:21, "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." Failing to acknowledge the Creator, failing to be appreciative of his gifts, that is all it takes to be ungodly. And that leads to unrighteousness.

Because men are ungodly, God has allowed us to become thoroughly unrighteous as a judgment upon us. As a judgment upon our ungodliness, he doesn't hold us back from unrighteousness. Our bodies are affected in 1:24. "Wherefore God also gave them up ... to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." Our souls are affected in Romans 1:26. "God gave them up unto vile affections," emotions. Our spirits are affected in Romans 1:28. "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Thoroughly ungodly and unrighteous; thoroughly unrighteous because of our ungodliness.

There is a list of unrighteous deeds that we do because of this judgment upon our ungodliness in

Romans 1:29-31. “Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.” This is the condition of man. So that is the first section.

Romans 2:1-17. The Judgment of God

The second section begins in chapter 2 verse 1. It’s about the judgment of God.

We learn three things about the judgment of God. First, it’s according to truth. In Romans 2:2, “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.” In other words God’s judgment is righteous, and the standard is truth.

Secondly, it’s according to deeds, in Romans 2:6. “Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” There are potentially two groups of people in the judgment, and they are differentiated by their deeds. Group one, in verse 7, “To them who by patient continuance in well doing,” that is, they do good all the time without fail, perfectly. “Seek for glory and honour and immortality,” they do good for the right motives. They receive “eternal life.”

And group two in verses 8 and 9: “But unto them that are contentious,” their motives are not perfect. “And do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,” their deeds are not perfect. They

will receive “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,” Rm2:7-9. That’s a sequence going from the heart of God to the heart of man. It starts off with God having “indignation” in his heart against unrighteous men. And then the indignation in his heart is expressed by his outward “wrath.” It will be received externally as “tribulation” by those condemned. And then will become “anguish” in the heart of those suffering that tribulation.

The previous section we looked at shows which group we fall into, because we saw before that we are “filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness,” etc., Rm1:29. We all obviously fall into group two, those that obey unrighteousness and have earned the wrath of God.

Thirdly, we see that God’s judgment is according to law. -- Hi, Sal. We are on page two at the top. -- “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified,” Rm2:12-13.

So this is not good news. There is no group listed here that does not sin; and there is no group listed here that keeps the law. Some “have sinned without law,” the Gentiles; and some “have sinned in the law,” the Jewish people. Some will “perish without law,” the Gentiles; and some will perish because they will be “judged by the law,” the Jewish people. But all have sinned, and all will perish. That is God’s judgment. That is how we fare in God’s judgment.

Romans 2:17-3:20. The Law Says All Men Are Sinners

The next section shows that the law confirms this. The law says that all men are sinners. Romans 3:9, “We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.” That means servants of sin, “under sin” the master.

“As it’s written, There is none righteous, no, not one, ... none that understandeth, ... none that seeketh after God, ... all gone out of the way, ... together become unprofitable, ... none that doeth good, no, not one,” Rm3:10-12. And Paul here is quoting from Psalms 5, 10, 14, 36, 53, and 140.. “Their throat an open sepulcher, ... swift to shed blood, destruction and misery in their ways, ... the way of peace they have not known, ... no fear of God,” Rm3:13-18.

“Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law,” that’s the Jewish people; the Gentiles never were given the law. “That every mouth,” of both Jew and Gentile, “may be stopped,” we won’t be able to claim to be righteous or to offer any excuse for not being righteous. “And all the world,” the Jewish people were chosen as a representative sample of humanity, to show how all of us would have fallen short, if we had been chosen to live under the law, “may become guilty before God,” Rm3:19. Everyone is guilty before God. No one has kept the law. God gave the law for the purpose of making men guilty, not for the purpose of making men righteous.

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,” Rm3:20. How many people will go to heaven by being good? None, “no

flesh,” nada. The law is the best chance anyone has of being justified by works, because the law is the perfect revelation of what is right and wrong. But no one keeps it.

“For by the law is the knowledge of sin,” Rm3:20. That’s the best the law can do for you, to help you realize you’re a sinner. That’s why God gave the law. “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith,” Gal3:24. If the law makes you realize your sinfulness, and then you turn to Christ for salvation by faith, the law has accomplished its purpose in your life.

Romans 3:21-31. Justification By Faith

Now we are ready to look at the section on justification by faith. -- What was that you said? Oh, you’re amen-ing for the good part coming up. --

So far we have seen that men are under the wrath of God because of our ungodliness and unrighteousness. We are worthy of judgment, and the best the law can do for us, is to help us know we are sinners.

In verse 3:21, “But now ...” Now the good news, now the gospel. “The righteousness of God,” the righteousness from God that he provides to man, “without the law is manifested, being witnessed [to] by the law and the prophets.”

This righteousness is “without the law.” Contrary to Catholic doctrine, we don’t have to keep the Ten Commandments or be good to go to heaven. And if we think we have to be good to go to heaven then we

can't go to heaven, because that means we are an unbeliever, we don't believe Christ's death counts or is sufficient. If we think we have to be good to go to heaven, and we are not weeping in despair every moment, then we do not realize that we are not good; we are self-righteous, and have not received God's righteousness. "There is none good, no, not one," Rm3:12.

Jesus was asked by one man: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him ... if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal ..." Mt19:16-26. In other words, Jesus is going through some of the Ten Commandments. And it's true that if you keep the law perfectly—as we saw in chapter two—"patient continuance in well doing" Rm2:27, then you will be justified by your works. But Jesus was trying to get this man to realize he was not going to be able to do that; he was trying to get him to see his need of salvation. And the end of the story is that the man, "went away sorrowful," because he continued to believe he needed to earn eternal life, which is out of reach of every man.

So rather than teaching salvation by keeping the Ten Commandments, this passage from Matthew teaches the opposite. The only way we will ever be judged to be righteous is if we receive the righteousness God provides to us "without the law," without the Ten Commandments, without any good deeds, or else it would be "the righteousness of man" rather than "the righteousness of God," and you don't find the righteousness of man in this book. You only find the unrighteousness of man.

So this righteousness of God is without law and it's by faith. "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe," Rm3:22

Justification does not require repentance, being baptized, being good, going to church, going to confession. If any of these things were required, this would be the place for Paul to tell us, because he is giving us a complete treatise on justification here in chapters one through four. But Paul says that the righteousness of God is given to all them that believe, including those that haven't been baptized, including those that haven't repented, including those that haven't ever gone to confession or gone to church. Without doing any of those other things, God promises to "all them that believe," that they will be justified. -- Voice: "Amen."

In fact, if we do any of those other things for the purpose of justification, then we don't have faith in Christ, because we don't think what Christ did on the cross is sufficient to satisfy God's justice.

Now there are some Scriptures scattered throughout the New Testament that seem to indicate that more than faith is required, when the context is not understood. For example, John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. (Mt3:2) And we saw that Jesus preached, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Mt4:17, when I was here several months ago.

But in the survey of Matthew, we saw that even though Jesus preached repent in the first part of his ministry, he stopped preaching repent in the second part, because that generation of the nation of Israel

didn't repent, and the kingdom was not at hand anymore. But some people today continue to preach repent based on the fact that Jesus preached repent, and don't even realize that he stopped preaching repent. There may be valid reasons for preaching repent, but not because Jesus preached repent in the early part of his ministry, because he stopped.

So it's important to understand the context. That is all I am saying. And, like I said, this is a complete treatise on the subject of justification. If repentance or any other thing was necessary, Paul would be gravely negligent to omit to tell us what else we need to do here, because he says here that all we need to do is believe.

The book of John is entirely about how to have eternal life, and it says eternal life is by faith alone. The Greek word 'pistos' (pis-tos'), translated 'faith,' 'believe,' and 'trust' is used more times in John than any other book in the Bible, because the purpose of the book of John was that, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name," Jn20:31. Not, "that being baptized you might have life," or "that going to church you might have life," or "that being good you might have life," but "that believing you might have life through his name."

The next paragraph tells us how God can justify us merely by our faith. He does it through redemption and propitiation. In Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" ... being condemned and punished. That is what we would expect, because God is a just God. But it says, "For

all have sinned ... being justified,” Rm3:23. Now how can a just God do that?

Well, it's by his grace, “being justified freely by his grace,” Rm3:24. Grace means getting something good that you don't deserve. And it's “freely,” unearned. But that still doesn't explain it. What explains it's that even though it was free for us, it wasn't free for God. It wasn't free for Christ.

“Through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ,” Rm3:24. Redemption means that when a poor person sells himself into slavery, a rich relative pays the price to buy their freedom again. That is what Christ did for us. He paid the price that only he could pay. So the price was paid. Our justification is not free, but it's free for us.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” Rm3:25. Propitiation is when somebody is angry with you, and then they are appeased and are not angry at you anymore. When we started this section on justification, we saw that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,” Rm1:18. Jesus bore that wrath in our place, and that is why God is not angry anymore at any person who believes, at any person who has “faith in his blood.”

But even though Christ died for all, we can choose to trust in our own righteousness, we can be judged for our own works, and we can suffer the wrath for ourselves at the judgment. But if we trust in Christ, his substitutionary death counts for us. He received our sins. “He [God the Father] hath made him [Yeshua] to be sin for us, [he] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,”

2Cor5:21. And we receive his righteousness. “Be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith,” Phil3:9. Or we can be self righteous, and see how it goes at the judgment.

One thing is more important than our justification. It’s that God remain just. “To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God,” Rm3:25. When it’s talking about his righteousness here, it’s not talking about the righteousness which he gives to man. It’s talking, this time, about his own righteousness. Is he a just judge or not? When he passed over David’s sin of adultery and murder, the “sins that are past,” before the death of Christ, how could he do that and still be just? It’s because he looked forward in time to the death of Christ for David.

“That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,” Rm3:26. Now if God justified sinners, and that was the end of the story, then he wouldn’t be just, because the Bible says in Proverbs 17:15, “He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.” God is able to justify the wicked -- that’s us -- without being unjust, because we receive the righteousness of Christ. And God was able to condemn the just -- that’s Jesus -- without being unjust, because Jesus willingly took our sins on himself. This way, and this way only, God can be just and justifier.

So God cannot just overlook or forgive sin. He can’t just say, “I forgive you,” because then he wouldn’t be a just judge. If we had a judge downtown that let

guilty men go free, we would be putting a new judge in there, I hope. But Christ paid the price which satisfied justice, so God can justify the wicked “which believeth in Jesus,” and still be just.

Romans 4:1-25. The Law Says Justification Is By Faith

Ok, the next section shows that the Old Testament confirms the doctrine of justification by faith. First of all, it says that the righteousness that God provides is an ‘imputed’ righteousness. “For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted [imputed] unto him for righteousness,” Rm4:2-3. In this passage, the same Greek word will be translated as ‘counted,’ ‘reckoned,’ and ‘imputed’.

Abraham was not in himself actually righteous. He had to be “counted” as being righteous while he was not righteous. This is another direct contradiction of the Catholic doctrine that men actually become righteous through baptism and confession and then must continue to be righteous to go to heaven.

And this righteousness of God is only available “to him that worketh not.” “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,” Rm4:4-5. If you are trying to be good to go to heaven then you don’t have this righteousness that God provides because you are one of those “that worketh,” rather than one of those “that worketh not.”

When your employer pays you, it's not grace. It's debt, because he owes you what you have earned for your work. Even if he helps you do the work, he owes you wages, because you put in the hours. If he pays you when you don't even show up for work, that's grace.

There is a system comprised of works, judgments, and rewards. There is a system comprised of faith, grace, and gifts. You have to be in that faith, grace, and gifts system in order to be justified. If you are in that works, judgment, and rewards system, you won't survive the judgment.

The next paragraph also talks about imputed righteousness without works. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," Romans 4:6-8.

It's not, as the Catholics teach, that grace helps us do good works for our justification. It's that our works have been completely removed from the equation for our justification. It's "righteousness without works." It's an imputed righteousness, not that we are actually righteous because of our works. Our works are actually bad. We actually sin grievously. But the good news! "Blessed is the [sinning] man to whom the Lord will not impute [his] sin." Actually sinners, but not counted as sinners!

Now the only way to be justified, based on all of this, is to avoid being judged. If we are ever judged, we will perish. It's important to understand that even

though God will judge “every man according to his deeds,” as we saw in Romans 2:6, not all will go through the judgment personally, since Christ already went through the judgment for those who believe on him.

Hebrews 9:27-28 says: “And as it’s appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” Many believers, maybe some of us sitting here today, won’t die even once, because of the rapture, even though it’s appointed unto man “once to die.” Why? Because Christ already died for us, and it counts for you if you have believed on him. And now even if we do die physically, the New Testament says we fall asleep, because we have already died through his death. And that is the same with the judgment. He already went through the judgment, so we won’t go through the judgment. There is no double jeopardy, even in our court system.

We see the actual judgment in Revelation 20 beginning in verse 5. “This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years,” Rev20:5-6. Notice there is no judgment for these who are raised in the first resurrection, because the judgment Christ already went through counts for them.

A thousand years later there is going to be another group resurrected, and they will be judged, and they will be condemned. There is no mention of anyone in this later resurrection being judged and being found to be good enough to go to heaven. The

judgment is not to determine who will be justified and who will be condemned. It's to determine how much punishment each person in the judgment will be sentenced to. But everyone who is judged will be condemned.

In Revelation 20:7-15, "And when the thousand years are expired ... I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books [plural] were opened: and another book [singular] was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books [plural], according to their works." No one is judged out of the book of life. All are judged by the books, plural, because they contain a list of "their works."

"Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." This is the judgment talked about in Romans 2. And none of these people survive the judgment. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life [everyone in this second resurrection] was cast into the lake of fire."

The book of life is just there as a check, but there will be no one in this judgment whose name can be found in that book. God made eternal life available as a gift by simple faith to whosoever will, but the absence of these people's names in the book of life shows they trusted in their own works, and thus must indeed now be judged by their works. The book of life has no columns in which to list any works, only the names of those who believe. If you want to rely on works, you will have to be judged out of those other books.

The next paragraph is about inheriting the promise. I won't read all this, but basically that God took Abraham out, and showed him the stars, and said, "So shall thy seed be," Rm4:18. He said, "You are going to have a lot of descendants," even though Abraham was very old and had no child at the time.

And Abraham believed the Word of God, and so "it was counted unto him for righteousness," Rm4:3. Abraham was justified the same way we are, by faith in God's Word. The content was different, because Christ hadn't come yet, but all men through all time have been justified by faith alone in God's Word.

In the middle of this paragraph it says, "According to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be," Rm4:18. That was the Word of God that Abraham believed. And the Word of God that we need to believe is that "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," Jn3:36.

So Abraham "was strong in faith giving glory to God," Rm4:20. It's not presumptuous to have faith. It gives God the glory due his name. If you have faith, you are saying that you believe he will keep his Word. He is not a liar. "And being fully persuaded ..." Rm4:21. Faith is always fully persuaded. "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness," Rm4:22.

Now, the best part of this, beginning in Romans 4:23-25, is that this was written for us. "Now it was not written for his [Abraham's] sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for

our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

So Paul didn't put these doctrines here because they are theoretical or philosophical. Paul, in this last paragraph is concluding this section with an invitation. He wants you to act upon these doctrines and these words.

And so if there is somebody here today that hasn't received the righteousness of God, hasn't put that kind of faith in Jesus, then this is the time to do that. We are going to close our eyes and bow our heads for a minute. Tell him that you trust in his Son as your substitute who took your sin and suffered your punishment in your place on the cross, and that you accept the righteousness he offers you. He will give you his righteousness just for believing because the Word of God, in Romans 3:22 says, “The righteousness of God ... is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all ... them that believe.”

And if you are a Christian here, pray that anyone that doesn't know the Lord here would understand this and put their faith in him. Father in heaven, we ask your grace that we would all understand this and we would all have faith in the sacrifice of your Son so that we might all have the righteousness you provided for us and eternal life. Amen.



Romans 5-8a: Sanctification and Glorification

Recorded June 29, 2008

Romans 5:1-2. The Three Tenses Of Our Salvation

The last time I was here, we started a survey of Romans. We covered chapters 1 through 4. Today I would like to look at Romans chapter 5, which is about the certainty of our complete salvation, including our future glorification and our present sanctification. This is a special topic to me, so I am really thankful that I can share it with you.

We are going to start by looking at the first two verses of Romans chapter 5 that present the three tenses of our salvation. The past tense of our salvation is justification. Paul covered that in Romans chapters 1 through 4. Chapter 5, verse 1, says, “Therefore being justified,” which is better translated “having been justified,” past tense, “by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

To be justified means that God, who is holy, and his wrath is against all unrighteousness, counts a man who is not just, as if he were just. And he does that because of our faith in what Jesus did for us as our substitute, taking our sin and providing us his righteousness.

And then “we have peace with God,” Rm5:1. “We,” who still commit acts of unrighteousness, “have peace with God,” the just holy judge, because God counts us as righteous, “through Christ our Lord,” Rm5:1. So that is justification, the past aspect of our salvation. And I hope that is a past aspect for each person in this room, that we have already been justified by having believed on Jesus Christ at one day in the past.

The present aspect of our salvation is sanctification, a big word. And Paul is going to cover that in more detail in Romans 6 - 8. Romans 5:2 says, “By whom also we have access,” it should be “have had access,” past tense, “by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” So when you believed on Jesus Christ for justification, something else happened, though you didn’t realize it at the time; you also entered into grace through Jesus Christ. And it’s a one way door into grace. You can go in, but you can’t come out.

Nobody ever leaves grace once they enter in, because “we stand” in grace. Nobody falls in grace. We don’t stumble in grace. It says, “wherein we stand,” Rm5:2. Not some of us, not just for a little while; but, “we stand.”

The future aspect of our salvation is glorification. Paul will cover that topic in more detail in chapters 8 - 11. The end of chapter 5, verse 2, says, “And rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

That word “hope” tells us that it’s something about the future. It doesn’t mean “hope so”; like, “I hope it comes to pass,” “I’m not really sure.” It’s a very certain thing that is going to happen in the future to all who have been justified. But the word “hope” is there because it’s something future. If there is something certain that happened in the past, like Christ’s death on the cross; we can have faith in that, because it happened in the past. But if it’s something sure that is going to happen in the future, that is a ‘hope.’

And the thing in the future that is certain that we are looking forward to is “the glory of God.” Now that doesn’t mean that God is glorious, though he is. It’s talking about the glory that God is going to give to man. Just as the phrase, “the righteousness of God,” back in Romans 1:17 didn’t mean that God is righteous, though he is; but that he gives his righteousness to men, and that event is called justification. Likewise, we are not only going to see the glory of God, we are going to share in the glory of God: and that event is called glorification. Praise the Lord!

And we rejoice in that hope of glory because it's a sure thing. If it wasn't a sure thing it would be presumptuous of us to rejoice in it. If we didn't know it was going to happen, we should, out of humility, wait until we know for sure, before we rejoice in it. But since we already know it's going to happen, we rejoice in it now.

In fact, the Greek word translated "rejoice" in Romans 5:2, 'kairometha,' not only means 'to rejoice,' but also 'to boast'; we "boast in hope of the glory of God," Rm5:2. And, again, it's not presumption that we are boasting in this hope because it's a sure thing, since it's God's promise. Paul would be very derelict here to say we are boasting in it, if it was something that might not happen to us.



Now here is a diagram of the three tenses of our salvation. On the left hand side you see justification. That is a past event, and it affects our spirits. On the right hand side you see glorification. That is a future event, and it affects our bodies. Our bodies didn't change when we believed on Jesus Christ, except now they are older than they used to be. But in the future they will be changed; made incorruptible, immortal, and glorious. And then in the middle of the chart, you see sanctification. And that is not an event. It's a process. There is no second blessing that you can get as an event that is going to let you cruise through the Christian life without effort.

So Romans chapter 5 is an amplification of the main proposition of the book of Romans. I said the last time I was here that the main proposition of the book of Romans, according to 1:16-17, is that all who have been justified will be glorified, and all who have been justified are being sanctified, because of the way in which we were justified. So we will look at the certainty of our glorification in verses 3 - 10, and the certainty of our sanctification in verses 11 - 21.

Paul made that division clear within the chapter by starting both sections with the phrase, “And not only so, but we also rejoice in ...” Romans 5:3 says “And not only so, but we rejoice [KJV has ‘glory’] in tribulations also.” Then in verse 11, “And not only so, but we also rejoice [KJV has ‘joy’] in God.”

The Meaning of the Word ‘Glory’

Now before we start looking at the rest of the chapter, we have to do a little housekeeping; we have to consider the meaning of the word ‘glory,’ because not many people know what the word means today. If our hope that we are rejoicing in is the glory of God, sharing in the glory of God, well, what is glory? We should know what that is.

And this may be surprising. Sometimes glory means something like ‘honor,’ but most often it includes the concept of ‘brightness’. And people used to know that. That has just disappeared out of modern dictionaries, so we have to go back to Webster’s original dictionary to see the definition. In Webster’s original dictionary, the number one meaning for ‘glory’ was ‘brightness’. But, of course,

what really matters is the Greek word, because that is the word that God wrote.

In Liddle and Scott's Greek English Lexicon, ('lexicon' means 'dictionary'), for the word 'doksa,' which is translated 'glory,' the third meaning is, "of external appearance, effulgence." Ok, 'effulgence' doesn't help us much. We don't use that word too often. So we have to go back to Webster's original dictionary, and effulgence means "a flood of light, great luster or brightness."

Now is that the way the word is used in the New Testament? Let's take a look. 2 Corinthians 3:7, "The children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory," for the 'brightness,' "of his countenance," of his 'face'. So Moses went up on the mountain, and he was with the shekinah glory for a while. And there is another use of the word 'glory' for 'brightness,' the 'shekinah glory'. And by his being with the shekinah glory, his face was glorified like our whole bodies will be someday. And when he came down from the mountain, he had to put a veil on his face because its brightness was hurting the eyes of the people.

Here is another passage. This is about Paul on his way to Damascus, when he saw the resurrected Lord. After Jesus was resurrected, 40 days later he ascended up to heaven and was glorified. So when Paul saw him on the way to Damascus, Yeshua was shining brightly. "About noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth ... And when I could not see for the glory," for the 'brightness,' "of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus," Acts 22:6-11.

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‘Honor’ is not going to hurt anyone’s eyes, but a bright ‘glory,’ a bright light, can be blinding.

How does Jesus look today? When John saw him many years later in a vision in Revelation chapter 1, he was still shining, glorious. “His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ... and his countenance,” his ‘face,’ “was as the sun shineth in his strength,” Rev1:15-16.

Now our bodies are going to be changed to be like his body in the future. That is called glorification. We are not going to receive a new body. The Bible never says we will receive a ‘new’ body. Our current bodies will be changed. Philippians 3:20, “We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body,” that is the body we have now, “that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,” his brightly shining body, “according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

Now we only get one body. God can no more replace my body than he can replace my spirit. If he gave me a new spirit, it wouldn’t be me anymore, it would be somebody else. And if he replaces my body, it’s not me anymore, it’s somebody else, because both parts are me. My spirit’s Wayne; my body is Wayne.

Also if God didn’t change our present bodies, and he just threw them away, and gave us new bodies, then that would mean Satan would have won a victory in that part of creation; a permanent victory, and God can’t allow that to happen. So he has to redeem our current bodies for his own name’s sake.

Also, if God replaced our bodies with new bodies instead of changing our present bodies, there would be no such thing as ‘resurrection’. The meaning of ‘resurrection’ is that you take something that dies, and you raise it back up. If you don’t raise up that same thing, if you replace it with something else, that is not ‘resurrection,’ it’s ‘replacement’.

Jesus’ tomb was empty. When Peter and John went into the tomb, they didn’t see Jesus’ old body laying there in the tomb, and his new body walking around outside. The tomb was empty because it was his same body that rose up.

And whether you are dead for a few days, or whether you are dead for 500 years and your body turns to dust, God is able to take that same material and bring it back together, add water, if you will, and reform it. Now the fingernails we trimmed over of our lifetimes; he is not going to gather those back. But if we lose an arm, something essential, he will gather that wherever it’s, whatever form it’s in, and restore it with the rest of our body.

Our glorified bodies will be immortal: that means they can’t die. Incorruptible: meaning they can’t sin and can’t decay. Spiritual: that means their life is going to be from God. When our bodies are glorified, they will be ‘spiritual,’ but not ‘spirit’. Physical things can be ‘spiritual,’ but they can’t be ‘spirit’. Jesus said in Luke 24:39 after the resurrection, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it’s I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” So it’s true that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” according to 1 Corinthians 15:50, but “flesh and

bones” shall inherit the kingdom of God, according to Luke 24:39.

Now this hope of glory that we are looking forward to, this is not just one of many hopes for us Christians. This is the hope. This is one third of our salvation, as it were: justification, sanctification, glorification. And that’s why it’s so important for us to know about it. Titus 2:13 says, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious,” the ‘brightly shining,’ “appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Colossians 1:27 says, “Christ in you, ‘the’ hope of glory,” of glorification.

Rm5:3-10. All Who Have Been Justified Will Be Glorified

Ok, now let’s look at how all who have been justified will be glorified, which is often called ‘eternal security’. Romans 5:3 says, “And not only so, but we glory ...” And this is a very unfortunate translation, because this is not the Greek word ‘doksa’ translated ‘glory’ in the previous verse. This is the word ‘kaukometha’ translated ‘rejoice’ in the previous verse. So let’s read it again. “And not only so, but we rejoice,” or ‘boast,’ ‘kaukometha,’ “in tribulations also,” Rm5:3. So first, we rejoice in hope of glory. Second, we rejoice in tribulations also.

Now why would somebody rejoice in tribulations and suffering? Is it logical to rejoice in suffering? Well, it’s only logical if you ‘know’ something. It says here “knowing.” “Knowing that tribulation worketh,” or ‘produces,’ “patience,” Rm5:3. Patience means ‘endurance,’ ‘perseverance’. Suffering never produces falling or failure for

anyone who has been justified. It always produces endurance. If there was any chance that we could fall and lose our salvation when we are tested by tribulation; then we could not rejoice in tribulation. We would rightly be afraid that we might fail the test and lose our salvation. But instead we rejoice in tribulation, and this is only possible because we know we are guaranteed to pass the test.

We know that no matter how hard things get, we are not going to stop believing on the Lord; and so during the easier times, of course, we are not going to stop believing either. If there is anything that could stop us from reaching our goal of glorification, it's tribulation. Tribulation will never stop a believer from believing, though it often stops false brethren from continuing to claim to be believers.

Tribulation melted away the crowds that had supposedly accepted Jesus with joy, like the sun withers plants that have no depth of soil. "He has no root in himself, but endures only for a while, for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles," Mt13:5-6, 20-21. But tribulation, the worst thing, can't prevent our glorification, and thus neither can anything else prevent our glorification. And that in itself is worth rejoicing in!

But Paul goes on. "And patience, experience." Experience means 'proof' or 'passing the test'. "And experience, hope," Rm5:5. Because if you pass the test, now you have more reward waiting for you in eternity. You have more glory to hope for, to look forward to, and to rejoice in.

So we rejoice in hope of glory, and we logically rejoice in sufferings too, because they result in more glory for us to look forward to. This is brought out in 2 Corinthians 4:17. “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Now our affliction is not light. It’s often very heavy. But compared to the weight of glory that we get in exchange for it, it’s light. And our affliction is not momentary. Sometimes it lasts very long. But compared to the eternity of glory that we receive for it, it’s just a moment.

And we don’t all receive the same amount of glory in eternity. We won’t all shine with the same amount of brightness. 1 Corinthians 15:41 says, “There is one glory,” or ‘brightness,’ “of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory,” in ‘brightness’. So after we are all glorified, as soon as you see somebody, you will know immediately how much they have suffered, how faithful they have been, how hard they have labored, how much they shared the gospel, just by how brightly they are shining throughout eternity. And I wouldn’t be surprised if there were some subtle color variations to help indicate which kinds of works they received the differing amounts of glory for, even as the stars have different colors of light.

And we persevere through sufferings without fail. Romans 5:5 says, “And hope maketh not ashamed.” That means we ‘rejoiced’ and ‘boasted’ that we are going to be glorified, and when the time comes for us to be glorified, we are not going to find ourselves in the lake of fire instead. We are not going to be

embarrassed or disappointed. Our glorification will come to pass.

Now how is it that we persevere through sufferings without fail? “Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us,” Rm5:5. The word “because” there shows that Paul is telling us the reason we are sure to persevere. We are sure to persevere, we have eternal security, because after we are justified, the love of God is free to be poured out without measure, without limit, in a new way in our lives. Now the first thing God does at the very moment we believe is to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit to indwell us. And the Holy Spirit causes us to persevere, and to reach glorification.

Let’s look at God’s love to sinners in Romans 5:6-8. I’m going to paraphrase this. “Not many people will die for somebody else, but if they do, they are not going to die for a really bad person like Hitler. But God, who is even more offended by sin than we are, died in the person of his Son, for really bad people like us.”

Let me read verse 8. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Now that is a really amazing display of the love of God. But that has a limit in it in this verse, because there are certain things that God can’t do for people who are not justified. He can’t give glorification to people who are not justified.

And he can’t guarantee the justification of all people even though Christ died for all people; some will not believe and accept. And the problem is a legal one. It’s because of this word “sinners,” in Rm5:8. Sin is

a legal obstacle that limits what the love of a holy God can do for men. The only thing God can do for sinners, although it's one of the greatest things and is even beyond our ability to fully comprehend it, is for his Son to die for sinners, "while ... sinners, Christ died for us."

But now let's look at God's love to the justified in Romans 5:9. "Much more then," and it's a "much more" comparison, "much more then, being now justified by his blood." Now that our sins have been taken out of the way, God's love is free to be poured out to us, to give us his Holy Spirit, and to bring all who have been justified to glorification. It says, "We shall be saved from wrath through him." Notice the future tense of the verb, "shall be saved."

The future tense of our salvation is glorification. It means that in the future we will be glorified instead of suffering the wrath of God in the judgment and in the lake of fire. And not only that, but it's all of us that will be glorified. It says, "we shall be saved," not some of us shall be saved. And it's certain. It says, "we shall be saved through him," not we might be saved through him.

So God provided a way of salvation for us before we were justified; Christ died for us. But now "much more," after we have been justified, God doesn't merely provide glorification for us, he ensures glorification for us. He guarantees our glorification, because in his love he wants to do that, but more importantly because he is free to do that, because now there is no legal obstacle of sin and righteous condemnation to limit his love, and to limit what he can do for us. We see also in verse 10, "For if, when

we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Future tense again. We shall be saved. We shall be glorified. We have eternal security.

Rm5:11-21. All Who Have Been Justified Are Being Sanctified

So we've considered the certainty of our future glorification, now let's consider the certainty of our present sanctification. Paul says in 5:11, “And not only so, but we also joy,” that's the word 'rejoice' or 'boast,' 'kaukometha' again, “in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” We now rejoice in God because we have been brought into a new relationship with God. Rather than fear, we now have joy and cry, “Abba, Father.” And this new relationship has vast effects upon us, because the way God accomplished the atonement was to put us into Christ. Therefore, all who have been justified, are being sanctified, because of the way in which we were justified; and that is worth rejoicing in!

In other words, we boast in God that he is going to bring us to glory, glorification. We don't boast in ourselves that we are going to be able to do that, because it's God's work in us. And we boast in our new relationship with God, and the certainty of the effect it has on us. It's not that we are inherently different or better than any other Christian. Christians are not divided into different groups, like carnal Christians and spiritual Christians. We boast because it's God's work in us, in all of us who have been justified, and God has ensured both our future glorification, and just as certainly, our present

sanctification, by uniting us with Jesus Christ, “through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,” Rm5:11. He united us with Christ at the atonement.

Paul talks about our union with Adam in 5:12-14. And I’ll paraphrase this. “You can ‘sin’ without law, but you can’t ‘transgress’ without law; you can’t break a law if there’s no law to break. But all people suffered death, which is the penalty for transgressing, from Adam to Moses, (except for Enoch whom God delivered), even though they didn’t have a law to transgress. So it must have been that they transgressed when Adam transgressed, and that Adam’s sin was imputed unto them.” Adam’s sin is imputed unto us because we were in him and one with him at the time he sinned.

Now we may not particularly like that doctrine, but at the end of the paragraph in verse 14, Paul says, “who is the figure of him that was to come.” Adam is a figure of Jesus. And how can one man die for the sins of another? Well, our sins were imputed unto Christ, like Adam’s sins were imputed unto us. So the two go together. You can’t say, “I like the concept that my sins could be imputed to Christ, so that I could be saved; but I don’t think it’s possible that Adam’s sin was imputed to me.”

There are some differences, though. In Romans 5:15, Paul says, “But not as” So there is a difference here; “but not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more,” that’s the difference, “much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded,” that’s

the difference, “unto many.” If the effect of Adam’s sin was so certain that it resulted, with all certainty, in death for all of Adam’s race; then it’s much more certain that our union with Christ, and the grace of God we entered into thereby, will effectively work in every Christian. And God does not merely restore to us what we lost in Adam. He goes way beyond that in what he gives us in Jesus Christ.

In verse 16. “And not as it was,” we are talking about another difference, “by one that sinned,” that’s the difference, one sinned, “so is the gift: for the judgment was by one,” one man, Adam, and his one offence, “to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences,” the many offenses of many people, “unto justification.” Justification had to cover not only the one sin of Adam that passed on to us and was so powerful in its effects; but it also had to cover, in addition to that one sin of Adam, all the sins of all people of all time.

So the gift and grace received by the atonement is vastly more powerful than the one sin of Adam, and Adam’s sin was powerful enough to affect us all without fail, so how can we ever say that it’s possible that the grace of God may not affect us? How could we claim that there could be even one Christian who has the ability to walk like the unsaved? Of course there are many people that merely claim to be Christians, and even attend church, that are not truly Christians, that never believed, or were justified, or received the gift by grace.

Let’s go on to 5:18. “Therefore as by the offence of one,” that’s Adam’s action, “judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness,” that should be translated ‘righteous

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act,' "of one," of Christ, "the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." "All men" there means 'all men who are in that person'. All who were in Adam, which is the whole human race, suffered condemnation. All who are in Christ, all who have been justified, receive justification of life.

Not merely justification, but also life. We have been born of God, we are regenerate, we have new life. How can anyone think Christians have the ability to walk in unrighteousness when we have God's nature within us? If we have truly been justified, and not just claim to be a Christian, then we cannot help but live according to our new nature, not perfectly, but certainly differently than living without God within us.

"Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God," 1Jn3:9. This doesn't mean that we cannot commit individual acts of sin, any more than our having been in Adam and having had his fallen nature meant that we could never do any acts of righteousness; but it's not possible for we who have God's nature because of our new birth, to continue in a lifestyle of sin; and when we do commit sin, it's grievous to us.

Now even though the second half of this chapter is primarily about the certainty of sanctification, we also see the certainty of our glorification in the way we received the atonement through Jesus Christ. Verse 18 talks about actions that others did that set the bounds of our freedom of choice. Adam's act of transgression resulted in condemnation, which only Jesus could provide a way out of by his act of

righteousness. We don't have completely free choice in this world, because we can't just choose anything we want. Our choices are limited to what is provided to us to choose from. If Jesus had not died for our sins to provide a way of justification by faith, we could have had faith all day, and nothing would have come of it.

Likewise, for us to become unjustified, we can't just decide, "Ok, I'll become unjustified now." We don't have that option. Christ would have to, and this is unthinkable, commit sin, so that we could become sinners again. Or a third party stronger than Christ, as Christ was stronger than Adam, would have to come, and make a way for us to have the option to become one with him and become 'unjustified,' but of course no one is stronger than Christ.

So we don't have the option to go in and out of Christ at will. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul calls Christ, not 'the second Adam,' but "the last Adam". There are only going to be two Adams, two representatives of the human race: Adam and Christ, and once you are in Christ, God provides no way for you to leave Christ.

Now let's look at grace in Romans 5:20. "Moreover the law entered," and the Greek is 'entered alongside,' "that the offence might abound," and the word should be just 'increase,' not 'abound'. Having the law means men not only sin, but they also transgress, or commit "offence," which is even more sinful. Also, when the law says not to do something, the result is that evil men want to do it more, and they do it more.

“But where sin abounded,” ‘increased’ in the Greek, “grace did much more abound,” and there the word really is ‘abound,’ except it has a prefix ‘super’ in front of it, ‘super-abound,’ and then it has “much more” in front of that. So Paul is exhausting the limits of language to try to show us the abounding nature of grace, that it ‘much more super-abounds’ over any amount of sin, so that God can guarantee our sanctification (and glorification too).

Verse 21, “That as sin hath reigned unto death ...” Sin reigns over all who have not been justified. And that is why we see the world as it’s. And what it means for sin to reign is that, at any moment in time, a person can resist and not sin. But because sin is their master, because sin ‘reigns’ over them and has persistent influence over them, their general way of life will be one of sin, for every person to different degrees.

And then Paul says, “Even so might grace reign,” Rm5:21. Grace reigns after we have been justified. Not merely just as powerfully, but even more powerfully, than the reign of sin. And so what it means for grace to reign, is that at any moment in time, we can resist the reign of grace in our lives, but because of the persistent influence of grace upon us, our lives will be characterized by righteousness, and by everything that God’s grace wants to accomplish in our lives.

So there is such a thing as irresistible grace, but it’s not for those who are unjustified, because they haven’t yet had their entrance into grace. It’s when we believe on Jesus Christ that we have entrance “into this grace wherein we stand,” Rm5:2. And also,

that is when grace begins to reign. And by its powerful reign over us, it's causing us to, without fail, walk in righteousness while it takes us to glorification. That grace might, "reign through righteousness," that's sanctification, "unto eternal life," that's glorification, Rm5:21.

And people like to say that eternal life is a kind of life, but it's also a length of life. If you have life for only one year, you never had 'eternal' life, you had some kind of temporary life. If you have eternal life now, you have it a million years from now. And so we have all these things, grace, righteousness, and eternal life, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rm5:21, through Christ's work of the atonement which resulted in our union with Christ.

And Romans 6:1 confirms our interpretation of Romans 5 because it says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Now if Paul had taught that if you are not good you can lose your salvation, then nobody would say, "Oh, I'll just go out and sin all I want then." But since he taught eternal security, that no matter what you do, you are going to be glorified, then people raise the objection, "If you teach eternal security, people are just going to go out and sin."

And if our teaching doesn't expose us to this charge, then we are not teaching eternal security and grace. Of course, anyone that makes that charge doesn't understand the power of the reign of grace over us, like the reign of sin was before we were justified, only immeasurably stronger, and so Paul will expound in more detail on how our union with Christ ensures the certainty of our sanctification in chapters 6 and 7.

What Do You Give A Person Who Has Everything?

Ok, what do you give a person who has everything? We are going to have everything in eternity. How about a gemstone with a secret name written in it like Revelation 2:17 talks about? Or how about a crown that only those who love his appearing can wear, like in 2 Timothy 4:7-8?

Or how about different degrees of brightness? Daniel 12:2-3 says, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life [those who have been justified], and some to shame and everlasting contempt [those who have not been justified], and they that be wise [those who have been justified and labor to different degrees] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness [those who have been justified and share the gospel to different degrees], as the stars for ever and ever.”

Some when they are glorified won't shine quite so brightly - forever and ever. And we are not in competition with each other, but we should invest in our future. Jim Elliot said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

And if you don't know the Lord today, thankfully your future judgment is not certain, it's not guaranteed. You can change your destiny today, unlike those of us who have believed. We are destined for glory, and there is nothing we can do to change that, thankfully.

But you can believe on the Lord today. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life,” Jn3:16. So in your heart now, tell him you trust in what he did for you. Trust his Word that, if you believe, you will have everlasting life.

Father, we ask that if there is someone here that doesn't know you, that they will trust in you, and receive everlasting life, and that each of us would live in such a way that we would have more glory for eternity through your grace. Amen.

Romans 6:1-13. Sanctification - A New Life

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Today we are continuing our study of Romans, and we are in chapters 6 and 7. Our topic today is the doctrine of sanctification.

Chapter 6, Verse 1. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” This question comes up because Paul had taught eternal security in chapter 5. Now nobody raises this question if you teach you can lose your salvation. They don't say, “Well, if you can lose your salvation, that would mean we could just go out and sin and live however we want.” But because Paul taught eternal security in chapter 5, that you are not going to lose your salvation even if you sin, then they say, “Well, that would mean we could just go out and sin.”

Paul's answer is in verse 2. "God forbid." More literally, "May it never be," NASV. And Paul often uses this kind of answer when he answers objections about things that are not merely inappropriate, but impossible. In Romans 3:5-6 he says, "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? ... God forbid." In Romans 9:14 he says, "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." It's not merely inappropriate for God to be unrighteous. It's impossible for God to be unrighteous. And it's not merely inappropriate for us to continue in sin. It's impossible for us to continue in sin.

In the rest of verse 2 he tells us why. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" He doesn't mean that we have a moral obligation not to live in sin and that it would be really ungrateful and rude of us to do so. He means "How?" How would that work? By what conceivable way could that be possible?

So first he is making a statement. We are dead to sin. Then he is saying it's logically impossible to be at the same time both dead to something and alive to something. You can't be dead to something and be alive to it. It's a logical impossibility.

Now there are several places in the New Testament where we are given a list of sins that is impossible for a Christian to continue in. One example is 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" Now we tend to think that the unrighteous might just be 'backslidden' or 'not walking with the Lord' right now. But Paul says, "Know ye not that the

unrighteous” aren’t Christians. They aren’t going to heaven. They won’t “inherit the kingdom of God.”

It’s stated like that because after the tribulation we return to earth to the Messianic Kingdom. It’s popular for us today to say something like, “Unless you’re born again, you can’t go to heaven,” but it’s more Biblical to say something like, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” Jn3:3, the future Messianic Kingdom.

So Paul is saying those whose lives are characterized by those kinds of unrighteous deeds are not even believers. He says, “Be not deceived.” We tend to be easily deceived in this area. He says, “Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,” that’s homosexuals, “nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you.” He cannot say “And such ‘are’ some of you,” because it’s impossible for a Christian to be one of those things. But “such ‘were’ some of you” (though not ‘all’ of you), before you accepted the Lord.

Here’s another list. Galatians 5:19, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past,” over and over and over again, “that they which do such things” are ‘poor Christians’? No. They are not Christians. That they “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

And Ephesians 5:5. “For this ye know,” I hope you know by now. I hope you know. “That no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.” Even if they make a profession of faith, even if they come to church, even if they go to our social events, don’t be fooled. “For because of these things cometh the wrath of God,” and we are not under the wrath of God, “upon the children of disobedience,” but we are children of God and our lives are characterized by obedience.

Also, in Revelation 21:8. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Now a Christian, in a time of weakness, and selfishness, and lust, can fall into one of these things, like David did. He committed adultery with Bathsheba. He murdered her husband. But his life was not characterized by those kinds of things. And the reason we can’t continue in these kinds of things is because the Holy Spirit makes us feel guilty when we sin. And we repent, and it might happen again, but we feel terrible and we repent. So we just can’t continue in those kinds of things like the world does.

Back to our text. Romans 6:3. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” In other words, he is giving us the timing; he is telling us ‘when’ we died to sin. He had said in verse 2, “You can’t continue in sin.

It's impossible because you are dead to sin." Well, when did we die to sin? And the answer is that we died to sin when we were baptized into Jesus Christ.

Now this is not talking about water baptism, because there are a lot of believers who were never water baptized, and we saw in Romans chapter 3 that it's not essential for justification to be water baptized. And there are also a lot of people who are water baptized who aren't believers, who don't know the Lord.

So what this is talking about is Spirit baptism into the body of Christ, into the Church. 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." So this is not something that just 'ought' to happen. This is something that happened to all of us, or else we are not in the body of Christ. We are not justified.

It says here that we were baptized into Christ's death. So this baptism into Christ happens at a certain point in Christ's experience, and it happens at a certain point in our experience. In Christ's experience it was at the point of his death, not at the point of his birth, or something like that, but at the point of his death. And for us the point is when we were justified. At the time we believed, we were baptized into Christ.

Now since we were baptized into him at the point of his death, then everything that happens to Christ after his death happens to us. The next thing that happened to Christ after his death was his burial. So verse 4 says, "Therefore we are buried with him by

baptism into death.” All these subsequent things happen “by,” by means of, our having been baptized into his death.

And so next we are raised with Christ by our baptism into his death. It says, “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” The word “that” indicates purpose; ‘so that,’ ‘in order that,’ as Christ was raised up we also would walk in newness of life.

The purpose that God had in our salvation was not primarily the forgiveness of our sins. The purpose in God putting us into Christ at the point of his death, was not primarily so that we would share in his death and our sins would be forgiven. The purpose was that, by being put into him at the point of death, we would then be raised with him and walk in newness of life. That was God’s purpose in this whole process.

And I know that God’s purposes always come to pass. If justifying us by putting us into Christ at the point of his death could fail to accomplish God’s purpose that each of us walk in newness of life, then he would have used another method to accomplish our justification. But putting us into Christ at the time of our justification does, without fail, accomplish God’s purpose of a new walk for all who have been justified.

That word “should,” when it says, “even so we also ‘should’ walk in newness of life,” don’t be confused by that and think it means we merely ‘ought’ to walk in newness of life. The Wycliffe New Testament

says, “So walk we in newness of life.” It leaves out the word “should,” because it’s confusing. Corey Keating, of NtGreek.org, says, “If the subjunctive mood,” like for the word “should,” “is used in a purpose or a result clause,” which it’s because we saw the word “that” indicates purpose, “then the action should not be thought of as a possible result, but should be viewed as the stated outcome that will happen.”

So what we need to understand is that all these verses in this section use words like “should” to indicate future tense, but that is just because resurrection is future to burial and death. They are just logical clauses. One thing follows another. But in these kinds of clauses, “should” doesn’t mean “ought to,” it means it’s going to happen, it follows logically from what went before, and that is what we want to understand here.

Verse 6, “Knowing this, that our old man is,” and it should be past tense, “was,” “crucified with him.” Now what does that phrase “old man” mean? It doesn’t mean “sin nature.” That is a made up term. We don’t have two parts to our spirit, you know, one part the old nature and one part the new nature. And we don’t have two spirits in us, one old nature and one new nature.

“Old man” means the man we were before we became the “new man.” The person we were before we were put into Christ and that was put into Christ at the moment of his death, that is the ‘old man.’ And when Christ was raised up from the dead, and we were raised up with him, that is the ‘new man,’ in terms of his experience. In our experience, the person we were before we were justified, that is the

‘old man’. The person we are now after our justification, that is the ‘new man’.

Justification makes such a big difference in a person’s life that you have to talk about it as the ‘old man’ and the ‘new man.’ 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

All right. Let’s move on to the second part of verse 6, “that the body of sin might be destroyed,” or, as Darby says, “annulled.” The word “body” there means “body.” Our bodies are sinful, and they have been like that ever since Adam sinned and his body began to die and became prone to sin.

And our bodies are not going to be destroyed. They are going to be changed into the glory of God at the time of our glorification in the future, but right now the effects of our bodies, even though they are sinful, have been annulled, which means ‘made of none effect’. So even though we still have the same bodies, and they haven’t been changed since our justification, except that they are older; their effect has been made of none effect, their influence is negated, “... that henceforth we should not serve sin,” as we see in the last part of verse 6.

And, again, it’s confusing. That word “should” is not in the Greek. Young’s Literal Translation says, “For our no longer serving sin.” It doesn’t mention the word “should” because this is something that is actually happening to us right now. We are no longer serving sin, because the effect of our sinful

bodies have been annulled, because we have been justified.

Also, I want to mention that the underlined words in the outline indicate servitude, like the word “serve” that I underlined in your handout, because it’s a main theme that you have to understand to understand these two chapters, chapters 6 and 7. It’s talking about servitude, and how we have had a change of masters. We have had a change of kings. We have had a change of husbands.

And then in verse 7, “For he that is dead is freed from sin.” We have been liberated. We have been emancipated because of what Christ did on the cross. He paid the full price so that we are legally released as slaves of sin and are made servants of God.

In Romans 3:9 Paul says, “We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin,” under the authority of sin, slaves to sin. Romans 3:19, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law,” under the authority of the law, slaves to the law. That’s referring to our Jewish believing brethren, because Gentiles were never under the law. Romans 5:14, “Death reigned from Adam to Moses.” So not only were we under sin; we were under death, too. It had power over us, and nobody could escape its reign. And Romans 5:21, “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign unto eternal life.” So now we are under the reign of grace.

Let’s look at verse 8. “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” The word “believe” does not indicate any doubt here;

and the word “shall” does not mean we have to wait until the resurrection of our bodies to “live with him.” The verse indicates that if one is true, the other necessarily follows. Christ is already alive, and as certainly as we died with him, just as certainly, we are living his life now.

You can't say someone has been justified, but they are not walking a sanctified walk or living a Christ-like life. If you died with him, you are also living with him. Sharing in his death justified you without fail, and so sharing in his life is also sanctifying you without fail.

Verse 9. “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.” Lazarus lived under the dominion of death, and got sick, and died. And Jesus came along and raised him up. But when he raised Lazarus from the dead, Lazarus was put right back under the dominion of death again, and so some time later Lazarus died again. But Jesus, though he was under the domain of death for a time when he took our sins on the cross, when he was raised up from the dead, he wasn't put back under the domain of death again, and he is never going to die again.

And not only did he take us with him and deliver us from the domain of death, but he also took us with him and delivered us from the domain and the rule of sin. In verses 10 and 11, Paul says, “For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

This is the first commandment in the book of Romans, and it's not a commandment to 'do' anything; just to realize something: that we died to sin, and that we are alive to God. In what way did we die to sin? We died to the reign and the rule of sin, the servitude to sin. In what way are we alive to God? God is now our new master. Now we are servants of God instead of servants to sin. So we have a new master-servant relationship.

Now let's look at the way this new master-servant relationship works. First, before we were justified, while we were under sin; sin, as our ruler, as our master, had a strong influence, and a persistent influence, in our lives. At any moment in time we could choose not to sin. But because sin had a strong and persistent influence on us; therefore, in general, the life of every single person who has not been justified, their general way of life is sin. Even if they successfully resist sin sometimes, their general way of life is one of sin. Some sin to a greater degree, some to a lesser degree, but all are characterized by a life of sin.

Now we are under the reign of God. We are servants to God. How does that work? Well, the Holy Spirit exerts a strong and persistent influence on our lives. And at any point in time we have free will to decide, no, we are not going to do righteousness. But because the Holy Spirit continues to have that strong and persistent influence on us, the general characteristic of every believer's life is one of righteousness - not all to the same degree, but all characterized by righteousness; in the same way that the life of every unbeliever is characterized by sin to different degrees.

Matthew 13:23, “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it.” There were four groups in this parable in Matthew, and this is the first group that ‘understood’ the Word, so this is the first group that was justified. And it continues, “which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

So everyone who is justified bears fruit. The minimum is thirtyfold, but some do much better than that. They go sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. We don’t want to be satisfied with just the minimum that is guaranteed. We don’t want to just have a righteous walk; we want every step of the way to be in righteousness, and we want the fullness and completeness that we can have in Jesus Christ.

Now this is God’s work, and so he gets the glory. Because, even if we wanted to, we couldn’t stop from having that thirtyfold fruit. But we want completeness in Jesus Christ, so that we can have eternal reward, and so that his name can be glorified even more. Ephesians 4:13. “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect [that means complete] man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” So that’s our goal, but every justified person is guaranteed, if you will, a walk of righteousness.

Romans 6:12. “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Now we have just been saying that sin doesn’t reign over us, that it’s impossible for sin to reign over us, and that is true, ‘over us’. Sin can reign ‘in our mortal body’ even though it can’t reign ‘over

us'. If a person resists the Holy Spirit, and grits his teeth, and just continues on, and doesn't repent; sin can reign in his mortal body for a period of time, for a little while, and then the Lord will take that believer home by means of physical death; because he won't be allowed to continue in sin.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 10. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh," that is the death of the body, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," that means you don't lose your salvation over it, "... I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

So the apostle says that if somebody called a brother, somebody who assembles with believers and is thought to be a believer, tries to walk in one of these things, he will feel terrible and normally he will stop it. But, even though he feels terrible, if he forces himself to continue on in it, the Lord will take him home. But we can speed up the process by exercising church discipline and shunning this person, not eating with him, not companying with him. He might be made to realize the seriousness of his sin, and he might repent sooner. But if he doesn't, the Lord will take him home sooner.

1 John 5:16 says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." So if you see a brother continuing in any of these

things, go ahead and pray that he will stop doing those things. But don't pray for his health. Don't pray that God will protect his life, because then you will be praying against the will of God, who wants to take him home by means of physical death.

Ok, verse 13. "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Now the word "yield" there means to present yourselves for service, as if you are standing before a king, and as soon as he gives the word you go out and do what he says.

And when we were under sin, and we presented ourselves as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, we didn't just say, "I surrender to you. I am willing to do what you want. I am willing to be willing." We went out and we sinned. And what this word "yield" means here in this verse, is that when you yield yourselves unto God you don't just say, "I am willing to do your will. I surrender to your will." You go out and you do it. This is talking about action.

Philippians 2:12-13 says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it's God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Colossians 1:29 says, "I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." 1 Corinthians 16:13 says, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." Ephesians 6:13, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." 2 Timothy 2:1, 3, 15,

“Be strong ... endure hardness, as a good soldier ... a workman.”

Now it's good to pray when you are under temptation. Hebrews 4:15-16 says, “For we have ... an high priest ... in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” And Jesus quoted Scripture to the devil, when he was tempted. But we can quote Scripture to ourselves to help us so that we can resist the devil.

There are some sins that you ought to resist. James 4:7 says, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” But there are other sins you are not to resist. There are some sins you are not supposed to stand up against. You are supposed to run. 2 Timothy 2:22, “Flee also youthful lusts.” 1 Corinthians 6:18, “Flee fornication.” Like Joseph fled from Potiphar's wife. You may need to change your work schedule, or your job or something, so that you are not even in that situation.

But what we shouldn't do is just sit back and say, “I'm willing,” and just ‘let go and let God’; because people that try to ‘let go and let God’ have a false hope of a more righteous walk. And those are the people that are going to have the thirtyfold, instead of the sixtyfold, or the hundredfold, because he tells us to go out and work.

There is no second event that you can have between your justification and your glorification, that will let you cruise through the Christian life, and cruise through your sanctification process, without effort,

and without suffering, and without striving, and without work, and without labor.

Now, knowing that our walk in righteousness is guaranteed helps us in two ways. First of all, if you know that you can't continue in sin, you are not going to be planning for it. You are not going to be investing time or money in it, because you know you are not going to be able to continue in it. There is no sense in starting up this lifestyle, or starting to go down that road, when you know it's all going to be thrown away every time you start it. You are going to feel guilty, and you are going to leave it and come back, or the Lord is going to take you home. So knowing that our walk in righteousness is guaranteed helps us not even start down those wrong roads.

And, secondly, it helps us because if we know we have the war won, we have more confidence to fight the battles. And since we know that the walk is guaranteed, we have more confidence to make each step one of righteousness.

Now, what we are talking about here in Romans 6, is not actually 'sanctification'. We are talking about the 'doctrine of sanctification'. But if you want to see what real 'sanctification' is you turn over to chapter 12. Chapters 12 through 16 is where, not the 'doctrine of sanctification' occurs, but 'sanctification' occurs, because 'sanctification' means doing the will of God, serving, working, laboring, and doing what it says, in chapters 12 through 16.

Romans 6:13-18. Sanctification - A New Master

All right, let's look at verses 14 through 18 as a group to save time. Paul is talking about not being under the law, and he says people think, "Ok, if you are not under the law, if there is no threat of punishment, then people would just go out and sin. They will live however they want."

But Paul says in verse 16, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Now at first glance, it looks like that verse is saying I can just, every five minutes, go and choose who I am going to serve. If I decide to serve this guy, I am his servant for a while; and if I decide to serve that guy, I become his servant a while.

But that is not what it's saying. It's saying that if you look at who a person is serving you can tell who their master is. Most of the time, we obey our employer, even though at any particular moment we may disobey. An apple tree does not become an apple tree because it bears apples; you can tell that it's an apple tree because it bears apples, and it bears apples because it's an apple tree. Even the law, with its threat of punishment, cannot control servants of sin, but servants of righteousness do righteousness even when you take the law and its threat of punishment away.

Now there are different kinds of servitude. In the Bible and in this country we have had bond service, indentured servants, and apprenticeship. Now we have what we call 'employer-employee'

relationships, which covers up the servitude aspect nicely so we don't realize we are just servants, but we are. And even in our society, to change your employer is a significant event. You can't just run over and serve another man and thereby become his servant. You go through a process, and become another man's servant first, and then you serve him, because you're under his authority, and it changes your life, it changes what you do all day.

So he says here in verses 17 and 18, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." So when we believed the gospel, our change of masters took place.

And to 'obey the gospel' means to have faith and be justified. Because Romans 10:16-17 says, "They have not all obeyed the gospel." Now we don't do works to be saved. We have faith in the gospel and that saves us. But since God revealed the gospel to the world it's not obedience to reject it. We need to have faith in it; and, continuing on with that passage in Romans 10, in verse 17, "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

So this is the only totally free choice you ever have in life. Before your justification, you always had the power of sin, your master, influencing you and getting you to sin as your general way of life. And after your justification, you always have the Holy Spirit, who is never going to let you go, influencing you and causing you to walk in righteousness. But for that period of time, while you are a servant of sin,

and you haven't yet been regenerated, and you haven't yet entered into grace (because that happens at justification); you hear the gospel, and the supernatural power of the gospel gives you the ability to make a true choice as to whether or not to believe, and that is the only totally free choice we have in life.

Let's look at the next paragraph quickly, in verses 19 through 23. Here Paul is still showing that being under grace results in a more righteous walk than being under the law, because when you are a servant of sin, you do works of unlawfulness. "Ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity," which is more literally translated 'lawlessness unto lawlessness'. He says, "Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." That word "holiness" is from the same Greek word which is translated "saints" in other places, and it's where we get the word 'sanctification' from, which is our topic today. Holiness is the goal of the law, but it's not accomplished in us by the law.

And what Paul is encouraging us to do here, when he says, "yield your members servants to righteousness," is to make every step one of righteousness. He says, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" There is shame in those things. And he said, "The end of those things is death, but now we have fruit unto God and holiness." So he is motivating us to avoid wasting time in empty and hurtful things, and to make every step one of righteousness.

And notice the words "those things." Sin results in death, "the end of those things is death." "But now

being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” He doesn’t say “the end of ‘those things’ is everlasting life” because although sin results in death, holiness and good works do not result in everlasting life.

Now the two things go together on both sides. Sin and death always go together because one causes the other. And holiness and everlasting life always go together, but not because one causes the other. Holiness (sanctification) and everlasting life (glorification) always go together without fail because both come from the same source: justification.

Now the Catholic Church teaches that, first of all, you are justified because of baptism. And we saw in Romans chapter 3, that baptism isn’t the way of justification. And they teach that at that point your sins are forgiven, but that after that point then you are rewarded eternal life for the righteous acts that you do, with the help of God’s grace. And if you do something really unrighteous, then you lose that eternal life, and you need to go to confession or do some other things to get those sins forgiven and get re-justified. But these verses clearly teach that is not the case. You don’t receive eternal life because of your righteous acts. “Everlasting life” is not a result of our living a holy life.

Romans 7:1-6. Sanctification - A New Husband

Let’s look at the next paragraph, chapter 7 verses 1 through 6. And it says here that “the law has

dominion over man as long as he lives.” And this is, again, referring to our Jewish believing brethren, like Paul. “For the woman which hath an husband ...” The Wycliffe New Testament says, “that is under a husband.” And that word “under” is really there in the Greek. I don’t know why most versions leave it out because the whole idea is that, just as Israel was under the law, a woman is under the authority of her husband. Just like Israel has to obey the law, a woman has to obey her husband.

That is what Ephesians 5:21-33 says. Women have to submit to their husbands. It also says husbands have to make sure that every command they give is for the welfare of the wife. A husband has to sacrifice everything for his wife like Christ sacrificed himself for the Church. So we men are not off the hook.

But here is the idea. Here is a married woman who is infertile and can’t have children. There is nothing wrong with her husband, except that he can’t miraculously cause this barren woman to have children. And she can’t marry this other man, whose mere word of promise can give children to the barren, because it would be adultery to have two husbands. So she has to wait for her husband to die.

But the law is never going to die, and Israel can’t be freed from the law that way. So what happens is that the wife dies with and is raised up with Jesus, and then can rightfully marry Jesus. So our Jewish brethren died along with Christ, and were raised up with him, so they along with us can comprise the church, the bride of Christ, who can make even people like us bear fruit.

He says in the middle of the paragraph, “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God ... that we should serve in newness of spirit.”

So, we saw earlier that we have a new master-servant relationship. Now we see here that we have a new husband-wife relationship. We will see later, in Romans 8, that we also have a new father-son relationship. All these relationships are superior-inferior relationships - not in quality, but in position - because a superior always gives commands, and the inferior always obeys commands.

And this is why we aren't guaranteed that we will do righteousness perfectly. Instead, we are guaranteed we will do righteousness in general, because our new relationships - like servant to God rather than servant to sin, husband to Christ rather than husband to the law, son of the Father rather than son of flesh - all these relationships work just like they do in real life. In general, those in authority over us vastly affect how we live by their persistent influence and legitimate authority, even though at any moment in time we can choose to disobey. So it's not a mechanical thing. It's a new relationship.

Romans 7:7-25. Sanctification - The Law

Now in verses 7 to 12 of Romans 7, Paul says, “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” So from your own conscience you can find out a lot of bad things about yourself, but if you

study the law, as Paul did, you can find out even more bad things about yourself. Like when Paul got to the tenth commandment that said, “Thou shalt not covet.” And the positive side of that commandment, in addition to not wanting what we don’t have, is to be content with what we do have. And Paul realized he fell short.

He says, “For I was alive without the law once.” That means he felt Ok. “But when the commandment came,” as he studied it and tried to keep it, “sin revived, and I died.” He realized that he was a sinner. He realized he was condemned.

“That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” Because he said back in verse 8 that, “the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence,” that is, lust. So the law not only shows you your sin, but it also makes you want to sin. You tell somebody don’t do this, and they want to do it. And that just shows how bad we are. There is nothing wrong with the law.

I was in an elementary school cafeteria where a church was meeting, and the place was plastered with banners saying, “Just say no to drugs” - in an elementary school. The problem is that when you put things like that in front of people all the time, and you keep telling them not to do it, you know, they are going to start to be interested in it. And they are going to think, “Maybe I should try that.”

Let’s look at the next paragraph, Romans 7:13-25. “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Now we know this refers to Paul before he had been justified because we have just been studying that we who have been justified

are no longer under sin, we are no longer servants in bondage to sin. So Paul is describing his life as a Jewish Pharisee under the law before he came to Christ.

He says, “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.” The Pharisees delighted in the law of God. They built their lives around studying the law of God. He says, “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” A person who is under sin and a servant of sin can’t keep the law, no matter how much they study it. And the problem is in our members, in our bodies of sin. “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” He could decide to keep the law, but he couldn’t keep it, because the effect of his sinful body had not been annulled (Rm6:6).

How is Paul’s pre-justification experience under the law relevant and important to this section on sanctification? Because it’s the best passage in the Bible to show that the best the law can do for us is not enough. Paul was an example of an unregenerate man trying to keep the law, and there was no hope for him. He said, “Who will deliver me from this body of death,” this body, that keeps me from keeping the law? And the only answer is, not the law, but “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord,” Rm7:25.

Romans 8:1-13. Sanctification - A New Mind

All right, let's look at chapter 8, verses 1 to 13, our last paragraph.

Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This verse is not saying there are two classes of Christians, and that only Christians who walk after the Spirit have no condemnation. There is no condemnation for anyone who has been justified, especially since we are not under the Law, as Paul has just shown.

But at the same time that we were delivered from condemnation and any threat of law, we were also changed from being fleshly to being spiritual. We were changed from being 'after,' or 'according to,' or 'under' (the Greek word is 'kata') the flesh; to being 'after,' or 'according to,' or 'under' the Spirit.

Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." All Christians walk after the Spirit, not because of threat of condemnation, but because we have the Holy Spirit and life in Christ Jesus. We are regenerate, we have the Holy Spirit, we are spiritual, and this results in a righteous walk.

In contrast, the law of Moses is called here "the law of sin and death," Rm8:2. Paul had just asked in the previous two paragraphs, "Is the law sin?" Rm7:7-12; and was the law "made death unto me," Rm7:13-25. He had answered that the law is neither sin nor death, but that because of our own sinfulness, it

results only in sin and death for all who are under the law, and thus not in Christ.

Romans 8:3, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.” There is nothing wrong with the law, the problem is with us; the spiritual weakness of those born only of flesh. So what the law could not accomplish because of our condition, “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,” Rm8:3-4.

So our justification accomplishes the sanctification that the law could not accomplish, because when we were justified we moved from the realm of the flesh to the realm of the spirit; we are now spiritual, and walk after the Spirit. If the way we were justified did not guarantee a righteousness walk for every believer, then God would have needed to justify us another way, because the reason God sent his Son to die for us was “that [so that] the righteousness of the law might be [would be] fulfilled in us,” Rm8:3-4, and God’s purposes are always fulfilled.

Notice it’s not the law, but “the righteousness of the law” that is now fulfilled in our walk. We are not under and do not try to keep the law of Moses, but we do fulfill the righteousness that the law of Moses was based upon.

Although Jeremiah 31:31-33 is primarily about Israel, the Gentiles also share in the blessings of the New Covenant, which makes the law of Moses into an Old Covenant. “I will make a new covenant with

the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt [the law of Moses]; which my covenant they brake, ... but this shall be the covenant ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” A supernatural change of heart accomplishes the righteousness of the law which the law could not accomplish.

Romans 8:5, “For they that are after the flesh do mind [think about] the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [mind, think about] the things of the Spirit.” The reason the law cannot accomplish a righteousness walk in natural men, and the reason justification in Christ does accomplish a righteous walk in men who have been made spiritual, is because of the difference in the way we think.

Romans 8:6-8, “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it’s not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Our way of thinking has vast implications for our ability to walk in righteousness and to please God. The natural man’s way of thinking is death, no concept of spiritual things, and hatred (enmity) against God, and rebellion. The spiritual man’s way of thinking is life, being spiritually alive, and at peace with God.

Romans 8:9-10, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit's life because of righteousness." Every Christian has the Holy Spirit, and thus every Christian is in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Our bodies are dead because they are unchanged from the time we believed, but our spirits are alive to God because we were justified, counted as righteous.

Romans 8:11, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Although our bodies have not yet been made alive to God as our spirits have, and although our bodies are presently the source of the struggle we face in this life, our bodies will one day receive their part of salvation, at the time of resurrection and glorification.

This same "mortal" body, Rm8:11, that the Holy Spirit lives in gets raised up and changed to immortality. You don't get a new body; that wouldn't be resurrection, as we discussed in chapter 5. Just as Christ's tomb was empty because his body was raised, and he did not receive another body, so it will be with us. Even if a believer's body is only scattered dust by that time; God can re-gather it, restore it, and glorify it.

In John 14:16-17, Jesus said that after he leaves the earth, the Holy Spirit will come and dwell in us as a comforter, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world

cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” There is no better comforter or companion than one who is always with us because he dwells within us.

Also, notice that the Spirit that dwells in us is called “the Spirit of God” in verse 9, and “the Spirit of Christ” in verse 10. In John 14:23, “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Both Yeshua and the Father dwell within us through the Spirit. That is why, not only are we in Christ, but according to Romans 8:10, Christ is in us: “If Christ be in you, the body is dead ... but the Spirit’s life.” It’s impossible for us to walk after the flesh, when the Father and the Son dwell in our physical bodies by means of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:12-13, “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Those who live after the flesh are those who have never been justified, who are not only spiritually dead now, but whose bodies also will die, not just ‘sleep,’ because their resurrection will only be for the purpose of the second death. Those who have been justified, owe none of their benefits to the flesh, and mortify the deeds of the body, as a general way of life, because of the Holy Spirit that dwells in them, and not only have spiritual life now, but also their bodies will one day be resurrected and glorified.

But we are not satisfied with the minimum that God will work in our lives. We want the fullness, completeness, and maturity that God desires for us. We want to bring “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,” 2Cor10:5. And therefore we need to be conscious and diligent in mortifying the deeds of the body as the Spirit’s influencing us to do.

We must do as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:27, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.” And as he says in Romans 13:14, “make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” And indeed, to obey all that we are commanded to do. Resist some things: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,” James 4:7. Flee other things: “Flee fornication,” 1 Corinthians 6:18. “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong,” 1 Corinthians 16:13. Just as we talked about back in Romans 6:12-21.

As Paul finishes this section on sanctification, that started back in Romans 6:1, he urges us to action. To fight, to labor, to serve. He does not say, “Let go, and let God.” He does not say, “You are hopeless. Hand it all over to God, and he will deliver you from those sins that trouble you.” We are not hopeless; we are in Christ, his Spirit’s in us, we are legally free of sin and made servants to God, we have a new life, and walk and think after the Spirit. That’s why Paul doesn’t say we need deliverance; he says we need to stand up, be strong, and mortify the deeds of the flesh.

The teaching that we just need to keep surrendering and then we can cruise effortlessly into sanctification actually puts all the burden on us

because we have to keep surrendering, or abiding, or letting go, or being filled with the Spirit, or we no longer walk after the Spirit. In reality, God is causing all who have been justified to walk after the Spirit, even those who think they have to keep surrendering in order to walk after the Spirit. But those who think sanctification comes by way of surrender only achieve minimal sanctification, only thirty-fold fruit.

Those who understand that God is without fail sanctifying them, but that they must put out their own effort and diligent labor to mortify the deeds of the body as completely as possible and to walk in every good work, are the ones who will bear sixty and an hundred-fold fruit and receive more eternal reward. Let us strive mightily for the glory of God, for the time is short.

People talk about passing over from Romans 6 and 7 to Romans 8, but Romans 8:12-13 is just like Romans 6:12-21. Paul is still talking about how our justification ensures our sanctification in Romans 8, just as he was in Romans 6, although he added more information in Romans 8 about the Holy Spirit's role. Teaching that sanctification is provided by some second experience does injustice to the greatness of the justification that God provided.

Justification is the big change that happened to us: from death to life, from serving sin to serving God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, having spiritual life, being in Christ; and that change results in our sanctification without fail to the glory of God, because it's his work.

Now if there is anyone here who hasn't been justified, Christ took our guilt upon him, so that if we trust in what he did, we can be counted as 'not guilty'. In John 3:16 it says, "Whosoever believes in him should [shall] not perish, but have everlasting life." So you need to take God at his word, trust in him, and you will have everlasting life, and he will begin his work of sanctification in you.

So thanks for letting me share with you again. We don't have lunch today, do we? Do we want to have any questions?

Question from the audience: "Would you say young believers struggle for a while before they overcome some things because they don't have the information?"

Even new believers don't continue in sin, although we wouldn't want to discourage anyone by making our definition or application more stringent than what the Bible means by "continue in sin." But there is also a natural growth process for which there are no shortcuts. Having good scriptural information, like having good healthful food, helps; but the growth process will still take time.

1 John 2:12-13 says, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven ... fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning ... young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one." The order is important: children, fathers, young men.

The first thing we have to know when we are children is that our sins are forgiven, because often

when we do something wrong, we think God is going to take away his power. We think “I can’t witness to somebody because I just sinned yesterday” or something. And we need to know that our sins are forgiven. That is the first thing we need to know. And after that, as we focus on “him that is from the beginning,” and try to learn about him, then on the way to becoming fathers, we will become young men and overcome.

Comment from the audience: “It’s not what we did, it’s all to the glory of God. It’s his plan to save us. I heard something on the radio that kind of goes along with this message, that we’re not saved ‘by’ good works, we’re saved ‘to do’ good works. We’re justified by the act of God, the mercy of God, who sent Jesus to be a sin offering for us. We have nothing to boast. When I explain the gospel to people, they don’t understand it. They say they’re gonna climb that ladder themselves. But Jesus is the ladder for us.”

I have a friend, Rich, who said one time, that people are always trying to do good works to earn salvation, to earn justification. And you can’t do that. You’re not saved by your works. But once you’ve been justified, then, now’s the time. Go for it! Do the good works!



Romans 8b-11. Glorification

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I want to talk about one of my favorite topics today: glorification. And we are going to look at glorification in two parts. The first part is the certainty of our personal glorification in the second half of chapter 8; and the second part is the certainty of Israel's national glorification in chapters 9 - 11.

So let's start with the certainty of our personal glorification. Now, of course, this is only for those who have been justified. All who have been justified will be glorified. It's a future event. We haven't been glorified yet.

What glorification means is that our physical bodies are going to be changed to be like Christ's body. We are going to shine like his body shines now, each of us to different degrees based on how faithful we were, how much we suffered, how much we shared the gospel, things like that. So you will be able to tell just by looking at somebody, what their life had been like, for all eternity (as we explained in Romans 5).

Romans 8:14-39. Glorification

This section on glorification begins in Romans 8 verse 14. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In the first half of Romans 8, Paul had been saying that all who have been justified are being sanctified. We walk after the Spirit, because the indwelling Holy Spirit affects the way we think. Now in verse 14, Paul summarizes that process as being "led of the Spirit."

The word "led" here often includes an element of force, like leading captives in Mark 13:11, "They shall lead you and deliver you up." Here in verse 14, we are not forced against our will, but the Holy Spirit's persuasion is so strong and consistent that God's overall purpose is sure to be achieved. That is why the sanctification of every Christian is certain and sure. But now Paul segues into the topic of glorification, by pointing out that our being led of the Spirit indicates that we are sons of God.

This is the third superior-inferior relationship we have in these chapters: superior-inferior, not in quality, but in position, like father-son, husband-wife, master-servant. We looked at the master-servant relation in chapter 6, and the husband-wife

relationship in chapter 7, and now the father-son relationship in chapter 8.

And one of the main things about being a son of God is that you become an heir of God along with Jesus Christ. Verse 17, “and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,” talking about our future inheritance.

And then verse 17 talks about suffering, because when Jesus was here he suffered, and so we also suffer in this present age. And why talk about suffering when you are talking about future glorification? Because the more we suffer the more we will be glorified.

Now God is wise and he will give us the right amount of suffering during our lives, but more suffering means more glory for eternity. As we mentioned when we studied Romans 5, you are giving up something you can't keep (comfort) to gain something you can't lose (eternal glory). So verses 17-18 say: “If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” The glory is much better than the suffering is bad; and the suffering is temporary, but the glory is eternal.

Ok, then let's look at verse 21 about the creation. “The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” How does the creation groan and travail in pain? Well, crops don't grow perfectly. There isn't

enough water. There is pollution. Animals bite and claw and kill each other for food. The whole creation is suffering, not just us.

But a short time after our bodies are glorified, creation will also be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and creation too will be, in a sense, glorified. The desert will blossom as a rose and the lion will lay down with the calf in peace. So creation is waiting for our glorification.

Romans 8:23, “And not only they,” creation, “but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Two things here. First of all we have the first fruits of the Spirit. That means we’re sure to receive the rest of the harvest. The fact that you have the Holy Spirit right now shows that you are going to receive the complete inheritance later on.

And, secondly, it says we are awaiting the ‘adoption’. So when it’s talking about ‘adoption’ here it’s talking about the redemption of our body. Our bodies haven’t been changed since the time we believed, but there is coming a day when our bodies will be redeemed and that is called our ‘adoption’.

Ok, verse 24. “We are saved by [or in] hope,” and then Paul goes on to talk about hope in this section. So the word “hope” is telling us we are looking at a future event, not something we already experienced. But it’s still a certainty. It doesn’t mean, “I hope so.” It’s something that is sure to come to pass. It’s just in the future, so it’s called “hope.”

Verse 28, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” That is a well known verse and a precious verse. But in this context it definitely includes the certainty of our glorification, because if anything could result in our not being glorified, that thing wouldn’t be working for our good. So this verse means, among other things, that nothing can stop us from being glorified. Nothing can cause us to lose our salvation.

Continuing in verse 28, “To them who are the called according to his purpose.” Calling refers to after-justification service. As an example of that, we will look at how we are called to sanctification in 1 Thessalonians 4:7. “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” That is sanctification. And we are also called to glorification in 1 Thessalonians 2:12. “God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.”

Here are more verses about being called to sanctification:

“To all that be in Rome ... called to be saints,” Rm1:7.

“Be blameless ... called unto the fellowship of his Son,” 1Cor1:9.

“God hath called us to peace,” 1Cor7:15.

“Ye have been called unto liberty,” Gal5:13.

“Worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,” Eph4:1.

“Called us with an holy calling,” 2Tim1:9.

“He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy,”
1Pet1:15.

“Called you out of darkness into ... light,” 1Pet2:9.

“Hereunto were ye called: ... Christ also suffered,”
1Pet2:21.

“Not ... evil for evil ... ye are thereunto called,”
1Pet3:9.

“Called us to glory and virtue,” 2Pet1:3.

Here are more verses about being called to glorification:

“Ye are called in one hope of your calling,” Eph4:4.

“Called you by our gospel, to ... obtaining ... glory,”
2Thes2:14.

“Eternal life, whereunto thou art also called,”
1Tim6:12.

“Called us unto his eternal glory,” 1Pet5:10.

“Called us to glory and virtue,” 2Pet1:3.

But we are not called to believe or to justification. We are only called to glorification, to sanctification, and to service. It's a 'calling,' like a 'vocation'. So the vocation that we have, the job we have, once we have been justified, is to be sanctified, to walk in holiness, and to be glorified. That is what God called us to, and that is what he will accomplish in us.

Romans 8:29, “For whom he did foreknow ...” And I just want to stop here and define the word

“foreknow,” because some people have defined foreknow as something that God causes to happen; but that is not what the word means. It means ‘to know before’. As an example, in 2 Peter “There shall come in the last days scoffers ... saying, Where is the promise of his coming? ... Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware,” 2Pet3:3-4,17.

So when it says the two English words, “know ... before,” in 2 Peter 3:17, that is the single Greek word meaning “foreknow.” Now we ‘know before’ that scoffers are coming because Peter warned us, but we are not ‘causing’ those scoffers to come in the last days by knowing it. We just know it ahead of time because of the prophecy. So that is all the word “foreknow” means.

God knew from the foundation of the earth who would someday be in Christ. And since he knows who is going to believe, he doesn’t have to wait until they believe to predestinate them to glory. In that sense, God interacts with time differently than we do.

And since he knows they will become his children and spend eternity with him, they are special to him, and he has a special interest in their lives, even before they believe. He doesn’t pretend that he doesn’t know who will believe. But that foreknowledge doesn’t directly or indirectly cause them to believe.

Continuing in verse 29, Paul says that whoever God foreknew “he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Now, the main

thing you need to know about predestination is that predestination is always to glorification, never to justification. It says here, “he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

The word “image” here refers to external appearance, which means that God has predestinated us to be like Christ. When he returns “we shall be like him; for we shall see him [externally] as he is,” 1Jn3:2. We will share then in the bright appearance he already has now. That is what ‘predestination’ means. Nowhere in the Bible are we predestinated to believe or predestinated to be justified. We are predestinated to be glorified.

And that is found in Ephesians 1:5 also, “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.” And, remember back in verse 28, we just talked about how our ‘adoption’ refers to resurrection and glorification, not justification. And then continuing in Ephesians 1:11, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated.” See, predestination is about something that is going to happen to us in the future, the receiving of our “inheritance,” our glorification.

We are never predestinated to faith or to believe. D. M. Lloyd-Jones, one of my favorite authors, commenting on the “spiritual blessings” of Eph1:1, says the Holy Spirit “gives us the gift of faith,” in reference to saving faith. But this is not a Biblical phrase to use in relation to salvation, and often when a phrase is not found in the Bible it’s indicative of a doctrinal mistake. Of course, there is a gift of faith in relation to spiritual gifts. “To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles,”

1Cor12:9-10. But in relation to saving faith, faith is never a gift.

Ephesians 2:8-9 is no exception. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it’s the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast,” Eph2:8-9. If the phrases “that not of yourselves” and “the gift of God” referred to “faith” in this verse, it would mean there are two kinds of faith: that which is “of yourselves” and that which is “not of yourselves.”

But that would mean we learned nothing from the first 11 chapters of Romans. Paul, and the other New Testament writers, consistently present faith in simple contrast to works. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,” Rm4:4-5. “They sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law,” Rm9:32. “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law,” Gal2:16. And, of course, we could go on and on.

So Ephesians 2:8 has to mean that ‘salvation’ is a gift from God that you receive by faith and cannot merit by your own works. And the construction of the sentence in Ephesians 2:8 certainly allows for that interpretation, without the need to redefine all the other passages on faith in the New Testament. And the grammar of Ephesians 2:8 does not lend itself to the interpretation that faith is a gift, because the

word “faith” is feminine, while “that” and “gift” are neuter.

Also, Acts 13:48 does not mean that people believed because God elected them. “And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” Acts 13:48. The phrase “eternal life” refers primarily to our glorification and inheritance, as we saw in chapter 5. So this verse shows that predestination is to glorification, not to justification.

The way we, as men, would do it, is that as soon as a person believed, we would ordain him to glorification, and then the verse would read, “as many as believed were ordained to eternal life.” But God, knowing all things from the beginning, has no reason to wait until a person believes before he ordains him to glorification, and so he predestinates him from eternity past. So at some point, everyone who is ordained to glorification believes, because that event when they believe is what God foresaw that caused him to ordain them to glorification in the first place. So man’s choice determines his ultimate destiny, but only because God in his sovereignty has created him, provided salvation, and provided him this choice through the gospel.

So as soon as we believe, we have eternal security; even earlier, from the foundation of the earth. Joy!!! “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us,” Eph 1:4-5. Everyone believes in eternal security. The only disagreement is as to when it starts. The angels that didn’t follow Satan are confirmed in their righteousness, and can no longer be tempted. If Adam had not sinned in the

garden, he would at some point have been confirmed in his righteousness, and no longer subject to temptation. When are bodies glorified, we will no longer be able to be tempted, because sin presently dwells in our mortal bodies. And no one believes you can lose your salvation after you go to heaven or enter the Messianic Kingdom. But we don't need to wait for glorification, when we can no longer be tempted to sin, to have no chance of apostatizing. Because we have been legally delivered from slavery to sin and enslaved instead to righteousness, and because of our union with God, and our being in Christ, and the Holy Spirit within us, and predestination to glorification, we already have eternal security.

Back in Romans 8:30, Paul continues, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Now this is good news because it means that our glorification is certain. If any of these things happen to a person, all of them happen to a person. It all or none. So since we have been justified, we know we are going to be glorified. And we know that we were also predestinated and called to glory.

Now these 5 things happen in a person's life in this order chronologically. God foreknows, then predestinates, then calls, then justifies, then glorifies. But it doesn't mean that each one causes the next. Instead, each one ensures our glorification.

In the first set, "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate," the foreknowledge does result in the next one, predestination, but the predestination is to glorification, to be conformed to his image, as we

saw. But in the second set, “whom he did predestinate, them he also called,” the predestination doesn’t result in our being called. It results in our being glorified, “he ... did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.” We are not predestinated to be called.

And in the third set, “whom he called, them he also justified,” being called doesn’t result in justification. It results in sanctification and glorification. We are called to be sanctified and glorified. But in the fourth set, “whom he justified, them he also glorified,” justification does result in the next one, glorification, because of the way in which we were justified.

So all these things are like a chain where you get the whole thing, but each one doesn’t cause the next. And each link results in our glorification. The good news is that our glorification is the next event in store for those who have been justified, and it’s certain to happen.

And then Romans 8:35, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine ...” and so forth. And then Paul says, “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers ...” and so forth, “shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,” Rm8:38-39.

So this is the last verse in this section about the certainty of our personal glorification. And it sounds pretty certain that nothing can separate us from God and Christ, not ourselves, not anyone else, not our sin, and not our lack of faith, because he will never

let us stop believing. Nothing can separate us from Christ once we entered into Christ by justification through faith.

Romans 9-11. Israel's Salvation

Now let's look at chapters 9 - 11, which are about Israel's national salvation and the certainty of Israel's national glorification. If Israel's future national glorification isn't certain, then neither is our future personal glorification. If God could call Israel, and bring them so far, and then drop them for some reason, then he can do the same to us. But these three chapters show that Israel's national glorification is certain. We will be glorified personally, those who are in the Church; and also Israel, as a nation, will be glorified. And both events are tied to each other, and happen at about the same time.

Romans 9:1-9:29. Not All Israel

The Problem: Israel Currently Does Not Accept Christ

Paul starts off this section by stating the problem. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rm9:1-3. Paul would be willing to be accursed from Christ, if it were possible, which it's not, in place of his unbelieving Jewish brethren.

Now Israel has always been comprised mostly of unbelievers. When Moses brought the people out of

Egypt, most of them were unbelievers. But Moses had a lot of power. He was bringing plagues on Egypt, and they were under persecution in Egypt, and so they went along with Moses. And while Israel wandered in the wilderness, the people kept grumbling in their tents, because most of them were unregenerate, and so, of course, they had a hard time living with God on a day to day basis.

So teachers today often err when they use Israel as a picture of the church. Of course, there are some parallels, and we can always learn some things from the experience of others. But the church is comprised entirely of regenerate people, new creations, who have the Holy Spirit living in them, and thus walk after the Spirit. So the church is not going to act like Israel, except in limited and isolated ways.

Israel Grudgingly Accepted the Other Things from God

In Romans 9:4-5, Paul says, “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption,” God chose the nation of Israel as his national son and heir of the world. “And the glory,” the glory of God, and the shekinah glory that was with them, and will dwell with them again in the Messianic Kingdom. “And the covenants,” there are four unconditional Jewish covenants -- Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New -- which are the basis of the future kingdom. “The giving of the law,” which is the only conditional Jewish covenant. “The service of God,” refers to the temple service and all their service to God. “And the promises,” including the Messianic Kingdom. “Whose are the fathers,” Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

“And of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen,” Rm9:5. So Christ is God. He is over all. We see that God is a plural unity, Hebrew “echad,” not a singular unity, “yachid,” from the first three verses of the Bible. “In the beginning God [God the Father] created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God [God the Holy Spirit] moved upon the face of the waters. And God said [God the Son, the Word of God; later, Yeshua], Let there be light: and there was light,” Gen1:1-3. God is “Elohim”. The “im” at the end of Hebrew nouns means plural.

God the Father is so transcendent he could not create the world except through the person of his Son. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... All things were made by him,” Jn1:1-3. If you really believe God is transcendent, you understand that we can’t even see his shekinah glory apart from the person of his Son. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. ... No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him,” Jn1:18.

That is why the Messiah is often presented as man, and often presented as God, in prophecy. “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” Mt22:42-

44. So Messiah is David's "Lord" (God) who became David's "son" (man).

Now the interesting thing is that even though the Jewish people, like the Gentiles, are mostly unbelievers; they went along the other things listed here, until they got to the last one, "Christ." They went along with the giving of the law, and the service of the tabernacle, and so forth, because all these things are external things, which even unjustified men can participate in. But when it comes to Christ, the Jewish people, as a group, reject Christ; not merely like unsaved Gentiles reject him, by trying to justify themselves by works; but they also reject Christ outwardly. If you visit a synagogue today they are not going to be teaching about Yeshua.

And many times, one generation of Israel would kill the prophet God sent them, and the next generation would accept that prophet, and say, "We wouldn't have done that." "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," Mt23:29-32. But with Christ, not even the next generation, or the next generation, accepted him as a prophet. So that is a big change.

So, is God done with Israel? Are the covenants not going to be fulfilled? Is Israel not going to obtain national glorification? Is God not going to keep his word and fulfill the promises he made to Israel?

You can't say, well, Israel's covenants have been transferred to the church. That would be like God transferring your glorification to someone else; and it would mean we don't have eternal security; and it would mean that God didn't keep his promise. If he promised you glorification and then gave it to someone else, he would not be keeping his promise to you.

There has Always Been a Division among Jewish People

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel,” Rm9:6.

The definition of a Jew is ‘a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’. You can't just say ‘a descendant of Abraham,’ because Ishmael and the Arab nations also came from Abraham. And you can't just say a descendant of Abraham and Isaac, because Esau and the Edomites also came from Isaac. You have to say ‘a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,’ because all 12 of Jacob's sons, are considered part of Israel, which is why God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

But here Paul is saying that there is a further division. Even among Jacob's descendants, not all Jacob's descendants are part of the Israel God made the promises to. “They are not all Israel [the chosen people], which are [descendants] of Israel [Jacob].” Ok, so what scriptural basis does Paul have for that doctrine, and how can you tell which of Jacob's descendants are God's Israel and which are not?

Isaac and Ishmael

“Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called [Gen21:12]. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son [Gen18:10,14],” Rm9:7-9.

Both Isaac and Ishmael were the seed of Abraham, but only Isaac was “counted for the seed.” In allegory, Isaac was a believer, because he is “called,” he is one of “the children of God,” he had a supernatural birth, because of the word of God, “the promise” of God. The word “believe” isn’t mentioned here, because it wouldn’t fit in with the allegory, since Isaac had no faith at the time the allegory refers to, since he wasn’t born yet. But we know from Romans 1-8 how one becomes a child of God. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” Gal3:26.

And in allegory, Ishmael was an unbeliever, because he was “of the flesh,” a natural man, with only a natural birth. So the application of the allegory is that, in reality, only the descendants of Jacob who are spiritual children of God through faith in God will be “counted for the seed.”

So what is the significance of being counted as the seed or of not being counted as the seed? It has to do with inheriting the covenants, and inheriting the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession during the Messianic Kingdom, and dwelling near the Millennial Temple, and the shekinah glory, and the

Messiah, who will reign from Jerusalem. “I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, and I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land ... of Canaan, for an everlasting possession,” Gen17:7-8.

Only believers will be able to enter the future Messianic Kingdom. So unbelieving Israelites will not be able to enter the kingdom, and they won't be able to inherit “Canaan for an everlasting possession,” because they don't have everlasting life. So unbelieving descendants of Jacob are not part of “the seed” that God made the promises to. On the other hand, many Gentiles will be in the kingdom because they believed in the God of Israel, but they are not part of “the seed,” that inherits Canaan either, and they will primarily dwell outside the land of Israel during the kingdom.

But as for Jewish people, if they believe in God for their justification, they are part of the seed that the promises were made to, and if they don't believe (trust) in God, they are not only not part of the promised seed; they will not enter the kingdom at all. God knew who he was making the promises to, back when he made them, because he knows the future, and knew which descendants of Jacob would eventually believe.

Jacob and Esau

“And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to

election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger [Gen25:23],” Rm9:10-12.

Likewise, both Jacob and Esau were the seed of Abraham and Isaac, but only Jacob was “counted for the seed.” In allegory, Jacob was ‘chosen,’ “of him that calleth,” “according to election,” for the “purpose of God,” and “not of works”. And in allegory, Esau was not ‘chosen,’ or ‘elect’. And the application of the allegory is that only the descendants of Jacob who are chosen and elect are “counted for the seed.” In other words, not all the “chosen people” are chosen to receive the covenant.

So from Isaac, we saw that inheritance is by faith, and from Jacob we see that it’s not of works. It’s “not of works” so that “the purpose of God” might “stand.” If the fulfillment of God’s purposes depended on man’s works, there would be a risk that God’s purposes might not be fulfilled, and actually, they certainly would not be fulfilled. Because man always fails; but God always succeeds. So we know that our glorification and the glorification of Israel is certain, because they are not based on the works of men but on the declaration of God. So Israel’s disobedience cannot derail God’s plans for their national glorification.

“As it’s written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated [Mal1:2-5],” Rm9:13. Only those who are God’s, and will be glorified, are called “chosen” or “elect,” but that doesn’t mean God doesn’t also have plans for those who are not elect. It wasn’t just that Esau was not loved, but that he was hated.

“I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness ... and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel,” Mal1:2-5.

God will be “magnified” in the nation of Israel during the Messianic Kingdom, but the nation of Edom, Esau’s nation, the land of southern Jordan today, which borders Israel, will be a place of burning pitch during the kingdom. “My sword shall come down upon Edom and upon the people of my curse ... and the land thereof shall become burning pitch ... the smoke thereof shall go up forever,” Is34:5-10.

And the application is that the descendants of Jacob who are not part of the elect, are not merely not loved like Jacob, but they are also hated like Esau. This doesn’t mean that God doesn’t love them, or that he isn’t grieved by their sufferings, or that he didn’t sacrifice everything (his own Son) to provide salvation for them, but it means that, as Edom receives special physical judgments, so, unfortunately, do they.

That Esau and his descendants were not chosen to receive the covenants, doesn’t mean he and none of his descendants are predestinated to glorification, or can’t believe on the Lord. There will be many descendants of Esau in the kingdom, but they will not be there as a nation of Edom.

Moses and Pharaoh

“What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid,” Rm9:14.

Was God unjust to Ishmael and his mother for Abraham to send them away with nothing but a bottle of water? Was he unjust to Esau and his descendants in predestinating his nation of Edom to be a land of burning pitch during the Messianic Kingdom? Is he unrighteous in allowing the descendants of Jacob who do not believe to go through physical judgments?

Well, despite the hardships Ishmael went through, God ensured that he would survive, and blessed him. “As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him ... and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac,” Gen17:20-21. And although Esau’s descendants will not enter the kingdom as part of Edom, they will still enter the kingdom as individuals or as a member of another nation if they believe and are justified. And any physical suffering that Jewish, or Gentile, unbelievers experience in this life reduces the amount of punishment they receive in the next life; just as any physical suffering a believer experiences in this life increases the amount of glorification and reward he receives for eternity. Some children are born with handicaps or diseases that cause them much physical suffering, which is beyond our understanding at this time, but we believe God will make all things right in eternity.

On the other hand, if Ishmael, and Esau, and their descendants, and the majority of Jacob’s

descendants, were to be denied any real possibility of spiritual justification, as Calvinism teaches, then that kind of God would be unjust. God allowed Adam, who could have been justified by his works, to live and bear children rather than executing him and starting over, even though his descendants are thus born under the reign of sin with no chance of being justified by their works, because he knew he would provide redemption through Christ for all who believe.

To say then that they also have no chance of believing, that an all-powerful God would allow a situation where many precious individuals have no real possibility of any future except eternal punishment, would be to make God more cruel than the most calloused of men. That doctrine, Calvinism, bears a man's name, which in itself is a warning of its error; and Calvin's God is like himself, who inflicted so much cruelty on the people of Geneva, including the 24 women and 7 men he urged the city to burn at the stake for supposedly spreading the plague by witchcraft.

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion [Ex33:19]. So then it's not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,” Rm9:15-16.

Moses asked to see God's glory, and God answered, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” and then God showed him his glory, and as a result, the body of Moses was partially and temporarily glorified, and he had to put a veil over his face so its shining didn't hurt the eyes of the Israelites. This

was not a justification experience for Moses, but a glorification experience.

Likewise, the descendants of Jacob can't be glorified by deciding to be glorified ("him that willet"), or by living a good enough life to merit glorification ("him that runneth"). All anyone can do is to decide to trust in God, which in this present time means to believe the gospel, and thereby receive justification and glorification.

"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth [Ex9:16]. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," Rm9:17-18.

Moses was used of God to lead his people. Pharaoh was also used of God. God raised him up as ruler of Egypt so he could manifest his power by destroying Pharaoh and his armies. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so he wouldn't give in too soon, and let the people go too soon, so Moses could complete the whole series of plagues.

He strengthened Pharaoh to do what Pharaoh wanted to do, despite the suffering Pharaoh was going through. And he didn't harden Pharaoh's heart in regards to spiritual salvation. At any time, Pharaoh could have believed on God for salvation.

And God also hardened the hearts of the whole Egyptian army, so they would follow the Israelites into the sea, which is not a logical thing to do when you see walls of water on each side, and you've just suffered 10 miraculous plagues. He did not harden

their hearts regarding faith or justification. “Lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them,” Ex14:16-17.

So likewise among the descendants of Jacob, even the unbelievers, are used by God, and provide service to God. As a judgment upon them, God has hardened their hearts so they will not accept Christ as unbelievers, merely outwardly, as a nation, like they accepted the other prophets. God has not permitted Judaism to be like Catholicism and Episcopalianism, etc. that use the name of Christ but have nothing in common with the Christ of the Bible. (Can you imagine Peter in the gospels or Acts walking around in golden vestments and presiding over rituals in cathedrals?)

As the survey of Matthew in this book shows, after the nation of Israel rejected Jesus’ teaching, preaching, and healing ministries, Jesus pronounced a judgment upon the nation. “In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them,” Mt13:14-15.

John stated the same thing, but focusing on God’s action. “Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes,

and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them,” Jn12:39-40.

After the death and resurrection of Yeshua, his 12 special prophets (Paul is the 12th), called apostles, re-offered the kingdom to Israel and the Jewish communities scattered throughout the world as recorded in the book of Acts, so that just as one generation of Israel refused to enter Canaan, but 40 years later the next generation entered, so it could be with the kingdom. But the next generation during the apostles' time was also unwilling, and about 40 years after the rejection of the Messiah, instead of entering the Messianic Kingdom, the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed in 70 AD and many of the people dispersed.

Just before the 70 AD destruction, Paul again pronounced the judgment of Isaiah to the Jewish community in Rome, to close the book of Acts and end the historical narrative of the Bible. “And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it,” Acts28:24-28.

The Babylonian captivity was a major event in the history of the Jewish people, but it lasted only 70 years. Many prophets warned of its coming, which provided much of the content of our Bible. But where are the prophets and their writings warning of the coming of the 70 AD destruction and the 2,000 year dispersion? They are the writings of the New Testament.

Vessels of Wrath and Vessels of Mercy

“Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” Rm9:19-21.

Pharaoh will probably not receive additional eternal punishment at the last judgment for not letting the people go after God hardened his heart, except perhaps to the extent that he desired to not let them go. But he would have lived a longer physical life if God had not hardened his heart about letting the people go. But then, he wouldn't have gotten to enjoy being such a powerful Pharaoh if God hadn't raised him up for that showdown with Moses. God knew through foreknowledge that Pharaoh would never believe and be justified and would eventually be eternally condemned, but at least by being chosen to resist letting the people go, he also got to be Pharaoh.

And the unbelieving descendants of Jacob will probably not receive additional punishment at the last judgment for rejecting the New Testament

writings about Christ to the extent they reject them due to God's hardening of their hearts. But they are fulfilling their roles as vessels "unto dishonour," when instead they could be living this life as a "vessel unto honour."

"The same lump," probably refers to Israel. Otherwise, Paul probably could have just said that the potter can make any kind of vessel, without mentioning "of the same lump." So Paul is talking about the different roles and purposes that God gives to believers and unbelievers within the people of Israel.

"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," Rm9:22. Unbelieving Israelites are called "vessels of wrath" here. Gentile unbelievers are vessels of wrath too. All created things bring glory to God in some way. Believers also suffer, maybe even more greatly than unbelievers in this life, but never because of his wrath.

The main reason the Jewish people suffer is that they are at the center of a struggle between Satan and God (Rev12:12-14). Satan wants to destroy God's plan. He tried during Esther's time, but with a simple case of royal insomnia, "on that night could not the king sleep," Esther6:1, God began to turn things around, and delivered the people from those that sought to destroy them.

There is one way, and only one way, to destroy the Jewish people, so please keep this confidential. "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of

the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD,” Jer31:35-37. (Also Jer33:25-26.) If someone can build enough big missiles, and not point them at Israel, but use them to destroy the sun, moon, and stars, and stop the waves of the oceans, and measure the heavens, and search out the foundations of the earth, then God will disown the Jewish people, and then their enemies will be able to prevail against them, but that is the only way.

And you can't talk about the history of the Jewish people without talking about persecution. I can't even begin to list here, and communicate the unfairness and wrongness these precious people have suffered. God allows Satan to cause their suffering; but God suffers, as it were, along with them.

Just as it was God's plan that Christ suffer, and Judas had a part in bringing about that God-ordained suffering, nevertheless Judas will face grave punishment at the last judgment for his part in it, and his wicked and cruel intentions. Even so, though God's will allows the Jewish people to suffer, woe to every person, mostly so-called Christians, who so wickedly have any part in bringing about the sufferings of our Lord's brethren. "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it's written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good

were it for that man if he had never been born,” Mk14:21.

As Gentile believers, it’s hard for us to realize the amount of stigma the name of Jesus has with Jewish people, because of the persecutions that were inflicted on them in the name of Christ. Of course, we’ve all heard of the holocaust, beginning around 1933, when Hitler and those with him may have murdered 1/3 (6,000,000) of the Jewish people. “Woe to that man ... Good were it for that man if he had never been born.”

One of the great tragedies of the holocaust was the failure of Gentile neighbors, who had a voice in society, to speak out for the sake of the Jewish people, who had been silenced in the societies that persecuted them. Although this is out of context here, for the sake of saving even one life, I ask Jewish people particularly, because they know from the past what it’s like when other people won’t speak out in their behalf, to help speak out for the estimated 46,000,000 voiceless unborn infants intentionally killed each year, 1/4 of all pregnancies worldwide. How can God wait any longer to judge all the nations and peoples of the earth in the soon-coming, 7-year tribulation period, the day of the Lord?

Before the Holocaust, there were Russian pogroms, beginning around 1881. And beginning around 1648, there was a Greek Orthodox (the eastern version of Roman Catholic) Ukrainian Cossack most Gentile believers have probably never heard of, named Bogdan Chmielnicki, who led the massacre of possibly 500,000 Jewish people. “Woe to that

man ... Good were it for that man if he had never been born.”

Most Gentile believers probably think of the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions in terms of believing Christians being tortured and burnt at the stake as heretics by the Roman Catholic Church. But while “in 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue,” the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella were expelling the Jewish people from their kingdom with their “Edict of Expulsion”. To the Jewish people, the inquisitions were a time of expulsions, forced conversions, suffering, and death from people they don’t know any better than to lump together as ‘Christians.’ (But since Yeshua is Messiah, we should not be surprised that Satan has filled the world with counterfeit ‘Christianity.’)

As another example, beginning around 1100 AD, the Crusades that we see in movies as glorious efforts to liberate the holy land from Muslim occupation, were, from a Jewish perspective, times of great persecution, because the Roman Catholic Church was as zealous to have the crusaders attack the Jewish communities along the way as they were to have them attack Muslim armies.

So these are only a few examples, but the years in between the dates and times I mentioned were also full of persecutions and attacks. Not to mention the restrictions on where Jewish people could live, like the original ghetto in Rome, or the Pale in Russia. Or the restrictions on professions, and trades, and ways of earning a living. Or the requirements to wear distinctive marks or clothing. Or special taxes and confiscations, and hatred, and humiliations.

Unfortunately, Israel's troubles are not yet over. And the Gentiles will soon have plenty of trouble. Let's take a quick look at some future events. I won't cover events here that I discuss elsewhere in the book, like the rapture of the church, Israel's future belief and acceptance of Yeshua, and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. This information should be useful to anyone who is not a believer by the time Yeshua returns for the church at the rapture, and so has to go into the tribulation period, so I will call the following section A Survival Guide to the Apocalypse.

A Survival Guide to the Apocalypse

The Reestablishment of Israel in 1948

We know there are only two worldwide returns of Jewish people to the land of Israel, because the final one, as shown here in Isaiah 11, is the second one. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb ... and the calf and the young lion ... for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea [describing the Messianic Kingdom]. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea [worldwide]," Is11:11-12.

So we saw the first return in 1948. The Babylonian Captivity does not count as a worldwide return from all nations - the captives went into Babylon and returned from Babylon. But unfortunately, the scriptures say that the first worldwide regathering, our current one, is a regathering in wrath for the

purpose of judgment. “Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. ... I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof ... and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you,” Ez22:17. (See also Ez20:33-38.)

The Return of Elijah

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD,” Mal4:5. God would have sent Elijah instead of John the Baptist if Israel would have accepted Yeshua as Messiah. But God foreknew Yeshua’s generation would not accept him, so he sent John the Baptist instead. (Mt11:14; Mt17:10-13.) So Elijah will yet return sometime before the tribulation period, although we don’t know how public his return will be.

Russia’s Attempt to Invade Israel

Russia and its allies will try to invade Israel, but will miraculously be destroyed. The timing of this event is uncertain, but many believe it will happen sometime before the 7-year tribulation period. “Set thy face toward Gog [probably a title for whoever rules Magog], of the land of Magog [southern Russia], the prince of Rosh [Russia], Meshech [Moscow], and Tubal [Tobolsk, historical capital of Siberia], and prophesy against him, ... Persia [Iran], Cush [Ethiopia], and Put [Somalia] with them ... Gomer [Germany], ... Togarmah [Armenia], in the uttermost parts of the north ... even many peoples with thee. ... In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is

gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it's brought forth out of the peoples ... it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee against my land. ... And I will rain upon him, ... and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. ... Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel," Ez38:1-39:4.

The 7-Year Tribulation Period

The 7-year tribulation period is also called the day of the LORD, or the day of Jehovah. (The word "LORD" in all-caps in the Bible means the scriptures originally had the word "Jehovah" there. It's amazing to me that men dared to openly and intentionally alter God's scriptures out of supposed respect for God.) "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it," Is13:9. Why is God angry? "Behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity [including sexual immorality]: the earth also shall disclose her blood [of those murdered, including unborn infants], and shall no more cover her slain," Is26:21. People today enjoy and are entertained by the two things that determine every movie and television show's rating, immorality and violence.

That the day of the Lord is coming should cause us to call upon God for salvation today. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in

mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call,” Joel2:31-32.

The Time of Jacob’s Trouble

The Tribulation Period is also called “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble, but he shall be saved out of it,” Jer30:8. It will be a time of persecution of both true Christians (mostly Evangelicals today), and the Jewish people. In Revelation 6:9, John sees the spirits of “them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” The believing Gentiles that dare to shelter the Jewish people and who survive the tribulation period will be the Gentiles who enter the Messianic Kingdom in their natural bodies. “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, ... he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations [Gentiles]: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. ... Ye took me in. ... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,” Mt25:31-46.

Israel’s Treaty with the Antichrist

The 7-year tribulation period will begin when the reestablished nation of Israel signs a 7-year agreement with the Antichrist for the sake of their security. “After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself [this happened to Yeshua around 40 AD]: and the people [the Romans] of the prince that shall come [the Antichrist will be born to an Italian woman] shall destroy the city and the sanctuary [the Romans, the people of the Antichrist who has not yet come, did

this back in 70 AD]; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he [the prince that shall come, the Antichrist] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [7 years],” Dan9:26-27.

The treaty will be made “with many,” but others in Israel will trust in God for their security and oppose the agreement. God condemns this treaty. “Ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge. ... Your agreement with hell shall not stand. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it,” Is48:14-22.

The 144,000 Jewish Missionaries and the 2 Witnesses

Since all believers are taken out of the world at the ‘rapture’ sometime before the tribulation period, God jump-starts getting the gospel out during the tribulation period with 144,000 young Jewish men lined up who will believe and become missionaries for Yeshua to the Gentiles. He will also have two special witnesses in Jerusalem, who no doubt will be seen worldwide through media like TV and the internet. They are not Enoch and Elijah, because they are already glorified (Lk9:31; Heb11:5) and can’t die, but the Antichrist will kill these two prophets. If you’re not already familiar with them, you can read about them in Revelation 7, 11, and 14:1-5. But let’s get back to Israel’s treaty with the Antichrist.

The Abomination of Desolation in the Middle of the Tribulation

To continue with the Daniel 9 passage, “He [the Antichrist] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease [the Antichrist will break the 7-year treaty at the 3 1/2 year point, and stop the temple sacrifices, which also shows that the temple will have been rebuilt by the middle of the tribulation period], and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate [the abomination of desolation], even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate,” Dan9:27.

The “abomination of desolation” is that the Antichrist will “set up” an idol of himself in the tribulation period temple as the following shows. “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white [by martyrdom], and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate ‘set up,’ there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days,” Dan9:9-12.

And it will be an unusual idol. It will be alive and powerful. “He [the Antichrist’s false prophet] doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the

sight of the beast [the Antichrist]; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live [the Antichrist was killed and resurrected sometime before the middle of the tribulation period, Rev13:3]. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed,” Rev13:12-18.

The Mark of the Beast

To continue with Revelation 13, “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it’s the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six [this might be the numeric value of his name transliterated into Hebrew letters which are also used for numerals],” Rev13:12-18.

By the middle of the tribulation, no one will doubt that there’s a God, but the only decision will be to refuse the mark of the Antichrist and likely be killed by men, or take his mark and be punished by God. “I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth ... and there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen ... and the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall

drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints [believers during the tribulation period are encouraged to endure persecution and death by looking forward to the resurrection and time of eternal reward]: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them,” Rev14:6-13.

Some have taught that if a person heard the gospel before the rapture, but hadn't become a believer by the time of the rapture, they would not have the option to be saved afterwards. This is totally untrue. But if anyone takes the mark of the beast in the second half of the tribulation period, salvation will no longer be available to them, as we saw in the Revelation 14 passage above, and their future judgment will be as certain then, as our future glorification is now.

The Flight from Jerusalem

After Yeshua's rejection, he prophesied the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem, and warned the people as to when they should flee Jerusalem. The warning is recorded in parallel passages in Matthew and Luke,

but the two passages refer to two different times. First, Luke says to flee when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, which happened in 66 AD. “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,” Lk21:20-24.

But how do you flee Jerusalem when it’s surrounded by armies. In 66 AD, the local Roman general, Cestus Gallus, came from Caesarea and surrounded Jerusalem, but he knew his supply lines were not secure, so he lifted the siege to return to Caesarea, but was killed by Jewish forces on his way back. During that break, those who believed the words of Yeshua (like those who believed Moses in Deut9:18-21) fled to Pella across the Jordan, and safely waited out the war. In 68 AD, Titus, who served under his father Vespasian, laid siege to Jerusalem, and destroyed it in 70 AD.

In contrast to Luke, Matthew said to flee Jerusalem when the abomination of desolation occurs in the middle of the tribulation period. “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them

which be in Judaea flee into the mountains. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day, for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ... If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth ... for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,” Mt24:15-27. This time Jerusalem will not be surrounded with armies when the signal is given to leave Jerusalem, so people must flee immediately. Many people will flee “into the mountains” of Edom to the rock city of Petra. And they are warned not to be tricked into coming out of hiding by rumors that Messiah has come. When Yeshua does return, “he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him,” Rev1:7.

The Fall of Jerusalem at the End of the Tribulation Period

When all the nations gather against Jerusalem at the end of the tribulation period, God will strengthen the people in Jerusalem. “In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them,” Zech12:8. Nevertheless, the city will fall. “I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into

captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city,” Zech14:2. Then God will step in. “Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,” Zech14:3-4.

Yeshua’s Return at Petra in Edom (Southern Jordan)

God will save the Jewish remnant at Bozrah (Petra) first. “The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah,” Zech12:7. “For my sword shall be bathed in heaven. Behold, it shall come down upon Idumea [Edom], and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood ... for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea [Edom],” Is34:5-8.

The Battle from Petra to the Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem

Yeshua will fight the Gentile armies all the way from Petra to the Kidron valley. Remember Yeshua is not a Gentile; he will fight with the Jews against the armies of the Gentiles. “God came from Teman [near Petra], and the Holy One from mount Paran [near Petra]. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise, and his brightness was as the light; he had horns [death rays] coming out of his hand ... before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. ... He beheld, and drove asunder the nations

[Gentiles]; and the everlasting mountains were scattered,” Hab3:3-6.

Of course, the only way God can actually come from Teman, is in the person of his Son Yeshua the Messiah, because no man can see God the Father. “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” Mt24:30. And Yeshua will easily dispense with the Antichrist, “that Wicked [one] ... whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming,” 2Thes2:8.

As he pushes the Gentile armies back from Petra into the narrow Kidron valley, it will become a winepress that he treads. “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? ... I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress alone. ... I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments,” Is63:1-3, ASV.

From the New Testament, “The angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city [the Kidron outside Jerusalem], and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs,” Rev14:19-20. And from the Old Testament, “Let the nations bestir themselves, and

come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat [Kidron]. ... Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe, for the winepress is full. ... Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision,” Joel3:12-14.

And then the Messianic Kingdom will be set up. And for some information about what the Messianic Kingdom will be like, you can look at the survey of Ezekiel 40-48 earlier in this book.

Romans 9:1-9:29. Not All Isreal (Continued)

So it has been hard for unregenerate Israel to have a relationship with God. Some of the benefits are that they got to hear the word of God in the synagogues, and to avoid many of the corruptions of Gentile nations. And it has also been hard, as it were, for God to have a relationship with unregenerate men whom he “endured with much longsuffering,” Rm9:22.

“And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?” Rm9:23-24.

The good news is that “vessels of wrath” can become “vessels of mercy.” “The vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel,” Jer18:4.

All men are all under the wrath of God because of ungodliness, unrighteousness, and transgression as we saw in Romans 1-3, until we put our faith in

Christ, as we saw in Romans 4. “We all ... were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, ... that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith,” Eph2:3-9.

God can change one kind of vessel into another, through his miraculous power. “It’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. ... With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible,” Mt19:24-26. So being a vessel of wrath doesn’t indicate your final destiny. But once you become a vessel of mercy, God would never remake you into a marred vessel again; so being a vessel of mercy does indicate your final destiny.

Israel’s Temporary and Partial Judgment

“As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved [Hos2:23]. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God [Hos1:10],” Rm9:25-26. Paul quotes these passages from Hosea to show it was prophesied beforehand that Israel would have a long period of temporary blindness. It’s been about 2,000 years, and now Israel has been reestablished in the land, and it’s almost time for them to regain their sight.

Some Jewish people are still God's "people," and "beloved," and "children of the living God." They are primarily the Jewish Messianic believers that are ostracized and expelled from the Jewish community today. But eventually, Jewish believers in Yeshua will be part of the Jewish community again, and Israel will be, "My people," again.

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved [Is10:22]: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth [Is10:23]. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha [Is1:9]," Rm9:27-29.

Paul quotes these passages from Isaiah to show that Israel's blindness is only partial. There has always been a believing remnant, however small, in every generation. And it's the believing remnant that preserves the existence and continuance of the Jewish people. If any generation were to fail to have that remnant, there would be nothing to preserve that generation from total destruction like Sodom and Gomorrah.

"As the new wine [the remnant] is found in the cluster [the Jewish people], and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing [the remnant] is in it [the Jewish people]: so will I do for my servants' sakes [the remnant], that I may not destroy them all [the Jewish people]. And I will bring forth a seed [the remnant] out of Jacob [the Jewish people], ... and mine elect [the remnant] shall inherit," Is65:8-9. So even though Jewish believers in Yeshua are scorned

and outcast from the Jewish community today, they are the only ones preserving the existence of the Jewish people.

Romans 9:30-10:21. Justification by Faith

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it’s written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed [Ps118:22],” Rm9:30-33.

Of course, only a minority of Gentiles attained to righteousness. But there are many more Gentiles in the world than Jewish people, so the church is mostly Gentile. And the Gentiles had not spent centuries learning the word of God, and trying to live according to its righteous guidelines, but through the gospel many Gentiles have believed and are thereby counted righteous before God, and also walk according to the righteousness of the law (not the law itself). The majority of Jewish people, like the majority of Gentile people, stumble at God’s provision of justification by faith because of their self-righteousness attitudes, and thus think they can do good works to attain justification.

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not

according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God," Rm10:1-3.

So these 3 chapters are about the salvation of Israel; their national justification, sanctification, and glorification. And not only Paul's, but also my heart's desire and prayer is that they would be saved. And if you are a believer, your heart's desire and prayer is the same for our Lord's great-great-great nephews and nieces and kinsmen. Not that they would stop being Jewish, or fail to preserve their uniqueness or their culture and traditions; but only that they would accept by faith God's provision of righteousness in Yeshua.

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them [Lev18:5; Neh9:29; Ez20:11,13,21]," Rm10:4-5. Theoretically, a person could be justified by the law, if he kept it. But in practical terms, no one has kept it, except the Savior, which is why he was able to suffer our punishment in our place, a sacrifice for sin, since he was worthy of no punishment for himself.

"Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he [Yeshua, Messiah] shall grow up before him [God the Father] as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of

sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we [Israel] did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,” Is53:3-6.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my [Isaiah’s] people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth,” Is53:7-9.

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he [God] hath put him to grief: when thou [God] shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed [the people who are justified by faith, the fruit of Messiah’s sacrifice], he shall prolong his days [through resurrection, never to die again], and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He [God] shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: [now God speaking says:] by his knowledge shall my righteous servant [Messiah] justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities [Israel’s and the world’s]. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the

spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors,” Is53:10-12.

Many rabbis teach that the “he” and “him” in this passage refers to Israel; but then who would the “we,” “our,” and “us” refer to? Try replacing the word “he” with the word “Israel” in the passage, and it makes no sense. The “he” in this passage is a righteous person. The “we” in this passage are unrighteous people. The one righteous person suffers their punishment in place of the unrighteous people.

“The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us,” must mean “The LORD has laid on him [Messiah] the iniquity of us [Israel].” It cannot mean “The LORD has laid on him [Israel] the iniquity of us [Israel].” God’s righteous servant Yeshua has provided righteousness (justification) to all who know him. “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above.) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart [Deut30:12-14]; that is, the word of faith, which we preach,” Rm10:6-8. Paul quotes a passage from Deuteronomy about how God provided the law to Israel, instead of them having to work to get it. But the righteousness God provides in Christ is not only readily available, like the law,

but also readily attainable by faith, unlike righteousness by the law which is unattainable.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed [Is28:16]. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved [Joel2:32],” Rm10:9-13.

Trust in the Savior as your savior in your heart, and confess him before men, and you will be saved, based on the authority of God’s word. He says, “Whoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed,” Is28:16, meaning will not fail, will not perish. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,” Joel2:32. If you are not already a believer, do that now. Believe in your heart, and call upon him in prayer.

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it’s written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! [Is52:7; Nahum1:15]” Rm10:14-15. We often hear these words at missionary conferences, and that’s appropriate, but do we remember they are primarily talking about Jewish missions?

And the Jewish people hate Christian missionaries, because they think Christians are trying to take them away from being Jewish, because they don't think it's possible to be Christian and remain Jewish. They also think Messianic Christian churches are just formed to lure Jewish people away from Judaism, but while all believing Christians rejoice when any Jew or Gentile comes to know the Messiah, Jewish believers mainly form Messianic congregations to help them practice their own Jewish culture as Christians.

So unfortunately, the majority of Jewish people resent Christian missionaries for supposedly taking Jewish people away from being Jewish, but then when the Jewish people who become Christians form assemblies so they can continue in their Jewish culture, the Jewish people criticize them for that too, saying it's just a ploy to get more converts.

Judaism, for the most part, doesn't actively proselytize, because it teaches that Gentiles can be counted righteous before God by keeping the laws given to Noah, without converting to Judaism. But we know that neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved apart from Jesus Christ. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, ... this is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts4:10-12.

If we discovered a drug that could heal all cancers, it would be wrong, and it would indicate we did not

love someone who needs it, if we did not try to give it to them. We reach out to Jewish people, and Gentile people, because we love them and because they need forgiveness of sins, knowledge of God, eternal life, and an inheritance in the Messianic Kingdom.

“But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report [Is53:1]? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world [Ps19:4],” Rm10:16-18. So you have to hear a message before you can believe it. Israel heard through the 12 apostles of Yeshua, and Israel continues to hear from believers today.”

“But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you [Deut32:21]. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not. I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me [Is65:1]. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people [Is65:2],” Rm10:19-21.

So Israel knew from prophecy that there would be a period of time when Gentiles believed and Israel did not believe. And Israel is a disobedient nation, because all nations are disobedient. The majority of people in all nations are unregenerate, and any Gentile nation that God could have picked would be just as disobedient.

Romans 11. All Israel

Israel's Blindness is Partial

“I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elijah? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal [1Kings19:10,14,18]. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it's no more grace: otherwise work is no more work,” Rm11:1-6.

God told Elijah there were still 7000 that hadn't bowed the knee to Baal. So in Elijah's time there were 7000. In our time, we don't know the number, but there is always a remnant. Paul was part of the remnant during his generation. And the way God makes sure there are always some believing Jewish people in every generation, is by election based on grace and faith, not on law and works; by knowing in advance who will believe, and having them born at the right time to serve this purpose.

And in 11:7, “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. According as it's written, God hath given them the spirit of

slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day [Is6:9-10; Is29:10]. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always [Ps69:22-23],” Rm11:7-10.

To me, this is one of the saddest passages in the Bible. But when it says Israel is blinded, it doesn't mean God is blinding Jewish people so they can't accept Yeshua, because some Jewish people do accept Jesus, including Paul. What it means is that those that don't know the Lord, are blinded from accepting Jesus Christ outwardly without putting faith in Christ.

David's words sound harsh about bowing down their backs always, but the Messiah suffered harshly too. Rejection of the Messiah is a serious offence. And even if we would not have given him vinegar for his thirst while he was suffering, our hearts are naturally of the same kind as those who tormented him, even if not of the same degree.

“For thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. ... Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink [while on the cross]. Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for

their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake [the Septuagint says “bow down their back away”]. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten [in our place]; and they talk to the grief ... whom thou hast wounded. Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. But I am poor and sorrowful. Let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high [Messiah will return to rule]. ... The humble shall see this, and be glad; and your heart shall live that seek God. ... For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein,” Ps69:7-36.

So Messiah prayed for terrible judgment upon unbelieving Israel. But no one has to remain in unbelief. Be “humble,” don’t consider yourself righteous but instead accept the righteousness God provides, and you will have cause to “be glad” when you see Messiah reign. “Seek God” and you “shall live,” and “inherit” the Messianic Kingdom, and “shall dwell therein.”

Israel’s Blindness is Temporary

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy,” Rm11:11. Because Israel, as a nation, rejected the gospel, the gospel could go out

to the Gentiles without the hindrance of the law. The temporary fall of Israel was great riches for the Gentiles. And the reason God sends the gospel to the Gentiles, and saves them as Gentiles without any need to become Jewish proselytes, is to provoke unbelieving Israelites to jealousy, so Israel will be saved. It's to help Jewish people realize they cannot be justified merely by being Jewish, or by traditions, or by keeping the law.

“Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? ... For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” Rm11:12-15.

At some point in the future, the nation of Israel will be reconciled to God, and at that point it won't result in justification for the Gentiles, as Israel's fall did; but instead it will result in the resurrection and glorification of both Jews and Gentiles. It will be “life from the dead,” Rm11:15.

Jesus told the Jewish people, “You won't see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,’” and the Gentile nations won't see him either until the Jewish people say that. The event called the ‘rapture’ is a private return of the Messiah to catch away the church out of the world before the great tribulation. He will not return publicly, and the kingdom won't be set up, until Israel as a nation says of Yeshua, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,” Mt23:39.

“... If some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them,

and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. ... Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear, ... lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. ... They also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted ... into their own olive tree?" Rm11:16-24.

The "natural branches" are the Jewish people and the "wild" branches are the Gentiles. The olive tree is the Jewish people's "own olive tree." It does not represent salvation, because even unbelieving Jewish people remained on the tree until the rejection of Christ and the resulting judicial blindness. The "root and fatness" are the Jewish fathers and the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant.

When God gave the law, and the tabernacle service, and the shekinah glory, unbelieving Jewish people could participate in those things. But when God sent the Messiah, and all the blessings of God are now in and through him, unbelievers, including Jewish unbelievers, cannot participate in knowing Christ, and so Jewish unbelievers are the "some" of the natural branches that were broken off. The natural branches that were not broken off are the believing Jewish remnant, and they are also part of the church.

The wild branches that were grafted in are Gentiles that believe on Yeshua, and thus share in Israel's covenant blessings during this present age. We should be humble, because we are sharing in Jewish blessings, Jewish covenants, Jewish scriptures, the

Jewish Messiah, and will have an inheritance in the Jewish Messianic Kingdom.

None of these things have been transferred over to the Gentiles. Unbelieving Gentiles will not partake in those blessings, as the unbelieving Jews did before Christ came. And soon God will work it out so that all Israel believes, and is grafted back into their own tree.

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,” Rm11:25.

“Blindness in part,” so Israel’s blindness is only partial, because there is always a remnant who believes. “Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,” so Israel’s blindness is only temporary, because they will soon be grafted back in. We Gentiles need to know this to avoid all kinds of false doctrines about Israel, and so we can humbly look forward to rejoicing along with the Jewish people, when God’s promises will be fulfilled for them, and Israel will have the pre-eminent place among the nations in the coming kingdom. “Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her,” Is66:10.

All Israel Shall be Saved

So 11:26-27 says, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it’s written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins [Ps14:7; Is59:20].” Now

“all Israel shall be saved” doesn’t mean that every Israelite who ever lived is going to be given another chance to accept Yeshua, and is going to be justified some day. What it means is that in the last generation, by the end of the tribulation period, every Jewish person will accept Yeshua as Savior, and so all of Israel living at that point in time shall be saved.

Let’s look into the future and watch that happen. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son ... And the land shall mourn, every family apart,” Zech12:9-12.

This will be a very organized repentance like the one we talked about that Jesus required of the nation in the gospel of Matthew. And at that time, Israel did not perform this repentance, but in the future the nation will perform this very organized repentance. To continue the Zechariah passage, “And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness,” Zech12:12-13:1.

So all Israel shall be saved. But God doesn’t accomplish this by forcing or causing all the Jewish people living at that time to believe. He doesn’t predestinate them all to faith or justification. He

accomplishes this, tragically, by the death of the 2/3's of the Jewish people, that he knows won't believe on Christ during the tribulation period, so that only the one third he knows will believe will be left.

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It's my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God,” Zech13:8-9.

So how does the Lord get exactly 2/3 that don't believe and 1/3 that do in that generation? He knows from his foreknowledge who will believe, and controls through his sovereignty when people are born so that it will come out 2/3's and 1/3.

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes,” Rm11:28. The Jewish people are called “enemies” here because at the time Paul wrote this epistle, it was the Jews who were persecuting Christians, not the other way around. The Jews were trying to stamp out this Jewish ‘cult’ while it was just getting started.

Paul himself, the writer of this epistle, was once a Jewish persecutor of Christians, an ‘enemy of the gospel,’ so he knows what he's talking about. “I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were

put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun ... And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It's hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," Acts26:9-15. But after the false-Christian emperor Constantine gave Christianity a dominant place in the Roman Empire in 313 AD, the false Christians started persecuting Jewish people.

"But as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," Rm11:28-29. Israel is precious to us, because Israel is precious to our God. And God will never go back on his promises to Israel, because God never goes back on any promises. And since Israel's national glorification is certain, we can be confident our personal glorification is certain.

God's Plan

God prevented the unbelieving Jewish people from accepting Christ as a prophet in an external manner while remaining unbelievers, so the gospel would go out to the Gentiles, so the Gentiles would bring the gospel to the Jewish people, so both Jews and Gentiles are dependent upon God.

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor [Is40:13]? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again [Job41:11]? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen,” Rm11:30-36.



Romans 12-16: Service

Recorded March 29, 2009

This is the last session in our survey of the book of Romans. Your handout shows an outline of the book of Romans, and we see that the first 11 chapters were about doctrine, and now we are going to look at chapters 12 - 16, which are about practice. Doctrine always comes before practice. You should always base your practice on doctrine, and never base doctrine on your practice. The book of Ephesians is the same way. The first three chapters are doctrine, and the last three chapters are practice.

When Paul gets to Romans 12:1 he says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." He

says, I beseech you “therefore,” because he is basing his plea on what went before. So, what went before in the first 11 chapters?

Well, in chapters 1 through 4 we started off under the wrath of God because of our sinfulness, and we were facing the righteous judgment of God, until by faith in the substitutionary redemption of Jesus Christ we received justification, and were declared not guilty, and we had peace with God.

And then, in the first half of Romans 5, we learned that we are awaiting our sure hope of glory, to share in the glory of God, our bodies being like his body, shining brightly, and that nothing can stop that from happening. All who have been justified will be glorified.

And in the second half of Romans 5 and Romans 6 - 8, we learned that all who have been justified will also be sanctified. Because we were united with Christ at the point of his death, so we were also buried and raised with him. And thereby, we were legally delivered from being servants to sin, and were made servants to God, servants to righteousness. And we learned that our Jewish brethren were delivered from being married to the law, and they became married to Christ. And we learned that we all have the Holy Spirit within us, who gives us understanding of spiritual things, and changes our thinking, which also changes our walk.

And then we saw in Romans 8 - 11 that we are now sons of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ in the future kingdom, and that nothing can separate us from the love of God; that both our future personal

glorification and Israel's future national glorification are certain and sure.

And now in chapter 12, Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And that means not using our bodies for sin, and also sacrificing our own pleasure and comfort to serve and labor for the Lord.

And then Paul says it's not just in your body, but in your spirit that you should render service. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God," Rm12:2. Your mind is part of your spirit. It's part of your heart. And we are not like the world, because we have the Holy Spirit; and so we think differently than the world. We are going to see as we look through these chapters how differently we now think from the world.

Romans 12-13. Love & Humility

All these 5 chapters, 12-16, are about love, and about our service to God, which is mainly love, because love fulfills all righteousness. Paul starts off in verse 3, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." You know, if you are going to love others, you have to start with humility, because love is others-centered. And if you are full of pride, you are going to be self-centered.

Then he says in verse 9, "Let love be without dissimulation." That means you must love, and you

must do so genuinely, without faking it, and without being a hypocrite. Love is primarily a decision, not a feeling. But you are obligated to stir up your feelings to go along with your decision. “Unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently,” 1Pet1:22: Your love has to be both genuine (unfeigned) and fervent.

Untold harm has been done to people by pretty tunes whose words are poison, like Dean Martin’s, “Please release me let me go; For I don’t love you anymore; To waste our lives would be a sin; Release me and let me love again.” No, you are sinning by not continuing to love your wife, by your cruelty towards her because of your lack of commitment. We can’t control our emotions perfectly, but we can direct them, and fan them, or inhibit them, by choice.

He says, “Abhor that which is evil,” Rm12:9, because unrighteousness is inconsistent with love. Sin never helps anybody. It only hurts people.

And then in verse 10, Paul says, “In honour preferring one another.” You see how different this is from the world’s way of looking at things? The world says, you know, “I’ll get mine, and then if I feel good, and it’s not too inconvenient, I’ll give you some.” But we prefer one another before ourselves.

In Philippians 2:3, Paul said, “In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” And if you are aware of your own sins, and your own shortcomings, you are going to have no problem seeing others as better than yourselves, because every other person in the world has some area that they do better in than you. Maybe they listen better,

or maybe they serve better. But there is some area, there is some skill, that they have that you can learn something from them.

And in Romans 12:15 he says, “Weep with them that weep.” The world doesn’t do that. The world sees somebody weeping, and they say, “Don’t worry, be happy.” Don’t bring my day down with your suffering. They say, “Get over it.” But we weep with those who weep.

And that is why we have to be careful about what we watch on TV. Because when we see someone suffer, our heart is supposed to be broken and compassionate, weeping with that person. And when you see suffering over and over on TV, and you harden your heart because it’s just for pretend, then you get in the habit of hardening your heart. And when you go out in the world and somebody cuts in front of you on the freeway, or you see a little child who is afraid of the dark or something, hey, you have seen a lot worse things than that, and you are in the habit of hardening your heart. And so it makes our whole society harder, and less compassionate, and less gracious, and in some cases even worse. So fill your minds with the Word of God, and not with the stuff you see on TV.

And then in verse 16 he says, “Condescend to men of low estate.” If you want to know if someone is a loving person, don’t look at how they treat their friends. Look at how they treat their waiter. See if they show respect to the homeless person in dirty clothes.

And then Paul says in 13:1. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,” because we need to obey

government; and in 13:4 he says, “He beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger.” The only duty God ever gave the Gentile governments is to execute murderers. He told Noah, “Anybody or any animal that sheds man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed,” (see Gen9:6). And, you know, that is the job that the governments of the world are doing worst at right now. The Islamic governments execute people for lesser crimes in violation of the word of God; and the Western governments don’t execute murderers, in violation of the word of God.

And then Paul said, “For this cause pay ye tribute,” in verse 6. I just included that because April 15th is coming up, and this way you can have a little bit of joy knowing that you are serving the Lord while paying your taxes.

Then in verses 11-13 he says, “Knowing the time,” time to awake out of sleep. “The day is at hand,” the day of the Lord, the day of the Lord’s return. “Cast off the works of darkness ... rioting,” That word means ‘partying,’ ‘carnival’. You know how the world’s mind is: just get through the work week so I can party on Friday night. And then it says “drunkenness.” They brag about getting drunk. “Chambering and wantonness.” Those are sexual sins, and our nation and the world is so preoccupied with those kinds of things. “Strife and envy,” talking about each other behind their backs and trying to get more money. Such a different way of thinking than the Christian way of thinking, than the Lord’s way of thinking.

Romans 14. Love & Amoral Things

In chapter 14 we are going to deal with love and amoral things, meaning neutral things. Amoral things are neither moral nor immoral; they are neutral. They are part of the physical realm, and cannot, in themselves, affect us spiritually. But how we make use of them can have spiritual consequences for other people and for our own eternal rewards.

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations,” Rm14:1. This verse doesn’t mean we can’t have or discuss differences in doctrine or application of scripture. This book of Romans is a good example of Paul lining up his arguments and using persuasion. It means we are not to be argumentative or contentious.

The only time the whole group will agree about all doctrine and application is in a dictatorship, and the agreement will only be outward. True unity is not about being the same, but about loving each other despite the differences. “That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Rom15:6. The only way we can all have the same mind is to have the mind of humility and love, so we are never argumentative or hateful in our differences.

“Speak the same thing, and ... be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,” 1Cor1:10. The only way we can all speak the same thing, without being lorded over by dictatorial leadership, is to all speak love and righteousness, even while we freely disagree about many doctrines and applications. “Speaking the

truth in love,” Eph4:15. Please disagree! Seek the truth as best you can. Speak the truth as best you know it. But speak it “in love.”

“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded,” not all forced to believe the same doctrine, but rather, “having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves,” Phil2:2-3. “With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” Eph4:2-3. This is where true “unity of the Spirit” comes from. Not from denominational sameness, but from “forbearing,” the differences. “Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous,” 1Pet3:8. That’s the way to disagree. There’s a saying that where you have 2 Jewish people, you have 3 opinions, a humorous way of saying it’s healthy and we should be willing to question and seek and discuss.

“For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs,” Rm14:2. Here is a vegetarian, not because of health reasons or compassion for animals, but because he thinks it’s spiritually wrong to eat meat. He is wrong. It’s not a sin to eat any kind of meat, “all things,” during this age. Even Jewish believers are not under the law of Moses during this age, and Gentiles never were under the law.

This chapter is about brethren who restrict themselves more than we are commanded or required to do. It’s about not doing things we are

permitted to do, and about doing things we are not required to do. It's always ok to restrict yourself more than required, but it's not ok to think you are required to restrict yourself more than required. That is legalism. Legalists don't try to keep the law, for example, to gain salvation; because if they did that they wouldn't be Christians, because salvation is by faith alone. They try to keep the law out of mistaken obedience, and often think they need to keep it or they won't have power with God, or power to witness, or answered prayer, etc. Legalists need better teaching, and a better understanding of the Word, and more maturity; but we are to receive them.

“Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him,” Rm14:3. Those who have faith enough to use the “liberty which we have in Christ,” Gal2:4, must avoid the natural temptation to think those who don't are so immature they don't have much to contribute to the body of Christ. Those who are weak, the legalists, must guard against their natural tendency to condemn others and to be argumentative about these things.

“For God hath received him,” Rm14:3. We should draw our circle of fellowship the same as God does. All believers are precious to us because they are precious to their Father whom we love. It would not make God happy, as it were, for us to exclude some who are his children. That means Charismatics, non-Charismatics, Calvinists, devotionalists, fundamentalists, evangelicals, etc. And we need to let them all be in leadership together and teach anything that a person can believe and still be a

Christian, and let the believers who hear them grow by learning to exercise discernment.

As long as we only receive true believers into our number, no one will teach anything that a true believer can't believe. No one will teach anything that contradicts the deity of Christ, or justification by faith, and so forth. If there is not freedom for true brethren to share all their different doctrines, then to that extent, the brethren in our assembly will stop learning and be stunted in their growth.

But this also means we must not include any people that God doesn't include, even if they are of the same denomination. We don't draw our circle any smaller than God does, but we don't draw it any larger either. This is also essential for unity.

And there are even some true Christians that we are not to "receive." 1 Corinthians 5:11 says, "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother," he is not an outsider, he is called a brother, he is part of the church assembly, "be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." You don't keep company with or eat with him. It's not enough to merely excommunicate from any particular assembly a so-called brother who continues in any of these things, because he will just go to another assembly. But whether he finds another assembly to receive him or not, if he is being disciplined, don't eat with him or company with him.

If a person who is called a brother, who we count as one of us (this doesn't apply to our non-Christian friends), is living with his girl friend and they are not

married, they need to get married. Otherwise you go through the steps of church discipline, and if they don't fix the situation, you don't keep company with or eat with them.

And there are other reasons to exclude even true believers from our gatherings. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned," meaning doctrine incompatible with being a Christian, "and avoid them," Rom16:17. As it says here in our text, you don't accept brethren if they are argumentative and cause "doubtful disputations."

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand," Rom14:4. This verse is a blessed restatement of 1 John and Romans 6 - 8 (surveys included in this book). God is not only able to make us all stand, but he actually does make every one of his children stand, "he shall be holden up." Legalists may be tempted to be disappointed in this regarding believers they think are living too freely, like the Pharisees who said, "Give God the praise. We know that this man is a sinner," Jn9:24.

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," Rom14:5. Paul would not say, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," if he were talking about things which are moral or immoral. If he were talking about fornication, he would not say, everyone decide for himself if it's right or wrong. He can only say this about amoral things, like eating meat.

Amoral things are not right or wrong in themselves. In some ages they are right, and in some ages they are wrong. Eating meat or not eating meat doesn't hurt anyone (except the animal, which is not to be discounted, but not relevant to this passage). When someone practices homosexuality, he hurts himself and other people. Homosexuality is inherently immoral. Sexuality between a man and woman outside of marriage causes harm to people and is inherently wrong, whereas "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled," Heb13:4. This would be true whether God ever gave the law or not. But eating pork is only immoral when God forbids it, even if it's not the most healthful of foods, because disobedience is always immoral.

The apostles, using their rightful apostolic authority, "whatsoever thou shalt bind (prohibit) on earth shall be bound in heaven (agreed to, confirmed by heaven): and whatsoever thou shalt loose (allow) on earth shall be loosed in heaven," Mt16:19, forbid the eating of blood, which is amoral in itself, in Acts 15, and now that eating blood is immoral the Church, and any Christian who eats it's wrong and disobedient. So Paul would not say of eating blood, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

"He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living,” Rom14:6-9. Both the weak and stronger brethren, i.e. all Christians, are conscientious and trying to serve the Lord, because of the Holy Spirit within us. But we are not all going to interpret or apply the scripture identically.

“Why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ... So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God,” Rom14:10-12. Christians will never enter into judgment regarding eternal life or punishment. Christ has already gone through that judgment for us. But our works will be judged to see how much reward or loss of reward we will have. “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon [upon Christ], he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved,” 1Cor3:14-15. And we have enough trouble doing our own job that we don’t have to worry about how well somebody else is doing his job, except to help them if we can.

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself,” Rm14:13-14. The key is in those words “of itself,” because God told Adam that he could eat only plants, every green thing. Then he told Noah, “You can eat any meat. If it moves, you can eat it; everything that moveth.” And then he told Moses, “You can only eat some meats. You can’t eat pork.” And then he told the apostles, “You can eat any meat.”

In the kingdom, although “fishers shall stand” along the Dead Sea at “Engedi,” Ez47:10, “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,” Is11:9, except for animal sacrifices. (Regarding the healing of the Dead Sea and the resumption of animal sacrifices, see the survey in this book on Ezekiel’s Temple.) So during the kingdom, at least on the mountain of the house of the Lord, we may eat only plants again. (But if so, don’t worry, they will be tasty.) In the new heaven and earth, after the kingdom, “there shall be no more death,” Rev21:4, and we will eat only plants, including “fruits” from “the tree of life,” Rev22:2. And so meat can’t inherently be wrong in itself, because if it was, God couldn’t say it was ok at some times.

But meats become wrong whenever God says they’re wrong. If, in any period of time, God says they are wrong, then the meat doesn’t change, but now if you eat it, you are not only eating meat, you are also disobeying God, which is always wrong.

By the way, that also shows that there are ages and dispensations. Our brothers who want to keep the law say, “Well, Adam knew about unclean animals, and Noah knew about unclean animals, so they must have kept the law, too, even before Moses gave it to Israel.” But that is not true, because although they knew which animals were clean for the purposes of sacrifice, Adam wasn’t allowed to eat any of them, and Noah was allowed to eat all of them. So Adam and Noah weren’t under the law, and in the age before our present one the Jewish people were under the law, and now neither believing Jews nor any Gentile is under the law.

So there are ages. And you can't just say, "I'm going to obey the Bible. I'm going to do what the Bible says." Well, are you going to do what the Bible said to Adam, or are you going to do what the Bible said to Noah, or are you going to do what the Bible said to Moses, or are you going to do what the Bible said to ...? You know, they are all self exclusive. You can't do them all. You can't eat only plants, and also eat all meats, and also eat only some meats. So you have to learn to interpret the Bible in context. What does the Lord want for us at this time, in this age. What did he command us?

"But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it's unclean," Rm14:14. So even in this age, when there are no unclean meats, if a person thinks it's wrong to eat meat, it's sin for him to eat meat. Because any time you violate your conscience, any time you think something is wrong and you do it anyway, you've sinned by your intention to sin, even if the thing was actually ok to do if you understood the Bible better.

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably," Rm14:15. These sections we are studying are about love. The word charity means love. And we are always allowed to restrict our liberty. We are not under obligation to exercise our liberty. Paul said in 1 Corinthians, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient (necessary)," 1 Cor6:12; 10:23. So even though you are allowed to eat meat, you are always permitted not to eat meat, and sometimes you must not eat meat for the sake of your brother.

"Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but

righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another,” Rm14:16-19. Righteousness, peace and joy are eternal things. And meat and drink are physical things. But you can turn those neutral things, which are neither moral nor immoral, into spiritual things. For example, if you don’t eat meat for the sake of your brother’s welfare, now you turn something that is neutral into something that is spiritual, because in addition to not eating the meat, you are loving your brother.

“All things indeed are pure; but it’s evil for that man who eateth with offence. It’s good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine,” Rm14:20-21. Wine is a topic that is more pertinent to our day. Those vegetarians don’t cause much trouble today, but we still have a lot of disagreement in the Church about whether it’s alright to drink wine or not. A lot of believers think it’s wrong to drink wine, and I can sympathize with them because alcohol has caused so much trouble in the world, and so much suffering in families and individuals.

But Paul says, it’s good not to drink wine “nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth,” Rm14:21. That means that if you go out to a meal with a person who doesn’t believe in drinking wine, and you drink wine in front of him, he may want to drink wine, and he may do it even though he thinks it’s wrong, and thus you have influenced him to sin. Or he may do it to be part of the crowd, and you influenced him to sin.

Or, Paul says, “Or is offended,” Rm14:21. The way you offend your brother is, you are drinking wine and you are supposed to be having a conversation that edifies him, and instead he has this turmoil in this heart. He is thinking, “That isn’t right.” And so he is not listening to anything you are saying that could be edifying to him. He is just concerned about what you are doing. And so for unnecessary reasons, you’ve influenced him to lower his opinion of you, and to think of you as an evil doer in that regard, and you’ve lost some opportunity to be closer to him for the sake of your mutual edification.

Now in our day, we don’t have the problem of people being too legalistic as much as we have the problem of people abusing liberty. Nowadays, anything goes in our society. We think there are no rules, and that whatever we do is just fine. But even in our day there are even some things that are neutral in themselves that God has commanded us not to do or to do. And that changes them from being amoral (neutral) things into being moral or immoral things.

We already saw that the apostles commanded the churches not to eat blood, and Jesus had given them the authority to make such rules for the Church. So they made that rule in Acts 15. Anyway, they were just confirming the laws God gave to Noah, and those laws are for both Jews and Gentiles.

Also, in 1 Corinthians 11, in the second half of the chapter, Paul speaks about the Lord’s Supper, and about the bread and the wine, which are physical things, neutral in themselves. They are not spiritual things. But because Yeshua commanded us to keep the Lord’s Supper, now it becomes something that we have to do, and we have to do it the right way. We

can't substitute milk for wine. And leavened bread does not present an acceptable picture of the Lord's body since he said in the Gospels that leaven is a picture of false doctrine. And the Lord's Supper should be a meal, not a snack - the Lord's supper.

And then there is the headcovering observance in the first half of 1 Corinthians 11, which is also a church assembly observance, just as the Lord's Supper is.

Romans 15. Love & Decision Making

Let's go on to Romans 15 and look at how Paul made his decisions, look at how to know the will of God. Paul had a special ministry. He was the apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. And he says here, "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost," Rm15:16. So when Paul needed to make a decision about his ministry, he could make it based on the previous revelation he had received from God, as recorded various places in Acts, that he is the apostle to the Gentiles. So he went to the Gentiles, and "from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum," that is Albania which is northwest of Greece and Macedonia, "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ," Rm15:19.

And there was another principle he followed in his ministry. He said, "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation," Rm15:20. And he based this on a scripture. "But as

it's written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand," Rm15:22. So he knew that he was the apostle to the Gentiles, and that he was helping fulfill that Scripture by his office, and so he followed the Scripture that he wouldn't build upon another man's foundation. He would go where there weren't any assemblies, where there weren't any house churches.

He says, "For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you," Rm15:22. Paul couldn't go to Rome, even though he wanted to, because they already had assemblies there. They already had gatherings there, because Rome was the capital of the Roman Empire, and there was a lot of traffic back and forth between Jerusalem and other cities, and Rome; and they had already received the gospel somehow. So Paul couldn't go there, because that wasn't his job. His job was to go out into the Gentile areas where the gospel hadn't been preached. Paul didn't have to pray and ask God if he should set up a ministry in Rome.

So that is how Paul was hindered from visiting Rome. But he says, "But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you ..." Rm15:23. He says, "I have no more place in these parts. I have finished my work in Asia Minor and Greece." So now, "Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you," Rm15:24. Paul was finally going to get to visit the churches in Rome, because he would get to visit with them on his way to Spain, which was the next logical place for him to preach the gospel.

He had preached in the Galatia area, next to Tarsus where he was born and near the church in Antioch that had sent him out to evangelize. And then he was going to preach in Asia Minor where Ephesus is, but God by a vision told him to skip that area and go over to Greece. A vision was necessary in this case, or Paul would have gone to Ephesus, because that was the next logical step.

And then after his work was done in Greece, Paul got to backtrack to Ephesus, and spend three years there. And as he writes this epistle to the Romans, he is on his way back to Jerusalem to bring the offering to the poor saints there, as Frank made mention of earlier this morning. And now he says here in Romans, “You know, I have finished my work in Galatia, Greece, and Ephesus, and now I am ready to come to you, because I am actually on my way to Spain. But I am looking forward to stopping by and seeing you.”

He says, “For I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you,” Rm15:24. It makes sense. Pick up some provisions, maybe get some financial support. And he says, “If first I be somewhat filled with your company,” get some rest, get some spiritual encouragement, and teach and encourage these believers in Rome on your way to Spain.

So Paul didn't have to try to figure out what the will of God was in this. When God wanted Paul to do something unusual, he gave him visions and direct revelation, because Paul was an apostle and a prophet. But usually, even Paul just went on to the next logical step.

Like Peter did also in Acts 12:6-12, when he was in prison “between two soldiers, bound with two chains.” And God sent an angel to get him out, and “his chains fell off from his hands,” and the iron gate “opened to them of his own accord.” God did for Peter what he couldn’t do for himself, but then Peter didn’t need to hear a voice from God about what to do next, but rather “when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary ... where many were gathered together praying.” He knew where the brethren met, and it made sense to let them know God had freed him from prison.

Paul didn’t know when to stop ministering in Antioch and start his missionary journeys, so God told him through the prophets in the church at Antioch, “Separate Paul and Barnabas for the work I have for them to do” Acts13:2. So that got the thing started. But the second time Paul went out, God didn’t need to tell him to go. Paul said to Barnabas, “Let’s go see how the brethren are doing,” (see Acts15:36). Are they being attacked by false teachers? Are they being persecuted? Are they fighting among themselves? It just makes sense. Let’s go back and see how they are doing. That’s how they started the second missionary journey.

So here, as he is writing to the Romans, Paul doesn’t have to try to figure out what the will of God is. He knows the will of God. He is the apostle to the Gentiles. He is supposed to preach where Christ hasn’t been preached. And the next logical place to go is Spain. He doesn’t have to open his Bible, and close his eyes, and put his finger down on a verse, and try to figure out where God wants him to go. He doesn’t have to have a two-way conversation in prayer with God, because I don’t see anywhere in the

New Testament that says prayer is a two-way conversation.

He doesn't have to see if there is an open door, because God opened a door for Paul in Troas, and Paul walked away from it (2Cor2:12-13). An open door just means an opportunity. It doesn't indicate what God's will is. Often you have to keep pushing on closed doors, like to get government permission to evangelize people you know need the gospel; and often the open and easy things are not the things we should be doing. That is no way to make decisions. You should study the Bible, and the Bible tells you what God wants you to do.

Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." These are the eternal, spiritual things that God is concerned about. He is not concerned whether you are a brick layer, or an architect, or a fisherman. That is not spiritual. That is not relevant. Now God is concerned about whether you earn enough money to have enough food to eat, so you don't suffer too much. He is concerned about those kinds of things. But it's not more spiritual to have one job than to have another. It's not more spiritual to live in one city than another.

We get concerned about these things because we don't want to suffer. We want to make the decision that is going to avoid unknown problems down the line. But that is not what God is concerned about. He is concerned that wherever you are, whatever job you are doing, that you rejoice evermore, that you pray without ceasing, that you give thanks in all

things. And he will direct your steps (Pr3:6, Ps37:23). So even if you go somewhere for the wrong reason, he will make sure you are where he wants you.

But here is how to know the will of God. Say you have to decide whether to live in Philadelphia or San Francisco. Well, what does the Bible say? It doesn't say anything about Philadelphia or San Francisco. But what does it say? It says, "Children, obey your parents. Honor your parents. Take care of your parents" (Eph6:1-2). Well, which city is going to let you take better care of your parents?

Now you have taken a decision which is neutral, which is not eternal, and because you have made the decision based on the Word of God that says, "Children take care of your parents," now you have turned that thing which is neutral, into something which is spiritual. You have obeyed the Word of God, and obedience to God is always spiritual.

Or what city will help you provide for your family? The Bible says that if a man doesn't provide for his family he is "worse than an infidel," 1Tim5:8. So that, again, is how you can make that decision, and turn that neutral thing into a spiritual thing. Which city is going to let you share the gospel better, and fellowship with believers better? That is the way to make your decisions. Base them on the Word of God, on what God is really concerned about. "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you," 1Thes5:16-18. "Concerning you," and you, and you, and me, and all of us. Base your decisions on love, which we know is his will, and you will have eternal reward.

Romans 16. Love & People

Ok, we are in our last chapter, chapter 16. This is a precious chapter because it's about people. And, you know, the Bible is not philosophy. It's not theory. It's always about persons (including God, angels, and men). It's always about relationships.

We get to meet a few people here. We get to meet Phebe. He says, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant," the Greek word is 'diakonos,' "of the church which is at Cenchrea," Rm16:1. Cenchrea was near Corinth. It served as their harbor. "That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer," 'succourer' means helper or a patron, somebody who provides money, "of many, and of myself also," Rm16:2.

Now unfortunately, modernist, liberal teachers that are desperate to find woman leadership in the Bible, say this word 'diakonos' should be 'transliterated' as 'deaconess' rather than 'translated' as 'servant'. Transliterate means to make the Greek word sound English ('diakonos,' 'deacon') rather than translate it into its meaning ('servant').

But Phebe wasn't a 'deacon'. She was a 'servant' of the church. There's a lot of people mentioned in this chapter that labored in the church, and Phebe was a laborer in the church. She was like the ladies described in 1 Timothy 5:10, "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." That kind of

lady would be outstanding in the church. She would be noted. She would be a helper in the church, a servant of the local assembly she is at.

Or she might be like the ladies that followed Jesus. “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance,” Lk8:1-3. They were his patrons. They helped finance his ministry. Now this is probably the kind of lady Phebe was. And she is probably mentioned first in this list, because she is probably the one who took this letter that we have been studying, and delivered it to the brethren in Rome, when she went there from Corinth, on account of some personal “business” she needed to do there, that Paul referred to in verse 2.

And then we see a couple here, Aquila and Priscilla. We first hear about them in Acts as having left Rome to go to Corinth when Claudius the emperor expelled the Jews from Rome because of a person named Chrestus, which some Jewish people raised trouble about. Perhaps as Jewish believers preached Christ in the synagogues, their opposition “set all the city on an uproar” as they did in Thessalonica (Acts17:5).

And while Aquila and Priscilla were in Corinth, Paul showed up preaching the gospel, and they lodged him in their house. And they became such close workers with Paul, that when Paul finished in

Corinth, and left for Ephesus, they pulled up roots and went with him. Paul dropped them off in Ephesus while he went on to Jerusalem, and they laid the groundwork for the ministry in Ephesus, while Paul strengthened the churches of Galatia as he worked his way back from Jerusalem to Ephesus.

Then, when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus to the Corinthians, who obviously knew Priscilla and Aquila from when they lived and ministered there, he said, “The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house,” 1Cor16:19. So first they housed Paul in Corinth, and now they’ve opened up their house in Ephesus for the church to meet in, they hosted a house church.

And then, probably after Claudius died and Nero his stepson became emperor, they moved back to Rome. And in this letter we are looking at now, written from Corinth to Rome, Paul says, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks,” Rm16:3-4. We don’t know exactly when, but at some time they had risked their own lives to save Paul’s, and I am looking forward to hearing more about that when we see them. Paul continues, “Unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house,” Rm16:4-5. So they went back to Rome, and again they have a church in their house. Some of the brethren in Rome are meeting in their house. So this is a real serving couple; a real blessing to the saints.

Then we have this lady Mary; and she is just one of several people in this chapter described as laborers,

but I'll mention only her. "Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us," Rm16:6. And then we have, "Amplias my beloved in the Lord," Rm16:8, somebody that Paul must have met in Corinth or Ephesus or somewhere who is now in Rome. And there are many people in this chapter just called "beloved" or "my beloved."

And then we see some more house churches. "Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them," Rm16:14. Probably not one household if there are all these different brethren; probably brethren that gather together in church meetings. "Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them," Rm16:15. Again, another group, another gathering.

And then we see the people that are with Paul that send their greetings to the people in Rome. "Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen," probably Jewish brethren, but possibly relatives of Paul, "salute you," Rm16:21.

And then, and this is precious, "I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord," Rm16:22. So here is the guy that is writing down this long letter being dictated from Paul, and Paul allowed him, and the Holy Spirit allowed him, to insert his own greeting here. "I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord." You see how personable God is, to allow Tertius this little favor, which of course meant a lot to Tertius, when God has covenants, and nations, and so forth, seemingly bigger things to be concerned about; and how these things are not just about theology, or philosophy, or theory.

Paul continues, “Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you,” Rm16:23. Here is another man who hosts a house church, and lodges visiting brethren, and whose house is a center of activity throughout the week for the brethren. He is the host of the whole church. It doesn’t mean everybody could fit in his house, but they are all welcome. What a ministry, and what eternal rewards we will someday see him reap!

And next, “Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you,” Rm16:23. So here is a guy that has some money and some influence. And he is followed up with, and this also is precious, “and Quartus a brother,” Rm16:23. That is all Paul has to say about him. Maybe he is a guy who took Paul’s visit to Corinth as an opportunity to hang around with Paul and these other brothers while Paul was writing this epistle, staying up late with them, and talking into the night. He probably loves Paul, and wants to learn all he can from him. We really don’t know anything about him except that he is a brother. And that is all we really need to know, because since he is a brother, we know he is in Jesus Christ, the one who created the world, the one from the beginning, who, with God the Father, is above all; and Quartus is a joint heir with Jesus Christ, and will share in his glory in the kingdom. So praise the Lord that he is a brother, and that his name is recorded here in Scripture, and that we will meet him some day in the future for sure.

So, of course, the most important thing for you, or anyone, to do, is to make sure that you also are “a brother,” (or sister). And you become a brother by being born of God by trusting in what Yeshua, Jesus Christ, did when he suffered in your place for your

sins. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith,” Rm3:23-25. Trust in him as your savior in your heart, and tell him that you do so, for on the authority of the Word of God, who cannot lie, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,” Rm10:13.

And for us who have known the Lord for some time now, I wonder if we had been in that church at Rome, if Paul would have mentioned any of us in his greetings? Would have described any of us as his beloved, or as someone who labored much? How would he describe you and your service to the Lord?

We have so many eternal blessings that we learned about in chapters 1-11, we are so rich spiritually - justified, at peace with the holy God, walking in newness of life through his Spirit he has given us, destined with all certainty for an inheritance in his glorious kingdom - therefore, we ought to serve him fervently, in body and spirit.

And it's fitting that we should end our survey of Romans, that we have taken several sessions to go through, with the benediction here in verse 27, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.”