

# The Lighthouse

**New Testament Commentary** 

## Romans

By

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## Introduction to the Letter to the Congregations in Rome

**Robert Haldane** says of it, "The great truths which are embodied and inculcated in every other part of the Bible, are here brought together in a condensed and comprehensive form. More especially, the glorious doctrine of justification by faith is clearly unfolded and exhibited in the strongest light."

**William Tyndale** said, "Forasmuch as this epistle is the principal part and most excellent part of the New Testament and most pure Evangelion...and also a light and a way into the whole Scripture."

**Background:** The Book of Romans was written by Tertuis for Paul (Ch. 16:22) from Corinth (Rom. 16:23) on his way to Jerusalem to deliver financial gifts for the poor (Ch. 16:5, 10, 11, 14, 15). Phebe a servant of the congregation at Cenchrea delivered the letter to the congregations in Rome (Ch. 16:1, 23, 27).



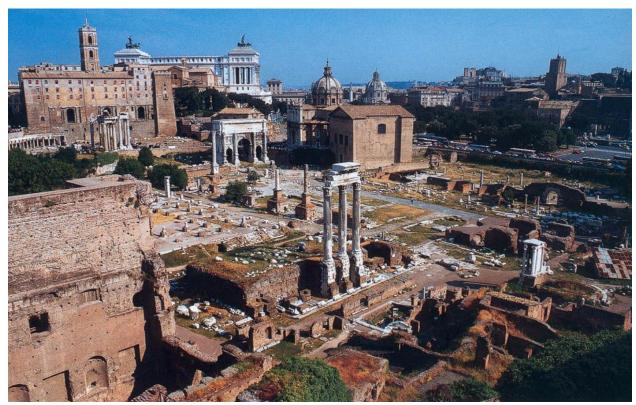
Ruins of Corinth where Paul wrote the letter of Romans

**Purposes for Writing:** They are a Gentile congregation under his apostleship (Ch. 15:15-16). He wrote it for several reasons; (1) to explain his absence (Chs. 1:13; 15:19-22); (2) to request prayer (Ch. 15:31) and (3) to explain why the gospel needs to be preached (Chs. 1:18-3:23); (4)

to defend justification by faith without works (Chs. 3:20-5:20); (5) to explain why grace does not promote sin (6:1-8:27); (6) to explain God's purpose of grace for Israel and Gentiles (Chs. 8:28-12:1); (7) to explain the relationship of the Christian to the congregation, to government and to the weaker among them (Chs. 12-15).

**The Theme:** The Righteousness of God. The term "righteousness" and its forms are found 43 times in Romans. The term "gospel" is found 13 times

**The Audience:** This epistle is sent to a number of congregations at Rome (Ch. 16:5, 10, 11, 14, 15). A careful reading of Romans 16:5-15 reveals possibly six different congregations at Rome. Rome was over a million in population at that time.



The Roman Forum – 1000 B.C. to 400 A.D.

#### Peter and the congregations at Rome.

- If he had been in Rome at the writing of this epistle Paul would have greeted him with all the rest.
- If Peter had been to Rome at the time of Paul's first imprisonment, he would have mentioned Peter in his prison epistles when he sends greetings from those in Rome.
- If Peter had been to Rome at the time of his final imprisonment in Rome, he would not have said all in Rome had forsaken him 2 Tim. 4:16-17

- In the fourth century introduction to the book of Romans, Ambrosiaster claimed that no apostle originated the congregation at Rome but rather certain Jewish Christians. Rom. 15:20-22 seem to indicate that no other apostle had yet come to Rome.
- If another Apostle had founded the congregation at Rome, Paul would have never said what he tells them in Rom. 15:20-22

#### How are we to account for traditions that say Peter built it?

The earliest traditions equally give Paul as a founder:

- Irenaeus says that the congregation was "founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul...." Irenaeus Against Heresies, Vol. 1, chap. III, numb. 2, p. 415
- Traditions have been tampered with by apostate Rome (e.g. False Decredals).

Most likely the congregation at Rome was founded by unknown disciples who had been converted, immersed and trained on the day of Pentecost, and sent back to Rome by the congregation in Jerusalem (Acts 2:10,41-42). Peter had been influential in the founding of the congregation at Rome through the Pentecost sermon. Paul had been influential through his epistle and imprisonments at Rome.



**Appian Way to Rome** 

#### **Outline of Romans**

#### I. Your Redemptive Salvation by God's Mercy - Chs. 1-11

#### A. The Revelation of God's Gospel - Ch. 1:1-17

- 1. Revealed in Paul's Call v 1
- 2. Revealed in the Prophets vv. 2-4
- 3. Revealed in the Saints at Rome vv. 5-15
- 4. Revealed in the Character of the Gospel vv. 16-17

#### B. The Revelation of God's Wrath - Chs. 1:18-3:20

- 1. No Excuses Ch. 1:18-31
- 2. No Escape Chs. 2:1-3:9
- 3. No Ethical Integrity Ch. 3:10-18
- 4. No Emancipation Ch. 3:19-20

#### C. The Revelation of God's Righteousness – Chs. 3:21-8:27

- 1. Revealed in the Law and Prophets Ch. 3:21
- 2. Revealed in the Person of Christ Ch. 3:22
- 3. Revealed in God's Provision Ch. 3:24-26
- 4. Revealed in Justification by Faith Chs. 3:27-5:2
- 5. Revealed in Federal Headship of Christ Ch. 5:12-21
- 6. Revealed in Immersion Ch. 6
- 7. Revealed in the Inability of the Law Ch. 7
- 8. Revealed in the Law of the Spirit Ch. 8:1-27

#### D. The Revelation of God's Purpose - Chs. 8:28-11:36

- 1. God's Purpose for His Elect Ch. 8:28-38
- 2. God's Purpose for Israel Chs. 9-11
  - a. God's Twice Born Jewish Promised Children Ch. 9:1-8
  - b. God's Elective Grace Ch. 9:9-15
  - c. God's Elective Mercy Ch. 9:16-24
  - d. God's Elective Promised Children Among the Gentiles Ch. 9:24-29
  - e. God's Elective Means Chs. 9:30-10:21
- 3. God's Purpose for Israel among the Nations Ch. 11

#### II. Your Reasonable Service by God's Grace - Chs. 12-15

#### A. God's Purpose for Christian Service - Chs. 12-15:14

- 1. Acceptable Service as a Mature Church Member Ch. 12
- 2. Acceptable Service as a Mature Citizen Ch. 13
- 3. Acceptable Service as a Mature Christian Chs. 14-15:5

#### B. God's Purpose for Paul's Service – Ch. 15:6-33

- 1. The Interracial Problems Mixed Races/Cultures
- 2. The Interracial Solution vv. 6-33
- 3. The Interracial Paul vv. 14-32
  - a. Paul the Partner with Gentiles vv. 14-15

- b. Paul the Priest for Gentiles vv. 16-17
- c. Paul the Preacher to Gentiles vv. 18-19
- d. Paul the Pioneer to Gentiles vv. 20-24
- e. Paul the Presenter of Gentile Gratitude vv. 25-30

#### III. Your Relationship with other Congregations - Ch. 16

- A. Paul's Commendation vv. 1-2
- B. Paul's Congregational Salutations-vv. 3-16
- C. Paul's Critical Exhortation vv. 17-20
- D. Paul's Companions vv. 21-24
- E. Paul's Concluding Doxology-vv. 25-27



The Coliseum in Rome

#### **Transition Points**

Paul methodically presents his case to the Romans as a trained lawyer in a very logical developmental style. The reader must discern the developmental transition points throughout this letter in order to grasp his arguments correctly. These transition points consist of three basic parts; (1) summary statements followed by (2) expanded explanation/defense and a (3) conclusion.

- 1. Romans 1:1-17 refer to the gospel of Christ. The summary statement is found in verse 1. The expanded explanation (vv. 2-15) and a concluding summary application (vv. 16-17). The gospel declares the righteousness of God in Christ for believers.
- 2. Romans 1:18-3:9 presents evidence for the universal need of righteousness declared in the gospel. There is universal need of righteousness because there is universal unrighteousness and that is why the wrath of God is revealed against all mankind. The summary statement (vv. 18-21). The expanded explanation (Rom. 1:22-3:8). The conclusion is first summarized in Romans 3:9 and then expanded in Romans 3:10-23 where it is concluded again in verse 23.
- 3. Romans 3:21-5:21 argues for justification of the "ungodly" (universally condition of mankind as proven in Romans 1:18-3:23) by imputed righteousness as declared in the gospel. The summary statement (Rom. 3:21-26). The expanded explanatory statement (Rom. 3:27-5:2). Within this expanded statement is a defense of grace as opposed to works (Romans 3:27-31) followed by the use of Abraham to illustrate justification by grace as opposed to works (Rom. 4:1-21). The Summary conclusion is found in Romans 4:22-5:2. An expansion of this conclusion is presented in Romans 5:3-19 proving the complete sufficiency of justification by grace through the substitutionary Person of Christ, and then the conclusion is again summarized in Romans 5:20-21.
- 4. Romans 6-8:27 present the basis for why justification by grace as previously presented and defended, does not promote sin in the life of the justified. The summary statement is found in Romans 6:1-2. The expanded explanation and defense is found in Romans 6:3-8:27
- 5. Romans 8:28-11:1 presents the certain fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God in regard to redemption for all the elect (Rom. 8:32). Romans 8:28-39 is the summary statement. Romans 9-11:28 provide a further explanation in regard to the elect nation of Israel and individual Jews and gentile elect. The conclusion is found in Romans 11:29-36.
- 6. Romans 12:1 provide the transition point between Romans 1-11 in regard to the doctrine of salvation or the "mercies" of God and the doctrine of service or "acceptable" offerings by the saved in Romans 12:2-15:33. The summary point is Romans 12:1-3. The expanded explanation is found Romans 12:4-15:33.
- 7. Romans 16:1-23 provide the final salutations from Paul to the Roman congregations. Romans 16:24-27 is the summary conclusion of the letter.

## The Letter to the Congregations in Rome

## Chapter 1

aul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

- 2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)
- 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;
- 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:<sup>1</sup>
- 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:
- 6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

#### **The Gospel of Christ**

Paul was set apart unto the gospel of Christ (v. 1). The same gospel preached by all the prophets (v. 2; Acts 10:43) in anticipation of the coming "Christ" (Heb. Messiah). Isaiah 53 presents the gospel as clear as possible from a pre-incarnate view point (Rom. 10:16; Acts 8:32-35).

- 7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>
- 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.
- 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;
- 10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.
- 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;<sup>3</sup>
- 12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.
- 13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "According to the flesh....Spirit" – According to the flesh he was a man and the seed of David (v. 3). However, according to His immaterial spirit he was the Holy Son of God demonstrated in power of His resurrection.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Called to be saints" – same exact construction in the Greek text as "called to be an apostle" (v. 1). That was Paul's present condition by calling. Likewise, all children of God by their present condition are saints by calling. They are "saints" or set apart by God through the gospel unto salvation and service

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "**Impart unto you some spiritual gift**" – Significantly, no *sign* gifts are listed in Romans 12. Sign gifts were the signature credentials of the apostolic office (2 Cor. 12:12). Sign gifts were received through the laying on of apostolic hands (See note on Acts 8:17-19). Another evidence that this congregation was not founded by an apostle as they were without sign gifts.

- 14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
- 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.
- 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:<sup>4</sup> for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.<sup>5</sup>
- 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed<sup>6</sup> from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.<sup>7</sup>
- 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;<sup>8</sup>
- 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "Not ashamed of the gospel" – Key verse in this chapter. Paul was not ashamed because (1) God called him to preach the Gospel – v. 1; (2) All the prophets preached the gospel – vv. 2-3; (3) All the saints at Rome were saved by the gospel – vv. 6-15 (4) The power of God is manifested in the preaching of the gospel – v. 16; (5) The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel – v. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "The power of God" – In this context, it is the power of God unto that aspect of salvation called justification (v. 17). Judicial/legal eternal life is obtained by faith in the gospel (v. 17b "the just shall *live* by faith"). It is faith that manifests God's power in and through the gospel. God uses the gospel, as the vehicle for expressing His creative power or word of command when God regenerates the elect (2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13; James 1:18; 1 Jn. 5:1). The gospel does not contain that power but becomes that power when God speaks effectively through it (effectual call – 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Rom. 8:30). At all other times the gospel comes in "word only" (1 Thes. 1:5). Regeneration provides spiritual life (eternal) while justification obtains judicial life (eternal). Faith is created by regenerative life (Jn. 6:44-45; 64-65) but the same faith is the basis for judicial life (justification). Thus faith is the product of spiritual life and the basis for judicial life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed" – Christ and his sinless life is the central object of the gospel that declares that all righteousness demanded by God is satisfied by His Son (see note on Romans 3:22-26; 10:4). God's power and Godhead are revealed in nature (Rom. 1:19-20). God's wrath is revealed in the digression of sin and its consequences (Rom. 1:18-31). Right and wrong are revealed in them by conscience (Rom. 1:19; 2:15), and unto them by law (Rom. 3:19-21). However, the righteousness of God is revealed as "good news" in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Outside of Christ, there is only the wrath of God is revealed (Rom. 1:18-3:23).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> "**From faith to faith**" – The righteousness of God is received within the sphere of faith alone. The literal Greek text says "out of faith (ek) into (eis) faith thus never leaving the sphere of faith. The just (those justified) shall live (obtain judicial eternal life) by faith (without going beyond the sphere of faith into works). See note on Rom. 3:27-28 and Galatians 3:10-12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> "Who hold" – The problem of all lost mankind is not the absence of light, but active opposition to all truth revealed unto them (Rom. 3:10-20; 8:7). The Greek term translated "hold" (katexo) can be used positively or negatively. Here it is used negatively ("in unrighteousness") and means to actively resist (present tense of continuous action) or hold down or hold back the truth revealed by God unto them and in them. This is the nature of all who are "in the flesh" (Rom. 8:7-8). Paul is describing the reaction of the lost nature to light, just as, Jesus does in Jn. 3:18-20. This is why they are now under the wrath of God (Jn. 3:36). "Is revealed" demonstrates that this wrath is presently being revealed from heaven, manifested in the consequences described in verses 24-31, and shall be manifested in future judgment (Rom. 1:31; 2:3-10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "Known of God is manifest in them...unto them" – Natural revelation rather than written revelation is the subject here. God reveals something of His "godhead" (the universe is a complex trinity as it is made up of space, matter and time, all of which are trinities as well) and power (vast power that maintains the universe from micro to

#### THE WRATH OF GOD NOW REVEALED - Rom. 1:18

In Romans 1:18-32 Paul explains that stages in sin reveals the extent of God's wrath in giving them over from one stage to another stage until it concludes with destruction of that person or culture. Each stage is the natural consequence of the former stage in this downward progression. Paul argues that this downward progression originates with repressing the truth about God (Rom. 1:20 "hold" translates a Greek term that means to "hold down" or repress as the depraved nature has no other response toward God – Rom. 8:7). that is revealed to them in nature and in conscience (Rom. 1:18-21). This refusal to retain the knowledge of God in their minds leads to refusing to give God his deserved honor and thankfulness, thus the mind becomes darkened and foolish reasoning is the result that manifests itself in replacing the vacuum of God by something else or idolatry (Rom. 1:22-23). So Romans 1:18-32 is talking about man in his FALLEN state.

Idolatry or the perversion of God also perverts any standard of true holiness or morality and so man is left only with himself and his depraved passions or "lusts" to guide his morals which results in sexual perversions (Rom. 1:24). When the truth of God is rejected, so is God's standard of holiness or morality (Rom. 1:25). So with only depraved passions as the guide the next stage is sexual perversions.

However, there is one sin unto which God turns over such a person or nation that is the flood gate for a total corrupt human being or society and that is the sin of homosexuality (Rom. 1:26-27). When a person or nation continues in this sin, then God turns them over to being "FILLED" or complete manifest depravity (Rom. 1:28-32). Homosexuality is the flood gate that opens up a condition like unto the time of Noah and Sodom and Gomorrah when God's wrath is then transformed into sudden destruction of that person and/or nation. That person or culture is "filled" or as Moses described such a progressed state: "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart WAS ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY." - Gen. 6:5

A person or nation can see where they are at in this progressive digression into sin. When homosexuality begins to dominate a nation, there is no shame left, and it opens the flood gate to pure manifest evils that can only end in absolute destruction of that individual or nation.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:<sup>10</sup>

macro). He also places "in them" the conscience which performs the "work of the Law" - approving good and condemning evil (See Rom. 2:14-15).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "Without excuse" – The revelation of God in nature provides no saving light, as that is revealed in the gospel (vv. 16-17). However, nature's revelation provides sufficient light to reveal there is a true God and a moral standard. God who "shewed" Himself to them, and "in" them, is "clearly seen" (v. 20) and "understood" (v. 20). They are judged by the light they have, and therefore, they are without excuse. In Romans 3:9 Paul reveals that his purpose from Romans 1:18-3:8 was to prove both Gentiles and Jews have sinned against the light they have been given.

- 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.<sup>11</sup>
- 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
- 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
- 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:<sup>12</sup>
- 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
- 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature [lesbian]:
- And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men [homosexuals] working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence [what is deserved] of their error which was meet [necessary, called for]. 13
- And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient [suitable, fitting, proper];
- 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness [desire to injure]; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity [evil hearted]; whisperers [secret slanderers],
- 30 Backbiters [open slanderers], haters of God, despiteful [to insult], proud [arrogant], boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- 31 Without understanding [no proper moral understanding], covenantbreakers [contract breakers], without natural affection [lack of paternal love for their own children], implacable [incapable of seeking peace], unmerciful:
- 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> "**Became vain**" – When revealed truth is resisted and rejected it begins a process of downward digression into greater darkness and corruption and foolishness under the pretense of wisdom and enlightenment (e.g. evolution). Rejection of the truth of God results in replacing God with something else, which is idolatry (vv.23, 25). When God is rejected so is the purpose of man's existence and any righteous standard (vv. 24,26-30).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> "**God gave them up**" – Three times this is stated (vv. 24,26,28). There is a progressive downward spiral of corruption with each statement. The fountainhead of all sin is the rejection of the knowledge of God. Fornication and adultery (v. 24). Homosexuality (vv. 26-27). Unrestrained immorality (vv. 29-30). Giving them over to such things is the evidence that God's wrath is presently upon them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> "The natural use" – Marriage was designed by God to be between a male and female. Here sodomy or homosexuality is spelled out in clarity "And likewise, also the men…men with men." Widespread acceptance of Sodomy is a sign of God's wrath upon a nation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> "**Knowing the judgment of God**" – People who know they are doing evil in God's sight and yet take pleasure in others following them into that sin have reached the lowest depth of depravity, as they sit in the seat of the scorner (Psa. 1:2). This is evidence that God's wrath is upon them as He completely gives them over to the love of sin.

## Chapter 2

herefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 15

- ▲ 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 16
- 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?
- 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance [tolerate] and longsuffering [patient endurance of evil]; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
- 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent [without repentance] heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
- 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:
- 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 17
- 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation [fierce anger] and wrath [lawful punishment],
- 9 Tribulation [afflictions] and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;
- 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "**Thou judgest another**" – In Romans 3:9, Paul says he has proven that there are none better than others. The idea that some think they are better than others begins with this chapter, and in this verse. This idea is particularly expressed by Jews in verses 17-25 in their boast of law-keeping, and in particular their boast of circumcision in verses 26-29. Romans 3:1declares these things do not make the Jew better. However, it is also expressed clearly in the first five verses of this chapter. Such people believe they will escape the judgment of God (v. 3). They also despise God's manifest goodness revealed in his providence (v., 4), and have no true repentance (v. 5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> "**The judgment of God is according to truth**" – In the following verses (vv.6-14) Paul lays down the just criteria and consequences for justification by the law of God. The Law judges every man on the same criteria; (1) According to his works; (2) according to what he does rather than says; (3) according to the light that he has; (4) according to the Law's righteousness revealed in the person of Christ. The basis for this judgment is "works" (v. 6) not grace or justification by faith, but justification under the law (vv. 12-15). This is a judgment of those described in verses 1-5 and verses 17-25 who vainly believe their own works will pass God's judgment (vv. 3, 17-25).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> "By patient continuance in well doing" – The continuous action of the present tense is stressed here as in Galatians 3:10 "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Those who will be justified by works cannot fail in one point, as to fail in one point (James 2:10-11) is to "come short" of justification and fall under its curse. Paul is setting forth the standard by which all men shall be justified in their own person according to their own works (v. 6) under Law (v. 13). He is not referring to those already judged and justified by faith in the person of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24-5:2), since such do not come under the law to be justified or condemned (Jn. 5:24). Neither is he writing about those already justified by faith and enabled by the Spirit of God (see note on Romans 8:4).

- 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.
- 12 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; 18
- 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified [legal vindication]. 19
- 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:<sup>20</sup>
- 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)<sup>21</sup>
- 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. 22
- 17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 23
- 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;
- 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "**Perished without law...judged by the law**" – Since Paul is considering justification by works under law there is no consideration of salvation, because no flesh can be justified by the works of the law (Rom. 3:19-20). Those who "perish" without law are the Gentiles. They perish because there is no gospel in nature or in the law written on conscience; rather, only sufficient light to render them without excuse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> "**Doers of the law shall be justified**" – All who come before God on the basis of their own works (v. 6) hoping to be justified by the Law must measure up to the Law's own definition of sufficiently "doing" works (James 2:10). None have ever measured up to the law, nor will they (see Rom. 3:19-20).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> "By nature the things contained in the law" – God has written the essence of the moral law upon the "conscience" of every man (v. 15). Hence, the Gentile is also "without excuse" (Rom. 1:20), and will be judged according to the light given him. God is just. However, the law written upon their conscience demands the same just rule (v. 13) and all Gentiles who stand before God hoping to be justified by their own good works must measure up to that same just standard (James 2:10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "**The work of the law**" – The conscience in men accomplishes the same "work" that the written Law of God is designed to accomplish – revealing right from wrong (see Rom. 3:20b). Therefore, it provides a just basis to judge the Gentiles even though they were without the written Law of God. They will be judged according to the light provided by God in nature and in them (conscience). They will be without excuse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> "Judge....according to my gospel" – The universal standard of righteousness used by God to judge all who come to him on the basis of the works of the Law is "Christ." Christ is revealed in the gospel as the standard of satisfaction of God's righteousness. The Law requires internal righteousness ("secrets of men") as well as external righteousness. The Person of Christ is what all will be measured by to meet the just demands of the Law. All who come before God on the basis of their own works will be judged as sinners (Rom. 3:9-20,23). All who come before God by faith "in Christ" will be justified (Rom. 3:24-5:19). All in this text come by their own works (vv 11-13).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "**Restest in the Law**" – In addition to the cultured Gentile, the pious Jew believed he could be justified by doing the works of the law. Romans 2:17-3:8 is directed at the pious law keeping Jew who believed he could escape the judgment of God due to his own life of good works. Paul's argument is that the Law does not profit anyone that has violated it.

- 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.
- 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?<sup>24</sup>
- 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?
- 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?
- 24 For the name of God is blasphemed [speak injuriously against] among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.
- 25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.<sup>25</sup>
- 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?
- 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?
- 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:
- 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> "**Should not steal**" – Paul has in mind the whole Mosaic Law including the Ten Commandments, as he lists the third, seventh and eighth of the Ten Commandments (vv. 21,22).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law" – The principle in verse 13 is repeated here again. Circumcision was the very first ceremonial rite of a Jew coming into the world. It was a symbol of the new birth in Christ by the cutting off of the flesh. Under the Mosaic covenant it was the sign of commitment to lifelong law keeping that was only fulfilled in the Person of Christ. Paul argues it is worthless apart from complete and continuous obedience to law-keeping (Rom. 2:13; 3:19-20; James 2:10-11). Only Christ fulfills this in His own life and only those in Christ satisfies the Law's demands. However, here it is being considered apart from Christ in the life of the Jew. If a man fails in keeping the law in one point he fails in all points, including the point of circumcision. Thus one sin makes his circumcision "uncircumicision" and is profitless as a means of proving he is more righteous than the Gentile and for being justified before God.

<sup>&</sup>quot;He is a Jew, which is one inwardly" - Later in Romans 9:57 Paul will argue that the true Jewish promised children within national ethnic Israel are not those merely born "after the flesh" but in addition to being ethnic Jews they must also be born after the Spirit or supernaturally born of God as illustrated by Isaac's birth, and those elected by grace as illustrated by the birth of Jacob. Likewise, the true ethnic Jew (v. 17) is the one who has been circumcised in heart in addition to the flesh. Otherwise his external circumcision is regarded as uncircumcison as there is no ability to be righteous much less do righteousness. In contrast, the externally uncircumcised gentile who is justified by faith in Christ is righteous and does righteousness due to circumcision of his heart (new birth) and therefore is more righteous before God then the merely external circumcised Jew. To be a complete Jew before God a child of Jacob must be circumcised internally as well as externally. Hence, the outward act of circumcision does not provide the Jew with any claim to righteousness in God's sight or advantage over the Gentile. Only those truly righteous by new birth and justification by faith will stand before God without condemnation.

## Chapter 3

That advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?<sup>27</sup>

- 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles [inspired words] of God.
- 3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?
- 4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.<sup>28</sup>
- 5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)<sup>29</sup>
- 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?
- 7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?
- 8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.
- 9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;<sup>30</sup>
- 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:<sup>31</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> "What advantage then hath the Jew?" – The nature of this question demonstrates that Paul has proven that the Jew has no advantage over the Gentile in regard to justification by works. However, are there no advantages being a Jew rather than a Gentile? Indeed there is! They have the advantage of special revelation whereas the Gentile only had natural revelation. They have more light. They also have special promises as a nation in regard to election (Rom. 11:25-28). Paul now begins to answer a series of objections against what he has taught since Romans 2:17 concerning the Jew.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> "**Does their unbelief**" – Does their unbelief make God's promise unto Abraham invalid and without effect? Paul's response to this line of reasoning is that if there is blame, it belongs to any response, doctrine or teaching by man that contradicts God' Word (v. 4). The problem is not with God's promise but with man's understanding of that promise. God's promise to Abraham concerning the ethnic nation will be fulfilled (Rom. 11:25-28).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" – The objector argues that since their unrighteousness justifies what God says about the Jews in His Word, then how can God justly condemn them for proving His Word right about them? Just because God's Word correctly condemns them for sin does not justify sin. God is not condemning them for vindicating the fact that his Word is right about them. Rather, He is condemning them because His Word is right about them and they have violated His Word. Such an argument as used by objectors would teach that the more we sin the more we glorify God and therefore, let us do evil that God can be glorified (vv. 7-8). That kind of reasoning would blame sin on God and deny that God has the right to judge the world for sin.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> "We have before proved" – Paul refers to his beginning point in Romans 1:18 where Gentiles are first considered as those who have only natural revelation in contrast to Jews who "resteth in the law" (2:17). This whole section (1:18-3:8) is dedicated by Paul to prove Jews are no better than Gentiles but both are equally "under sin." A person cannot be "under sin" without being "under law" (v. 19) as there is no sin where there is no law (Rom. 5:13). The law of conscience reflects the moral law of Moses (Rom. 2:14-15) as it does the same "work" as the written Law.

- 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
- 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:
- 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
- 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:
- 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:
- 17 And the way of peace have they not known:
- 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.
- 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

#### **Universal Depravity**

Paul is not referring to a class of special evil humans. He purposely and repetitively uses universal language "none...not one" in verses 10-12 to deny the existence of any child of Adam that does not fit this description. In Romans 3:19-20 he again uses universal language "every mouth" and "all the world" and "no flesh" that leaves none of fallen human kind as an exception. In verses 13-18 he describes the extent of human depravity to include every moral aspect and avenue of human expression: (1) the mouth – vv. 13-14; (2) their actions – vv. 15-17; (3) their attitudes – v. 18

- 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified [legal vindication] $^{32}$  in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. $^{33}$
- $21\,$  But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;  $^{34}$

<sup>&</sup>quot;As it is written" – Psalm 14:2-3; 53:2-3 directly apply to the fallen race of men and the common fallen human nature of Jews or Gentiles. God did not simply look down upon Jews in Psalm 14 and 53, but upon "man." When "God looked down from heaven" upon mankind he saw none that would seek after God. He saw none good, none righteous. No such thing as foreseen faith, only foreseen depravity. Verses 10-18 are a description of the total depravity of man. Total depravity does not mean that man has reached his maximum potential for corruption by sin, but rather every aspect of his nature has been corrupted by sin and under the reign of sin. All lost persons are equally spiritually dead "in trespasses and sins" but not are all equally corrupted by sin. Just as all corpses are equally dead but not all are equally corrupted but are in stages of corruption according to how long they have been dead.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> "**Justified**" - The term "justified" when used in connection with the term "law" or in reference to a court of judgment always is forensic in meaning and declarative in regard to a verdict. Law and/or courts never "make" one righteous but only render a verdict based upon evidence that *declares* them guilty or innocent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> "**No flesh**" – Verse 19-20 is the conclusive application of verses 9-18 and it is universal in its application. Note the universal language (1) "every mouth"; (2) "all the world"; (3) "no flesh"; (4) "in his sight"; The phrase "deeds of the Law" cannot be restricted simply to the Mosaic Law and Jews because of (a) the universal language and (b) it refers to "the righteousness of God" (v. 21) revealed by the conscience (Rom. 2:14-15) as well as written revelation because the conscience does the same "work" as the Law (see note on Rom. 2:15).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> "Without the law" – The righteous standard of God is manifest in the Mosaic Law. However, the law and the prophets witness to the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel (see Rom. 1:2; 2:16; Acts 10:43; 26:22-23). This is the righteousness obtained through faith in Christ (v. 22) whether Jew or Gentile, for all equally have sinned and come short of God's glory (v. 23).

- 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:
- 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;<sup>35</sup>
- 24 Being justified [legally vindicated] freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:<sup>36</sup>
- 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [satisfaction] through faith in his blood,<sup>37</sup> to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance [toleration] of God;<sup>38</sup>
- 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier<sup>39</sup> [legal vindicator] of him which believeth in Jesus.<sup>40</sup>

#### **Justified**

. The term "justified" is a forensic (legal) term that means "legally vindicated" and pictures a court room with God presiding over it determining whether each person is legally vindicated or condemned by the law. From Romans 1:18 to 3:23 Paul has proven all have sinned under the Law and none can be legally vindicated (justified) by the Law (Rom. 3:19-20) and thus all have sinned. In Romans 3:24-26 legal vindication for sinners is only obtained through the personal righteousness of Christ being imputed to the believer by faith. Thus the "ungodly" (Rom. 4:5) is legally vindicated before God (Rom. 4:1) by a righteousness that cannot be found in the person of the "ungodly" but must be obtained through a legal representative standing before God in his behalf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> "**The glory of God**" – Paul commanded the Corinthians, whether they drink or eat or whatsoever they do, do all things to the "glory of God" – 1 Cor. 10:31. Sin has its roots in the heart of man (Mt. 15:19). God looks upon the heart intent or motive (Jer. 17:10; Heb. 4:12) behind all that we think (Mt. 15:19 "evil thoughts"), say (Mt. 12:33-37), or do. Even the most godly actions are counted as sin if the motive is not for the glory of God. Paul noted that the first expression of fallen man is to refuse to acknowledge God, and give him thanks (Rom. 1:21).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> "**Justified freely by his grace**" –In verses 24-26, Paul sets forth God's basis, provision and object of faith for the justification of sinners. This is in direct contrast to "justified by the deeds of the law" in verse 20. The Greek term (dorean) translated "freely" is translated "without a cause" in John 15:25 where they hated Jesus without a cause. No cause was found in him for them to hate him. Here, there is no cause found in the sinner for God to justify him (see Romans 3:9-20) and therefore justification must be "freely" by grace. The sole merit is found "in Christ Jesus."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> "**To be a propitiation**" – God's wrath against sinners has been the subject since Romans 1:18 to Romans 3:23. Any life tainted by sin does not satisfy the Law's standard for justification and cannot merit eternal life, but provokes the laws condemnation unto damnation. The only thing that satisfies the righteous demands of God's law to obtain heaven and avoid hell is the sacrifice of a sinless life. Where will the sinner obtain such a life? This life is God's free and gracious provision "in Christ" obtained through faith. The shed "blood" of Christ represents his own sinless life, and satisfies the Law's righteous demands to obtain heaven and avoid hell. "Propitiation" means "satisfaction" as the redemptive provision of Christ is the only life that propitiates or satisfies the wrath and righteousness of God's Law and that propitiation is only received by faith. Our life cannot propitiate the Law as the Law requires the penalty of sin, as well as a sinless life for eternal life. We can provide neither in our own person.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> "**Remission of sins that are past**" – God remitted the sins of the Old Testament saints who looked forward by faith to the promised Christ provision. See Acts 10:43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> "**Be Just and the justifier**" – One of the oldest questions asked – "how can man be just with God" (Job 9:2). How can a holy God remain just and justify sinners? The answer is through substitution or what Job called a "daysman" (Job 9:33) or "redeemer" (Job 19:25-27) who stands between the sinner and God as the sinner's representative. God's wrath against sin is poured out on the representative, and the righteousness of the representative is imputed to the believer (see 2 Cor. 5:21).

- 27 Where is boasting then?<sup>41</sup> It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.<sup>42</sup>
- 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified [legally vindicated] by faith without the deeds of the law.  $^{43}$
- 29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:
- 30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify [legally vindicate] the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 44
- 31 Do we then make void [invalidate] the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish [vindicate] the law. $^{45}$
- <sup>40</sup> "**Believeth in Christ**" In Romans 3:24-26, the life and works that satisfy the righteous demands of God are provided by Christ, not by the sinner. Hence, "faith" and "believeth" are not to be understood as "faithfulness" on the part of the sinner; but rather, should be understood as simple trust that has for its object those things found in the prepositional phrases "in His blood" and "in Christ."
- <sup>41</sup> "**Where is boasting then**" If Christ's own life satisfied all of God's righteous demands against the sinner and is simply received by faith, then what grounds are there for boasting by the one justified by faith? This question is introduced here, and the answer covers Romans 3:27-4:21. The illustration of Abraham is given to directly answer this question (4:2) and prove Abraham was not justified by works done in his own person. The repeated phrase "by faith" in Romans 4:1-25 has reference to Abraham's faith in the provision of God, as revealed in the gospel (Gal. 3:6-8; Rom. 1:17; 4:22-25).
- <sup>42</sup> "**By what law**?" Here the term "law" is equally applied to "faith" as it is to "works." Paul is using the term "law" according to its basic meaning as a "rule" or "principle." According to what principle is boasting eliminated with regard to justification? Is boasting eliminated by justification through the principle of faith or through the principle of works? The principle of faith has been defined in verses 24-26. Justification by the principle of faith simply receives what God has provided "in His blood" and "in Christ Jesus." The principle of justification by works has been defined in Romans 2:6 "according to his deeds" or according to what man provides by his own actions. The difference is between what Christ did for the sinner versus what the sinner does for God. Paul denies that justification by the principle of works eliminates grounds for boasting. Hence, the conclusion is drawn in verse 28 that anyone justified before God is justified by faith without works. This is a declaration that one is justified by faith alone rather than by works or merging faith with works. Faith is contrasted to works for justification before God, not inclusive of works.
- <sup>43</sup> "**Therefore we conclude**" Justification before God requires the full satisfaction of the Law's demands (1) an entire life of sinlessness that can justify eternal life and (2) the complete penalty of the Law against sin paid in full. We can satisfy neither in our own person by any amount of works in our own person. Therefore, if we are going to be justified before God it cannot be based upon anything we are or have done in our own person and therefore it must be by faith in the Person and works of Christ in our behalf without works performed in our own person.
- <sup>44</sup> "**Through faith...by faith**" Paul argues that there is only "one God" and therefore there is only one way for justification for both Jews and Gentiles. The one way of justification is "through" (dia) and "by" (ek) faith. The first preposition denotes that faith is the agency "through" which justification is received. The second preposition defines faith as the sphere or source from which it originates. "εκ denotes source, δια intermediate agency or attendant circumstance." A.T. Robertson, **Word Pictures** (Romans 3:30). Therefore, Paul is repeating what he said in Romans 1:17 that the righteousness of God is shut up to faith alone.
- <sup>45</sup> "We establish the Law" The righteous demands of the law cannot be satisfied by what man does for God, as all have "come short" of what the law demands. Hence, the only way the Law can be established is to receive by faith Christ's complete satisfaction of the Law's demands. It is the life and death of Christ in the place of the sinner that

## Chapter 4

hat shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?<sup>46</sup>

2 For if Abraham were justified [legally vindicated] by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.<sup>47</sup>

- 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed
- God, and it was counted [applied] unto him for righteousness. 48
- 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned [applied] of grace, but of debt.
- 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted [to be applied] for righteousness.<sup>49</sup>

#### **Two Aspects of Justification**

To be legally vindicated before God requires satisfying both requirements of the Law. Justification requires obtaining righteousness approved by the law (v. 5), as well as obtaining remission of sins for violating the law (vv. 6-7). The sinner ("ungodly") cannot obtain either in or through his own person. Both must be imputed to him and both constitute "justification" before God The "blessed man" is the man legally vindicated by faith in Christ's provision in His person.

fully satisfies the just demands of the law for righteousness against sin. Moreover, this is the only basis that both Jew and Gentile can be equally justified before God without works (vv. 29-30).

- <sup>46</sup> "**Abraham**" Paul introduces Abraham to prove that justification by faith is without boasting. He systematically proves that justification is (1) by grace instead of by debt v. 4; (2) by faith without good works v. 5; (3) by imputation without works vv. 5-8; (4) By faith through imputation without divine ordinances vv. 9-12; (5) By faith without keeping the works of the law vv. 13-15; (5) By effectual grace through faith because it is based solely upon the power and promise of God without the performance or assistance of man vv. 16-21. Hence, justification is not by faithfulness but by faith in the faithfulness of Christ. Significantly, Abraham lived before the law of Moses and so "works" in verses 1-12 cannot refer to the works of the Mosaic Law or becoming a Jewish proselyte but to works performed in his own body.
- <sup>47</sup> "Whereof to glory" The word "glory" translates the same Greek word as "boasting" in Romans 3:27. The question now being considered is does Abraham have any grounds for boasting in his justification before God? He provides an immediate answer; "not before God," and then proceeds to draw principles from different areas of Abraham's life to define what he means that justification by faith is without works.
- <sup>48</sup> "Saith the scripture?" Paul quotes Genesis 15:6, where God provides further progressive revelation of the promise first given to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 15:7). The Hebrew text uses the perfect tense "believed," demonstrating that the initial faith exercised by Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, at the initial reception of the gospel (Gal. 3:8 with Gen. 12:3, note "had" in Gen. 12:1), continues as a completed state in response to this repeated but progressive revelation in Genesis 15:1-6. In other words, Abraham had already believed God, and it

had already been imputed to him for righteousness at the point of his gospel conversion in the Ur of the Chaldees, and he continued in that completed state of faith in God's promise; that original promise is merely expanded in Genesis 15:6. Genesis 15:6 is similar to 1 John 5:13. Those to whom John wrote already had believed in Christ but John provides further explanation of their salvation in order that they might be strengthened in that initial but *continuing* faith. Justification by faith is a completed action that stands completed and continues as a completed action (see perfect tense – Rom. 5:1-2).

- 6 Even as David<sup>50</sup> also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth [to be applied as] righteousness without works,<sup>51</sup>
- 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.
- 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute [to be applied as] sin. 52
- <sup>49</sup> "Worketh not, but believeth on him" Just as grace is in contrast to works (v. 4), so "believeth" is in contrast to "worketh" (v. 5). Therefore "believeth" cannot be interpreted as "fait; hfulness," but refers to faith in an object - "on him." Christ's righteousness is foreign/distinct/separate from works performed in/through our own person. It is not faith "on us" but "on him." Christ in his own person and in his own works has satisfied the full demands of the Law. Neither are these works performed in/through our own person. Indeed, it is impossible for us to do that, as that requires not merely absolute sinlessness from birth, but requires we pay the full penalty of sin in our own person as well. Hence, the problem is how does righteousness foreign to our own person found only in the person of Christ alone become ours so that we stand justified before God? It comes by imputation (see 2 Cor. 5:21) not by impartation. The absolute proof is that all the verbs are found in the present tense ("worketh not" "believeth" "justifieth" "imputed") and in regard to one whose present state is "ungodly" in his own person and works. Hence, "imputed" must refer to the transfer of righteousness foreign to the person of the "ungodly" or else Paul would claim that only the "godly" is justified due to the righteousness of Christ imparted to Him by either regeneration or sanctification. This is the difference between the gospel of Christ and "another gospel." All false gospels include works performed in the life of the believer, as the ultimate basis for justification before God. Hence, the false gospel depends upon righteousness imparted to the believer through regeneration or sanctification, so that only the godly are ultimately justified rather than the "ungodly." Neither regeneration nor sanctification has anything to do with justification. Neither does impartation of righteousness nor spiritual union have anything to do with justification. Regeneration brings us into spiritual union with God through Christ and progressive sanctification is the impartation of Christ righteousness into our lives in progressive increments never completed in this life. However, in direct contrast, both a complete sinless life and the complete penalty for sin must be fully satisfied in the person being justified by the Law, not merely one or the other. Neither regeneration nor progressive sanctification satisfy the full demands of the Law in the person of the believer in this life. Glorification obtains it in the person of the believer, but glorification is not a consequence of our works, as we are completely passive in glorification. Glorification is the sovereign work of God. Therefore, justification is based solely upon the imputed righteousness of Christ.
- <sup>50</sup> "Even as David" Paul introduces Psalm 32:1-2, not because David was initially justified at this point in his life but because justification is a completed action at the initial point which continues from that initial point as a completed action providing the same basis for continuing remission of sins as initially received at the point of gospel conversion (see perfect tense in Romans 5:1-2). This Psalm provides an enduring principle that defines the doctrine of imputation. He does something similar using Genesis 21 in regard to enduring principle of the nature of faith that justifies. In Romans 4:18-21, Paul writes about the account of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael as recorded in Genesis 21, but he is not indicating that Abraham was said to be justified in that chapter. Rather, Paul merely draws a principle from that passage to characterize the true nature of justifying faith as a perfect tense state.
- <sup>51</sup> "Without works" Grace cannot be defined to include works (v. 4). "Believing" cannot be defined to include works (v. 5). Imputation cannot be defined to include works (v. 6). Therefore justification before God is without works and therefore by faith alone (although this faith is not alone but accompanied with all other salvation essentials). Since the Mosaic law is the most comprehensive definition of works, if justification cannot be obtained by keeping the Law of Moses, neither can it be obtained by any lesser standard of righteousness (conscience). Therefore, to deny that justification can be obtained by the works of the Law of Moses is to deny it can be obtained by works at all, as there is no greater comprehensive definition of works than the Law of Moses.
- <sup>52</sup> "**Blessed is the man**" Justification by imputation has a positive and negative side. Christ's righteousness is imputed to the sinners account (v. 6) while the sins of the sinner are imputed to Christ's account (vv. 7-8), and not charged to the sinner. Imputation is a legal transaction whereby Christ and the sinner trade places before the Law of God. Christ is "made…to be sin" for us while we are made the righteousness of God in him (see 2 Cor. 5:21). This is why the gospel means "good news" as it is the good news of being justified "freely" by His grace.

- 9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.<sup>53</sup>
- 10 How was it then reckoned?<sup>54</sup> when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.
- 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:
- 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.
- 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.<sup>55</sup>
- 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:
- 15 Because the law worketh wrath [legal punishment]: for where no law is, there is no transgression.
- 16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;<sup>56</sup> not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,<sup>57</sup>

<sup>&</sup>quot;Cometh this blessedness" – The question is how does the blessedness described in verses 7-8 come upon a person. Does it come by faith without works (vv. 5-6) or does it come in connection with administration of divine ordinances? Abraham is also the "father" of circumcision. For the Jew, the rite of circumcision was the initial act of commitment to a life of obedience under the Law of God. It was also the symbol of new life or the cutting off of the flesh. Thus, it is similar to water immersion as the first act of public commitment to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:5). If Abraham were justified before he was circumcised that would be a declaration that he was justified "without works" but if "in circumcision" it would declare justification was inclusive of works. The Roman Catholic Catechism explicitly states that circumcision under the Old Covenant is comparable to baptism as a sacrament under the New Covenant and they explicitly use the circumcision of Christ to illustrate the transition (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition, p. 133 #527; p. 297 #1150).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> "**Reckoned**" – The same Greek term is translated "reckoned" "imputeth" and "counted" in this chapter. It means to apply or regard or treat something as true theoretically, legally or logically. For example, Christ was "numbered" with the transgressors. He was treated as such, even though in reality he was not a transgressor. The non-imputation of sin is to be treated as sinless while the imputation of righteousness to the "ungodly" is to be treated as righteous.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> "**Not...through the law**" – After repudiating divine ordinances as a means through which one is justified (vv. 9-12) he proceeds to deny that justification is obtained by law-keeping. The law is contrary to both "faith" (Gal. 3:12) and the promise of eternal life. The Law must condemn the sinner and convey condemnation and wrath ("the law worketh wrath" – Rom. 4:15) rather than justify sinners for eternal life (v. 14). The only way you can do away with the just consequences of sin is to do away with the law (v. 15), because sin is the violation of the law. Where there is no law there is no sin.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> "**Might be sure to all the seed**" – Justification by grace through faith makes the promise of eternal life sure to all the true promised seed of Abraham, because it is not qualified or conditioned by law keeping, and thus not subject to the condemnation and wrath of the law.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> "**The father of us all**" – An Old Testament saint could not be set forth as our role model ("father") if Old Testament saints were justified another way. (See Acts 1:12; 10:43; 26:22-23; Heb. 4:2; Gal. 3:6-8; 17).

- 17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.
- 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.
- 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:<sup>58</sup>
- 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;
- 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.
- 22 And therefore it was imputed [applied] to him for righteousness.
- 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed [applied] to him;<sup>59</sup>
- 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed [applied], if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;
- 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

## Chapter 5

herefore being justified [legally vindicated] by faith, <sup>60</sup> we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>61</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> "**Now dead...deadness of Sarah's womb**" – Paul draws from this story the essential characteristic that defines justifying faith. Justifying faith is reduced simply to the firm conviction and trust that what God promised, He must accomplish by His power without performance or assistance by the believer (v. 21). Justification before God is outside the ability or assistance of man (v. 17). Man's ability to assist God is defined as "dead" and "deadness." They were not justified by what they did for God (faithfulness) but by what God did for them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> "**Not written for His sake alone**" – Abraham believed in Christ (Gal. 3:16-17; Jn. 8:56) and in the gospel of Christ (Gal. 3:6-8) and was justified before God. However, these things were recorded "for us also" (v. 24) that we should believe in Christ for justification before God (vv. 24-25). What Christ did was "for us," or in our place, as our substitute to justify us from "our offenses." His resurrection obtains victory over condemnation and death because of our sins and thus it was "for our justification."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> "**Therefore being justified by faith**" – This is the conclusion drawn concerning justification by faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, first introduced in Romans 3:24-26. The term "justified" represents a passive Aorist participle or a completed action at the point of faith in the gospel wherein the one "being justified" is passive rather than participating in this action. This does not refer to active "faithfulness" by the believer but God's act of imputing righteousness to the believer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> "Wherein we stand" – Justification is not an incomplete ongoing process but a completed state or position that continues as a completed state. Paul uses the agrist tense ("justified" – v. 1) and two perfect tense verbs ("have access" and "we stand" – v. 2) to demonstrate this is a completed action at the point of faith in the gospel of Christ. In the example of Abraham's circumcision, he declares it was something he already "had" previous to circumcision (Rom. 4:11) at the point of faith in the gospel (Gal. 3:8).

- 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations [afflictions] also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 62
- 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
- 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
- 6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
- 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure [perhaps] for a good man some would even dare to die.
- 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- 9 Much more then, being now justified [legal vindication] by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath [legal punishment] through him.
- 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.
- 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.
- 12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin<sup>63</sup>; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:<sup>64</sup>

"Death by sin" - The particular "one" man is Adam, and the particular sin is the Adamic sin. The particular "death by" that sin is the death predicted in Genesis 2:17; "for *in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*." The literal Hebrew says "dying thou shalt surely die" and therefore defines death in its most comprehensive nature. Comprehensive death includes (1) immediate spiritual death in the very day he ate; (2) progressive dying culiminating at his physical death; (3) which in turn, without redemption, would terminate in eternal death. This is the "death" which human nature was subjected to when Adam sinned ("death by sin") and the same human nature which is the source from which all subsequent humans partake through natural generation "after its own kind." Therefore, it is this very "death" in its comprehensive form, inherent in human nature as found in fallen Adam, that is "passed upon all men" through natural reproduction "after its own kind." Hence, by one man's disobedience "many be dead." Therefore, infants are born with a spiritually dead human nature and the proof is that they are subject to physical death, and apart from redemption, they are subject to eternal death. There is no other precedent for the physical death of infants than Adam's sin and therefore "death by sin, and so, death passed upon all men." The Greek term translated "so" is "houto" and means "after this manner." After what manner? "By one man's sin" and death by one man's disobedience" after this manner "many be dead." "By one man's disobedience" after this manner "many be dead." "By one man's disobedience" after this manner "many be dead." "By one man's disobedience" after this manner "many were made sinners."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> "**And not only so**" – Paul's argument in Romans 5:3-11 is based upon the completion and finality of justification in Romans 5:1-2 which in turn is based upon his developed argument in Romans 4:1-25. If justification by faith is a sufficient and completed action (Rom. 5:1-2) then tribulation cannot work against us but only for us (Rom. 5:3-5). If justification by faith is sufficient and is a completed action then the love of God before we were justified can only be much more greater after we are justified (Rom. 5:6-11). If justification by faith is sufficient and is a completed action (Rom. 5:1-2) then it must be based upon the representative Person of Jesus Christ rather than upon works performed in our own person (Rom. 5:12-19). Hence, where sin abounded grace did much more abound and the reign of grace will not fail (Rom. 5:20-21).

- 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed [applied] when there is no law. 65
- 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude [likeness] of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 66
- 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.<sup>67</sup>
- 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.
- 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

It is for this very reason that Jesus was **not** born of the "seed" of man but rather from "her seed" (Gen. 3:15) by virgin birth because "death" is passed down through the male "seed" and not the "egg" of the woman. All forms of death (spiritual, phyiscal, eternal) are the penal consequences of sin (Rom. 6:23). Spiritual death was the immediate penal consequence of sin "in the day" he ate. Progressive and cumulative physical death is the penal consequence of sin as proven in the physical death of Jesus Christ "for our sins." There can be no question that "eternal death" is penal for our sins. Thus death in its comprehensive nature was "passed" down to all mankind as the penal consequence of sin, as predicted in Genesis 2:17.

- <sup>64</sup> "Wherefore, as by one man" Paul now attempts to prove his statement in verse 11 by demonstrating that Adam and Christ acted as representative men. We became "enemies" to God by the representative act of "one man" Adam, just as we became "reconciled" to God by the representative actions of "one man" Jesus Christ. All whom they represented obtained the full consequences due to their representative actions. Adam's one act of sin brought condemnation and death upon all whom he represented. Christ's act of obedience brought justification and eternal life upon all whom He represented. Those being represented actually received these things in time and space through birth (natural birth in Adam and supernatural birth in Christ). The word "so" (houtos) means "after this manner." It is "after this manner" all men have sinned already, even before they were born. The word "sinned" translates the Aorist tense, and so, this is seen as a completed action. Thus, "by one man's offence many be dead....were made sinners" (Rom. 5:15, 19). What was "passed" upon all men was "death" in its fullest meaning spiritual, physical and eternal death. The fact that infants die proves their death is a consequence of "one man's offence" rather than their own personal sin.
- <sup>65</sup> "Sin was in the world" He argues that sin was present in the world before the law was given by Moses and therefore the origin of sin and death cannot be attributed to violating Mosaic Law. However, there is no sin where there is no law. Hence, when and where did sin originate and with what law? Paul's argument is that death between "Adam and Moses" is to be attributed to Adam's violation of the law given in Eden. When Adam sinned, he represented all mankind by his one act (v. 19).
- <sup>66</sup> "Even over them who had not sinned" The only explanation for the death of humans who have no capability to comprehend good from evil and/or do not willfully choose to do evil ("the similitude of Adam's transgression") is that they were represented by Adam when he sinned. Thus, they were made sinners and condemned to death when Adam sinned, and by Adam's sin (vv. 12, 18-19).
- <sup>67</sup> "Many...many" Prior to verse 17 Paul uses "many" to describe those for whom Adam and Christ represented. In verses 18-19 Paul uses "all" to describe those who actually received the consequences of each representative (v. 17). The "many" for whom Christ acted are "all" those who actually receive (v. 17) the consequences of His obedience (v. 19) just as the "many" for whom Adam acted in behalf of are "all" those who actually received the consequences of his action (v. 19). Not "all" in Adam are in Christ by representation and the applied consequences prove it.

- 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.
- 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.
- 20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
- 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Chapter 6

hat shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were immersed into Jesus Christ were immersed into his death?<sup>68</sup>

### **Two Representative Men**

The representative substitutionary work of Christ is the basis for justification. Adam and Chirst are compared and contrasted in Romans 5:12-19. Paul repreatedly states that by "one man's" actions many were either condemned, made righteous, dead or obtained life. However, the consequences are received and experienced individually at the point of birth. All born physically in Adam are born into this world spiritually dead and condemned under the law of God. All who are born again in Christ "receive" 17) "justification of life" "righteousness" at the point of spiritual birth. In Adam all die but in Christ all are made alive (1 Cor. 15:22). Both Adam and Christ acted in a representative capacity for more than themselves but for "many."

Paul's argument is that justification "without works" is based upon the actions of one man who acted as our representative and obtained life and righteousness for us through His own works.

In contrast, all physically born into Adam's family obtained condemnation and death by the actions of one man who acted as their representative through his own works.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Immersed into his death" – The objection considered is, that if grace super abounds where sin abounded due to the representative work of Christ in our behalf received by faith without works, then why not continue in sin that grace may more abound? (Rom. 5:20; 6:1). Paul responds to this objection by five questions that all begin with "know" (vv. 3, 6, 9, 16; 7:1). First, they should "know" that water immersion provides a visible "likeness" of the representative work of Christ for those who received it by faith. Water immersion publicly identifies the believer with His representative death for our sin. Water immersion also publicly identifies us with His victory over sin, death and the grave through the resurrected life. Water immersion is the visible profession of our hope previously professed by our lips that made us qualified candidates for immersion in water. Therefore, by representation we have died to sin already and arose to life, all of which, we received legally through justification by faith. At the same time of justification by faith we were regenerated by the Spirit of God and received the spiritual life of Christ (Eph. 2:1,5) as faith is the regenerative fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, we are no more sanctified by our personal obedience to the Law of God any more than we were justified by our personal obedience to the Law of God. The life of Christ is sanctified already and merely needs recognition and yielding to by faith. As we simply yield to the indwelling Spirit of Christ by faith that life is made manifest in and through the believer not in order to be sanctified but because it already is without sin as no sin exists in the life of Christ.

4 Therefore we are buried<sup>69</sup> with him by immersion into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.<sup>70</sup>

#### The Mode of Baptism

Many Reformed expositors interpret the baptism in Romans 6:4-5 as spiritual baptism. However, no spiritual union has been mentioned thus far by Paul. What has been mentioned is legal union (justification) based upon the representative work of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:15-19). However, regardless if this word is applied literally, metaphorically or spiritually it must retain its historical meaning to "dip, plunge, immerse" and this is proven by the adjective "buried." However, Paul is here referring to water rather than spiritual immersion. In water immersion there is seen a visibly identification of the believer with Christ in the "likeness" of His death and resurrection. We cannot continue in sin because the representative work of Christ (Rom. 5:19-20) obtains not merely imputed legal vindication (righteousness and remission of sins) or legal death to sin (Rom. 7:1-4) but also obtain the resurrected life through regeneration. Declared faith in the representative work of Christ is the prerequisite for immersion in water and immersion in water publicly symbolizes that identification.

- 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
- 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed [Gr. katargeho = to deprive of influence or power], that henceforth we should not serve sin.<sup>71</sup>
- 7 For he that is dead is freed [Gr. dikaioo legally vindicated] from sin. 72
- 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:<sup>73</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> "**buried with him in immersion**" – This settles the proper mode of baptism. Not only does the term "baptizo"historically mean to submerge, immerse and plunge but the accompanying adjective used by Paul demands it can be nothing else.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> "**Likeness**" – Water immersion provides the "likeness" of His death and resurrection. However, the "likeness" seen in water immersion reflects the reality of His representative work that we received by faith legally and regeneratively at the point of justification.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Knowing this" – The "law of sin" indwells within "this body" (Rom. 7:24) and indwelling sin must be destroyed by the death of this body (1 Cor. 15:53-57). The "body" of the Christian must either die or this indwelling principle of corruption must be removed by putting on incorruption by Christ at His return Christ (1 Cor. 15:53-57). However, even now the power of indwelling sin can be mortified or put to death (Rom. 8:12-13) by simply acknowledging the power of the Spirit life of Christ within you and yielding to Christ by faith (vv. 11-13). Whenever we do not "walk in the Spirit" and yield to indwelling sin it creates within us an exercise of futility and frustration (Rom. 7:14-25).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> "**Freed from sin**" – The Greek term translated "freed" is the word consistently translated "justified" in Romans 3:24-5:2. We are legally vindicated before God by faith in the gospel. Justification is based upon the actual representative work of Christ and therefore when he died and rose again we also died and rose again with him representatively. That work was received through faith without works. In regeneration we obtain the resurrected life of Christ within us. That life is manifested through us whenever we resist the power of indwelling sin in our members by yielding through faith to the power of the Spirit of life in our new man. Thus our "old man is crucified" with Christ both representatively by faith and experientially by faith..

#### The body of Sin

The representative work of Christ (Rom. 5:15-19) provided for the ultimate salvation of our body from the power and presence of sin. Paul says that "the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6) not that it already has been destroyed. Indeed, the believer still longs to be delivered from "this body of death" (Rom. 7:24). Our flesh is now "sold under sin" and will be delivered to death (Rom. 7:14). There is nothing good in "the flesh" (Rom. 7:18) because indwelling sin operates through our "members" (Rom. 7:23,25). Ultimately this "body of sin" will be destroyed by death and we will obtain a body without the principle of corruption in the resurrection or rapture (1 Cor. 15:52-57). However, the good news is that the resurrection life of Christ exists within the believer through the indwelling Spirit of Christ and He is not subject to the authority of sin. It is through the indwelling resurrection life of Christ that the believer can now have victory over the power of indwelling sin. This is what Paul refers to when he says "if we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). We have the regenerative life of Christ within us, now we need to "walk" or live our life by the power of the Spirit.

- 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
- 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
- 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 74
- 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.
- 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 75
- 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> "**We shall also live with Him**" – All who share in his death also share in his life. The life that we share is through regeneration and it is free from sin and death, because Christ died once and sin has no dominion over his resurrected life. It is through the Spirit of life in Christ that we are able to deprive indwelling sin of its power over us.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> "**Let not sin...reign**" – Judicially "in Christ" sin cannot reign over us because we are judicially dead to sin. However, in our person and practice we are not free from the presence or power of indwelling sin. On the other hand, the power of the indwelling Spirit of God enables us to overcome the presence and power of sin as we "yield" to Him by faith. The child of God has the willingness due to the new birth, but the renewed will does have the power to carry out its desires (Rom. 7:14-24). He must learn to "yield" to the indwelling Spirit of God for freedom from sin (Rom. 8:2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> "**Not under Law, but under grace**" – Through the substitutionary death of Christ we are "dead to the Law" (Rom. 7:1-5). The Law has no jurisdiction over "dead" persons. We are alive to God by regeneration. Sanctification is progressively worked out in our lives through the new inward man by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. In this manner, the life of Christ is "put on" by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. Our new inward man is created in "righteousness and true holiness" (Col. 3:10) and therefore, manifests a "holy" life unto God.

- 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?<sup>76</sup>
- 17 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.
- 18 Being then made free [legal emancipation] from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.<sup>77</sup>
- 19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.<sup>78</sup>
- 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free [legal emancipation] from righteousness.
- 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.
- 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.
- 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Chapter 7

now ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

- 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.
- 4 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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> "**Servants to obey**" – All men are "servants" to some master. We are either servants of sin or servants of righteousness (v. 16). There is no middle condition. Freedom from the Law (see note on Romans 7:1-5) makes us servants of Christ

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> "**Ye became**" – The transition point was at point of regeneration and justification by faith. We became servants of righteousness in regard to our position in Christ, in regard to our regenerate condition that changed the ruling disposition of our mind to serve Christ (Rom. 7:25). However, actual service to righteousness occurs in our life only when we yield to the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> "**Now yield your members**" – Indwelling sin has its foothold in our "members" or "the flesh" (Rom. 7:17-18, 20, 25). The flesh is not regenerated. Only the spirit of man has been regenerated and the spirit of man is the governing inclination of man. We cannot will our members to do righteousness (Rom. 7:18) but must "yield" them to the indwelling Spirit of God in order to overpower indwelling sin.

- 5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.
- 6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.<sup>79</sup>
- 7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.<sup>80</sup>
- 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.
- 9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.
- 10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.
- 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.
- 12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.
- 13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.
- 14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 81
- 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.
- 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.
- 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.
- 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> "**Being dead**" – The only thing that frees a woman from the law of marriage to her husband is the death of her husband. As long as he liveth she is bound to him by law. When we received the atonement by faith we died to the law by the body of Christ as it was crucified on the cross in our place for our sin. Our sin was judged in his body on the cross. Hence, we are not subject to the condemnation and wrath of the Law. However, being released from the law does not place us in a non-married state. To be loosed from the law is to be married to Christ. There is no middle state between marriage to the Law and marriage to Christ.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> "**Is the law sin**" – Being dead to the law does not mean that the law was the source of sin. The law simply defines and reveals the source of sin in us. Sin in us retaliates against the Law and thereby sin is revealed by the law.

<sup>81 &</sup>quot;**T am carnal**" – Paul has used past tense verbs in verses 6-13 but changes to present tense verbs from verse 14 to verse 25. When Paul was "in the flesh" (v. 7) the law agitated and revealed indwelling sin (vv. 7-13) but could not deliver the lost man from indwelling sin. However, neither can the law deliver the saved man from indwelling sin (vv. 14-25). The law is "spiritual" or pertains unto spiritual things but the saved man is still "carnal" as pertaining to his flesh or the unredeemed aspect of his nature. The unredeemed aspect of his human nature (the flesh) is sold under sin and absolute proof that it is "sold under sin" is the grave yard full of the bodies of Christians. The "carnal" aspect of human nature will never "serve" God (Rom. 7:25b). Saved people can be "carnal" (1 Cor. 3:1-4). The redeemed immaterial aspect of man delights in the law of God (v. 22), and can be distinguished from indwelling sin within his flesh (vv. 17, 18, 20). The only possible way to overpower indwelling sin is by yielding to the power indwelling Spirit of God to mortify or put to death the power of indwelling sin in our "flesh" (Rom. 7:25a; 8:13).

- 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.
- 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.
- 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.
- 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
- 23 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.
- 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
- 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

#### Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

As a lost man he was free from righteousness (Rom. 6:20). However, as a saved man there is an internal war within him between the law of indwelling sin and the inward regenerated man that delights in the law of God (Gal. 5;16). Regeneration reverses the inclination of the soul from the love of sin to the love of righteousness but does not have any inherent power to overpower indwelling sin (Rom. 7:18b). Whenever the believer attempts to operate in his own strength to administer his delight for the Law of God it always ends in frustration and defeat (Rom. 7:24). Only as he yields to the presence and power of the Indwelling Spirit of Christ does God work in him "both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philip. 2:13; Rom. 8:9-13). Spiritual maturity is determined by how much of our life is empowered by the Spirit.

## Chapter 8

here is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.<sup>82</sup>

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:<sup>83</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> "Walk...after the Spirit" – Paul is directly referring to Romans 7:24-25 and deliverance from the "law" or power of indwelling sin by Christ. Those who are "in the flesh" will "mind" the flesh and "walk after the flesh". However, those who are "in the Spirit" may at times "mind" the flesh" and "walk after the flesh" and experience defeat and condemnation (Romans 7:14-25). The only deliverance from indwelling sin and *experiential* condemnation is by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (v. 2). Paul deals with this law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus from two perspectives. First, we are delivered representatively, positionally and judicially from sin by faith in the gospel (v. 3). Second, we are delivered experientially and progressively from the power of indwelling sin by faith in Christ as we "walk after the Spirit."(v. 4). We are to walk even as we received (Col. 2:6) so that if we live "in the Spirit" we ought to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> "Condemned sin" – The power of indwelling sin was dealt with by God sending Christ in the flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, and through death of his body. Sin has no legal right over the life of Christ which we receive through the indwelling Spirit. Sin does have present power of condemnation in the area of our bodies, and we *experience* it when we "walk after the flesh." Hence, we must "walk after the Spirit" to experience "now" (v. 1) the freedom from

- 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.<sup>84</sup>
- 5 For they that are after the flesh do [Gr. present tense] mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.
- 6 For to be carnally [flesh] minded [mind set] is [Gr. present tense] death; but to be spiritually minded [mind set] is [Gr. present tense] life and peace.
- 7 Because the carnal [flesh] mind [mind set] is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
- 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 85
- 9 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. 86
- 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is [present tense] dead because of sin; but the Spirit is [present tense] life because of righteousness.<sup>87</sup>

the power of sin obtained by Christ. The child of God can "walk" after either, but freedom from the indwelling power of sin is only experienced by walking (living) after the Spirit.

- <sup>84</sup> "**The law might be fulfilled in us**" The doctrine of justification is not in view at all here. We have been justified by faith in Christ without works and will not come into a future judgment (Jn. 5:24). We are not being enabled by the Spirit to live a sinless life (1 Jn. 1:8-10). It is fulfilled ultimately "in us" by glorification of the body (vv. 11, 23) when indwelling sin and its power are completely eradiated, and we are made sinless in the resurrection *before* judgment day. However, as we "mind" the things of the Spirit we can "walk after the Spirit," and *experience* the power of Christ's life to gain victory over the "deeds" of indwelling sin that otherwise will be manifested in our life (vv. 12-13).
- <sup>85</sup> "**In the flesh**" Paul limits the spiritual condition of all men to two different states. They are either (1) "in the flesh" or (2) "in the Spirit." There is no third class or condition of man because all who are not "in the Spirit" are "none of his" (v. 9). Paul writes that those in the flesh "cannot (Gr. ou dunatai) please God." The writer of Hebrews says it is "impossible (Gr. adunatai) to please God "without faith." Since those in the flesh "cannot please God" they must not have any ability (ou dunatai no ability/power) to believe. The unregenerate person cannot believe (see Jn. 6:44; 64-65). There is no middle condition between "in the flesh" and "in the Spirit." Thus being "in the Spirit" by regeneration is prerequisite for ability to believe.

The saved man is not "in the flesh" but he can "walk after the flesh" (Rom. 7:14-25; Gal. 5:16-17). The saved man must "put off" the old man and "put on" the new man, or "walk after the Spirit" or he will "now" experience "this body of death," and be separated from experiential blessings found in "walking after the Spirit."

- <sup>86</sup> "None of His" There are only two classifications of mankind on earth at any given time between the Genesis fall and Revelation glorification. Every human being is either "in the flesh" or "in the Spirit." Those "in the Spirit" have the Spirit of God indwelling them and if they do not have the Spirit of God indwelling them it is because they are "none of his." All of God's elect promised children from Genesis to Revelation have the indwelling Spirit of God only the lost do not.
- <sup>87</sup> "**The body is dead because of sin**" Note the use of present tense verbs in verses 10 and 12-13. The body is not physically dead but is the area of indwelling sin where death is now *experienced* when walking after the flesh. Whenever we walk (live present tense) after the flesh we subject ourselves to the domain of sin and death in our present experience. When we "mind" and "walk" after the flesh we experience separation (death) from the blessings of God now. However, just as the Spirit of God overpowered death in the body of Christ and will overpower death in the future resurrection of our bodies, so also, as we presently yield to Him, we can *experience* power over

- 11 But 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 [make alive present tense] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
- 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.
- 13 For if ye live [Gr. present tense] after the flesh, ye shall die [Gr. present tense]: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [Gr. present tense] the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
- 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons [Gr. huios] of God.
- 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
- 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children [Gr. teknia] of God:
- 17 And if children [Gr. teknia], then heirs; heirs of God, and [Gr. de] joint—heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 88
- 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in [Gr. eis] us.
- 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons [Gr. huios] of God.
- 20 For the creature [creation] was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,
- 21 Because the creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.
- 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain [birth pangs] together until now.
- 23 And not only they, 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.
- 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?
- 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.
- 26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities [mental and physical weaknesses]: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.<sup>89</sup>

indwelling sin now (vv. 12-13). Therefore we are not debtors to presently "live" or walk after the flesh, since we have the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to put to death the "deeds" of the flesh (indwelling sin). The present consequences or experience of death are those fruits of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21. The present experience of life are those fruits listed in Galatians 5:22-23 when we put to death the "deeds" of the flesh and "walk after the Spirit (Gal. 5:24-25).

<sup>88</sup> "**Heirs**" – There is disagreement among scholars whether Paul is referring to the Roman or Jewish law of inheritance. The Roman law regarded all children as equal heirs whereas the Jewish law gave a double portion to the first born. It is Jewish law Paul has in mind, because in Romans 8:29 Jesus is called the "firstborn" among many brethren.

- 27 And he [The Father] that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he [The Spirit] maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
- 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 90
- 29 For whom he did foreknow [know with design], he also did predestinate [determined beforehand] to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate [determined beforehand], them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified [legally vindicated]: and whom he justified [legally vindicated], them he also glorified.<sup>91</sup>
- 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?<sup>92</sup>
- 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?
- 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect [chosen ones]? It is God that justifieth [legally vindicates].
- 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
- 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation [afflictions], or distress [pinned in, in a fix], or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril [in danger], or sword?
- 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
- 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> "Cannot be uttered" – This is not the gift of tongues as tongues can be uttered by humans. The Holy Spirit interprets our heart in spite of our limited verbal capability of expressing our heart. To pray "in the Spirit" simply means to pray as led by the Spirit. To walk "in the Spirit" simply means to speak, think and act as led by the Spirit. To preach "in the Spirit" simply means to preach as empowered by and led by the Spirit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> "According to his Purpose" – Those things listed in verses 29-30 are the working out of His purpose in time and space. Foreknowledge is knowledge of His purpose to predestinate, call, justify and glorify us (v. 33 "his elect"). All "them" are the same "whom" are foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified "according to his purpose." What can you say to these things? Nothing! Because if God is for "us" (the elect – v. 33) then who can be against us, because no one can overrule His purpose and power? (v. 31). If God would not spare His own Son for them, He will not spare anything less to accomplish His purpose for them (v. 32). If God justified them, what judge in the universe can overrule his verdict? (v. 33). If Christ died for their sins who can condemn them for sin without rejecting Christ's death? (v.34). God will allow nothing to separate "us" (the elect) from His sovereign purpose to work all things for their ultimate good (vv. 35-39).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> "Whom he called, them he also justified" – This is the effectual call, since all who are called have been already predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son and will be also justified and glorified. (see 1 Cor. 1:26-28).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> "God be for us" – God the Holy Spirit is for us (Rom. 8:1-27) as the solution for indwelling sin; God the Father is for us (Rom. 8:28-33) as the solution to changing circumstances and challenges to our salvation. God the Son is for us (Rom. 8:34-39) as the solution to any possible problems that would separate us.

- 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities [powerful beings], nor powers [supernatural evil power], nor things present, nor things to come,
- 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Chapter 9

say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

- 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.
- →3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:
- 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;
- 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.
- 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 93
- 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.<sup>94</sup>
- 8 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 [applied, regared as] for the seed.
- 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.
- 10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;
- 11 (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;)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> "**Not all Israel which are of Israel**" – The meaning is "not all physical *ethnic* Israel is of the promised spiritual *ethnic* Israel." The Israel of promise is composed of only twice born ethnic Jews. Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob and Esau were all of the same physical-born ethnic family but they were not all children by promise. No Gentiles are included here or given as examples. God promised Abraham a "nation" from his own ethnic lineage in addition to promised children from the nations. However, the promised seed of the "nations" do not make up the "Israel" of promise.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> "Neither...are they all children" – The issue being addressed is whether God's promise to Abraham has failed because most Jews have rejected Christ (v. 6). If being a child of promise is solely by virtue of physical birth as an ethnic Jew then God failed, because many Jews reject Christ. However, Paul proves that God's promise to Abraham was not fulfilled in being merely a physically born Jew. In addition to physical birth all children of promise are supernaturally born, as was Isaac, in contrast to Ishmael, and unconditionally elected to this promise, like Jacob in contrast to Esau (vv. 8-13). Double birth applies to Gentile promised children also (v. 24). Paul is not denying Israel as God's elect nation but denying that physical birth alone makes a Jew one of God's promised children. Elect National Israel will not be composed of once-born Jews but twice-born Jews. Remnant Israel in every generation is composed of twice-born Jews (Rom. 11:1-5). National salvation of Israel in the future will be composed of twice-born Jews (Rom. 11:25-28).

- 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.
- 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.
- 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 95
- 15 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.
- 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.
- 17 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.
- 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.
- 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?
- 20 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?
- 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?
- 22 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:
- 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, <sup>96</sup>
- 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?<sup>97</sup>
- 25 As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>95 &</sup>quot;What shall we say then" – Paul anticipates objections to verses 8-13. The first objection to unconditional election in verse 11, and particular redemptive love in verse 13, is to charge God with being unjust and unrighteous (v. 14b.). What is Paul's response? God can choose to have mercy on whom he pleases (vv. 15-16), and this is the conclusion drawn in verse 18. The natural objection to verse 18 is to charge God as being the author of sin, because if God did not choose to have mercy upon Pharoah then how could Pharoah resist or overthrow God's will? Paul responds by charging the objector with no right to accuse God for doing what He wills with His own creatures (v. 20). God has the right to dispose of fallen mankind any way he chooses, because they deserve nothing but wrath, and none deserve "mercy."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> "Vessels of mercy" – Unfallen creatures are sinless and therefore need no "mercy." The term "mercy" infers that a person is not getting what he deserves. It infers a fallen condemned state that deserves wrath. The "same lump" has reference to mankind after the fall not before the fall. Justice after the fall calls for "wrath fitted to destruction" but being chosen out of the mass of fallen mankind for salvation is a matter of "mercy."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> "Also of the Gentiles" – The vessels of mercy prepared and "called" to glory include Gentiles. God made Abraham a promise that applied to a singular "nation" from his own loins as well as a plurality of "nations." Salvation of all promised children, whether Jews or Gentiles, is through elective grace and being twice-born (Rom. 4:11, 16 "father of all that believe"). The vessels of destruction include Gentiles (Pharaoh – v. 17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> "Were not my people" – Gentiles are also among the promised children of Abraham, and they are saved the very same way the Jewish promised children are saved (vv. 6-22). Twice born Gentiles are distinct from once born Gentiles "after the flesh."

- 26 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.
- 27 Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant [part that remains] shall be saved:
- 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.
- 29 And as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth [armies] had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorah.
- 30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 99
- 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.
- 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;
- 33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

## Chapter 10

rethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

- 3 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.
- 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. 100
- 5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> "Which followed not after righteousness" – or "the law of righteousness" (v. 31). Gentiles are justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, without the law or the works of the law. The Jews have the law and attempt to do the works of the law, but have not "attained the righteousness" demanded by the law because the law only justifies the life that does not fail at any "point" of the law (James 2:10-11). The law is designed to reveal sin and lead them to Christ as Savior from sin. Israel replaced Christ with the works of the law as their savior.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> "**The end...for righteousness**" – Justification by works teaches that faith in Christ is the beginning point for righteousness climaxed at the day of judgment. Justification by faith declares that faith in Christ is the "end" or the final satisfaction of the law's demands for righteousness. Justification by works presumes there is much for you to do (v. 5). Justification by faith declares that Christ needs no help or assistance from you (v. 6-7). The whole mission of Christ began by coming down from heaven (v. 6) and concluded by Christ coming up from the grave (v. 7). Faith demands that we only believe the good news of the gospel word in our hearts, believe that Christ has completed all that God demands for justification (vv. 8-10) and confess that with our mouths.

- 6 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:)
- 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)
- 8 But what saith it? The word is night hee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;
- 9 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.
- 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>101</sup>
- 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
- 12 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.
- 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
- 14 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?
- 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!
- 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?<sup>102</sup>
- 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 103
- 18 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.
- 19 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.
- 20 But Isaiah 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.
- 21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying [speak against, contradictory speaking] people.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> "With the heart man believeth" – Justification by faith is heart obedience to the gospel. Profession with the mouth and immersion in water are the outward expressions of a regenerated heart. The unregenerate heart is incapable of believing the gospel (See Ephesians 4:18). Faith in the heart begets faithfulness in the life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> "**Isaiah saith**" – Paul calls the "report" in Isaiah 53 the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was what the Eunuch was reading when Philip came up beside him (Acts 8:30-34). When asked who the prophet was speaking about, Luke records that Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> "**Hearing by the Word of God**" – The term "word" translates the Greek term "rhema" or the command of God (see 2 Cor. 4:6; James 1:18). When the gospel is not empowered by the command of God it falls on deaf ears (vv. 18-21; 1 Cor. 1:23). When it comes by command it has power that saves (1 Cor. 1:24-31; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 1 Cor. 1:17-18, ).

## Chapter 11

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, 104

- 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.
- 4 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.
- 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant [remaining part] according to the election [divine choice] of grace.
- 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.
- 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [divine choice] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded
- 8 (According as it is 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.
- 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them:
- 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.
- 11 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.
- 12 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?
- 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:
- 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.
- 15 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?
- 16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 105

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> "**His people which he foreknew**" – God has never "cast away" those among Israel he foreknew according to his elective purpose of salvation (see Rom. 8:28-31; 9:6-11). In every period of Jewish history, God has reserved himself a people according to election (vv. 5, 7). This "remnant" is God's people in every period of national apostasy which have kept the faith when Israel as a nation has rejected God. This "remnant" has never been broken off and never needs to be grafted in. What has been broken off is Israel as a nation and what will be grafted back "again" (v. 23) is Israel as a nation.

- 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 106
- 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.
- 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in.
- 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:
- 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.
- 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.
- 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. 107
- 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?
- 25 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. 108
- 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 109

- <sup>107</sup> "**Graff them in again**" What was broken off is what is grafted in "again." The elect remnant within national Israel were never broken off. Elect Gentiles are never broken off. It is the Israel as a nation that was broken off and Israel as a nation will be grafted in once again. When that happens "all Israel" as a nation will be saved. Breaking off has nothing to do with personal salvation, but with inclusion or exclusion from the sphere of ethnic sources from which he calls out His elect.
- <sup>108</sup> "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until" This blindness endures during the complete period when the Gentiles are being saved. In fact, Paul says they are now "enemies of the gospel FOR YOUR SAKE" (v. 28a). Hence, this "Israel" remains in "blindness" during the whole period of salvation among the Gentiles, and cannot be interpreted to include Gentile elect or the present Jewish "remnant" who do not remain in blindness during this same period but are being saved. The term "until" defines the precise point when this "Israel" is removed from blindness.
- <sup>109</sup> "Ungodliness from Jacob" The term "Jacob" is never used for the elect from all nations or the so-called universal invisible church. It is used to describe national Israel in rebellion against God (see Malachi 3:6 and verse 28 "enemies").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> "**Firstfruit....the lump**" – The "remnant" represents the "firstfruit" in a harvest, while "the lump," or the rest of the crop, is harvested at the end (Israel as a nation). The "root" represents "Abraham," (v. 28) while the two trees represent the two sources from which the promised seed are derived (National Israel and Gentile nations). The "branches" represent the manifest kingdom of God on earth.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> "**Some of the branches be broken off**" – The remnant is never broken off in national apostasy. What is broken off is the greater part of Israel as a nation The manifest kingdom was removed from national Israel to the Gentile nations "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

- 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.
- 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. 110
- 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance [change of mind].
- 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:
- 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.
- 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.
- 33 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!
- 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?
- 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed [get what is deserved] unto him again?
- 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

## Chapter 12

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. 112

-2 And be not conformed [changed from outside] to this world: but be ye transformed [changed from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> "Concerning the gospel they are enemies" – The pronoun "they" has for its nearest antecedent "Jacob" which in turn is descriptive of "Israel". National Israel is an enemy of the Gospel during the period of salvation among the Gentiles. They are presently "enemies of the gospel for your sake" but "touching election" they are beloved of the "father's". Abraham is the "father" of the promised seed, but it is Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who are the "fathers" of Israel as an ethnic nation. Abraham is called the father of all who believe but the "fathers" are never applied to any Gentile. This proves that it is Israel as an ethnic nation which is saved at the coming of Christ (Zech. 12:10-13:1 with Rev. 1:7).

<sup>&</sup>quot;Your reasonable service" – Romans 1-11 deal with your unreasonable salvation. Unreasonable because you do not merit it. Unreasonable because it is "by the mercies of God". Mercy is **not** getting what you deserve (which is judgment). Grace is getting what you don't deserve – salvation. Romans 12-15:14 deals with what is "your reasonable service." Romans 12 – your reasonable service as a church member. Romans 13 – your reasonable service as a christian brother. Your salvation rests upon Christ presenting His body as holy and acceptable to God in death for your sins. Your service begins by presenting your body as holy and acceptable to God in life. All worship begins with offering up acceptable sacrifices unto God (1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 13:15-16; Philip. 4:18; 2 Cor. 2:14-17)

<sup>&</sup>quot;Acceptable unto God" – True worship begins with presentation of an acceptable sacrifice unto God. Acceptable means that your body is presented a "living" sacrifice or a holy life. Acceptable means a life being transformed to the likeness of Christ not conformed to this world. Acceptable means a life according to God's will not yours. Acceptable means a life according to the measure of faith given you.

inside] by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

- 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; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 113
- 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 114
- 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 115
- 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 116
- 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;
- 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.
- 9 Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to [stick with] that which is good.
- 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;
- 11 Not slothful [lazy] in business; fervent [passionate] in spirit; serving the Lord;
- 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; [afflictions] continuing instant in prayer;
- 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.
- 14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.
- 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.
- 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> "**Measure of faith**" – Progressive sanctification is determined by the measure of grace and faith God has predetermined (Eph. 2:8b) to give to each of his elect in order to accomplish His own good pleasure (Philip. 2:13) during their life. This is not an excuse to be irresponsible but rather encouragement to live up to all that you are capable of being and doing by God's grace.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> "**As we have many members in one body**" – Paul is referring to the physical human body. Just as "we" all have in common one kind of human body, so also, all his readers had in common one kind of congregational body wherein their individual membership resided. They were not all members of one universal **physical** body and neither were they all members of one universal invisible congregational body.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> "So we, being many are one body in Christ" – The "we" of the Pauline epistles are those who are immersed members of New Testament congregations. Just as "we" all share in common one kind of physical body, so also "we" share in common one kind of congregational body. All congregations in the New Testament were one in kind, government, doctrine and practice. This kind of body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16) and equipped by the Spirit to function, and perform the mission given each congregation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> "**Having gifts**" – No sign gifts are listed here as there is in 1 Corinthians 12. Sign gifts were particular to the apostolic office (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4) and were received only through the laying on of the apostolic hands (Acts 8:19-21; 19:6; Rom. 1:11).

- 17 Recompense [get what is deserved] to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.
- 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
- 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.
- 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
- 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation [punishment].

## Chapter 13

et every soul be subject unto the higher powers [authorities]. For there is no power [authority] but of God: the powers [authorities] that be are ordained of God. 117

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power [authority], resisteth the ordinance of God: and

- 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power [authority]? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:
- 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath [legal punishment] upon him that doeth evil.
- 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath [legal punishment], but also for conscience sake.
- 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute [land tax] also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.
- 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute [land tax] to whom tribute [land tax] is due; custom [merchandise tax] to whom custom [merchandise tax]; fear [reverence] to whom fear [reverence]; honour [respect] to whom honour [respect].
- 8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.
- 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
- 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. 118

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> "**Let every soul be subject**" – Paul provides five reasons why every Christian should be subject to secular government authority; (1) For God's sake – v 1; (2) For wrath sake – vv. 3-5a; (3) For Conscience sake – vv. 5b-7; (4) For Loves sake – vv. 8-10; (5) For Christ's sake – vv. 11-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> "**Love is the fulfilling of the law**" – Paul is not saying that true children of God can "fulfill" the law in the same sense that Christ fulfilled the law by his sinless life. The law of love as defined in the Great Commandment demands 100% commitment, and 100% of your whole being 100% of the time. That is the absolute sense which justification

- 11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
- 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
- 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting [partying] and drunkenness, not in chambering [sleeping around] and wantonness [unrestrained lust], not in strife [contention] and envying.
- 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. 119

## Chapter 14

im that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations [nit picking at non-essentials].

-2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

- 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge [criticize] him that eateth: for God hath received him.
- 4 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. 120
- 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.
- 6 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.
- 7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.
- 8 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.

by the law requires. Only Jesus loved God and his neighbor in that absolute sense by His life. Paul is writing about the life of the believer as empowered by the Holy Spirit. Whenever we "walk in the Spirit" we fulfill the Law as it is God Who is working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philip. 2:13) and it is the expression of a new inward man created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Rom. 7:22). However, we do not always walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16). Hence, our partial fulfillment obtains present blessings and future rewards but not justification for entrance into heaven.

<sup>119</sup> "**Make not provision**" – If indwelling sin or the sin nature were eradicated at conversion or at a second work of grace, he would not have to exhort us not to make provision for the manifestation of the fleshly nature.

120 "**His own Master**" - Mature Christians care for the weak (v. 1). Paul is dealing with cultural issues that are neither right or wrong in themselves and therefore are left to the individual conscience to judge. He provides several principles for dealing with such matters in a mature Christian way; (1) Every man is accountable to God and His own conscience alone – vv. 1-12; (2) Be Mature enough to forsake such things that causes others to stumble – vv. 13-21; (3) Practice what is consistent with your own conscience – vv. 22-23; (4) Use common sense – 15:1a; (5) Be mature enough to practice self-denial – 15:1b; (6) Be Mature enough to do what is best for others – 15:2; (7) Follow the example of Christ – 15:3-4

- 9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.
- 10 But why dost thou judge [criticize] thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
- 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.
- 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
- 13 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.
- 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
- 15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat [food], now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat [food], for whom Christ died.
- 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
- 17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
- 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.
- 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
- 20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.
- 21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.
- 22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.
- 23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. 121

## Chapter 15

Te then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities [insecurities] of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" – Sin is the transgression of the law. Our conscience is a law within us that approves and disapproves. If we cannot do something in good conscience then we violate the law written upon our conscience.

- 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches [harsh criticisms] of them that reproached thee fell on me.
- 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime [before our time] were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.
- 5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: 122
- 6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.
- 8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:
- 9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.
- 10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.
- 11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.
- 12 And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.
- 13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.
- 14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish [to place before the mind, to confront with truth] one another.
- 15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,
- 16 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.
- 17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.
- 18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, <sup>123</sup>

<sup>122 &</sup>quot;**Now**" – At his point Paul addresses another issue that divides congregations then and now – unity for intraracial membership. The early Jewish believers had problems accepting non-Jews into the congregation (Acts 10-11; Gal. 2). Several principles are provided to preserve unity between various nationalities in one congregational body; (1) Unity preserved by a Christlike attitude toward each other – vv. 5-7; (2) Unity preserved by recognizing God's purpose for bringing diverse nationalities into the congregational body – vv. 8-12; There is neither "Jew nor Gentile, bond or free, male or female" in Christ but simply a "spiritual" race of heavenly citizens that stand on level ground of the cross. (3) Maturity to deal with divisive thinking – vv. 13-14. (4) The calling and example of Paul – vv. 15-16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> "Gentiles obedient"- The congregations at Rome were Gentile congregations under the apostolic authority given to Paul by Christ. Peter, James and John ministered to the Jewish congregations in Palestine (Gal. 2:9). His "signs

- 19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.
- 20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 124

#### No Apostle Founded the Congregations in Rome

Paul would not build upon the foundation of another Apostles (v.20) but he desired to come and have fruit among them through his gospel ministry. Paul never mentioned Peter once in this letter nor gave any instructions to salute him in Romans 16. The truth is that Peter influenced the founding of congregations in Rome through his ministry in Acts 2 where strangers from Rome were included among the Pentecostal converts (Acts 2:13) and Paul was instrumental through Priscilla and Aquilla.

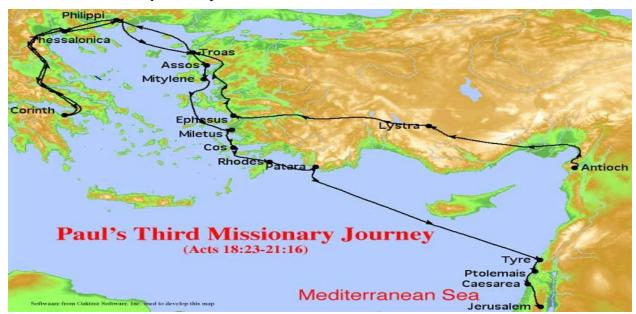
- 21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.
- 22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.
- 23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 125
- 24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.
- 25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.
- 26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.
- 27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.
- 28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.
- 29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

and wonders, by the power of the Spirit" confirmed the truth of the gospel (v. 19). The content of the message is what distinguishes Holy Spirit signs from "lying" signs (2 Thes. 2:9) or signs that are designed by Satan and empowered by Satan to deceive men into accepting false doctrines as truth.

<sup>125</sup> "**But now**" – Beginning in this verse Paul lays out his plans to come see them. He planned on stopping by on his way to Spain after going to Jerusalem. However, providence again would change his plans and he would be brought to them in bonds directly from his visit in Jerusalem under the authority of Rome (Acts 23:11). Paul is presently at Corinth writing this letter to the congregations at Rome and would shortly leave toward Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-3)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> "**Lest I should build upon another man's foundation**" - Peter did not build the congregations at Rome because Paul would not build upon Peter's foundation if Peter had founded the congregations at Rome. Paul desired to come among them to have fruit. Only providential problems had hindered him from coming sooner -v. 22

- 30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;
- 31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;



- 32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.
- 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

## Chapter 16

commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the congregation which is at Cenchrea:

- 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 [sustainer, benefactor] of many, and of myself also. 126
- 3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:
- 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the congregations of the Gentiles.
- 5 Likewise greet the congregation that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. 127

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> "A succourer" – This term may imply that she fit the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 5:9-10 and had lodged Paul and others as a "servant" of the congregation at Cenchrea. She may have come to assist sister congregations in Rome as a teacher of women and children. Our women today are seeking such assistance outside the faith by women like Beth Moore and other women who come to congregations to exhort and encourage women.

- 6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.
- 7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.
- 8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.
- 9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.
- 10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.
- 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.
- 12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.
- 13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.
- 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.
- 15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.
- 16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The congregations of Christ salute you. 128
- 17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 129
- 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; [selfish desires] and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. 130

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> "Congregation that is in their house" – Paul directed those he wrote to greet this congregation at Rome in the house of Aquilla and Priscilla. Hence, there was more than one congregation in Rome. There were other house congregations in Rome that they were to greet (vv. 10, 11, 14, 15). Note the language "they that are with them."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> "**Holy kiss...salute**" – Represent affection and respect. Today people in these countries still greet another of the same gender with a "kiss." In western culture the handshake represents the same warm affection. It is a "holy" kiss rather than a sensual or sexual act.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine (faith)" – These congregations most likely had their beginning with those who were saved and discipled in "the apostles doctrine" in Acts 2:10,41-42. They also received it from Paul through Aquilla and Priscilla (vv. 3-4; Acts 18). This apostolic doctrine was the pattern of faith and practice handed down to all the congregations of Christ. Therefore, this foundation of doctrine had been established and anyone who attempted to teach doctrine contrary to it would immediately cause division within these apostolic congregations. Paul also warned the congregation at Ephesus about such teachers (Acts 20:27-31) where apostolic doctrine had been established. The Greek term translated "mark" is "skopeo" from which we get our English word "scope" as in microscope or telescope. It means to critically identify, observe and examine them. They were to avoid them by not allowing them into their homes (2 Jn. 9-11) or by removing them from their membership (2 Thess. 3:6; 14).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> "**Serve their own belly**" – False teaching does originate with the Word of God or the Holy Spirit but with desires of men (self-gratification, self-interest) and doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1). The "belly" was metaphorical of the cravings and desires of men. The toolsof false teachers are "good words" and "fair speeches" or oratorical ability – slick tongues.

- 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple [uncontaminated with] concerning evil.
- 20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. <sup>131</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.
- 21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.
- 22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.
- 23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole congregation, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.
- 24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.
- 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, <sup>132</sup>
- 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:
- 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the congregation at Cenchrea.

#### **Written From Corinth**

Some dispute the footnote at the close of verse 27 which is found in the majority of manuscripts, however, the mention of Gaius in verse 23 who is explicitly mentioned in Paul's letter to the congregation at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14) provides additional support for the footnote.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> "**Bruise Satan shortly**" – Paul believed that Christ would come in his own generation and bring ultimate defeat to Satan. Paul did not believe that Christ would come prior to the fulfillment of preceding prophecies but believed that such prophecies could be all fulfilled in his own life time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> "**Mystery kept secret**" – The mystery that salvation would come to "all nations" (v. 26) and they should replace Israel between the first and second coming as the people of God.



**Model of Ancient Rome** 

## **Study Notes**

#### A. Brief Overview:

The Letter to the Romans provides an indepth study of the doctrine of salvation (Rom. 1-11) and service (Rom. 11-16). Don't confuse one with the other as they are distinctly different but yet in an inseparable cause and consequence relationship to each other. We are saved to serve.

As we look at the first section of Romans (1-12) we find Paul moving from one aspect to another aspect of salvation. In Romans 1:1-17 the gospel is the preeminent subject. In Romans 1:18-3:23 the justification of the wrath of God against sinners is the preeminent subject. In Romans 3;24-5:21 the doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the Law is the preeminent subject. In Romans 6:1-8:27 the doctrine of sanctification without the works of the Law is the preeminent subject. In Romans 8:28-11:30 the Purpose of God in the justification of the elect is the preeminent subject.

As we look at the second section of Romans (12-16) we find Paul moving from one aspect of service to another. In Romans 12 the believer's relationship with the congregation of Christ is the subject. In Romans 13 the believer's relationship with secular governments is the subject. In Romans 14-15 the believer's relationship with other believers in regard to cultural differences is

the subject. In Romans 15 the special call and ministry of Paul to the Gentiles is the subject. In Romans 16 the salutation by Paul to the different congregations in Rome is the subject.

### **B. Study Challenges**

- **1. Romans 1:1-17** Study the various relationships of the gospel. How does the gospel relate to the calling of Paul, to the Old Testament Prophets, to the person and work of Christ, to the believers at Rome and to the lost? What obligation do we have as believers to the lost in regard to the gospel. Explain Romans 1:11 in regard to the apostolic office (see 2 Cor. 12:12 and Acts 8:15-17).
- 2. Romans 1:18-3:9 The gospel is for sinners only not for the righteous. How does Paul prove in Romans 1:18-3:8 that all mankind are sinners under the wrath of God, as stated in his conclusion in Romans 3:9? What is it in man that represses whatever truth is revealed to him by God Rom. 1:18. What does nature reveal about God? What is "in" man that reveals righteousness? Are these two revelations (external and internal revelations) sufficient to hold all mankind accountable for sin? Can you find any positive reaction by man in Romans 1:18-31 to any revelation of righteousness by God? How many times does Paul say that God gave man over to some sort of sin in Romans 1:24-31? Note that each time is a further digression in corruption of sin. When individuals and nations are characterized by these digressions does that indicate they are under the wrath of God? How does Romans 1:18-31 show that all are sinners, but not all are equally corrupt in sin.

What about gentiles and Jews who seem more morally refined outwardly then others (Rom. 2:1-31)? What evidence do you find that the person described in Romans 2:1-5 is a hypocrite depending upon his own perception of righteousness to be justified above others before God? What evidence do you find that the Jew in Romans 2:17-28 is depending upon their own perceived righteousness to be justified above others before God? Does the mere listing of the righteous criteria for judgment by God under the Law in Romans 2:6-16 demand anyone will obtain justification before God by their works under the Law? Does your conclusion harmonize with Paul's conclusion in Romans 3:9-20 in regard to both Jews and Gentiles under the Law?

Does Romans 2:14-15 claim that the Law of Moses is written on the conscience? Or does it only claim that conscience does the "work" of the Law of Moses? What is the work of the Law of Moses (Rom. 3:20)? Since the Law of Moses is the most comprehensive definition of sin and righteousness ever given to man, if man cannot be justified by this standard of works, how can he be justified by any lesser standard or definition of good and bad works? Hence, denial that justification can be obedience to the Mosaic law is denial any flesh can be justified by works.

Does circumcision in the heart make a Gentile a spiritual Jew or is Paul still referring to the boast of the ethnical Jew (Rom. 2:26-27) who believes external circumcision makes him superior to other men. Is Paul asserting that the only ethical Jew regarded by God as a true Jew is the Jew who is circumcised also in heart (Rom. 2:28-29) or double born Jew (Rom. 9:6-11)?

#### 3. Romans 3:10-23

Where in the Old Testament is Paul quoting Romans 3:10-12? Where is Paul quoting Romans 3:13-18 from in the Old Testament? Is God referring to only certain ethnic groups of men or all mankind in general in Psalms 14 and 53? Does Paul use universal language inclusive of all mankind in general in Romans 3:19-20 or only some classes/kinds of men? How does you answer harmonize with Paul's conclusion in Romans 3:22b-23 – "there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"?

Was the Law ever designed to justify or give eternal life to men (Rom. 3:20 with Gal. 3:21)? What is the double purpose of the Law according to Paul in Romans 3:20-23? How does the Law reveal the righteousness of God (Rom. 3:21)? How does the Law reveal the knowledge of sin? How is sin coming short of "the glory of God"? Explain your answer in light of 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17,23; 1 Pet. 4:11 and Matthew 15:18-19? How is the law as the "righteousness of God" revealed in Christ apart from the Law and the prophets (Rom. 3:21)?

#### 4. Romans 3:24-26

How does the word "freely" help define the meaning of "grace" (Rom. 3:24 with Rom. 4:4,16; 11:6). Where is God's provision of redemption found? What are the two objects of faith described in verses 25-26? What does "blood" represent in regard to the Levitical sacrificial demands? For example, was sufficient blood shed by the crown of thorns even before Christ went to the cross to satisfy God's demands for the shedding of blood by a sacrifice? Does the "blood" represent the giving of "life" of a sacrifice unto death? What kind of life (see 1 Pet. 1:19)?

Justification is a legal term and refers to the complete satisfaction of the Law's requirements. All others have violated those requirements (Rom. 3:18-20; 22b-23). How does the blood of Christ provide a complete satisfaction ("propitiation") for the Law's requirements? Does it require the offering up of a sinless life unto death?

#### 5. Romans 3:27-31

The term "law" is applied to different things by Paul in the book of Romans. However, it means "a regulating principle" or "regulating rule" that something operates by. For example the "law of sin" is the "regulating principle" or "rule" by which indwelling sin operates by as described in Romans 7:15-20; 8:7. The "law of works" is the regulating principle by which works operates according to as described in (Rom. 4:4). It is the principle that demands you receive exactly in accordance with what your labor deserves (Rom. 4:4). The "law of Moses" is the ultimate example of this law in practice. Hence, the "law of works" includes any system of works from the most comprehensive system (Law of Moses) to the most simplistic system (response to conscience) that operates by the principle of getting what your own works deserve. In regard to justification before God, the law of works demands one receives exactly from God according to works performed in their own body (Rom. 2:6). In direct contrast the "law...of faith" in regard to justification demands one is justified according to the works performed in the body of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24-26; 2 Cor. 5:21) as that is the only way the Law can be satisfied. Therefore, the law of faith becomes the only basis for the justification of both Jews and Gentiles

before God (Rom. 3:30) as justification by the law of faith is the only way the Law of God is not invalidated but is fully satisfied (Rom. 3:31). The law of faith is placed in direct contrast to the law of works (Rom. 3:27; Gal. 3:12) just as grace is placed in direct contrast to works (Rom. 4:4-6; 11:6) because faith is "of grace" (Rom. 4:16). Only the law of faith removes all grounds for personal boasting (Rom. 3:27a).

#### 6. Romans 4:1-25

Paul provides Abraham to illustrate the difference between justification by the law of works and the law of faith and why faith provides not possible grounds for boasting before God (Rom. 4:1-2). Abraham lived 430 years before the Law of Moses was given. Hence, "the law of works" (Rom. 3:27-28) cannot possibly refer to becoming a proselyte to Judaism under the Law of Moses, but must refer to the works performed in the body of Abraham to be justified before God. Paul provides five reasons why Abraham was not justified by the "law of works" in Romans 4:1-21. (1) Works is the basis for boasting as it incurs just debt to be recognized and paid - Rom. 4:1-4. (2) The person justified before God is the "ungodly" who has faith without faithfulness "without works" - Rom. 4:5-8. (3) Abraham was justified without external divine rights and therefore "sacraments" are repudiated as means of grace for justification - Rom. 4:9-12; (4) Abraham was justified without the Mosaic Law - Rom. 4:13-15; (5) Abraham was justified soley by the promise and power of God without personal contributions as a justified man - Rom. 4:16-21. This is precisely how we are justified - Rom. 4:22-5:2.

What is the difference between regeneration and justification? What is the difference between progressive sanctification and justification? What is the difference between our position in Christ versus our condition in Christ? What is the difference between imputation versus impartation? Discuss why the term "ungodly" in Romans 4:5 denies justification is obtained or based upon imparted righteousness through spiritual union with Christ.

#### 7. Romans 5:1-2

Paul uses the Aorist tense "justified" in Romans 4:12 to show that justification was a completed action "in uncircumcision" before he entered "in circumcision" part of his life. What is the significance of the Aorist tense in Romans 5:1 and the perfect and Aorist tenses in Romans 5:2? Is justification a completed action at a particular point in the past that continues to stand completed up to the present or is it an uncompleted action that only finds completion at the day of judgment? How does John 5:24 relate to your conclusion? What is the difference between the peace "of God" and peace "with God"? Do we continue to "stand" by faith or by works (Rom. 5:2)?

#### 8. Romans 5:3-20

Paul's argument in Romans 5:3-11 is based upon the completion and finality of justification in Romans 5:1-2 which in turn is based upon his developed argument in Romans 4:1-25.

If justification by faith is a sufficient and completed action (Rom. 5:1-2) then tribulation cannot work against us but only for us (Rom. 5:3-5). If justification by faith is sufficient and completed action then the love of God for us before we were justified can only be much more greater after

we are justified (Rom. 5:6-11). If justification by faith is sufficient and a completed action (Rom. 5:1-2) then it must be based upon the representative works of the Person of Jesus Christ rather than upon works performed in our own person (Rom. 5:12-19). Hence, where sin abounded grace did much more abound and the reign of grace will not fail unto eternal life (Rom. 5:20-21).

Are all that are in Adam in Christ? The answer is that all who are physically born into this world are in Adam but only those who are spiritual born are in Christ. Justification in Christ is received through regenerative faith (Rom. 5:17).

#### 9. Romans 6-7:6

Romans 6 opens with a perceived objection to justification by faith based upon the representative work of Christ alone without our works. Paul has just stated that where sin abounded grace more abounded (Rom. 5:20). He has just stated that where sin reigned unto death as its final objective, so grace will reign unto eternal life as it final objective (Rom. 5:21). Hence, he has declared the eternal security of the believer based solely upon justification by faith in the representative work of Christ.

The objection in Romans 6:1 infers that if grace abounds where sin abounded, then should those justified by faith without works continue in sin that grace may more abound? In other words, does justification by faith without works give a license to sin? This is the objection of all who opposed eternal security of the believer.

Paul immediately answers this objection "God forbid" and then proceeds to answer it in more length by five arguments all beginning with "know" or "knowing" (6:3,6,9,16; 7:1). First "know ye not" that our identification with Christ's representative work is seen in the public "likeness" found in water immersion. In water immersion there is a visible identification with Christ's representative death and resurrection which is the essence of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:4-5) that all are required to profess with the mouth as the prerequisite for water immersion. What we received by faith (Rom. 5:17) is the death and resurrection of Christ as our death to sin and our resurrection to life. The identification here is with Christ as our representative as just described in Romans 5:15-19. So the very nature of justification by faith in the representative work of Christ denies continuance in sin as the reign of sin ended in the death of Christ. He died for our sins and His death ended the reign of sin for us. Sin has no power in the resurrected life of Christ but the resurrected life of Christ is the declaration of victory over the reign of sin, death and the grave.

This brings us to his second argument in verse 6 introduced by "knowing." We were representatively crucified with Christ on the cross and put to death for our sins. Thus we were legally "freed" from sin. The term "freed" represents the same word translated "justified" in Romans 3-5. Our legal freedom assures the final destruction of the law of sin that indwells "this body" of death (Rom. 7:24). In the resurrection and/or glorification of the living at Christ's return this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility thus destroying the law of sin that indwells the body (1 Cor. 15:53-57). However, this legal freedom by death also assures us of sharing in the resurrected life of Christ not merely in the future at glorification but presently through the indwelling Spirit of Christ whereby we can now put to death, mortify the deeds of sin in this body (vv. 11-15). The resurrected life of Christ is completely free from the influence of sin as He

dieth no more. This life exists within all who are justified by faith due to regeneration by the Spirit of God.

This brings us to his third argument in verse 9 introduced by "know ye not." The resurrection life of Christ exists within all those justified by faith. Indwelling sin has no power over the resurrected life of Christ within us. What we need to do is "know" this and act on it by faith in order to experience victory over indwelling sin. We do this by resisting indwelling sin in our "members" through yielding ourselves to the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ (vv. 12-13). Therefore we are not under the law for sanctification any more than for justification. The life of Christ is already sanctified and we merely need to yield to the Spirit for this life to be made manifest in and through us.

This brings us to the fourth argument in verse 16-23 introduced in verse 16 by the words "know ye not." One is either a servant of unrighteousness or a servant of righteousness. They are "made" (vv. 18,22) a servant of righteousness by new birth when God gives them a new heart that is inclined to righteousness. However, there is still an internal struggle with the "old man" and indwelling sin working through his "members" or "this body of death" (Rom. 7:24). Otherwise, he would not have to repeatedly exhort them to "yield" (vv. 13,16,19) their members as servants of righteousness. The lost man does not have this issue because Paul plainly tells them that when they were unregenerate or servants of sin they were "free" from righteousness (v. 20).

This brings us to the final argument in Romans 7:1-5 introduced by "know ye not" in Romans 7:1. In Romans 7:1-5 Paul argues that the believer is completely dead to the Law as a widow is dead to the law of marriage when her husband dies. She is free to marry whomsoever she wills without being adulterous. We died to the marriage with the law by the body of Christ. Christ's dead body terminated our legal obligations with the Law. Now we are married to Christ that we might bring forth fruits of righteousness by his life (7:6).

In regard to the mode of baptism, all major pedobaptist leaders acknowledge that immersion was the only mode of baptism in the apostolic era:

#### **Presbyterian**

**John Calvin**, himself a Pedobaptist, who wrote some very hard things against those who practiced baptism by immersion, wrote these words:

Whether the person baptized is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence: churches should be at liberty to adopt either according to the diversity of climates, although it is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church. (Calvin's Institutes, Book III, Chapter 15, Part 2, Section 19.)

Notice he believed that *climate* could dictate the mode rather than its New Testament meaning and usage. But who gave Calvin the right to say that?

#### **Lutheran**

Martin Luther -"I could wish that the baptized should be totally immersed according to the meaning of the word."

Philip Schaff -"Immersion and not sprinkling was unquestionably the original normal form of baptism. This is shown by the meaning of the Greek word and the analogy of the baptism of John which was performed in Jordan." (History of the Apostolic Church, p.568).

#### Methodist

**John Wesley** -commenting on Rom 6:4- "We are buried with Him- alluding to the ancient manner of baptism by immersion (Explanatory notes Upon the New Testament, p. 376) **George Whitefield** -commenting on Rom 6:4- "It is certain that the words of our text is an allusion to the manner of baptism by immersion".

#### **Episcopalians**

Conybeare and Howson -commenting on Rom 6:4-": This passage cannot be understood unless it is understood that the primitive baptism was by immersion."

Indeed, the Greek language has specific terms that mean sprinkle (rantizo) and pour (epicheo) and these words are found in the Scriptures, but never once used to describe this ordinance.

#### 10. Romans 7:7-25

Therefore, the sinner is not justified by the law (Rom. 7:7-13) and the believer is not sanctified by the works of the law (Rom. 7:14-8:4). As a lost man, Paul was completely in bondage to sin (Rom. 7:7-11), and as a saved man he is not without indwelling sin (Rom. 7:14-25), and yet the Law for justification and sanctification demands the same standard – a sinless life, as the law is "holy, just and good" (v. 12) but the believer is still not perfected in his own person as his "body" or "the flesh" is still "sold under sin" and will die due to indwelling sin (v. 14, 18, 24).

In Romans 7:7-11 Paul uses past tense verbs speaking of his unregenerate relationship with the Law of God and his failure to be justified by the Law. The fault does not lie in the Law (v. 7) as the Law was never designed to justify anyone but to reveal the knowledge of sin. The Law performed exactly as it was designed to perform. At one point in Paul's life he did have this knowledge that the law provides and did not see himself as condemned to death under the law but regarded himself as "alive" under the Law or one who was able to keep the Law for justification. However, as the Law revealed the nature of sin to him, he no longer viewed himself as "alive" justified by the Law but a sinner and so he "died" or realized he was condemned rather than justified under the Law (vv. 8-11).

In Romans 7:12-25 Paul uses present tense verbs speaking of his regenerate (v. 21) relationship with the Law of God. The internal warfare inferred in Romans 6:13-22 with the "members" of his body is more fully explained in Romans 7:14-25. Only the human spirit is born again (Jn.

3:6) not his body or soul. The law of sin operates through the natural cravings of the unglorified physical body or "the flesh" (vv. 14,18,24-25) whereas the Law of God operates in the "inward man" (v. 22) and clashes with the indwelling law of sin in the human soul (seat of self consciousness). This battle is impossible to win by human will power (v. 18) even though we have a new regenerate nature that delights in the Law of God (v. 22). This is why we cannot be sanctified under the Law as the Law has no more power to overcome indwelling sin than does the human will. This battle is won daily only as we "yield" (Rom. 6:13,16-17; 7:24) to the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:4, 12-13).

#### 11. Romans 8:1-27

The temporal condemnation experienced in Romans 7:14-25 is overcome when we "walk" (live our life) after the power of the indwelling Spirit (8:1-2). Christ removed us out from under the Law of God for justification and sanctification by fully satisfying the demands of the Law in our behalf (8:3). The righteousness that the Law demanded from us but was unable to obtain in and through us is fulfilled in and through us by the indwelling Spirit of Christ as it is the life of Christ being manifested in and through us as we yield to His Spirit (8:4).

In the child of God, the struggle between the law of indwelling sin and the regenerated "inward man" occurs in the "mind" (Rom. 7:23,25; 8:5-7). The unregenerate man does not have this struggle but is free from righteousness (Rom. 6:20) and his mind is dominated by the law of indwelling sin so that he minds the things of the flesh (Rom. 8:8) whereas the child of God with the "mind" serves God (Rom. 8:5-6). However, only the child of God is capable of walking "after" both the flesh (Rom. 7:24-22) and the Spirit (Rom. 8:4). The child of God is not "in" the flesh (Rom. 8:8-9) but he can walk "after" the flesh and does walk "after" the flesh whenever he is not yielding to the power of the indwelling Spirit to put to death the works of indwelling sin (Rom. 8:12-13).

However, progressive sanctification is the work of the indwelling Spirit of Christ growing the Christian in winning this internal battle. Such growth is the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God and being led by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:14-16). This internal witness and growth due to the power of the indwelling Spirit separates us from the world as heirs with Christ and makes us the object of tribulation by the world and causes us to persevere in increasing hope with the rest of creation to be finally be freed from this battle with sin (Rom. 8:17-25). In the midst of this battle with sin and the world the Holy Spirit intercedes in our behalf according to the will of God ensuring final victory according to the eternal purpose of God for our ultimate salvation (Rom. 8:26-28).

#### 12. Romans 8:28-39

Beginning with Romans 8:28 Paul lays out the eternal purpose of God in regard to the salvation of the elect in general (Rom. 8:28-39) and then the elect nation of Israel in specific in connection with God's overall purpose of redemption from Paul's day until the coming of Christ (Rom. 9-11).

God works all things for "the called according to His Purpose" of redemption (Rom. 8:28). His purpose of redemption is the basis for His foreknowledge (v. 29) and predestination (Rom. 8:30)

instead of vice versa. Election is according to foreknowledge (1 Pet. 1:3) but foreknowledge is "according to His Purpose" (Rom. 8:28-29). His purpose is like the blue print for building a house. When a carpenter looks at the blueprint he foreknows where every door, every window, every room will be located because the blueprint maps it out. Likewise, those "called according to His purpose" were foreknown in that purpose, predestinated according to that purpose, called, justified and ultimately glorified according to His purpose of redemption. Note the repetition of "those whom" demonstrating that God's purpose of redemption is specific, personal and always accomplished in every aspect. Hence, Paul asks rhetorically, "if God be for us, then who can be against us" and "us" is then identified as "the elect" according to His purpose of redemption (Rom. 8:32).

Paul continues to reinforce the eternal security of the elect by his rhetorical questions and conclusions begun in Romans 8:30 and extended to verse 39. He first argues from the greater to the lesser (v. 31). If God has given us the greatest gift already then that assures us that God will give everything else to secure our salvation. He then argues that the highest court and judge has already justified us so how can any lesser court and judge condemn us (v. 32). He then asks who can condemn us when Christ who will be judge over all the world has not only paid the full price for our redemption, but demonstrates that redemption has been accepted by God through his resurrection and now He stands as our defense attorney in heaven defending us on the basis of His own provision for us (v. 33). Finally he asks and considers all possible things that could separate us from the love Christ has for us and declares that none of these things are able to separate us from His love (vv. 34-39).

Romans 8:36 is a quotation from Psalms 44:22 where the Psalmist declares that such atrocities against the people of God were not due to their disobedience to God but rather in spite of their obedience to God due to the kind of world we live in.

Some have argued that Paul lists everything possible but the Christian's own free will, which some argue can separate our love from Christ. However, it is not our love for Christ that is guaranteed by Romans 8:34-39 but Christ's love for us that can never be severed. Furthermore, Romans 8:30 assures that the elect are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ.

#### **13. Romans 9**

After demonstrating that God will fulfill His redemptive purposes for God's elect as individuals, Paul demonstrates that God will fulfill His redemptive promise to Abraham in regard to the ethnic elect nation of Israel (Rom. 9:1-5).

There can be no question that Romans 9:1-5 has in view ethnic Jews as a nation rather than a mixture of ethnic peoples some wrongly call "spiritual Israel." Romans 9:6 simply distinguishes natural born ethnic Jews from twice born spiritual Jews and then goes on to illustrate that difference between Isaac and Ishmael (vv. 7-8) and Jacob and Esau. Paul provides no gentiles as illustrations of this distinction made in Romans 9:6 (Pharoah is used as an example of reprobation not election). Not all ethnic born Israel is of the promised twice born ethnic Israel. The promise to Abraham considering the ethnic nation of Israel has to do with twice born Israelites rather than those merely born of the flesh.

The ultimate promise concerning elect Israel and their salvation is yet future (Rom. 11:25-28) but will be composed of only twice born Jews (Rom. 9:6-8) who have been elected according to

God's purpose of grace (Rom. 9:11) not based upon anything foreseen in them after birth good or evil, but according to His elective distinguishing redemptive love (Rom. 9:11-13).

After Paul sets forth the criteria for elect Israel as a nation he anticipates and presents objections to what he has set forth. These objections characterize what is called Arminianism today. Ask yourself what type of theological view would make these kinds of objections? Ask yourself, does your view of election fit more with Paul's statements or with the anticipated objector's statements? For example, who would object that this kind of election and distinguishing love set forth concerning Jacob and Esau would make God unjust (Rom. 9:14)? When Paul denies it is not him that willeth or him that runneth but God that sheweth mercy upon whom He will have mercy and hardeneth whom He will hardeneth, who would object how could God hold anyone accountable since it is His will rather than their will that determines all salvation and reprobation (Rom. 9:19)? What kind of theology would respond to such an objection by the illustration of the Potter who can fashion anything he wants and design it for whatever purpose he wants (Rom. 9:20-24)? No Arminian would ever respond with that kind of illustration to the objection in Romans 9:19!

Significantly, the clay used by the Potter represents fallen rather than unfallen mankind as the vessels saved are called vessels of "mercy." Unfallen creatures are not objects of mercy as mercy infers they do not receive just condemnation. Instead, "mercy" infers they are fallen creatures who deserve wrath equally as the vessels fitted for destruction but God chooses to have mercy upon whom he will have mercy but hardeneth whom he will harden. The same light that melts the butter hardens the clay. God's mercy changes the nature of some sinners to receive light while God's justice is exercised upon others according to the good pleasure of His own will as all fallen mankind justly deserve wrath and none deserve mercy.

Furthermore, gentiles are included in the Potter illustration as among the vessels of mercy (Rom. 9:24). Gentiles are not part of this Israel (Rom. 9:1-13) but they are part of God's elective mercy within fallen mankind (Rom. 9:24-30). Israel's present rejection of Christ is part of God's purpose to bring salvation to the Gentiles during this period between the first and second coming of Christ (Rom. 9:30-32).

#### **14. Romans 10**

Most of professing Christendom and all other world religions embrace the view of Israel's view of salvation (Rom. 10:1-3). They reject the righteousness performed in the Person and life of Christ as sufficient to satisfy all the demands of the Law, but rather add works of righteousness performed in their own person and life to their faith in Christ for ultimate salvation. Christ is the "end" of all the demands doing the righteousness of the Law for all who truly understand and believe the gospel (v. 4). The Law always demands doing more and never has any end in sight throughout all your life (v. 5). However, faith in the gospel never asks what the believer needs to do or added to what Christ supplied in his own personal life between his first advent from heaven until His resurrection and ascension back to heaven (vv. 6-7). Instead saving faith simply embraces the good news in the heart that Christ provided all that is necessary to secure your salvation and that is the profession made with the mouth (vv. 8-13) and believed in the heart that anyone who calls upon the Lord in this manner "shall be saved."

God has not merely elected the persons to be saved but has also elected the means to save them (1 Thes. 1:4-5; 2 Thes. 2:13-14). God sends forth preachers (Rom. 10:14-15) even as He did prior to the cross (Rom. 10:16).

However, faith cometh by hearing but the kind of hearing that is required to be saved comes by the "rhema" ("word") of God. The term "rhema" refers to "God's word of command" when he empowers the gospel to be His creative word of command that produces inward light within the elect (2 Cor. 4:6; James 1:18; 1 Thes. 1:4-5; etc.). Apart from the "rhema" the gospel has no saving power (Rom. 10:18-21).

#### **15. Romans 11**

Not all physical born Israelites are of the promised Israel of God. In every generation of Israel's existence there has always been a "remnant" of twice born Jews according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:1-6). The election of grace has always and will always obtain salvation among physical born Israelites (Rom. 11:7). In regard to the rest of Israel in any given generation they have been rejected by God (Rom. 11:8-10) including the Israel that rejected Christ in Paul's day (Rom. 11:11). However, God has purposed that their fall as a nation should be for the good of God's elect among the gentile nations (Rom. 11:11).

However, their fall is temporary and not permanent as their full restoration is purposed by God (Rom. 11:12-24) at the coming of Christ when they will be grafted back "again" into the tree they were cut off (Rom. 11:25-28). The "remnant" has never been cut off in any generation. It is the nation of Israel as a whole that has been cut off in every generation including Paul's generation and presently. Hence, it is what has been cut off that will be grafted in "again" (Rom. 11:23). The precise time that the nation as a whole will be grafted in again is after the fullness of God's elect among the Gentiles has been saved at the second coming of Christ (Rom. 11:25-28).

The two olive trees represent the two spheres of ethnicity from which God will call out His elect. They do not represent personal salvation but rather the spheres of ethnicity from which God calls out His elect. The Nation of Israel had been the primary sphere of redemptive work by God from Abraham to Christ. The nations of the gentiles are the primary sphere of redemptive work between the first and second coming of Christ. The nation of Israel was "cut off" and then "grafted" In again. Hence, being cut off and grafted in again cannot refer to losing and gaining salvation again but rather simply God's choice of calling out His elect from one ethnic group (Jews) versus another (Gentiles). When the fullness of the Gentile elect come in, the gentiles will be cut off and God will shift back to Israel and then "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:25-28).

The absolute proof that "Israel" in Romans 11:26 is not a "spiritual Israel" of all the elect Jews and gentiles but is ethnic Israel is provided by Paul many times over. First, the "Israel" in verse 26 is the same Israel in verse 25 that is in contrast to the gentiles. Second, "Israel" in verse 26 is identified as "Jacob" in verse 26. The term "Jacob" is never used for gentiles but is the name that represents both the man Jacob and the Nation of Israel before they had a personal encounter with God. After Jacob had a personal encounter with God his name was changed to "Israel." When "Jacob" is used for Israel in the Old Testament it always refers to the rebellious state of Israel. Third, the sins of this "Israel" are not taken away until the second coming of Christ (v. 27) whereas all who are presently saved have already received remission of sins. Fourth, "Israel" in verse 26 is the Israel in verse 28 that is presently "enemies" of the gospel but still beloved due to the purpose of the Father's "election." The so-called "spiritual Israel" consisting of all the

elect cannot be regarded presently as the "enemies" of the gospel as it is faith in this gospel that makes them part of this so-called "spiritual" Israel of Jews and gentiles.

#### 16. Romans 12 – Your Reasonable Service as a church member

With Romans 12:1 Paul makes a transition from God's program of salvation to God's program of service. The mercies of God have been laid down in Romans 1:18-11:36. According to justice we don't deserve salvation. Salvation is a pure matter of mercy (Rom. 9:15-16,18; Tit. 3:5) The public sacrifice was to be offered upon no other altar but the brazen altar in the public house of God (Deut. 12:12-14). Romans 12 deals with our individual service within the public house of God – the congregation of Christ. Whatever was offered upon the altar in the house of God had to be "acceptable" to God. Our individual bodies are the vehicles through which our soul serves God and the institutional body is through which the people of God publicly serve and worship God (Rom. 12:4-5). Paul's audience had one thing in common with himself and each other, they all shared in common one kind of congregational body. Thus this is a "we" of like faith and order. The congregational body was to function like a human body where all members depended upon the trustworthiness of each member to provide its proper function so that the body as a whole could function in unity and with precision. God demands a "holy" vehicle to express service unto Him and to be blessed by him (Rom. 12:2).

God equips the individual believer for service (Rom. 12:3) according to a measure of grace as he does the institutional body of believers (Rom. 12:6-8). However, all service is measured by the rule of love (Rom. 12:9-21).

#### 17. Romans 13 – Your reasonable service as a Citizen

Paul provides five reasons why the Christian ought to submit, honor and respect secular governments: (1) For God's sake as he ordained them – vv. 1-2; (2) For wrath's sake – vv. 3-5a; (3) For conscience sake – vv. 5b-7; (4) For love's sake – vv. 8-10; and (5) for Jesus sake – vv. 11-14).

However, all authority belongs to God and governments only have delegated authority to minister civil righteousness in behalf of God. We are give unto Ceasar the things that belong to Ceasar but unto to God the things that belong to God. When government demands the Christian to disobey God, God's authority is preeminent and the Christian as an *individual* ought to suffer persecution by the government rather than disobey God.

However, as a *nation* Christians should oppose unjust regulations and try to overthrow them through legal discourse and if that is not possible then as a nation they ought to overthrow unjust and ungodly governments.

#### 18. Romans 14-15:5 – Your reasonable service as a Mature Christian

Paul is not dealing with God's commandments or Biblical principles but with things that are neither right nor wrong in themselves. Things that scriptures do not specifically address.

Paul lays down some practical principles to deal with others who cherish cultural traditions (foods, days, things) different than other members in the same congregational body. (1) Individual accountability to God alone; (2) The rule of self-persuasion; (3) The rule of neither right nor wrong; (4) The rules of liberty; (5) the rule of conscience; (6) the rule reason; (7) the rule of self-denial; (8) the rule of edification; (9) The Christ example to follow.

#### 19. Romans 15:6-33 – Your Reasonable service as interracial Christians

The Interracial Problems - The early Jewish Christians had problems accepting Gentile Christians and their cultural practices (Acts 10-11 – Gal. 2) and vice versa. Paul provides principles for interracial unity within congregational bodies - Rom. 15:6-33. (1) The Common Principle for unity – vv. 5-6; (2) The Command and example for unity – v. 7; (3) The Confirmation by Scriptures for Gentile inclusion – vv. 8-12. (4) The comfort by application – v. 13. (5) The Apostolic example of Paul – vv. 14-21. Paul is pictured in the capacity of a priest who "offers" them up – v. 16, and "preacher" - v. 19, and pioneer among the Gentiles. Finally Paul encourages them to offer up a interracial present/offering for the Jewish brethren in Palestine – vv. 22-33.

#### 20. Salutations – 16

Phebe carried this letter to the congregations at Rome. She was a member of the congregational body at Cenchre which was just a few miles north of Corinth near the Corinthian isthmus:



Phebe seemed to be described as one of those in the congregation that was above sixty years of age that had served the saints (see 1 Tim. 5:9-10) and instructed the younger women and children (Tit. 2:3-5). She did not come with any personal authority over the congregation but with apostolic commendation to help her in her "business" (Gr. pragma – where we get our English word "pragmatic"). Our congregations need elder women who can teach younger women how to be good wives, teach their children and how to provide hospitality. Our women are seeking the ministries of women from false denominations to meet these needs. There is a need for women like Phebe to minister to the women of our congregations.

Rome is estimated by many historians to be about one million citizens at this time. Hence, it was plenty large enough for several congregations.

- World Book Encyclopedia says that the population of ancient Rome was nearly one million.
- "In Rome, with its population of over one million" A History of Civilization by Gerritt P. Judd, p. 98
- Edward Gibbons the celebrated historian of the Fall and Decline of Rome carefully considers all the evidences for establishing the population.
  - When the city was besieged by the Goths it was measured at 21 miles in circumferance (almost a perfect circle)
  - Many of the citizens lived outside the walls
  - Under the Reign of Theodosius the actual number of houses was counted within the walls 48,380 houses
  - From all the above facts, Gibbon estimates that at the very minimum there were at least 1,200,000 population in Ancient Rome

There is at least two different congregations at Rome. There is one that existed in the house of Aquilla and Priscilla (Rom. 16:3-5). Another congregation is exhorted by Paul to greet this congregation in their house in his behalf. Romans 16:6-10a seems to be the members that met in the house of Aquilla and Priscilla.

Two more house congregations seem to be referred to in Romans 16:10b-11a. Greetings to "those with" Astribulos –vv. 10b-11a. (Gr. tous ek ton). Greetings to "those with" Narcissus – vv. 11b-13 (Gr. tous ek ton)

At least two other congregations seem to be mentioned in verses 14-15. Greetings to those "with them" -v. 14 (Gr. tous sun auton). Greetings to those "with them" -v. 15 (Gr. tous sun auton).



# The Roman Catholic Church and the Apostolic Congregations at Rome

Early "Christian" history was collected and edited by the Roman Catholic Church. We have only what Roman Catholics chose to preserve as history for the first ten centuries from the post-apostolic age.

When many speak of the "church" between the first and sixteenth century they are referring to the church at Rome.

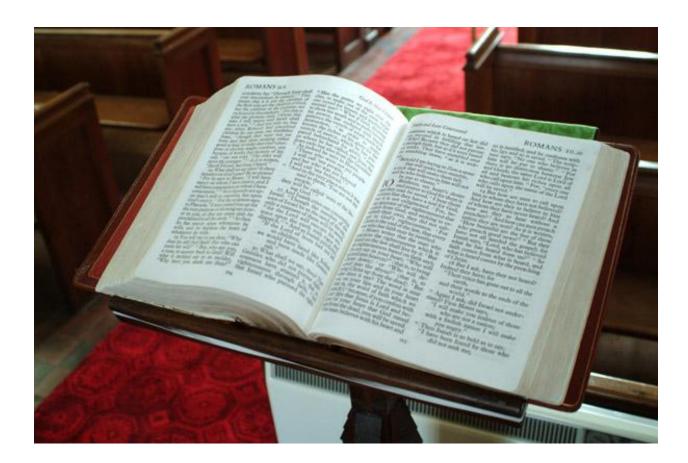
However, there is a tremendous amount of inspired data and prophetic history in Scriptures that repudiate any connection between the apostolic congregations in Rome with the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, there is much evidence to suggest that the Roman Catholic Church is the result of the great apostasy predicted in scriptures.

Although Rome attempts to provide a list of Bishops in succession to each other from Peter to the present Pope, there are numerous problems with this list as well as to the very claims of the Biblicity of any office called "Pope" in the Scriptures.

The Roman Catholic Church has no historical origin prior to Constantine the Great in the fourth century. Prior to that time all Pastors and congregations considered themselves equal to each other with only special recognition of three great historical congregations (Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome). Among the those three ancient congregations, Rome held preeminence only because that it was founded in the capital of the Roman Empire and had been established

through the ministries of Peter and Paul. Yet no congregation honored the Bishop of Rome as Pope or accepted the authority of the congregation at Rome above any other congregation.

Indeed, the whole Roman Catholic system can be easily seen to be a fabrication between Babylonian Mysticism and Christianity in an unholy union with the secular state. The office and title of both "Popes" and "Cardinals" comes directly from the Babylonian religion. Its central doctrine of sacramentalism is repudiated by Paul in Romans 3-4 as well as its mode of baptism in Roman 6:4-5. It denies that the scriptures are the final authority for faith and practice but pragmatically places tradition and church counsels as interpretative authorities above Scriptures.



## The Prophetic View of Scriptures

There can be no debate that New Testament churches were fully functioning long before Luke penned the final pages of the book of Acts. There are no accounts of any other denominational kind of churches. All churches found in the pages of the New Testament were of like faith and order.

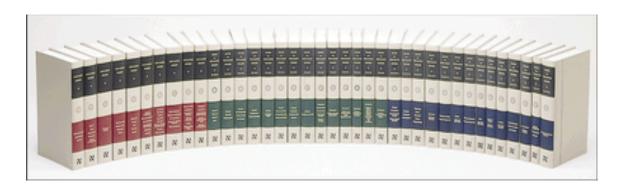
However, when one picks up a modern secular book on "church history" there is nothing found in such books for at least fifteen hundred years after the close of the apostolic era that even comes close to resembling those churches found in the pages of the New Testament. During that

period, the only kind of church that stands out on the pages of secular church history is the Roman Catholic Church and those whom Rome persecuted and depicted as heretics.

Even though there is a radical and profound difference in theology between modern Rome and the epistle written to the New Testament church at Rome, the vast majority of secular and religious historians assume they are one and the same.

Even prominent protestant leaders such as Dr. John MacArthur and Dr. R.C. Sproul when they speak of the Roman Catholic Church during the period of the Dark Ages, call it "**The Church**." The current host of the syndicated radio program The Bible Answer Man, Hank Hannegraff, as well as its former host Dr. Walter Martin, espouses the idea that the Roman Catholic Church is the true apostolic church until the Reformation period, and even now continues to be "**a**" true church of Christ in error.

However, what evidence supports this assumption? From what sources can this assumption be supported? It is common knowledge that the writing and preservation of ecclesiastical records up to the Reformation period have been solely in the hands of Rome. She has determined what should be preserved and what should be destroyed. She has defined what orthodoxy is and what heresy is and who are to be regarded as "heretics."



The so-called Church Fathers

<sup>133 &</sup>quot;The original sources of our information are, almost exclusively, the Catholic writers – a race of men who, while they had an interest in disguising the truth, appear to have delighted themselves in culminating all that dissented themselves from their communion. And even since the Reformation....our Protestant historians have been but too implicitly led by those false guides. There is scarcely any history of the Christian Church extant in our language from which it would not be easy to exemplify the truth of this representation...But with any man with his eyes open, and capable of exercising two grains of discrimination, should have first of all permitted himself to be so far imposed upon by the Catholic writers, as to give credit to such a tissue of absurd and ridiculous fooleries, and then gravely to detail them to his readers for the truth of history, is at once a striking weakness of the author, and of the necessity of exercising continual vigilance on the part of the reader, if he would neither become the dupe of Papal slander, nor of Protestant credulity." William Jones, *The History of the Christian Church*. (Louisville: Norwood & Palmer, 1831) Vol. I, preface.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> "Church councils often have been manipulated and ecclesiastical tradition has been falsified to give credence to some teaching entirely unknown to the New Testament." Robert A. Baker, **The Baptist March in History** (Nashville: Convention Press, 1958) p. 2

The question must be asked, how credible is her testimony and how accurate are her definitions? How accurate are her records? Not all scholars completely trust her definition of orthodoxy or the reliability of her records. There have been many historians from many denominations, including some candid Roman Catholic historians that view the data preserved by Rome in a completely different light. Many of them realize that unlike the Scriptures, secular history is; (1) uninspired, thus subject to personal bias; (2) incomplete; and (3) often inaccurate. These historians believe that Rome has unintentionally preserved sufficient historical data to demonstrate that apostolic Christianity continued among those whom she labeled and treated as **heretics**. Indeed, some identify those "heretics" as apostolic Christianity who are prophetically predicted to be characterized as "heretics" between His first and Second Advent.

Is it a fair question to ask if the Bible predicts that apostate Christianity would characterize the apostolic true churches of Christ as "heretics"? Does the Bible predict that apostate Christianity would distort and persecute apostolic churches until He comes again? If it does, all one has to do is compare these predictive scriptures with the character of all churches found in secular church history to see which, if any, are the Lord's true apostolic churches.

The Bible clearly predicts an apostate Christianity will arise in direct contrast to the characteristics of true apostolic New Testament Churches. In essence, the Bible warns us where we ought not to look for the Lord's true churches between the close of the Apostolic Age and the Second Coming of Christ.

#### A. Don't look among Churches who persecute

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. - Jn. 16:1-3 (emphasis mine)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> "The Catholics....instead of assuming such honorable pride, the orthodox theologians were tempted, by the assurance of impunity to compose fictions, which must be stigmatized with epithets of fraud and forgery. They ascribed their own polemical works to the most venerable names of Christian antiquity; the characters of Athanasius and Augustin were awkwardly personated by Vigilius and his disciples....Even the Scriptures themselves were profaned by their rash hands...the example of fraud must cite suspicion." Edward Gibbons, **The Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire**. (New York: Peter Fenelon Collier. 1845) Vol. 3, pp. 555,556,557

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> "No men are less to be trusted then the monkish historians, when they speak of he character and doctrine of dissidents from Rome." Benjamin Evans. **The Early English Baptists**, (Greenwood: The Attic Press, Reprint 1977) Vol. 1, p. 13

<sup>137 &</sup>quot;....no impartial reader can, I think, investigate the innumerable grotesque and lying legends that, during the whole course of the Middle Ages, were deliberately palmed upon mankind as undoubted facts, can follow the histories of the false decretals, and the discussions that were connected with them, or can observe the complete and absolute incapacity most Catholic historians have displayed, of conceiving any good thing in the ranks of their opponents, or stating with common fairness any consideration that can tell against their cause, without acknowledging how serious and how inveterate has been the evil. There have been, no doubt many noble exceptions. Yet, it is, I believe difficult to exaggerate the extent to which this moral defect exists in most of the ancient and very much of the modern literature of Catholocisim." William E. H. Lecky, **History of European Morals.** 2 Vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1887) Vol. 2, p. 212

And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. - Rev. 17:6



And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. - Rev. 17:6

These are predictive prophecies concerning the future of the Lord's churches and their persecutors. Significantly, Jesus predicts that those who persecute the Lord's churches during that period, after the close of the Biblical era, will believe they are serving the one true God, in killing them.

...that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. — Jn.16:2 (emphasis mine)

At the very minimum, this is clearly a Biblical prophecy that should warn us not to look for the true churches of Christ among those who persecute professed people of God in the name of God.

It does not take much study of secular church history to realize that the Roman Catholic Church perfectly characterizes this kind of persecuting Christianity. It does not take much study of the Reformation period right up until the declaration of Independence in America, to realize

that both Roman and Reformed Catholicism (Protestantism) killed, and persecuted one another. In addition, both at times, joined forces and persecuted professed Christians, who were neither part of them, or took part in such acts of persecution.

Where then do you look for His true churches? You don't look among those known for their persecution of other professed Christians. You look among those whom Rome and Reformed Rome martyred and persecuted, as "heretics." This is the inspired predicted plight of the true churches of Christ during this time of apostasy. Their history is traced by the trail of blood of their martyrs.

#### **B. Don't look among State Churches**

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. - Rev. 17:1-5 (emphasis mine)

Many attempt to interpret this prophetic woman as merely secular and political Rome, but that is contextually impossible. In Revelation 17:1-5, the symbolic descriptions are stated, whereas in Revelation 17:6-18, the symbolic descriptions are explained. In both the symbolic description and explanation she is clearly distinguished from secular government and kings:

With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. – Rev. 17:2

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast... and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. – Rev. 17:12, 17

The description "beast" is a common symbol for gentile governments. In Daniel such beasts are characteristic of secular governments and their rulers (Dan. 7). Her relationship to this beast is two-fold.

- 1. She sits upon it Symbolism of being supported by the beast.
- 2. She commits fornication with the kings of the earth Symbolism of illicit union marriage of state and religion state religion

Furthermore, she is a symbolic woman identified as "Mystery Babylon." The term "mystery" when attached to "Babylon" commonly referred to the paganized religions that originated from Babel. Babel was the first organized institutionalized religious rebellion against God. Nimrod took the truth of God written in the heavens, and transformed it into astrology, and perverted the nature of the Creator into that of the creature, making himself a god man. When God confused, and scattered the citizens of Babel, this "mystery" religion was scattered throughout the world. She is state institutionalized false religion.

She has been the state religion of every gentile government that has risen previous to Rome (Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Medes and Persians, Greece). This harlot has controlled, and manipulated every one of these former gentile governments in order to persecute, and kill the people of God. Hence, John could say, she was responsible not only for the death of all the prophets and the saints "upon the earth," but responsible for deceiving all the nations:

for by thy sorceries were **all nations** deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. – Rev. 18:23-24 (emphasis mine)

The Babylonian mystery religion had its seat of power in the city of Rome at the time John wrote this vision (Rev. 17:18). She was epitomized in Caesar, who was worshipped as a god man. John was on the island of Patmos, because he refused to offer up incense, dedicated to this deity of Rome.

However, John's message is concerning the future of this harlot. She will be destroyed by ten kings, who had not come to power when John wrote this, nor will they come to power, until just previous to the second coming of Christ.

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast... and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. – Rev. 17:12, 17

She is not destroyed, until the time of these ten kings after they receive a kingdom. They destroy her, when they come to power "with the beast" for "one hour," when He attempts to fight Christ at the Second Advent.

These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. – Rev. 17:13-14

Rome, as a secular government was overthrown in AD 476, and since that time has been the Vatican State. Therefore, the only government existing in Rome both before, and at the time of Second Advent, when these ten future kings unite with the beast to fight Christ, is the Vatican Roman Catholic Church State.

John is predicting the future of this Harlot in connection with the churches of God. Notice the direct contrast between this woman in Revelation 17-18, and another woman in Revelation 18 and 21! The first, is described as a metaphorical impure, and unfaithful woman (Rev. 17:5

harlot, whore), while the second, is described as a metaphorically pure and faithful woman (Rev 19:6-7 bride). The first has its seat of authority in an earthly worldly city (Rev. 17:18), whereas the second has her seat of authority in the heavenly city (Rev. 21). The contrast is too clear to miss. This is the ultimate contrast between polluted and pure institutionalized religion, right up to the second advent of Christ.

This Babylonian mystery cult had captivated, and permeated the whole Roman Empire, long before Constantine the Great came to power in the fourth century. Long before Constantine came to power, there were many churches that took in massive amounts of members, still clinging to the traditions, and beliefs of this Great Harlot. Slowly, multitudes of churches were permeated, and leavened into an apostate condition by this harlot.

During the time of Constantine the Great, the Roman Empire was beginning to crumble. Constantine rejected the apostolic churches that would have nothing to do with those paganized churches, or with any institutionalized state religion. Constantine embraced the apostate Augustine, and the paganized churches, that sided with him, to form the new state church religion. Constantine hoped this merger would prevent the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Dear reader, take note that the origin of a state church, is not to be found in the New Testament, but with paganized Christianity, three hundred years after the writing of the New Testament. Here is the beginning of an institutionalized Christian State religion. The apostate Augustine formulated the theological foundations (The City of God) to support this Christianized, Babylonian state religion. In declaring it the new state religion, all citizens in the Roman Empire were to become part of this Christianized Babylonian state religion, just as, they had done with the previous pagan, Babylonian state religion. The very character of the religious order adopted by Roman Catholicism comes directly from Mystery Babylon:

The College of Cardinals, with the Pope at its head, is just the counterpart of the Pagan College of Pontiffs, with its 'Pontifex Maximus,' or 'Sovereign Pontiff,' which had existed in Rome from the earliest times, and which is known to have been framed on the model of the grand original Council of Pontiffs at Babylon. – Alexander Hislop, **The Two Babylons or The Papal Worship**. Loizeaux Brothers, New Jersey, 1959, p. 206

In the Mystery Babylon religion, can be found **Pontiff's**, **monks**, **priests**, and **Cardinals**, but no such offices are to be found anywhere in the New Testament. Roman Catholicism would continue to adopt and develop the doctrines, and practices of Mystery Babylon, under Christianized names for the next one thousand years.

This Great Whore would produce a brood of offspring, Christianized "harlots," all of which would also be state churches. All of them would continue to practice Christianized Babylonian doctrines (infant baptism, sacraments, etc.).

And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. - Rev. 17:5

Some of these "harlots" state churches are:

- 1. Lutheranism The Church of Germany
- 2. Presbyterianism The Church of Scotland;
  The Church of Switzerland
- 3. Episcopalian The Church of England
- 4. The Reformed Church The Church of Holland

We are not to look for apostolic Christianity among any kind of state church, or religion. Such, is an unholy union (harlotry – "fornication with the kings of the earth"). This Biblical prophecy rules out Rome, and her Reformation daughters, as possible candidates to be New Testament churches. Where are we to look then? We are to look among those condemned for refusing to join this unholy union between church and state. Those identified by state churches, as "heretics."

#### A. Don't look among those churches which embrace predicted apostate doctrines:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. - 1 Tim. 4:1-5

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. - Gal. 1:8-9

Roman Catholicism is well known for prohibiting its priests and nuns to marry. Seventh Day Adventism, and other apostate Christian cults, also are well known concerning their dietary laws. There are multitudes of new denominations that distort, and thus deny the gospel of grace, and teach justification by works.

There are other equally clear scriptural warnings about those who would distort the true nature of God (John 1:1; 1 Jn. 4:1-4; 2 Jn. 9-11; Mt. 28:19). Among those who fall under this category are the United Pentecostal Churches, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Latter Day Saints, and scores more.

What the apostate church called truth and orthodoxy, the Bible and apostolic Christianity calls heresy. What Roman and Reformed Catholicism condemned as heretics, the New Testament defined as the churches of Christ "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints."

During the period of secular church history (the period of great apostasy), we are explicitly warned not to look for the churches of Christ among those who hold to such explicitly condemned heresies. We are to look for the true churches among those who opposed these heresies and as a consequence were labeled "heretics" by the ruling state churches.

#### B. Don't look among those who perverted and distorted the beliefs of others:

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? – Mt. 10:25

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. 34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! - Lk. 7:33

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. – Lk. 6:22

Apostate Christianity at a very early date invented a slanderous term to label the true apostolic churches. They called the churches of God, **Anabaptists.** The term means to **rebaptize**. New Testament churches refused to recognize the ordinances of apostate churches, as scriptural, and therefore, would properly baptize those coming over from the apostate churches. New Testament churches denied they rebaptized anyone, but rather claimed that the apostates were never truly baptized. Rome, early on, instituted state enforced ecclesiastical laws against "Anabaptism," punishable by death. These laws were called the Codex Justinianus after their founder.

The fabrications, and slanders brought against the apostolic Anabaptists by Rome, and her Reformed daughters, are legion. When apostolic Christianity used the Bible as their defense, the inquisitors used Catholic tradition, to repudiate their orthodox beliefs, labeling them "heretics" instead. 139

Rome accused the ancient apostolic Anabaptist Paulicians for embracing the heresy of Manicheaism even though the Paulicians openly denied it and openly condemned Manicheaism as heresy themselves. <sup>140</sup> The ancient Anabaptists were accused of denying marriage, denying the Lord's Day, denying observances of the ordinances, denying Christ, etc. simply because they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> "...The writers of that age searched out the most degrading and insulting epithets that language afforded and applied them with malignant gratification.....Yet these men could appeal to those who witnessed their sufferings, and boldly declare, with the axe or the stake in view, none venturing to contradict, that they were not put to death for any evil deeds, but solely for the sake of the Gospel." J.M. Cramp, **Baptist History**. (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication) p. 155

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> "...two heresies penalized by death in the Codex Justinianus were a denial of the trinity and a repetition of baptism. This ancient legislation directed against the Arians and Donatists was revived in the Sixteenth Century and applied to Anti-Trinitarians and Anabaptists. Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin all appealed to the imperial law...In fact, the very name 'Anabaptist,' meaning 'Rebaptism,' was invented in order to subject to imperial law those who preferred to call themselves simply Baptists. They would never admit they baptized over again, for infant baptism was to them no baptism but rather a 'dipping in the Roman bath.'" Roland H. Bainton, **The Travail of Religious Liberty** (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1958) pp. 98-99

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> "The Paulicians sincerely condemned the memory and opinions of the Manichean sect, and complained of the injustice which impressed that invidious name on the simple votaries of St. Paul and of Christ." Edward Gibbons, **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**. (New York: Peter Fenelon Collier, 1845) Vol. 5, p. 387

denied the Roman Catholic version of these things.<sup>141</sup> The radical pedobaptists (baby baptizers) led by Thomas Munzer in Germany were labeled as Anabaptists by the Lutheran State Church in order to exterminate all evangelical Anabaptists by the thousands even though Munsterites were pedobaptists and not Anabaptists. Anabaptists condemned the Munsterites as heretics and denied such were ever part of the true Anabaptist movement, but that mattered little to the Lutheran or Roman Catholic state churches.

It is this kind of distortion, false accusations by the ruling State Churches that defined the Anabaptists as "heretics" and led modern historians to view them through the eyes of their enemies instead of the truth. 142

We are not to look for the Lord's churches among those who slandered, distorted and falsely accused others. Where are we to look then? We are to look for the Lord's true churches among those who are slandered as the "heretics" by such state churches.

#### C. Don't Look Among the so-called Church Fathers

Few if any evangelical scholars recognize The Nicene Church Fathers and The Post-Nicene Church Fathers as true representatives of New Testament Christianity. Why? Because they are so radically different from New Testament churches and so obviously like modern Roman Catholicism. Rather, they rightly see these preserved documents to accurately reflect the doctrinal evolution of Roman Catholicism. However, most cannot see that The Ante-Nicene Church Fathers are but the logical historical foundations for the Nicene and Post-Nicene. The Ante-Nicene Fathers records the beginning of apostasy that gradually developed into the Nicene and Post-Nicene Pagan Christianity. In The Ante-Nicene Church Fathers we find the origin of explicit errors of baptismal regeneration, and the gradual development of infant immersion, and various orders of ecclesiastical offices that are found explicitly in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Church Fathers but not in the scriptures.

The Ante-Nicene Church Fathers are the history of apostasy at its very root, which laid the foundation for the Nicene and Post-Nicene development. Rome destroyed the historical and doctrinal records of all other professing Christians during this period (Montanists, Novationists,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> William Jones says of the Waldeneses, "The names imposed on them in France by their adversaries, they say, have been intended to vilify and ridicule them, or to represent them as new and different sects. Being stripped of all their property and reduced by persecution to extreme poverty, they have been called 'poor of Lynons.' From their mean and famished appearance in their exalted and destitute state, they have been called, in provincial jargon, 'Siccan,' or pickpockets. Because they would not observe Saints day, they were falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also, and called 'Inzabbatati' or 'InSabbathists.' As they denied transubstantiation or the personal and divine presence of Jesus Christ in the host or wafer exhibited in the mass, they were called 'Arians.' Their adversaries, premising that all power must be derived from God through his vicegerent, the Pope, or from an opposite and evil principle, inferred that the Waldenses were 'Manicheans' because they denied the Popes supremacy over the emperor and kings of the earth." William Jones, **The History of the Christian Church**, (Norwood & Plamer, Louisville: 1831) p. 300

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> "Because of this malignant prejudice, the historians of the day dismissed these groups without attempting to gain a documentary understanding or an objective judgment. This prejudging and condemnation of the free church movement has been carried on even in later times, a truth illustrated by subsequent Protestant historical accounts of the Anabaptists in the time of the Reformation. Only in recent years has a serious research attempt been made among historians to reconstruct a true picture of the Anabaptist movement." Earl D. Rachmacher, **What the Church Is All About** (Chicago: Moody Press, 1978) p. 67

Dontanists) by the power of the secular sword except for those Nicene records! Why? Those Nicene (ante, post) records are the historical roots of what gradually developed into the Nicene and Post-Nicene Roman Catholic denomination. These are writings record the historical succession of apostasy.

What is the value of the Ante-Nicene Fathers? When compared to the Post-Nicene Fathers it reveals clearly how far the Post-Nicene Fathers have departed from what they used to believe and practice. Some of the earliest Ante-Nicene fathers provide some insights into early Christianity. However, as one progresses in the Ante-Nicene Fathers, so does the progression of error until it becomes full bloom in the Post-Nicene condition of Rome. However, don't look for the true churches of Christ among the Ant-Nicene Church Fathers. Rome preserved these records while choosing not to preserve other records because these records serve Rome's claim to historical succession while helping Rome to disclaim all others as heretics or new comers.

#### G. The True History of New Testament Christianity after the Apostolic Era:

If the Roman Catholic Church is not the true representative of New Testament Christianity, then, who is? We do find them distorted but preserved in the pages of Rome's persecuting history. They are routinely identified by Roman historians as the evangelical Anabaptists. They are recorded by their trail of blood shed by Rome. Paul said, "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."

Several factors are routinely overlooked by pro-Romanists when studying what Rome recorded about those she called "heretics." False religious groups lived in the same geographical areas where true churches of Christ were also located simply because there was religious freedom and safety among New Testament Churches as they were all objects of state church persecution. Consequently due to geographical and social association, the true churches of Christ were labeled by the names of those heretical groups. Another factor often overlooked is that Roman historians isolate a particular heretic and then label apostolic churches by the name of that heretic simply because there are resemblances between the two. For example, New Testament Churches believed that a true child of God possessed a new and old nature simultaneously (Gal. 5:16-19) and therefore since Manicheans also believed in two opposing forces Rome labeled the Anabaptists as Manicheans. For example, New Testament Churches believed that the membership of a church ought to be solely composed of spiritual persons who live a holy life and since individuals like Donatus and Montanus believed similarly, these churches were labeled Montanists and Donatists and ascribed every excess that these individual's embraced. Rome played this game consistently throughout its recorded histories.

However, at times, Roman persecutors preserved what these Anabaptists actually believed because their faith was so obviously contrast to that of Rome's and so clearly subjected them to the ecclesiastical laws established by Rome. Such glimmers of light revealed that true apostolic Christianity was still alive and thriving in spite of the horrid and bloody persecution by Rome.

These evangelical Christians, many of whom, even the Roman persecutors admitted, lived pure and godly lives; are painted for the most part, in the worst of terms, in regard to their doctrines, simply due to the word of their enemies, or invalid associations. They were generally called "Anabaptists" by Rome but were perverted and distorted under such epitaphs as Montanists, Novations, Dontanists, Paulicians, Henricans, Catharists, and Waldenses. However,

they preferred to call themselves simply "Baptists." Here are the groups where you look for the churches of Christ during the predicted age of apostasy under state controlled churches.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of Church historians still accept history as recorded and viewed by Rome. However, there are many non-Baptist historians that acknowledged the antiquity of the Baptists:

1. Sir Isaac Newton - the greatest scientist who ever lived says:

The Modern Baptist, formerly called Anabaptists, are the only people who have never symbolized with the Papacy – William Whiston, **Memoirs of Whiston**, quoted in W.A. Jarrell's **Baptist Church Perpetuity**. (Dallas, 1894), [reprinted by Calvary Baptist Book Store, Ashland, KY] p. 313

**2. John Clark Ridpath**, Methodist, author of the monumental work "Ridpath's History of the World" says,

I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as 100 AD, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists.- John Clark Ridpath, personal letter to W.A. Jarrell, quoted in W.A. Jarrell's Baptist Church Perpetuity (Dallas, 1894), [reprinted by Calvary Baptist Church Book Store, Ashland, K.Y.], p. 59

**3.** The King of Holland appointed Dr. J.J. Dermout and Dr. Ypiej of the Reformed Church to write a history of Christianity and they say of the Baptists:

We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites were the original Waldenses, and who have long in history received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages... Ypeij en Dermout, Gerschiedenis Der nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk. (Breda 1819) quoted by J.T. Christian in A History of the Baptists (Texarkana, AR; Bogard Press, 1922) vol. 1, pp. 95-96

#### 4. Mosheim, Lutheran Historian says,

Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists — Johann Laurenze von Mosheim, **An Ecclesiastical History**, (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1860), [Reprinted by Old Paths Book Club, Box V, Rosemead, CA., Second ed.], Vol. II pp. 119,120

**5. Cardinal Hosius**, Roman Catholic, Ambassador of Pope to the Council of Trent says in the year 1563 AD

For not so long ago I read the edict of the other prince who lamented the fate of the Anabaptists who, so we read, were pronounced heretics twelve hundred years ago and deserving of capital punishment. He wanted them to be heard and not taken as condemned without a hearing. (by Carolinne White, Ph.D, Oxford University, Head of Oxford Latin) - Tracing the Cardinal Hosius "Baptist" Quote By Ben Townsend<sup>143</sup>

Hosius dated the Anabaptists to at least 363 A.D.

**6. Zwingli, Swiss Reformer**, writing in 1525 says of the Anabaptists:

The institution of the Anabaptists is no novelty, but for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS has caused great trouble to the church. – **Christian**, op cit. p. 86

Reformers Date Baptists back to 225 AD

7. Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ says of the Baptists;

From the Apostolic Age to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced. – Alexander Campbell, A Debate on Christian Baptism, Between the Rev. W.L. Maccalla, A Presbyterian teacher, and Alexander Campbell, ("Buffalo," NY., Campbell and Sala, 1824) pp. 378, 379

8. Robert Barclay, a Quaker says,

There are also reasons for believing that on the continent of Europe small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the time of the Apostles – Robert Barclay, **The Inner Life of the Societies of the Commonwealth**. (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1876), pp. 11, 12

**9. Roland Bainton,** a Mennonite, author of "The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century" says of the Anabaptists:

Nam & alterius Principis edictum non ita pridem legi, qui vicem Anabaptistarum dolens, quos ante mille ducentos annes haeretisos, capitalique supplicio dignos esse pronunciatos legimus, vult, ut audiantur omnino, nec indicta causa pro condemnatis habeantur. (The letters of Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, Liber Epistolarum 150, titled "Alberto Bavariae Duci" in about 1563 A.D.)

To call these people Anabaptists, that is re-baptizers, was to malign them, because they denied that baptism was repeated, inasmuch as infant baptism is no baptism at all. They called themselves simply Baptists.- Rolland Bainton, **The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century**, (Boston, Beacon Press, 1956), p. 99

Nearly all early Baptist historians unanimously testify to the historicity and perpetuity of the New Testament churches. However, many (but not all) modern Baptist historians approach historical sources through the eyes of Reformed Catholic Rome (Protestantism). 144

When the Reformation occurred, the Protestants joined with the Catholics in persecuting these Anabaptists. Even in America up to the introduction of the bill of rights, Protestants publicly persecuted these Anabaptists. The "Ana" was dropped and they became known merely as "Baptists." Historical Baptists have always rebaptized all who came over from the ranks of Protestants and Catholics simply because baptism was the designated act to publicly identify a believer with the Baptist ministry (not a Catholic or Protestant ministry).

The Protestant Reformer Henry Bullinger confirms the fact that these apostolic churches rejected both Protestant and Catholic churches and their ordinances when he says of them:

The Anabaptists think themselves to the only true church of Christ, and acceptable to God; and teach that they, who by baptism are received into their churches, ought not to have communion [fellowship] with [those called] evangelical, or any other whatsoever: for that our-[i.e., evangelical Protestant, or reformed] churches are not true churches, any more than the churches of the Papists." - J.R. Graves, Old Landmarkism What Is It? (reprint by Calvary Baptist Church Book Shop, Ashland, KY) p. 115

Significantly, since the time that a denominational difference occurred among apostolic churches, the name **Baptist** has always been attached to those churches which continued the ministry of John (Ana-baptists, Cata-Baptists, etc.). Today, the name **Baptist** has become a generic tag worn by many conflicting denominations which do not share either the doctrinal or historical heritage of these churches. However, it is not the name tag that defines New Testament Churches but their apostolic faith and practice as well as historical heritage that reaches back to the first church in Jerusalem.

#### G. The Great Commission Essentials and Historic Baptists:

Essential Characteristic #1: There is a prescribed method and pattern by which a new church comes into existence. In Matthew 28.19,20, Christ distinguishes between "ye" and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Dr. Robert Ashcraft points out that German Rationalism entered the halls of academia among Baptists in the late 1800's at Louisville Southern Baptist Seminary under the guise of the "new historical critical method." This method when applied to textual criticism of the Scriptures resulted in denial of Biblical inspiration and promoted evolution. When applied to church history along with a theological bias of universalism supported the view of Reformed Romanism. - Robert Ashcraft, Contending For the Faith. (Baptist Sunday School Committee, Texarkana, TX. 2006) pp. 601-606

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> Today the term "Baptist" is generic and includes more churches than the true historic and Biblical Baptists. Historic Baptists are known by their doctrinal content rather than their label. Historic Baptists are specifically known by their identity with all five aspects of the great commission.

"them" thus making the church the only authorized administrator of the Great Commission. This "ye" stands in a mediatory position between Christ and those who are the unconverted, unbaptized, and untaught. Christ administers unto "them" (the unconverted, unbaptized, and untaught) the gospel, baptism, and instruction of His commandments through this mediatory "ye" (i.e. the church).

And so in regard to this commission of Christ, it was addressed, to somebody. It supposes that there will be somebody to be baptized, and it authorizes somebody to baptize them. If by commanding some to baptize, it commands others by implication to be baptized, it by the same implication commands them to be baptized by those, and only those whom it commands to baptize. - William M. Nevins, Alien Baptism and the Baptists, The Challenge Press, Little Rock, Ark., 1977, p. 156.

**Essential Characteristic #2**: The authorized "ye" are "disciples" which by contextual definition are previously baptized believers existing in an observing churched state.

We cannot, for one moment conceive that Christ or His apostles committed the gospel to and commissioned it to be preserved and preached by, those who neither experientially understood, nor had themselves obeyed it, and whose teaching and practice tended directly to pervert and subvert it. – J.R. Graves, **Old Landmarkism, What Is It?** 1880, p. 35

**Essential Characteristic #3**: The authorized administrators are disciples of like faith and order with Christ in the same gospel, baptism and doctrine.

To say this commission was left to any believer, or to some group of men who hold every heresy under the sun, is to accuse the Lord of great carelessness. – Milburn Cockrell, **Scriptural Church Organization**, 2nd Ed. p. 29.

<u>Essential Characteristic #4</u>: The ultimate goal of the Great Commission is authority to bring baptized disciples into membership of an existing New Testament Church or into new church constitution. Observance of the Great Commission always concludes in New Testament church membership.

In this simple analysis of the commission is presented the very process by which Baptists are now made, constituted into churches, and governed. That it was the process by which the first preachers made converts, and constituted churches, is beyond question. T. G. Jones, **The Baptists, their Origin, Continuity, Principles, Spirit, Policy, Position, and Influence, a Vindication.** (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society) p. 27. (emphasis mine)

Essential Characteristic #5: The administrator of this commission is promised the presence of Christ until the end of the world. True churches have a promised historicity as a denomination that originates with the personal ministry of Christ and continues until the end of the age. Thus, true churches of Christ have two distinguishing characteristics (1) New Testament faith and practice and (2) New Testament origin as a denomination.

From these proposition, thus established, we draw the following inferences, as clear and certain truths,

- I. That all churches and ministers, who originated since the apostles, and not successively to them, are not in gospel order; and therefore cannot be acknowledged as such.
- II. That all, who have been ordained to the work of the ministry without the knowledge and call of the church, by popes, councils, &c. are the creatures of those who constituted them, and not the servants of Christ, or his church, and therefore have no right to administer for them.
- III. That those who have set aside the discipline of the gospel, and have given law to, and exercised dominion over the church, are usurpers over the place and office of Christ, are against him; and therefore may not be accepted in their offices.
- IV. That they, who administer contrary to their own, or the faith of the gospel, cannot administer for God; since without the gospel faith he has nothing to minister; and without their own he accepts no service; therefore the administrations of such are unwarrantable impositions in any way.

Our reasons, therefore for rejecting baptism by immersion when administered by Pedobaptist ministers, are,

## I. That they are connected with churches clearly out of the apostolic succession, and therefore clearly out of the apostolic commission ......

But if it should be said, that the apostolic succession cannot be ascertained, and then it is proper to act without it; we say, that the loss of the succession can never prove it futile, nor justify any one out of it. The Pedobaptists, by their own histories, admit they are not of it; but we do not, and shall think ourselves entitled to the claim, until the reverse be clearly shown. And should any think authority derived from the MOTHER HARLOTS, sufficient to qualify to administer a gospel ordinance, they will be so charitable as not to condemn us for preferring that

derived from Christ. And should any still more absurdly plead that ordination, received from an individual, is sufficient; we leave them to shew what is the use of ordination, and why it exists. If any think an administration will suffice which has no pattern in the gospel; they will suffer us to act according to the divine order with impunity. And if it should be said that faith in the subject is all that is necessary, we beg leave to require it where the scriptures do, that is every where. But we must close: we beseech you brethren while you hold fast the form of your profession, be ready to unite with those from whom you differ, as far as the principles of eternal truth will justify. And while you firmly oppose that shadowy union, so often urged, be instant in prayer and exert yourselves to bring about that which is in heart, and after godliness. Which the Lord hasten in its season. Amen and Amen. - A. M. MARSHALL, Moderator. JESSE MERCER, Clerk. – Jesse Mercer, **History of the Georgia Baptist Association**, 1838, pp. 126-127. (emphasis mine)

Conclusion: Some object, "these groups commonly called *Anabaptists* do not believe what Baptists believe today and so how can you claim they are Baptists?" We reply, whose word are you basing that conclusion upon? The word of Rome! What does the Bible predict that Rome would do and say about the true churches of Christ? Why then are you surprised by what they say and why do you accept it? The New Testament anticipates and predicts that secular history will pervert the true churches and that is exactly why Baptists can take this position, because it is a Biblical position in regard to secular Church history. Therefore, according to the New Testament prophecy, apostolic Christianity will not be found among any type of Christianity:

- 1. That persecutes, slanders, and kills other professing Christians.
- 2. Among state church types of Christianity.
- 3. Among those who embrace explicitly predicted false doctrines condemned by the New Testament.

Hence, in reverse the New Testament predicts that apostolic Christianity will be found

- 1. Among those persecuted, slandered and killed by a professed Christianity.
- 2. Among those who oppose state churches.
- 3. Among those who oppose explicit heresies predicted by the New Testament.

Only the historical Evangelical Anabaptists fit these predictive prophecies concerning the future of the New Testament churches after the apostolic age. These prophecies should be the guide for every Christian historian looking for traces of apostolic Christianity.

Every historian should remember that secular history is (1) uninspired, (2) incomplete, and often (3) inaccurate; but the Bible is inspired, complete, and always accurate. When secular history is used to either undermine what the Bible clearly predicts, or to reinterpret the Bible to fit secular history, the consequence will always be false ecclesiastical history and false doctrine.