

ROMANS COMMENTARY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. SALUTATION AND THEME (1:1-17).....	1
A. The Salutation (1:1-7).....	1
B. The Relation of Paul to the Church at Rome (1:8-15).....	2
C. The Nature and Content of the Gospel Summarized (1:16-17).....	2
II. JUSTIFICATION—THE IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (1:18—5:21).....	2
A. Condemnation—the universal need of righteousness (1:18--3:20).....	3
B. Manifestation—the universal provision of righteousness (3:21-26).....	5
C. Harmonization--justification and the law (3:27-31).....	7
D. Illustration--Justification and the Old Testament (4:1-25).....	7
E. Assurance—the benefits of justification (5:1-11).....	8
F. Application--the universality of justification (5:12-21).....	9
III. SANCTIFICATION—THE IMPARTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (6:1—8:17).....	10
A. Sanctification and the principle of sin—The basis of sanctification (6:1-14).....	11
B. Sanctification and the practice of sin—Enslavement to righteousness (6:15-23).....	12
C. Sanctification and the law—Emancipation from the law (7:1-25).....	12
D. Sanctification and the work of the Holy Spirit—Energizing the new nature (8:1-17).....	13
IV. GLORIFICATION—CONFORMATION TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST (8:18-39).....	15
A. The sufferings of this present time (8:18-27).....	15
B. The glory which shall be revealed in us (8:28-39).....	15
V. VINDICATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS WITH ISRAEL (9:1—11:36).....	18
A. The consideration of Israel's rejection (9:1-33).....	18
B. The explanation of Israel's rejection (10:1-21).....	21
C. The consolation concerning Israel's rejection (11:1-36).....	23
VI. APPLICATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AT WORK (12:1—15:13).....	25
A. The Basic Principle of God's righteousness at work in the believer's life (12:1-2).....	25
B. The specific applications of God's righteousness at work in the believer (12:3—15:13).....	26
VII. PROPAGATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DISSEMINATED (15:14--16:27).....	30
A. The Apostle to the Gentiles (15:14-21).....	30
B. The Apostle's future plans (15:22-33).....	30
C. The Apostle's personal expressions of greeting (16:1-24).....	30
D. The Apostle's doxology (16:25-27).....	31

ROMANS COMMENTARY

The Apostle Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans from Corinth during his third visit to that city (Acts 20:2; 2 Cor. 13:1). It is placed first among the Epistles because it is the most complete exposition of the foundational truths of Christianity. The purpose of this Epistle is to communicate to the Roman Christians the great doctrines of grace in preparation of his trip to visit them.

The theme of the Epistle is “the gospel of God” (1:1). This is the widest possible designation of the whole body of redemption truth. It relates to the whole world because “there is no respect of persons” (2:11) with Him who is “the God of the Jews” and “of the Gentiles also” (3:29). Accordingly all humanity is found guilty (3:19,23) and a justification is revealed sufficient for man's need and received through faith alone (3:28). Romans states the divine provision of God's grace whereby He is able to declare sinners as righteous through the atoning work of His righteous Son. It goes on to set forth the nature of the new life which all justified persons may enjoy through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Following this the Epistle reveals God's sovereign wisdom and grace in working out His purpose through the unfaithfulness of Israel. It closes by laying upon all Christians the obligation of recipients of “the mercies of God” (12:1) to live lives of consecrated service. The key expression of the book is “the righteousness of God” (1:17; 3:21,22).¹

I. SALUTATION AND THEME (1:1-17).

A. *The Salutation (1:1-7).*

Paul begins by introducing himself as a servant (δουλος DOULOS) or bond-slave of Jesus Christ. He considers himself to be, Christ's possession. To Paul, this is of the greatest importance. Then Paul calls himself an apostle (αποστολος APOSTOLOS), one set apart for the gospel of God. This is his authority. At this point Paul touches on his message, the Gospel (ευαγγελιον EUANGELION). The Good News is concerning Jesus Christ, God's Son and our Lord, who as to His human nature (σαρι SARI) was a descendant of King David and was designated (‘ορισθεντος HORISTHENTOS) to be the Son (‘υιος HUIOS) of God by the resurrection. Paul states in this passage that this Gospel is not new but predicted by the prophets. The Gospel is not about Jesus Christ, it is Jesus Christ. It was from this Jesus Christ that Paul received grace (χαρις CHARIS) and apostleship for the purpose of bringing the nations into obedience to the faith (πιστος PISTOS). Paul had been sent out to proclaim the Gospel so that Gentiles might be called out to become a part of the Church. And this included those living at Rome also (1:1-6).

Paul now addresses his readers: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called saints. Most likely these believers were the converts of Jews who were at the feast of Pentecost. These were Hellenized Jews who had heard Peter's first sermon, believed in Jesus as Messiah, and returned to their cities throughout the Roman Empire. The word saint (‘αγιος HAGIOS) always refers to a sanctified person, one set apart to God for His special possession and service. Thus all true Christians are saints here and now regardless of their progress in experience and growth (1:7).

Paul greets them, saying: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace flow together from the Father and the Son. They can never be separated. Grace is the Greek greeting and peace is the Hebrew greeting. Paul uses both to show the unity of believers, whether Jew or Gentile, in the Lord (1:7).

¹C. I. Scofield, ed., *The New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 1210.

B. The Relation of Paul to the Church at Rome (1:8-15).

Paul tells them of his intercession for them. He first tells of his prayer of thanksgiving for them and their faithful witness throughout the Roman Empire. Then he shares his prayer of petition. He expresses his desire to visit them and help them spiritually, as well as being comforted by them. Christian service is a two way street. One is always helped as he helps others. Paul's desire is to see people turn to Christ as a result of his ministry in Rome (1:8-13).

Paul next describes his obligation with the words, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." Paul viewed himself as a debtor to the whole world. He had been placed in debt by the love of Jesus Christ. Therefore Paul was ready to preach the Gospel to those at Rome (1:14-15).

The three phrases that describe Paul are: (1) I am debtor; (2) I am ready to preach; and (3) I am not ashamed.

C. The Nature and Content of the Gospel Summarized (1:16-17).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16-17).

The theme of this letter is: The Gospel of God. Paul starts this section by stating: For I am not ashamed of the gospel. The Jews and Gentiles both had leveled criticism against the doctrine of salvation through the crucified Savior. The Jews abhorred it as subverting the law. The Gentiles considered them foolish atheists. But Paul knew that it was the power of God unto salvation. It is precisely through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus that God chose to manifest His saving will and power. The gospel is the $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ DUNAMIS that destroys self-complacency, self-delusion, and sinful self-reliance. The gospel is for all, but there is one condition: faith. It is efficacious to everyone that believes. Historically, it went first to the Jew, then to the Gentile; now it is for all who believe.

In the gospel is revealed the justice of God which begins and ends with faith: the gospel is concerned with Jesus, in whom God has made known His saving presence and justice in history. Through Jesus, God offers the gift of faith, which makes His saving action effective in man. It reveals God's sovereignty over man and likewise moves man to respond.

Quoting Habakkuk 2:4, Paul emphasizes that one can be righteous in God's sight only through faith. Man has no righteousness; but God, in the gospel, has provided a righteousness, and He gives that to anyone who will receive it.

II. JUSTIFICATION—THE IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (1:18—5:21).

Justification = (df) can be defined as that sovereign and judicial act of God whereby He declares righteous all persons who come to Him trusting Christ's death for their eternal salvation. Justification springs from God's grace (Rom.3:24), is made possible on the ground of Christ's shed blood (Rom.5:9), and is pronounced upon them only who believe (Rom.3:28). God only can remain just and yet justify guilty sinners (Rom.3:26, 30). Before God could justify a sinner, there had to be a complete fulfillment of the Law. But inasmuch as no sinner has ever kept the Law, no one could be justified on this ground (Rom.3:9-20; Gal.2:16; 3:10,11; 5:4). When Christ came He fulfilled the Law on behalf of

the sinner (Rom.8:3; 10:4; II Cor.5:21; Gal.3:13), and now all who trust Christ are pronounced righteous by God.²

A. Condemnation—the Universal Need of Righteousness (1:18--3:20).

1. Plight of the Heathen—Guilty! (1:18-32).

God's attitude toward the sin of mankind is one of wrath, His holy aversion to all that is evil results in His purpose to destroy it utterly. God hates sin and His holiness demands that He judges all ungodliness (ασεβεια ASEBEIA) and unrighteousness (αδικια ADIKIA). Why are the heathen guilty? Because they have received a revelation from God and have attempted to suppress it. They have by their actions rejected the truth seen through creation. They have denied God's eternal power and Divine nature (θειοτες THEIOTES) which is revealed everywhere in the world around them. Therefore they are without excuse.

This continued rejection only adds to their guilt. They are filled with conceit. They profess themselves to be wise (σοφος SOPHOS), while turning the incorruptible (αφθαρτος APHTHAROS-immortal) God into an image of one of God's creations, thus showing themselves to be fools (μοραινο MORAINO-stupid). As a result of this attitude, God gave them up. He gave them over to all forms of uncleanness, to all forms of sexual depravity, and He gave them over to a reprobate mind that would not retain Him in its knowledge. And while they know the judgment of God, they encourage one another in their sin. They took seven steps downward: (1) They know God but refused to honor Him. (2) They were not thankful for God's goodness to them. (3) They began speculating foolishly. (4) Their minds became senseless and darkened. (5) They thought they were wise. (6) In reality, they had become very foolish. (7) Instead of worshiping the eternal God, they preferred idols patterned after mortal man. God's wrath on them was abandonment.³

Summary of the Gentile rejection of God: (1) They changed the glory of God into idolatry (1:21-23). (2) They changed the truth of God into a lie (1:25). (3) They gave up the knowledge of God and became materialists and humanists (1:28).⁴

Summary of the heathen in their lost estate: (1) The knowledge of God was revealed to them (1:28). (2) They knew it experientially (1:21). (3) They repudiated the full knowledge that they had (1:28). (4) They understood the results of their rejection, death (1:32).⁵

Conclusion: All are guilty because all have rejected the revelation of God. Are the heathen lost? Yes, the entire heathen world is lost, deserving condemnation, desiring evil, and desperately wicked.

2. Plight of the Moralist—Guilty! (2:1-16).

The moralist is inexcusable when he judges the heathen for sin but is blind to his own sin. The self-righteous man is self-condemned when he shows that he has the faculty of moral discrimination by judging others. It is not wrong to judge things in the lives of others, but it is this

² Lehman Strauss, *Strauss Dictionary of New Testament Terms* (La Mirada, CA: Biola College, 1980), 38.

³ Alva J. McClain, *Romans: The Gospel of God's Grace* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1978), 66.

⁴ Paul R. Fink, *Studies in Romans* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist College), 4.

⁵ Ibid.

very ability to discern right from wrong that condemns him when he sins. These men were doing in their own lives, perhaps only inwardly, the very things they disapproved in the lives of others. Their guilt was heightened by their own morality, by their own ability to judge. The moralist is condemned by his own judgment.

But not only is he self-condemned, he is God-condemned. On what grounds does God condemn him? According to truth, he is condemned. According to his works, he is condemned. Without partiality, he is condemned. And according to the Gospel that Paul preached, he is condemned. Every secret of man will be revealed and Jesus Christ is to be the Judge. Ignorance of the law will not save the Gentile. Possession of the law will not save the Jew. Both are condemned alike. The standard of righteousness is written in the conscience of every moralist. No one has ever lived up to that standard.

3. Plight of the Religious (Jew)—Guilty! (2:17-29).

a. The Jewish claim for exemption from condemnation.

The Jew agreed that the heathen was guilty. He could understand how the moralist was guilty. But he claimed to be exempt from condemnation on three grounds:

First, he was a Jew, an Israelite, a son of Abraham. What better family line could one have?

Second, he had the law of Moses, the best education he could get. Having received catechetical and rabbinical teaching all his life, he felt qualified to be: a way-shower to the blind, a light to people in darkness, an instructor of foolish ones, and a teacher of babes.

But there is an overwhelming problem which negates these two claims for exemption. The problem is that he did not practice what he preached. He broke the law given him, and in so doing dishonored God.

The Jew had one last claim--his outward circumcision. But circumcision could not save the Jew because he had not kept the whole law. In fact, lack of circumcision would not condemn a Gentile just as the possession of circumcision would not save the Jew. The whole question rests upon the law, the Jew had not kept the law. The very fact that the Jew was a circumcised man would only heighten his guilt in the eyes of God, because it showed he had the law but did not keep it.

The outward rite was worthless apart from the inward reality in the life.

b. The Old Testament promises of God to the Jew.

The first question: What has happened to the Jews' covenanted advantages? Answer: The promises still stand. The Jew had the advantage of special revelation of the law of God. He had the oracles that told of the coming of the Messiah.

The second question: Has not the Jews' unbelief cancelled the promises? Answer: No! God is faithful in keeping His promises to them. He does not lie.

The third question: Why should God judge man if man's sin enables God to be proved faithful? Answers:

This would deny God the divine right to judge any man. If this were true then those teaching false doctrines (as the Jews claimed Paul to be doing) would be adding to God's glory by their evil (which idea the Jews must reject). This put the Jews in an untenable situation and showed the foolishness of the question. Antinomian philosophy is to be condemned.

Conclusion: The Jew is also without excuse because of his unbelief. He is guilty of breaking the law. Religion is not enough, which brings us to the plight of the whole world.

4. Plight of the Whole World—Guilty (3:9-20).

Paul has proven that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin. The Jews are in no better condition. Everyone is under the guilt of sin, under the power of sin, under the condemnation of sin, under the doom of sin. The fourteen count indictment:

1. There is none righteous, no, not one (v.10).
2. There is none that understands (v.11).
3. There is none that seeks after God (v.11).
4. They are all gone out of the way (v.12).
5. They are together become unprofitable (v.12).
6. There is none that doeth good, no not one (v.12).
7. Their throat is an open sepulcher (v.13).
8. With their tongues they have used deceit (v.13).
9. The poison of asps is under their lips (v.13).
10. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness (v.14).
11. Their feet are swift to shed blood (v.15).
12. Destruction and misery are in their ways (v.16).
13. The way of peace have they not known (v.17).
14. There is no fear of God before their eyes (v.18).⁶

Now it is the turn of the defense to speak. But there is no defense! Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God. All those under the law are condemned by the law. The verdict is: guilty. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. The purpose of the law is to expose sin.

B. Manifestation—the Universal Provision of Righteousness (3:21-26).

First, the righteousness of God apart from the law is manifested to sinners. The Law has nothing to do with this righteousness. And yet the whole sacrificial system bore witness to the righteousness of God in Christ. By faith the Old Testament believer looked forward to the cross of Christ where the righteousness of God was manifested.

Second, the righteousness of God is attainable for sinners. This righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in God alone is not enough, it must be in Christ.

This righteousness is provided unto all men, however it is only applied to those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior. This act of faith is the only conditional element of the Gospel. Righteousness is from God, through Jesus Christ, to all who received Him by faith. All have sinned, therefore all need this righteousness to be saved. But what is faith?

Faith = (df) PISTIS, is used both in an active and a passive sense, both subjectively and objectively (1) Subjectively faith is that moral and spiritual quality whereby men trust God (Acts 27:25), but not a mere academic, intellectual faith. Faith includes the assent of the intellect, but it goes deeper, possessing a firm conviction and full acknowledgement of God's revelation (2 Thes. 2:11,12), a personal surrender to Him (John 1:12), and behavior in keeping with and corresponding to belief (2 Cor.5:7). (2) In an objective sense faith is the contents or body of truth men believe, designated in the New Testament "the faith" (Acts 6:7;14:22; Gal. 1:23; 3:23,25; 6:10; Phil.1:27; 1 Tim.4:1; 6:20,21; Jude 3,20).

Faith is essential to salvation. When the believing sinner accepts intellectually what the Bible teaches, trusts the Lord Jesus Christ, and yields completely to His authority, he is saved (Rom.10:17; Acts 16:31; Eph.2:8,9). The assurance of his salvation must not

⁶ McClain, 93.

depend upon human reason nor upon reeling, but upon the declarative statement in God's word (John 3:16; 5:24; I John 5:13).⁷

Repentance and faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior. Acts 20:21 Mark 1:15 Acts 2:37-38 Luke 18:13 Rom. 10:13 Psa. 51:1-4 Psa.51:7 Isa.55:6-7 Luke 12:8 Rom.10:9-11.⁸

And third, the righteousness of God is effective in sinners. When God justifies one who believes in Christ, he pronounces, treats and makes him righteous. God treats him just as if he had never committed any sin. Not merely forgiven, not merely pardoned, but made as righteous as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. As the believer's sins are imputed to Christ, Christ's righteousness is imputed to him (2 Cor. 5:21). This is done freely, that is, without any cost to the believer. It is done by grace, that is, by the unmerited, undeserved favor of God where He gives to sinners what they do not deserve. It is done through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; salvation cost God sacrifice of His only Son. Christ became our propitiation or mercy seat (I John 2:2) through His death. He died to declare His righteousness. In Christ, God punished every last sin that mankind has or will ever commit. God could not ignore sin because He is intrinsically holy. But He could be just, holy, and righteous, punishing sin, upholding His law, and still take a sinner, pronounce him righteous, and treat him like a righteous person because of Christ's work of atonement.

The salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior. Eph. 2:8 Acts 15:11 Rom. 3:24 John 3:16 Matt. 18:11 Phil. 2:7 Heb. 2:14 Isa. 53:4-7 Rom.3:25 1 John 4:10 1 Cor. 15:3 2 Cor. 5:21 John 10:18 Phil. 2:8 Gal. 1:4 1 Pet. 2:24 1 Pet. 3:18 Isa. 53:11 Heb. 12:2 1 Cor. 15:20 Isa. 53:12 Heb. 9:12-15 Heb.7:25 1 John 2:2.⁹

Conclusion: The righteousness of God is His mercy whereby He declares guilty man innocent and makes him so. He does this, not as a result of the law but apart from it; not because of any merit of man, but through forgiveness of his-sins in virtue of the redemption wrought in Christ for all who believe.

⁷ Strauss, 23-24.

⁸ "Article XII," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

⁹ "Article VIII," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

C. Harmonization--Justification and the Law (3:27-31).

There are three reasons why the principle of justification by faith is not contradictory to the principle of law: The first reason: Because it omits any ground of boasting. No man can boast of his own holiness, since it is God's free gift, both to the Jew and to the Gentile.

The second reason: Because there is only one God and therefore one method of justification. Salvation is *SOLA GRATIA, SOLA FIDE, SOLI DEO GLORIA*, only grace, only faith, only to God be the glory. Paul is bridging the gap between Jew and Gentile. Both are now one in Christ. The law of faith is the universal law of salvation by God.

The third reason: Because justification by faith is the only way that we establish the standards of righteousness to which the law could only point. We can confirm the law by placing it in its proper perspective. The Old Testament law, unable to effect salvation, was observed out of the motive of faith. Now we have the revelation of Christ. Faith in Christ is the proper response to the law.

We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation. 1 Thes. 1:4 Col. 3:12 1 Pet. 1:2 Titus 1:1 Rom. 8:29-30 Matt. 11:28 Isa. 55:1 Rev. 22:17 Rom. 10:13 John 6:37 Isa.55:6 Acts 2:38 Isa. 55:7 John 3:15-16 1 Tim.1:15 1 Cor.15:10 Eph. 2:4-5 John 5:40 John 3:18 John 3:36¹⁰

D. Illustration--Justification and the Old Testament (4:1-25).

In this great section of Romans, justification by faith is illustrated by Abraham and David. Paul has shown that all men are guilty, but that God provides righteousness to sinners. Paul then explained what justification is, the merciful act of God whereby He declares guilty man to be righteous and makes him so. Now Paul illustrates this truth.

1. Relationship of Good Works to Justification (4:1-8).

a. Justification is by faith apart from good works because this is how Abraham was justified (4:1-5).

The question was, how was Abraham justified, by works or by faith? If Abraham was justified by works, then he could boast and glory in his works, leaving God without the glory. This cannot be. Paul then appeals to Scripture as his final authority. "What do the Scriptures say?" "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Counted (LOGIZOMAI) means to reckon or put to one's account. Abraham had no good works. Abraham's faith was not a work, but an attitude. He simply believed God. Although there is no merit in faith of itself, faith is the only condition for justification.

b. Justification is by faith apart from good works because this is the teaching of the Old Testament (4:6-8).

David lived under the law, while Abraham lived before the law. Would that make a difference in the condition for justification? No. David had not works. "David also describes the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputes righteousness without works."

¹⁰ "Article X," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

Conclusion: Righteousness must be totally apart and separate from good works.

2. Relationship of Ordinances to Justification (4:9-12).

We have seen that good works cannot produce justification. But what about ordinances? Could circumcision be a condition to justification as both Abraham and David were circumcised? No. Abraham was circumcised at age 99, thirteen years after he had been justified, declared righteous, at age 86. It was while Abraham was a Gentile that he was justified! Justification is by faith apart from the ordinances because justification is God's way of dealing with all mankind, Jew and Gentile. Justification is by faith apart from ordinances because Abraham was circumcised after he was justified. He was justified on the faith principle. Circumcision was only a seal of the righteousness of faith.

Conclusion: Righteousness must be totally apart from ordinances.

3. Relationship of the Law to Justification (4:13-25).

a. Justification is by faith apart from the law because the promises given to Abraham did not originate from the law (4:13-16).

God made the promise of a seed long before circumcision was introduced. This promise was of the Messiah and His future kingdom. If fulfillment of this promise depended on law-keeping, man's inability to keep the law would have made the promise of none effect. "The law works wrath for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace. Abraham just believed God. God saved Abraham by faith alone, SOLA FIDE.

b. Justification is by faith apart from the law because of the essential nature of faith (4:17-22).

Faith has no merit in and of itself, however God has chosen to declare and make righteous those who fully trust His word. What is faith? Here Paul gives us the definition of faith: 1. Faith must have a valid content: the revelation of God. 2. Faith must have a valid object: God. 3. Faith is contrary to hope and yet rests upon a hope that is an absolute certainty. 4. Faith has a purpose. 5. Faith produces works. 6. Faith must have knowledge. 7. Faith results in justification.¹¹

c. Justification is by faith apart from the law because the principle of justification that was valid for Abraham is also valid for us (4:23-25).

This was written for us who believe:, that we might realize that we have the same God: the God of resurrection; the same basis: the finished work of Christ on the cross; and the same promise: "to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Conclusion: Righteousness must be totally apart from the law.

E. Assurance—the Benefits of Justification (5:1-11).

Now that we are justified, how should we live here and now? What are the present benefits of justification? (1) We have peace with God. (2) We have access, by faith, into this grace. (3) We have a standing in grace. (4) We have joy in hope of the glory of God. (5) We glory in tribulations. (6) We have a hope that makes not ashamed. (7) We have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. (8) We have the Holy Spirit. (9) We have the proof of God's love because Christ died for us. (10) We are going to be saved from wrath. (11) We are going to be saved by His life. (12) We rejoice in God. We, as believers, have all of these benefits right now. Note what each of these benefits involves:

¹¹ Fink, 13-14.

1. Justification by Faith is the only Possible Means of Salvation because of what it Provides in the *Present* (5:1-4).

The believer has *peace* with God. He has been reconciled to God. The enmity has been taken away.

The believer has *access* to God. He is on talking terms with God. God has promised to hear and answer his every prayer. He is always in a special sense in the presence of God Almighty.

The believer can *rejoice* in the hope of the glory of God. His future is secure. He will stand in the day of judgment. He is being conformed into the image of Christ.

The believer can rejoice in trials. He realizes that there is purpose in trials and testing. Testing (THLIPSIS-afflictions) produces patience (HUPOMONEN-endurance). patience produces character (DOKIMEN-approval). And character produces hope (ELPIDA-confident expectation).

Conclusion: A problem gives one the opportunity to be patient, which develops strength of character, which leads to trusting God more and more, resulting in confidence in God. There is no other way to provide these benefits in the present except by justification by faith.

2. Justification by Faith Is the only Possible Means of Salvation because of what it Can Guarantee for the *Future* (5:5-11).

a. It guarantees that we will not be put to shame in the presence of God in the future (5:5-8).

We have the love of God in the Person of the Holy Spirit indwelling us and sealing us unto that day of redemption. He makes our hope sure. God revealed His love by sending Christ, whose death removed the guilt of our sins. He rescued us when we were enemies. The living Christ is now our intercessor and His life guarantees the life of the believer. Christ's righteousness is ours, God's love is ours, and the Holy Spirit's presence is ours. And all this happened while we were still in rebellion against God. At the time of man's greatest need, God came down and provided salvation through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ did not die for the good, the perfect, the righteous, but for sinners (Matthew 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). Only sinners can be saved. This is why it is so necessary for a non-Christian to be brought to the realization that he is a lost sinner, or he will not see his need for a Savior.

b. It guarantees that we will be delivered from the wrath to come (5:9).

The result of being justified by the death of Christ, is that we shall be saved from God's wrath through Christ. God's wrath cannot touch us.

c. It guarantees that we will be able to rejoice in the presence of God because of what Christ has done in our behalf (5:10-11).

If, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him by the death of Christ, then we shall even more surely be saved through His life. It is for this reason that we can rejoice. We are kept safe by the life of Christ.

Conclusion: There is no other way that deliverance from shame and wrath, as well as rejoicing in the presence of God, can be guaranteed except by justification by faith. Any other method would not have this guaranty if it were based upon man in any way.

F. Application--Universality of Justification (5:12-21).

1. The Necessity for Universal Righteousness (5:12-14).

Sin is universally diffused throughout the world. The order is Fall, Sin, Death, Law. When Adam sinned, he brought sin to the human race. That one sin brought forth death. We are sinners because: (1) We commit sin. (2) We have sin natures. (3) We are in a state of Sin. (4) Because of Adam's sin imputed to us. Therefore, all are sinners and need righteousness.

Conclusion: Death proves all are sinners. All need righteousness. All need justification", Adam's single sin affected all men.

2. The Explanation of Universal Righteousness (5:15-17).

Justification does not operate in the same way as the offense. "Much more" (POLLO MALLON), this describes the gift of God's grace in comparison to Adam's offense. One transgression put all under condemnation. But Christ's death on the cross removes many transgressions.

Conclusion: Adam caused many to die. Christ caused many to receive life. Adam's act resulted in condemnation. Christ's act resulted in justification. Adam's sin resulted in death's reign. Christ's act resulted in life's reign for those who receive the grace and gift by faith. Christ's work far surpasses Adam's transgression.

3. The Application of Universal Righteousness (5:18-21).

Just as by the unrighteousness of Adam all in Adam are brought under condemnation, by the righteousness of Christ all in Christ are brought to justification. Adam's sin was imputed to all of his family, in the same way, Christ's righteousness is imputed to all of His family. All are born into Adam's family. A new birth is needed into the family of God. Paul also discussed this doctrine in I Corinthians 15:22, where he states: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Here "all" is qualified, it is used in a restricted sense. The first "all" is qualified "in Adam" and the second "all" is qualified "in Christ." The law was given to show our need for justification. The law revealed sin. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, showing the omnipotence of God.

Conclusion: God brought the law in, not to save men, but to show man how great a sinner he is. The way to get rid of sin is not through the law, but through grace. The claims of God's righteousness are fully met in the death of Christ and our security rests in the life of Christ. Everyone needs justification. Justification is offered to all by faith in Christ's finished work plus nothing. In justification God declares and makes the believer righteous.

The great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us. Acts 13:39 Isa. 53:11 Zech. 13:1 Rom. 8:1 Rom. 5:9 Rom. 5:1 Tit. 3:5-7 Rom. 1:17 Hab. 2:4 Gal. 3:11 Rom. 4:1-8 Heb. 10:38¹²

Now that the believer has been justified by God, how should he live? Justification is the basis for sanctification. Believers are no longer in Adam's family but in Christ's family.

III. SANCTIFICATION—THE IMPARTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (6:1—8:17).

Sanctification = (df) HAGIASMOS, a separation or setting apart for holy and sacred purposes. Positionally every believer in Christ has been set apart by God (1 Cor.1:2; 2 Thes.1:10). Practical sanctification, the separation of the believer from evil things and practices, is God's will for every Christian (1 Thes. 4:3). The divinely provided means for the Christian's practical sanctification is the Bible, God's Word. The Christian must earnestly and persistently pursue the reading and study of the Scriptures and obey its teachings (John 15:3; 17:17; Eph.5:25,26; 1 Pet.2:2).¹³

¹² "Article XI," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

¹³ Strauss, 51.

Sanctification is separation from the realm of sin to the realm of being in Christ, from the bondage of sin to bondage to righteousness, from the practice of sin to the practice of Christ, and from the presence of sin to the presence of Christ. The end result of sanctification is obedience. In the past we were delivered from the bondage of sin. In the present we are being delivered from the practice of sin. And in the future we shall be delivered from the very presence of sin.

A. Sanctification and the Principle of Sin—The Basis of Sanctification (6:1-14).

In this section Paul is dealing with the problem of sin's reign over the believer. We have been delivered from sin's bondage.

1. The Divine Reckoning, *Know* (6:1-10).

Having shown that justification is by faith alone, Paul now goes to the next step, sanctification. The doctrine of justification by faith has been condemned by many because they say, "If good works will not save, and bad works will not condemn, then why attempt to live a godly life?" A variation of this question is found in verse fifteen. This belief is known as antinomianism, or against law. This is the difficulty that cultists and those of other religions have with Christianity. They do not understand that a mature understanding of justification by faith leads the believer to appreciate God's grace, so that the end result is obedience to God out of a heart filled with gratitude. I detest all my sins because they offend God who is good and deserving of all my love. It is my appreciation and love for God and for what He has done in creating and saving me that causes me to want to obey Him. Just the fact that He is my Creator (regardless of what He does) is sufficient grounds for my love and obedience, not even counting His gracious, matchless gift of salvation.

Can we continue in sin? By no means (ME GENOITO). We cannot continue in sin because through our identification with Jesus Christ we are dead to sin. We are viewed by God as having died at Calvary. We do not die daily to sin, we are dead to sin already. But what about the sin in our lives? What is the secret of sanctification? How can we be released from the power of sin? There is a way; it is explained by three key words: know, reckon, yield.

First, we must know. When we were baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit at salvation, we were identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We are dead to sin's control. We have entered into Christ's life and have become a part of Him spiritually. His life is our life. Our old identification with Adam has been done away. Christ's death and victory was final and complete because our identification with Him is final and complete.

This is a past event. The death of our Lord has completely removed the guilt and penalty of our sin. Death is a completed transaction by which we have once and for all passed into the resurrection life of our Lord. The first principle of sanctification is knowing what Christ has already accomplished for us through His death. It is not striving to live the holy life, but knowing that we are holy in Christ.

2. The Believer's *Reckoning--Reckon* (6:11).

Second, we must reckon. Knowing what Christ has already done for us, we must moment by moment, day by day, consider it to be true. Reckon (LOGIZOMAI) means to consider, count, or calculate. We do not die daily, we live daily unto the glory of God. Because of thankfulness to God for counting us and treating us as if we were righteous, we refuse the temptation to continue in sin. The second principle of sanctification is to take as reality what God has promised. We live as though we have already entered into the presence of our Lord because He has sanctified us already.

3. The Believer's Yielding—Yield (Present) (6:12-14).

And third, we must yield our bodies to God. Knowing that God has sanctified us, and reckoning this to be true moment by moment, we are not to yield our members (i.e., hands, feet, tongues, etc.) to become weapons of unrighteousness. Instead, we are to yield or present ourselves to God. The word yield (PARISTEMI) means to present and is so translated in Romans 12:1. This is a once for all yielding to God. The third principle of sanctification is not continuously yielding your weapons to sin, but once for all yielding yourself totally to God.

Conclusion: Sanctification is not a daily dying to one's self. It is resting wholly on the finished work of Christ, knowing that we have been justified, daily reckoning that work to be finished, and constantly yielding ourselves to be used of God. And we have the promise: For sin shall not have dominion over you.

B. Sanctification and the Practice of Sin—Enslavement to Righteousness (6:15-23).

In this section Paul is dealing with the problem of sin's manifestation in the believer. We have been delivered from sin's bondage. We are being delivered from sin's practice. If we cannot sin continuously, can we sin occasionally? By no means (ME GENOITO)! If you start to obey sin, you are admitting the control of sin in your life. If you sin, you are sin's slave. To yield to sin results in death; to yield to obedience results in righteousness. Freedom from service to sin also puts one into the service of righteousness. We have a new master, Jesus Christ. Yet Christianity is not any more slavery than railroad tracks are unnecessary restrictions for trains. The tracks are necessary to help the train to perform its function. It is not possible to serve Christ, the Master of righteousness, and dabble in sin at the same time. Sin is high treason against the holy Sovereign of the universe; it is joining sides with Satan; it always promises more than it can deliver; bondage to sin causes shame and ends in death; it is insane to play with sin when you know its appalling power and terrible end. Yet, bondage to Christ leads to Biblical sanctification and results in everlasting life.

Conclusion: In chapter 5 those still in Adam were under the reign of sin which results in eternal death. Paul restates this by writing that sin pays a wage to those enslaved in her service: death. In chapter 6 those in Christ were under the reign of grace through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. Here Paul states that Christ gives an unmerited gift to those enslaved in the service of righteousness: eternal life. Thus the believer has no right to sin (6:23).

C. Sanctification and the Law—Emancipation from the Law (7:1-25).

1. The Law of the Husband (7:1-6).

Here we find an *analogy* in which the believer's life in Christ is likened to being a widow and being remarried. Note: This section is not dealing with marriage and divorce.¹⁴ Paul is only making an illustration. The principle Paul is trying to get across is that death dissolves marriage. Under the law unfaithfulness resulted in the death of the unfaithful partner which settled the problem of remarriage. "The right of remarriage is inherent in the biblical concept of divorce (cf. Deuteronomy 24:1-2)."¹⁵ Passages that do deal with divorce and remarriage include: Gen.38:24; Lev.20:10; Num.5:11-22; Matt.5:32; 19:9; I Cor.7. Beware making personal convictions dogma with only the "support" of analogies.) This section proves that we died with Christ and therefore

¹⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Romans*, vol. 1 (Pasadena, CA: Thru the Bible Books, 1976), 121.

¹⁵ Jay E. Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), 61.

are dead to the law. The principle is: the law has authority over man only as long as he lives. As long as we are under law, there is no possibility of being released from bondage to sin. But when Christ died at Calvary, we died to the law. Sin has no more dominion over us, neither does the law. The purpose of this freedom from the law through Christ's death is that we should bring forth fruit unto God which we could not do while under the law. We now obey the law of the Spirit, not because we fear the Lord, but because we love Him.

2. Sin and the Law (7:7-13).

In this section, Paul gives the following thesis: the purpose of the law is to reveal the fact of sin. He is not identifying the law with sin. Instead he shows that the proclamation of law cannot overcome sin. The law only gives the parameters of sin. It was the law that made Paul conscious of his lack of ability to keep the law. As a child Paul had not known the law and was complacent toward sin. But then he was BAR MITZVAH and put under the law. The more of the law of which Paul became aware, the more sin he found himself committing. Since the law intrinsically and originally was intended to guide men to life, Paul felt deceived when it instead became the occasion for sin and consequent death. It was not really the law, but sin that produced death. The law just revealed the sin. The problem was the sin nature.

3. Self and the Law (7:14-25).

What is the source of the conflict in the believer? Is the problem with the law? No, the problem is with the sin nature. The Mosaic law is holy and just and good as it came from the Holy Spirit. But it cannot bring holiness because I am beset by a self-seeking, self-centered ego. I am carnal, under sin, that is I have an old nature that is fleshly. It is sensual. It is in direct opposition to the holy law of God. "Carnality refers to this old human mind and spirit and nature which occupies and uses the flesh so that actually the flesh itself is contaminated with sin."¹⁶ Even though I know what is right, I cannot do what is right. In the Christian there are two natures, that of the flesh and that of the Spirit. Paul is responsible because he permitted himself to become a slave to sin. But when sin obtained a mastery in his life, he could not break it. Paul proves that the flesh has no good in it when he states: "For the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice" (v.19). Sin which dwells in me stops me from doing good. However, this NOT to be the normal situation for the Christian! As long as the believer is alive there will be a constant conflict between the old sinful nature and his new nature that delights in the law of God. But it is when the believer attempts to win the battle in himself that he is always defeated. I am helpless. I must be delivered from the control of sin. Only Christ can enable us to live the sanctified life.

Conclusion: In Christ, we are dead to the law, but alive unto God. The purpose of the law is to reveal sin. It cannot by proclamation save from sin. To live the sanctified life we must know what Christ has accomplished for us, daily reckon it to be true, and yield ourselves completely to Him.

D. Sanctification and the Work of the Holy Spirit—Energizing the New Nature (8:1-17).

1. Deliverance from the Law of Sin (8:1-8).

In chapters 1-3 the whole world was shown to be guilty before God. In chapters 4-5 condemned sinners were justified through faith in Christ. In chapters 6-7 the method of sanctification was explained. Now comes the question, how secure is this salvation?

¹⁶ McGee, 128.

This section is dealing with the security or preservation of those in Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus: "1. There is no condemnation. 2. There is no defeat. 3. There is no fear. 4. There is no despair. 5. There is no calamity. 6. There is no adversary. 7. There is no separation."¹⁷

This section begins with the statement: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The word condemnation (KATAKRIMA) means to give judgment against, pass sentence upon; it implies the fact of a crime or the imputation of a crime; condemnation with a suggestion of the punishment following.¹⁸

Because we are in Christ Jesus, we are not under condemnation, the judicial punishment of God which is the second death. This best fits the context if the following conditional phrase "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: is an interpolation as the overwhelming majority of both Roman Catholic and conservative Protestant scholars hold. It is not found in the oldest and best manuscripts. There are no conditions for us to meet. In Adam we were condemned. In Christ there is no condemnation.

Life in the Spirit enables us to live free from the law of sin and death. The law of Moses could not justify or sanctify because of the weakness of our flesh. We are unable to keep the law. It was because of the inability of the law to save that God sent Christ in the form of man to become an offering for sin. God's condemnation of sin took place when Christ died under the judgment due our sin. God provided our atonement by offering the person of Jesus Christ that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled by Him in our behalf. But if one's mind is not Christ-centered, but is separated from fellowship with God, if he is unsaved, then he will come up with death, eternal separation in God. However, if we are Christ-centered and are constantly thinking about the things of the Spirit, we will receive life and peace.

2. Deliverance from the Law of Death (8:9-11).

First, we are in the Spirit. If anyone does not have the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. All Christians are indwelt with the Holy Spirit! Now if Christ is in you, then although the body is dead because of sin, the Holy Spirit energizes us, He gives us life because of righteousness. The Christian having the Holy Spirit within him, enjoys not only new life, but also a new relationship with God, that of adopted son and heir through Christ. If the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then He will bring about the resurrection of your body.

3. Deliverance from the Control of the Sin Nature (8:12-17).

Because the Holy Spirit energizes our mortal bodies, we are debtors, not to the flesh, but to the Spirit. We are under new management. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are to mortify, or cease to practice, all the evil deeds of the body. Every Christian has the Spirit of God, and if he has the Spirit of God, he is not in the flesh, because to be in the flesh is death, and we have passed from death to life. God has adopted us as sons with every legal right of a son. But even more, He has given to us His own Spirit making us a part of His family by nature, as well as by adoption. For this reason we can call God, "Abba, Father." We are not treated as servants, but as sons. But how can we be sure that we are indeed the children of God? Because the Holy Spirit dwelling within gives us assurance that we are the very sons of God by His presence. Yet with the glorious privilege comes responsibility—if we will be glorified, then we must also suffer with Christ. What is the suffering? The conflict with the old sin nature against Christ and the new nature. It is the presence of the old sin nature that causes suffering. But deliverance from the presence of sin is on its way!"

¹⁷ McClain, 162.

¹⁸ W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, vol. 1 (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revel, 1966), 222.

Conclusion: This is a reflection on the redemptive work of Christ mentioned in Romans 7:25. The Christian is free from God's judgment, or condemnation, by reason of Christ's death for the sins of humanity (8:1-4). With the just demands of the law thus fulfilled, the believer must live now, not according to the flesh as the unbeliever, but according to the Spirit which dwells in him and leads to life and peace. The Christian, by reason of the Spirit's presence within him, enjoys not only new life but also a new relationship to God, that of adopted son and heir through Christ, whose sufferings and glory he shares.

IV. GLORIFICATION—CONFORMATION TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST (8:18-39).

A. The Sufferings of this Present Time (8:18-27).

The glory which the believer is destined to share with Christ far exceeds the sufferings, hardship, cruel and unusual punishment, severe persecution, or even death itself, of this present life. Paul wrote that he reckons (LOGIZOMAI) this to be true. In other words, this is his studied, deep conviction. He did experience all of these sufferings. Even the conflict within between the old sin nature and the new nature, when compared to God's goal of glorification, dims. It is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (8:18).

Paul next states that "the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God." Why does creation wait (APOKARADOKIA-anxious watching) for our glorification? The created world is linked to human destiny through its solidarity with man. As it shares in man's penalty of corruption through sin, so also it will share in his benefits of redemption and future glory. At present both must suffer while waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. One day even creation will be delivered from bondage to liberty. And because we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within as a down payment (APARCHE-firstfruits of the harvest), God will certainly redeem our bodies as He has already redeemed our souls. Patience is developed as we look to the future adoption of the body (8:19-25).

In the meantime, we have the Holy Spirit helping us in our infirmity, the old sin nature's presence. He Himself makes intercession for us. And the Father searches our hearts and interprets the Spirit's innermost feelings. Thus, intercession is made for us not only by God the Son, who sits at the right hand of God the Father, but also by God the Spirit who dwells within the believer. What will God do with those who have the righteousness of Christ? He will glorify them (8:26-27).

Conclusion: Paul declares that the present sufferings are nothing in comparison to the future glory to be revealed in us. Even nature itself is awaiting this glorious development. And we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies. And as we wait, we have the Holy Spirit as an indwelling Intercessor.

B. The Glory which Shall Be Revealed in Us (8:28-39).

1. Our assurance concerning the glory to be revealed in us (8:28-37).

We are encouraged by the certainty of the future bodily resurrection. We are encouraged by the indwelling Holy Spirit. And now we are encouraged by the eternal purpose of God. He is working every detail of life to the end established in His eternal purpose. Paul states that "all things work together for good." What is the good to which Paul is referring? It is God's eternal purpose. One interpretation is that this promise is for all without any exceptions, but only appreciated by those "who love God and are the called according to His purpose. This is because God is sovereign and everything He does is intrinsically good. Both the saved and the lost will bring glory to God as shown by the example of Moses and Pharaoh. "And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ

is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father" (Phil. 2:11). This includes things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Therefore all things are fulfilling His eternal purpose and thus work together for good. The second interpretation is that this promise applies only to believers. Only the sons of God are being conformed into the image of Christ, that Christ might have the preeminence among many brethren (v.29). The world does not have this promise. Only those who are predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son have this promise. The called are those who have heard the Gospel, they have received the Lord Jesus Christ. He is their master and for them there are no accidents (8:28). God works all things together for good. He is Sovereign and whatever He does is good.

A test case: Can God glorify us? All the believers of all time everywhere? If He can, then God can work all things together for good! God's eternal purpose comes first, then foreknowledge, then predestination, then calling, then justification, and then glorification. The predicate of one clause becomes the subject of the next clause.

The eternal purpose of God involves all things including our glorification. It is that we become increasingly conformed to the image of Christ. The word purpose (PROTHESIS) means a setting forth. The eternal purpose of God is a plan chosen by God which results in foreknowledge of the end result of the plan. Those that were thug foreknown were also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. God's plan started in eternity past when He chose us in Christ (Eph. 1:4-5). He predetermined that one day we would be like His Son. This predestination applies only to saved people. The word foreknowledge (PROGNOSOS) means to know before; it is one aspect of omniscience; it implies a knowledge of the end and the means to that end from all eternity; It is the basis of His foreordaining counsels; it involves His electing grace, but this does not preclude human will.¹⁹

The word predestinate (PROORIZO) has special reference to that to which the subjects of His foreknowledge are predestinated.

Predestination = (df) PROORIZO, meaning to deter mine, or work out a destination beforehand. God has determined the destination of every believer, and predestination is the divinely chosen means of reaching that goal. The goal is perfect sonship (Eph.1:5), perfect conformity to the likeness of His Son (Rom.8:28,29), that ultimately we should be "to the praise of the glory"" of His grace" (Eph.1:6). Predestination and election are not synonymous terms, therefore it is incorrect to use then interchangeably. We are "predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph.1:11).

The Scriptures teach also that God has set a destination for every unbeliever, but the responsibility of choice rests with every man. God made that point clear to Adam (Gen.2:16,17), and later to the nation of Israel (Deut.30:11-20). Spiritual death, that is, eternal separation from God, is the destination of all who reject God's way of salvation (John 3:36; Rom.6:23).²⁰

Whom He predestinated, them He also called. The word call (KALEO) means to call anyone, invite, summon; it is used particularly of the Divine call to partake of the blessings of redemption. When we are quickened by the Holy Spirit, and respond to His call in faith, He justifies us, and He also glorifies us. This means that the believer has already been glorified in Christ. The word justify (DIKAIOSIS) denotes the act of pronouncing righteous, treating as righteous, and making righteous on the ground of Christ's death; it involves His free gift of life; it springs from God's grace; only God can remain just and yet justify guilty sinners.

¹⁹ Vine, vol. 1, 119.

²⁰ Strauss, 47.

And the word glorify (DOXAZO) means to do honor to, to make glorious. Its end result will be complete conformity to "the image of His Son." All these acts of God took place before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) (8:29-30). Now we come to four rhetorical questions in relation to the eternal purpose of God. First, what shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? There is no adversary great enough to 'thwart the eternal purpose of God! Second, if God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not grant us all things besides? Since God gave us His Son, He is going to give us everything that is necessary in this life and the life to come. Third, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. What does election mean?

Election = (df) EKLEKTOS, meaning to select, pick out, choose. This doctrine has divided the Church down through the centuries. The division revolves around the two ideas of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility (or freewill) of man. Some Christians cling to one view and are violently opposed to the other. The Bible teaches both the sovereignty of God and the power of man to make choices. Election, according to Scripture, is God acting entirely apart from man and according to His own purpose. Election does not mean the elect will be saved whether they want to or not, and the non-elect could not be saved even if they wanted to be.

Election is a choice on God's part (John 15:16), based upon His grace (Rom.11:5), and not upon human works (Rom.9:11). The choice is further based upon God's foreknowledge (I Peter 1:2) and is absolutely certain of fulfillment (Rom.8:28-39). All of God's choices were made before the foundation of the world (Eph.1:4; II Tim.1:9). An important fact to keep in mind is that the judgments and choices of God are always right (Gen. 18:25; Rom.2:5; 9:14). The words "elect" and "chosen" are used synonymously in the Bible.²¹

Fourth, who shall condemn them? Christ has removed all condemnation. The only Person in the universe who can condemn us, is the very Person who died in our behalf. And it is the living Lord salvation in the eternal God. Jesus Christ is our Intercessor,

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Can tribulation or trouble separate us? No. Can distress or anguish? No. Can legal persecution? No. Can famine, nakedness, peril, or sword? Paul speaks from experience that these will not separate the believer from Christ's love. Nothing can undo what Christ has accomplished on our behalf on the cross. God's people will endure affliction. Persecution and tribulation will enter their lives. But these are insufficient to separate us from God's love. Rather we are "more than conquerors" (HUPERNIKAO-superconquerors), not through our own power, but through Him that loved us. Any suffering only draws us closer to Him (8:35-37). The man of God is invincible in the will of God. The conflict is constant, but the conflict is also ordained of God to conform us so that God will get all the credit SOLI DEO GLORIA.

2. Our confidence concerning the glory to be revealed in us (8:38-39).

What possible enemies could try to defeat this glorification? Could death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, or any other creature do so? Paul searches through the sphere of existence, the sphere of created things, the sphere of time, the sphere of space, and through any other possible sphere, and praise God! Nowhere can the Apostle find anything in the whole universe which can sever the relationship that the children of God have with the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by

²¹ Ibid, 22.

the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation. John 8:31-3 2 Col. 1:21,23 I John 2:19 Matt. 13:19-21 Rom. 8:23 Matt. 6:30 Psa. 121:3 Heb. 1:14 I Pet. 1:5 I Pet. 1:6 John 10:28 John 10:29 John 16:8 Rom. 8:35-39²²

Conclusion: All that happens to one who loves God is directed by God toward the achievement of being conformed into the image of Christ. The all-conquering power of the love of God has overcome every obstacle to man's salvation and every threat of his separation from God. That power manifested itself fully when God delivered up to death even His own Son for our salvation. Through Him, the Christian can overcome all his afflictions and trials. God's eternal purpose gives us assurance and His love gives us confidence that His promise of glorification is as good as accomplished. God is sovereign. Everything He does is intrinsically good. His eternal purpose will be fulfilled. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

V. VINDICATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS WITH ISRAEL (9:1—11:36).

Righteousness = (df) DIKAIOSUNE, is the character or quality of being right or just. ...It is used to denote an attribute of God, e.g., Rom.3:5, the context of which shows that "the righteousness of God" means essentially the same as His faithfulness, or truthfulness, that which is consistent with His own nature and promises.²³

Having dealt with justification (the imputation of righteousness), sanctification (the impartation of righteousness), and glorification (the conformation to the image of Christ), Paul must now deal with the serious theological problem of Israel's unbelief and its rejection of Jesus as Messiah. Has the eternal plan of God been frustrated by Israel's unbelief? What about all the Old Testament promises that God made to Israel? Has God's wonderful plan of salvation for Israel been nullified? Has God given up on the Jews? Who are true Israel? If God has not kept His promises to Abraham, then His promises to the Church would also be uncertain.

Paul's treatment of the problem is surprising, and yet it increases in glory the longer it is considered. In this section, one can see Romans 8:28ff in practice. God IS working ALL things together for good for ALL. Paul admits that Israel as a nation has rejected the Gospel, and yet he firmly declares that God is not finished with Israel. The eternal purpose of God will stand; not even Israel's unbelief can alter it. God controls the means as well as the end. The promises of God to Abraham will be fulfilled. "

A. The Consideration of Israel's Rejection (9:1-33).

In God's past dealings with Israel, the absolute sovereignty of God is revealed for all to see. In His wisdom and grace, He is working out His eternal purpose.

1. Paul's Remorse concerning Israel's Position (9:1-5).

Paul begins by affirming that what he is about to discuss is true. He is experiencing terrible grief over the unbelief of his own people. He would willingly undergo everlasting destruction apart from Christ for the sake of their coming to the knowledge of Christ if it were possible. But this is

²² "Article XV," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

²³ Vine, vol. 3, 298.

not possible as the life of Paul is not his own, but Christ's. The verb "I could wish" (EuCHOMEN-I was praying), implies that God would not allow him to do so. Note that the sovereignty of God does not produce apathy, but rather great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart for the lost. This is the same love that Moses expressed in Exodus 32:31-32, "And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--and if not, blot me, I pray, out of thy book which thou hast written," (9:1-3).

But who are the Israelites? They are the ones to whom belong the adoption. God adopted the nation of Israel as His son. Israel was brought into a special relationship with God, a collective relationship, not enjoyed by the other nation. In Exodus 4:22 we read, "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn." They are the ones to whom God revealed His glory. This was the visible presence of God in the pillar of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night in their travels in the wilderness described in Exodus 13:20-22 and 16:10.

They are the ones to whom the covenants were given: Abrahamic—a nation forever, Gen.12,15; Palestinian—a land forever, Deut.29,30; Davidic—a king forever, 2 Sam.7; and New—a people forever, (Jer.31). To Israel belong the covenants.

They are the ones to whom God gave the law of Moses. They were given the Ten Commandments in Exodus 19:16--20:17. They are the ones who were to be a kingdom of priests. In Exodus 19:6 it states, "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." They performed the sacrifices in the tabernacle and in the temple. And they are the ones to whom the promises were given. They had the promises of the forgiveness of sins, the inheritance of the Promised Land, and most important, the promise of the Messiah (cf. Gen.3:15; 49:10; Num.24:15-19; Deut.18:15-22). Their fathers included Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David. And they are the ones from whom our Lord Jesus Christ came according to the flesh (SARX). His humanity came from Israel. Yet in His own true inner personality, He "is over all, God blessed forever." Christ, as a man, was a Jew, but He always is God. He is Deity. He is the Messiah of Israel. He is blessed intrinsically because He is God. But these privileges resulted not in gratitude, but in pride, self-reliance, and even self-pity (9:4-5).

2. Paul's Reference to Biblical History to Explain Israel's Position (9:6-13).

In this section, the following principle is given: not all of Abraham's descendants are true Israelites. Mere natural descent from Abraham did not ensure the full possession of the divine gifts; it was God's sovereign prerogative to bestow this fullness upon, or to withhold it from, whom ever He wished. The children of promise are those who believe in the God of Abraham and their faith is imputed to them for righteousness, as was his.

Paul now proves this principle by going to the Old Testament. First, Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, but only "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Faith is what is important, not the flesh, i.e., the physical line. If anyone objects that this illustration is inappropriate as Ishmael was the son of Hagar, the bondwoman, Paul uses a second illustration. Isaac and Rebecca had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Both were legitimately in the line of Isaac. They were twins. But God, in His sovereignty, ignored the Eastern custom of primogeniture and chose Jacob, the younger, to be served by Esau, the elder. This choice was made that the eternal purpose of God according to election might stand. Election (EKLOGEN) signifies picked out, chosen; its source is God's grace, not human will. Salvation is never upon the basis of human merit. It is rather upon the basis of divine grace which arises out of the eternal purpose of God's sovereignty. Election is not based on parenthood, order of birth; it is totally the work of God who does the calling. Calling (KALOUNTOS) is election realized; it suggests either vocation or destination depending on the context. When Malachi 1:2-3 states that God loved Jacob, but hated Esau, it is using "hated"(EMISESA) in the legal sense; it is unemotional and refers to those who are not chosen; for this reason they are considered as hated; "the comparison of the good things done for Jacob with

those done for Esau is like the difference between loving and hating."²⁴ Note that it is not the "loved" or "chosen" that has anything to do with obtaining a special relationship with God. God does all the work and thereby gets all the credit. Why does one receive Christ? Because God chose him. Whatever God does is just and right. This is His universe. The question is not why did God reject Esau, but why did God ever chose Jacob. It was only through grace, SOLA GRATIA.

3. Paul's Reference to Biblical Principles to Explain Israel's Present Position (9:14-29).

Would not this arbitrary election make God unrighteous? The use of ME in the question (rather than OU which requires the answer yes) requires a negative response. May it not be (ME GENOTO). God is by His very character righteous. But what do the Scriptures say? Paul paraphrases what God told Moses in Exodus 33:19, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." God's mercy is not given as a recognition of human will, nor is it a reward of human work (John 1:12-13). God extends mercy because He desires to do so. Take Pharaoh for an example. God raised up Moses to display his mercy and He raised up Pharaoh to display His severity in punishing those who oppose Him. Pharaoh is responsible because he hardened his own heart, then God made that decision final. God is sovereign. Election does not depend on man's desire and effort, but on God's mercy. If Moses were chosen by God's mercy, and not by his own desire, then we can be saved only by God's mercy and not by our own desire. If none deserve salvation, then none can find fault with God in mercy choosing some and not choosing others. If it were based on merit none would be saved. Therefore God is just in having mercy on whom He wants to have mercy, and in hardening whom He wants to harden. God has the right to harden or soften. He is righteous in sovereign election as Creator and in providing salvation for whomever He wills in accordance with His eternal purpose (9:14-18).

What about the objection that if Pharaoh could not help himself then he is not the blame for his actions. This objection is absurd. It reveals a heart problem. Who do you think you are? You are but a creature. You owe your very existence to God. God is sovereign in that He has the right of the Creator over His creation. This is His universe. Every man is a sinner, every man deserves judgment. God has a right to pick out one man from that mass and have mercy upon him, and let the other man go if He so desires. God makes no man a sinner; man is a sinner already. The formed cannot question the actions of the Former. The formed has no intrinsic rights. God is the Potter. He can do with the clay whatever He wills. The thing that determines the difference is not the relative merit of man but the purpose of God. Both the vessels to honor and the vessels to dishonor bring Him glory (9:19-21).

How does this apply to Israel? If God desires to display His justice and grace through the unbelief of Israel, the vessels of wrath (ORGE-anger) fitted for destruction (ADOLEIA-perdition), and the Jewish remnant and believing Gentiles, the vessels of mercy (ELEOS-the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it²⁵ destined to receive the riches of His glory for eternity in heaven, who can object? (9:22-24).

Do the Scriptures support this concept? God told Hosea, "I will call them my people, who were not my people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. 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 sons of the living God" (Hosea 2:23; 1:10). And according to Isaiah only a remnant will be saved (Isaiah 10:22-23).

Conclusion: The Gentiles, without the privileges of the Jews and without the law or prior knowledge of the Scriptures, have attained to the righteousness of faith. " While Israel, with the

²⁴ Scofield, 978.

²⁵ Vine, vol. 3, 60.

law, attempted to establish their own righteousness by adherence to the law, but failed to attain righteousness. Paul proves this by quoting Isaiah 28:16. It is those who believe on Christ who shall not be ashamed. This partial blindness of Israel resulted in God calling out a people unto His name from both Jews and Gentiles.

B. The Explanation of Israel's Rejection (10:1-21).

In the last three verses of chapter nine, Paul states that the Gentiles have attained true righteousness without seeking it through the law, ordinances, or works. But the Jews, having the law, mistook it as the path to righteousness. Therefore they missed the true righteousness of God. The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility and the resulting condemnation if that privilege is rejected. Israel stumbled in fulfillment of the Scriptures. Because they had the law, they did not see the necessity of the Messiah's death. But "whosoever" or the one who trusts in Christ shall not be ashamed; that one will receive righteousness which is by faith. This section shows that God is working in Israel's rejection in keeping with human responsibility. Israel is still held responsible in God's program of sovereign election. Israel's rejection is not to be traced to unjustness on God's part, but to ignorance on Israel's part. Man is morally responsible for his rejection. What is God's present plan for Israel? That they be saved and brought into the Church. This is Paul's desire and prayer.

1. Israel's Ignorance of the Channel of Salvation (10:1-11).

Salvation = (df) SOTERIA, denoting deliverance, rescue, preservation. The root idea is deliverance from some danger or even death as when Peter cried, "Lord save me" (Mat.14:30). In the New Testament the general use is salvation from the penalty and power of sin, a spiritual and eternal deliverance granted immediately by God to all who repent of their sins and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of God is the Author and sole source of salvation (Mat.1:21; Acts 4:12; Heb.2:10; 5:9). His Gospel is the saving instrument (Rom.1:16). Salvation is all of GOD'S grace apart from any works on man's part (Eph. 2:8,9).²⁶

Paul's desire is that the Israelites might be changed from vessels of wrath to vessels of mercy. He desires their salvation from destruction because of their zeal (ZELON). They are sincere, but it is a sincerity based on ignorance. This ignorance has led to their disobedience. Not realizing how God imparts righteousness, they tried to establish their own righteousness and instead became self-righteous. As a result, they were not willing to submit themselves to the righteousness of God. They did not see their need. They did not understand that Christ is the end of the law for the believer. Christ is the goal or purpose for which the law was given. The law was given to lead us to Christ. Christ came to fulfill the law and thus give it validity. Self-established righteousness and God-established righteousness are contrasted here (10:1-4).

Paul next gives a principle concerning legal righteousness: the one living by law (NOMOS), the law of Moses, must meet all the requirements of the law if he wishes to be righteous. As the Jews were not able to keep the law, they were condemned by the very law that they were trusting in. But there is a principle concerning faith righteousness: the one living by faith in the Messiah is justified, that is, made righteous, apart from the law. The Messiah does not need our help or works; we are just to receive His work in our behalf. The source of righteousness is faith. Paul proves this by quoting Deuteronomy 30:10-14 where Moses shows that blessing is

²⁶ Strauss, 51.

possible only by faith. The concept of faith righteousness is not new with Paul. God will bring the Messiah to man; mankind cannot bring the Messiah (10:5-8).

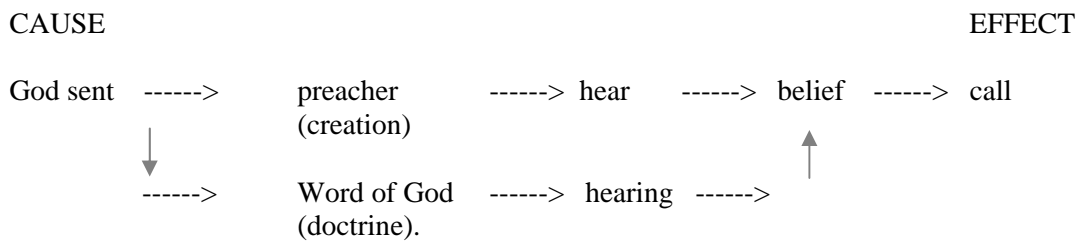
In verses 9-11 Paul is quoting Old Testament Hebrew poetry. Hebrew poetry consists of a balance or distribution of thought sometimes called "sense rhythm," constituting thought-arrangement rather than word-arrangement as its basis.²⁷ "Synonymous parallelism is the repetition of the same thought with equivalent expressions, the first line (stich) reinforcing the second, giving a distich or couplet."²⁸ Therefore confession of Jesus and belief in His resurrection are identical. Confession (HOMOLOGEO) and faith (PISTIS) are inseparable. Belief does not exist apart from confession. The conclusion is "He who believes in Him will not be put to shame" (Isaiah 28:16). The ones who call are all those who were chosen from the foundation of the world (10:9-11).

2. Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Character of Salvation (10:12-13).

In verse eleven the Scriptural quotation implies universal salvation; now Paul explains it. Salvation is offered to both Jews and Gentiles. Salvation is based on faith, not race. There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek because we all have the same Lord who is rich unto all that call upon Him. He is ready to receive all who call on Him for salvation. The grace of God can save both Jew and Gentile. The Lord is Lord of all (universal) and richly blesses all (restrictive, limited to the elect) who call on Him (10:12-13).

3. Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Preaching of the Gospel (10:14-21).

It is necessary that the Gospel be proclaimed universally. Paul argues this point from effect to cause. Salvation requires calling. But calling presupposes belief, in that it is the expression of belief. And belief presupposes hearing as it is the expression of hearing. And hearing presupposes preaching. And preaching presupposes the sending of God which is accomplished through creation. Therefore, all rests upon the work of God and He alone receives all the credit SOLI DEO GLORIA. God not only wills the end, the calling that results (from man's point of view) in salvation, but also the means, the preaching, hearing, and belief. In verse fifteen the "good news" is quoted from Isaiah 52:7 and refers to the fall of Babylon. As Babylon is fallen, sin and death are destroyed. Salvation is totally God's work of grace SOLA GRATIA.



Therefore, there is no excuse for all have heard. The revelation of God is both sufficient for condemnation and regeneration. However, we are accountable to deliver the message. One is only accountable for the revelation he has received. If one rejects the lesser revelation, he will reject the superior revelation as well. The Gospel has been universally proclaimed, { 10:14-16).

But the response to the universal proclamation of the Gospel has been partial. Not all have obeyed. Isaiah had predicted this in Isaiah 53:1. Consequently, faith comes by hearing "and hearing by the Word of God. But has everyone heard the Gospel? Yes, in Psalm 19:4, the Psalmist states

²⁷ Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 364.

²⁸ Ibid.

that throughout the inhabited earth it has been proclaimed through creation. But did the Jews understand it? Yes. First, Moses says that God would make Israel envious by those who are not a nation, the Gentiles. And second, Isaiah stated that God would be found by those who did not seek Him, and that God would reveal Himself to them, the Gentiles. But concerning Israel, he said, "All the day long did I stretch out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Isaiah 65:1,2).

Conclusion: In His sovereignty God has rejected some and elected others. The Gospel is within the reach of every man. Man is responsible because he is willingly disobedient. The only reason men are without Christ is that they refuse to submit to God and receive His righteousness.

C. The Consolation Concerning Israel's Rejection (11:1-36).

In chapter nine we noticed God's past dealings with Israel. God unconditionally chose Israel to be His son and gave them many great promises. All of God's actions were based on His own sovereign will and not on human merit. God will keep those promises. In chapter ten we noticed God's present dealings with Israel. God is calling out a remnant who, together with Gentile believers, will comprise the Church. Jews who rejected God's righteousness are lost. They are responsible because they have heard the Gospel through creation. Paul desires their salvation. There is no difference today between Jew and Gentile. In chapter eleven Paul deals with the logical question, did God reject His people? Theme in the question require a negative response. May it not be (ME GENOITO). In this chapter we will notice the future dealings of God with Israel.

1. Israel's Rejection Is not Total—There Is a Remnant (11:1-10).

Though Israel has been unfaithful to the prophetic message of the Gospel (Rom. 10:14-21), God remains faithful to Israel. Paul himself is proof of this. Paul's first question "Hath God cast away His people?" is a rhetorical question. If there is but one Jew who has accepted Christ, then God has not cast away His people. Therefore, if Paul is a Jew and he is saved, then God has not cast away Israel. Was Paul a Jew? Definitely! He was an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin (11:1).

Second, Paul brings up the foreknowledge of God. Foreknowledge (PROGINOSKO) is the basis of God's foreordaining counsels; it means to have a special relationship. If God's foreknowledge of us as individuals cannot fail, neither can it fail when it comes to this nation of Israel which He foreknew in ages past. God still has a national destiny for Israel which refutes the amillennial position (11:2).

Third, God has always had a remnant. God told Elijah in I Kings 19:10-18 when Elijah complained that he was the only believer left, "I have reserved for myself seven thousand men." Notice that it was God who did the reserving. The apostasy was at times general, but it was never universal. God always has a remnant. So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace, and not by merit, race, nor personal righteousness. And if it is by grace, works are totally excluded. Grace and works are mutually exclusive. Works have no part in election. But what about Israel? She sought righteousness but did not find it because she sought it by works. However the remnant did obtain the righteousness of God through the grace of God. The rest of Israel became insensitive to God's righteousness. This all was predicted by Moses (Deut. 29:4) and by Isaiah (Isa. 29:10). The rest of Israel refused to recognize the truth of God. They refused to seek righteousness after the manner of God and instead attempted to establish their own righteousness. David in Psalm 69:22,23 described the blinding, or darkening (SKOTEINOS), of their spiritual eyes. With the exception of the believing remnant, Israel has been temporary blinded. It is in bondage to sin.

God's foreknowledge and predestination results in the election of a remnant. The source of election is grace apart from works. The elect of Israel received the righteousness of God by faith and became vessels of honor.

While the rest of Israel seeking self-righteousness received blindness instead and became vessels to destruction. God gave them a spirit of slumber so that they could not see. This is all according to the eternal purpose of God. There is a remnant of Israel; Israel's rejection is not total (11:2-10).

2. Israel's Rejection Is not Final—God is Going to Restore Them (11:11-36).

We have seen that there is a remnant, but what about the rest of the nation of Israel? Are they cast off? Have they stumbled that they should fallout of the plan of God? Is Israel's rejection final? Again, the use of ME in the question "did they NOT stumble?" requires a negative response. May it not be (ME GENOITO). In this section Paul is going to set forth positive instruction in answer to this question. He is going to give two reasons why Israel's rejection is not final but only temporary,

First, Israel's rejection is not final because of God's purposes in Israel's rejection. Why was Israel set aside? (1) That salvation might come to the Gentiles. This would provoke the Jews to envy. The unbelief of Israel has paved the way for the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles and for their easier acceptance of it outside the context of Jewish culture. In God's design it should follow that Israel's ultimate acceptance of the Gospel message will benefit the world even more than its original unbelief. It will bring about an unprecedented revival among the Gentiles. (2) That blessing might come to the world. This temporary rejection has permitted the universal aspects of the Abrahamic covenant to be realized. (3) That the remnant of Israel might be saved. Gentile conversions were to cause Jews through envy to come to Christ. (4) That God might bring Israel to a place of world blessing. Israel is to become the chief nation on the earth. Jerusalem is to be the world capitol. All the Gentiles will go there to worship God. (5) That Israel might be an example to the Gentiles (11:11-16). Israel remains holy, that is, set apart for the purposes of God. If the first fruits are holy, then the whole batch (PHURAMA—a lump of dough or clay) is holy. If the root is holy, then so are the branches. If the Patriarchs were consecrated for God's service, " then so is Israel both as a nation and as individuals. What about the relationship of the Gentiles to Israel? Israel has been set aside temporarily but there is a remnant. The Church does not replace Israel. Believers are grafted among them. Believers partake of the riches and benefits of Israel's heritage. Therefore, the Church cannot boast. Believers are debtors to the Jews. The Church is established upon Israel's Messiah (11:16-18). What was the reason for Israel's rejection? Israel was set aside because of unbelief. The Gentiles stand in favor because of faith. For this reason believers are admonished not to be proud, but rather to reverence God. Believers stand in the grace of God by faith and not be their own intrinsic worth (of which as creatures believers have none). Consider this: when the body of Christ is complete, the Lord will come; then Gentile times will be finished and Israel shall be put in again, after all they are the natural branches (11:19-24).

Second, Israel's rejection is not final because of God's promise of the restoration of Israel. Do not be ignorant of this previously unrevealed truth: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. The "times of the Gentiles" started at the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 606 B.C. and will end at the Rapture of the Church before the Tribulation. The fullness of the Gentiles" is the dispensation of the Church which we are in now. It will end when the last member is joined to the Body of Christ. When these two events occur, then national salvation will come to Israel. The "all Israel" which "shall be saved II refers to the survivors of the Tribulation and the judgments at the Second Coming of Christ with His saints at the Revelation. This national repentance and salvation was prophesied in Isaiah 59:20-21 and Jeremiah 31:31. God cannot do otherwise because of His promises to the Patriarchs and His unconditional covenants (11:25-32).

Conclusion: The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. God does not change His mind. Everything occurs according to the eternal purpose of God. God set them aside temporarily for our salvation. But God will return to Israel. God hath concluded them all (Israel) in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all (believers).

3. The Doxology (11:33-36).

This final section celebrates the wisdom of God's plan of salvation, which is now open and comprehensible to the whole human race. In the first eleven chapters the human race is split between Jews and Gentiles. The promises of God came to the Jews but were rejected. This resulted in the expansion of those promises to the Gentiles. Now the Jews and Gentiles have been brought together with God having mercy upon both. This plan of God calls forth praise:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen (Rom. 11:33-36).

Who is the God we serve? He is the Creator of all things, the Source of all being, and the Sovereign of the universe. He is the infinite, perfect and eternal Spirit in Whom all things have their Source, Support, and End. God is eternal, i.e., self-existent, uncreated. To God, time is but a little span between two eternities. God created time and is, therefore, above time and overrules the events of time. God is omnipresent, i.e., everywhere present at the same time. He is not a man. He is not limited by time and space because He is Spirit as opposed to material. God is infinite, i.e., beyond our ability to fully comprehend with our finite understanding. He is without limits. God is absolute and immutable in His wisdom, power, presence, unity, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and love. God is omniscient, i.e., knowing all things from all eternity, never needing to learn as He Himself is the Source of all truth. God is omnipotent, i.e., all-powerful, without any restraints imposed by His environment. God is sovereign, i.e., does not have to answer to any for His actions, in absolute control, having no superior. And what is more, He is my Lord and my " God. Praise Him. To Him alone belongs all the credit SOLI DEO GLORIA. Amen.

VI. APPLICATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AT WORK (12:1—15:13).

This is the last section of Romans. In Romans 1:1-17 Paul introduces the theme: the Gospel of God. In Romans 1:18--5:21 he explains the doctrine of justification by faith. In Romans 6:1--8:17 he explains the doctrine of sanctification. In Romans 8:18-19 he explains the doctrine of glorification. In chapters 9-11 Paul deals with the problem of Israel's unbelief in the light of the eternal purpose of God. He ends Romans 11 with a glorious hymn of praise to God for His greatness and wisdom. Now comes the question, how should Christians live, labor, and love? In this section, that question will be answered. There must be a sacrifice of body and mind. There must be a godly love (AGAPE). There must be a love that fulfills the law. There must be good stewardship of time. Everything in life or death must be done to the glory of God. There must be consideration for the weaker brother. There must be patience and self-denial. There must be acceptance because of God's faithfulness and mercy towards us.

A. The Basic Principle of God's Righteousness at Work in the Believer's Life (12:1-2).

These two verses are the key to this section. They are the logical result of the mercies of God revealed in the first eleven chapters. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12:1-2).

1. The Righteousness of God Will Result in the Presentation of the Body of the Believer to the Service of God (12:1).

How can I find the will of God? What does God want me to do? What are God's requirements? First of all, we as believers (αδελφοι ADELPHOI-brothers) are exhorted (παρακαλο PARAKALO) to present (παραστεσαι PARASTESAI) our physical bodies as living sacrifices. The word "present" is in the aorist active infinitive and means to yield, or commit, as a definite action that took place in the past once and for all. The Christian life is based on a definite presentation upon which all subsequent decisions are based. The motivation for this presentation is the mercies or compassions of God as revealed in the first eleven chapters of Romans. This includes justification, sanctification, and glorification. The one who comprehends what God has graciously done for him will present himself to God as a living sacrifice. This is a rational decision. Believers are to give their total personality to God. It is a complete commitment. The believer has no personal rights. He surrenders his personal goals and plans to God. It is a lifetime commitment in which the believer is sanctified, or set apart, for the service of God. If the desire of your heart is to please God, then present yourself to Him. This is the only sensible things to do. We are to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. This is the chief purpose of man. And the will of God is perfect.

2. The Righteousness of God Will Produce Transformation of the Believer's Life to the Will of God (12:2).

How do I commit myself to God? What am I to do to be holy and pleasing to God? First, we are to stop being conformed, or molded, into the world's system of values and philosophies. Do not let worldly desires corrupt your life. The problem is not that the Christian is in the world, but that the world is in the Christian. Purge yourself from all carnal, or old sin nature, values, fashions, and tastes. And second, we are to be transformed (μεταμορφουσθε METAMORPHOUSTHE-change from the inside out as a butterfly) by the renewing (ANAKAINOSEI) of the mind (NOOS). We are to be brainwashed by the Word of God (Titus 3:5) with the goal of proving the will of God. We need to practice psychocybernetics to prove through trial the will (THELEMA-what God specifically wants for me right this minute) of God. This will prove that the " will of God is intrinsically good. Satan's lie is that God / desires to destroy our pleasure and happiness. But anything that God wills is good by its very nature. This will prove that God's will is acceptable, or well-pleasing.

Conclusion. God will not make you do what you do not want to do. He will change your "want to." And this will prove that the will of God is perfect (TELEION-complete). It includes all of life: religious, social, political, sexual, emotional, physical, business, and marriage.

B. The Specific Applications of God's Righteousness at Work in the Life of the Believer (12:3—15:13).

Having given the basic principle of the righteousness of God at work in the life of the believer, Paul now shows how this will be applied in the local church, the state, in social responsibilities, and in amoral or doubtful areas.

1. The Christian's Conduct in the Local Church (12:3-21) (cf. Rom. 12:1-2).

a. The Christian's conduct in humility (12:3-8).

How should believers act toward other believers? What is the will of God for our relationships in the local church? We are to realize that we are all different, though important, members of one body. There must be an attitude of humility. But humility, or meekness, is not weakness. Moses led a nation of approximately 2.5 million ex-slaves, yet he was the meekest man on earth. He had a controlled strength because he knew his position. Do not overestimate your importance. All you have, including life itself, was given you by God. Therefore, do not make yourself the standard of spirituality. On the other hand, do not underestimate the gift, or gifts, that God has given to you. Use it with all confidence in God. Every believer has a gift. Every believer has a function in the body of Christ. We are saved to serve. No one else can do your job as well as you. Think about it, God made you what you are! We are all in the same body, yet each has a different function with differing gifts. Each gift is needed, therefore there must be cooperation. We need preachers to communicate God's revelation faithfully. We need deacons to do the work of ministering to the needs, physical and spiritual, of the body.

We need theologians to systematically teach the truths of the Word of God. We need exhorters to encourage and motivate us, as well as to rebuke when necessary. We need those that will give liberally, regularly, systematically, and proportionately. We need administrators to rule and make decisions. And we especially need those who show mercy to keep the wheels turning with cheerfulness. Therefore, be humble, evaluate soberly your traits to discover God's gift for you, recognize the function of the individual gift among the many, and use the individual gift in practical applications by God's help.

b. The Christian's conduct in love (12:9-21).

The Christian is to love the brethren. This love (AGAPE) is to be without hypocrisy (AN/UPOKRITOS). It is to be sincere and unassumed. It should cause us to recoil at evil, and at the same time, bond us to that which is consistent with the character of God. It is to be a brotherly love (PHILADELPHIA) that seeks to outdo each other in the giving of honor (TIM--esteem).

But how can we test the sincerity of love? What is its measure? It is not slothful in business. It takes its responsibility to others seriously. It is fervent, a burning fire within that cannot be put out. It serves the Lord by service to other believers. It produces joy in hope; the assurance of the future glory of God. It produces patience in trials. Its strength is shown in prayer. It helps those in need. It blesses (EULOGEO-to speak well of) the brother who wrongs him. It rejoices (CHAIRO) with those that rejoice, and weeps with those that weep. It is humble (TAREINOS-low-lying). Therefore, love in truth, do not just talk about it, encourage others, be enthusiastic and energetic for Christ, Do not permit the devil and adverse circumstances to restrain the joy that Christ gives, v Be hospitable, do not curse, be empathetic, and be humble (12:9-16).

The Christian is also to love those outside the church. What is the attitude of the church to the community? What is its reputation? It ought to be one of love. We are not to retaliate, but to return good in place of evil. We are to be open and above suspicion. We are to bend over backwards to be a good neighbor. When wronged, we are not to express wrath, but to leave the matter with God. Let God take care of the revenge (Deut.32:35; I Pet.5:6; Heb. 10:30) . ' For only God has a right to avenge and He will do so. Rather, we are to meet the needs of the one who wrongs us. The 'general principle is: be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (12:17-21).

2. The Christian's Responsibility to the State (13: 1-7) (cf. Rom. 12:1-2, living sacrifice, not conformed, but transformed).

a. The principle of subjection (13:1).

What is the responsibility of the Christian to the state? What power or authority does the state have over the Christian? Every soul (universal obligation) must be subject to the government.

The government has been delegated its authority by God. Therefore a transformed believer will submit to the higher powers.

b. The precepts and reasons for subjection (13:1-4). General principle: government God's idea. It was God who set up government after the Flood. Civil government is, even today, ordained by God. The Most High God is the one who appoints the officials (Daniel 5:21). Thus, those that resist human government are in fact resisting God. And those that resist human government will be judged by human government. Note that this judgment is not eternal punishment. Government has the right to judge resisters.

General principle: government is to judge good and evil from its viewpoint. The government protects its law-abiding citizens. That is its purpose. One is to expect punishment when he violates what the government says is good.

c. The practice of subjection to government (13: 5-7).

General principle: it is necessary to be in subjection. The state has the right to demand our respect and obedience. We are to do this not only out of fear and respect but out of a good conscience before God (Acts 5:29). We are to render to all their due; this is our moral obligation. We are to pay taxes, tolls, respect and honor to those in authority.

We believe that civil government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth. Rom. 13:7 II Sam. 23:3 Ex. 18:21-22 Acts 23:5 Matt. 22:21 Tit. 3:1 I Pet. 2:13,14 I Pet. 2:17 Acts 5:29 Acts 4:19-20 Dan. 3:17-18 Matt. 10:28 Matt. 23:10 Rev. 10:6 Phil. 2:10-11 Psa. 72:11²⁹

3. The Christian's social responsibility (13:8-14). (Rom. 12:1-2).

a. The command delineating the Christian's social responsibility (13:8).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loves another hath fulfilled the law." While not going into debt is a good idea which no one wholly follows, the context is not dealing with business affairs. The command is: do not take advantage of others, rather love them. The one who loves fulfills the law automatically. Thus, Christians should take the lead in meeting social needs.

b. The motivation for discharging the Christian's social responsibility (13:9-14).

The second half of the Ten Commandments has to do with man's responsibility to his fellow man. We are responsible to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love fulfills (PLEROO-completes) the law. The law was to regulate our lives in accordance to the will of God. Due to the urgency of the hour, we are to stop ignoring our social obligation. We are to put off our apathy and put on our work clothes and fighting equipment. Let us fulfill our responsibility to society.

We are to walk in keeping with our character and profession.

Identified with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, we are to quit being selfish and earn the right to be heard. 4. The Christian's conduct in relation to doubtful things (14:1--15:13). (Rom. 12:1-2).

This section is dealing ONLY with AMORAL issues. The principles below do not apply to immoral issues which are condemned in the Scriptures as sin. Definitions:

Moral = (df) God given revelation specifically calls this good; we are commanded to do these things; they are in accordance with the Word of God.

²⁹ "Article XVII," *Baptist Articles of Faith* (Anaheim, CA: Central Baptist Church), n.d.

Immoral = (df) God given revelation specifically calls this evil; we are forbidden to do these things; they are contrary to the Word of God.

Amoral = (df) God given revelation does not specifically deal with these things; they are neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word of God.

Sad to say, most church fights and splits occur over amoral issues. It is when people turn personal conviction concerning amoral issues into dogma, that the problems start.

a. The problem of maintaining harmony in the local church (14:1-3).

Each believer has different convictions and is at a different level of commitment. Paul addresses the believers and tells them to take to themselves (PROSLAMBANO=receive) the weak, or spiritually sick (ASTHENES=impotent). The one that is weak in the faith is the one who is excessively critical on the minor issues. In the church there is unity, yet diversity, but there must be harmony, not division. When the weaker brother comes into the fellowship, we are to receive him, to recognize his position, and not to argue with him.

The stronger brother is not to make fun (EXOUTHENEO=despise) of the weaker brother who abstains from certain things because of his personal convictions. Neither is the weaker brother to judge, or look down upon as less spiritual (KRINO), the one who partakes. It is not what a person does that is important in amoral matters, but why he does them. What are his motives?

b. The principles for maintaining harmony in the local church (14:4--15:13).

1) The principle of freedom in Christ (14:4-13).

Addressed to the weaker brother: Since the believer has freedom in Christ in amoral things he should refrain from judging the stronger brother. What right have you to judge God's servants? God is able to make them stand. God is their Master, not you (14:4). Since the believer has freedom in Christ in amoral things he should recognize the relationship to the Lord. Diverse practices concerning amoral issues do arise out of the same motive of serving the Lord. It is not what is done that is important, but why. People of diverse practices all have the same responsibility of obedience to Jesus Christ. The believer is the Lord's. He is always responsible to God for his actions (14:5-9). Since the believer has freedom in Christ in amoral things he should recognize the right of the Lord to judge. All believers shall one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ (βεμα BEMA) where rewards will be dispensed according to motives. It is the Lord's right alone to judge, and He will judge (Isaiah 45:23). Thus we are not to judge one another (14:10-13). Therefore, the believer has the RIGHT to do the amoral things. The weaker brother is to refrain from judging, recognize the fact that each believer belongs to the Lord, and recognize the right of the Lord to judge.

2) The principle of giving no offense (14:13-15:3).

Addressed to the stronger brother: Refrain from being a stumbling block (προσκομμα PROSKOMMA=shocking offence) or an occasion to fall (σκανδαλον SKANDALON=offence, obstacle) in your weaker brother's way. Do not be offensive by flaunting your rights. Do not be an occasion to fall by encouraging him to do what he considers to be sinful. If he follows your example thinking it is sin, to him it is sin (14:13). Recognize the source of defilement. The uncleanness comes from the weaker brother's convictions; it is imputed defilement, not intrinsic defilement. Nothing amoral is unclean by itself (14:14). And relinquish your own rights. If exercising my rights, or liberty, morally hurts the weaker brother, love would constrain me to cease. Exercising my rights in amoral areas could result in: (1) a new believer being hurt, (2) my testimony being ruined, (3) the peace of the body of Christ being disrupted, (4) the work of the Church being disrupted, (5) the weaker brother being led into sin (14:15--15:3). Therefore, the believer has the *responsibility* to restrain his practice in amoral things. The stronger brother is not to be a stumbling block. He is to recognize the source of defilement is conscience and that nothing

amoral is unclean intrinsically. And he is to relinquish his rights to do the amoral thing. He can recognize his liberty without flaunting it. The one who flaunts his liberty does not really have liberty. Liberty is considerate of others. One can recognize his liberty without exercising it. But any doubt concerning an issue would make it a sin.

3) The principle of glorifying God through unity (15:4-13). Addressed to every believer:

The bases for unity (το αυτο φρονειν TO AUTO PHRONEIN-being like-minded one toward another) is the believer's hope as found in the Scriptures. It results in glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (15:4-6). Therefore, the believer is to work and study for the glory (δοξα DOXA) of God. The common hope of every believer is greater than the amoral things that divide us. The amoral things that divide are not as great as the God who unites even Jews and Gentiles. For this reason, receive one another for the glory of God. Again the question is not what we do, but why we do it. Paul bases his exhortation to unity on the fact that Christ also received us to the glory of God. The work of Christ in behalf of Jews and Gentiles makes us one. Even the Old Testament foretold this unity in Psalm 18:50; 117:1; Deuteronomy 32:43 in the LXX; and in Isaiah 11:1,10 (15:712).

Paul then concludes his wish for unity by stating: "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 Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

VII. PROPAGATION—GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS DISSEMINATED (15:14--16:27).

As Paul concludes this letter, we see him as the Apostle to the Gentiles. He informs the Christians at Rome concerning his plans to journey to Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain. He then requests their prayers and gives a number of personal greetings. The letter ends with a glorious doxology.

A. The Apostle to the Gentiles (15:14-21).

Paul took the liberty to write to these Christians that he had never met to remind them of what they already knew. He did this as a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, with the priestly duty of preaching the Gospel of God so that the Gentiles may be offered up as a pleasing sacrifice, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. All of Paul's boasting was in Jesus Christ who did the work through him.

It was Paul's goal to be a pioneer. He always was preaching the Gospel where it was never heard before. His ministry was authenticated by signs and wonders. He had preached in the major population centers from Jerusalem to north-eastern Greece.

B. The Apostle's Future Plans (15:22-33).

Now Paul wanted to preach in new territory where the Gospel had not been proclaimed. Thus, he plans to set out for Spain with a stop-over at Rome. But first he must go to Jerusalem to deliver relief supplies from the saints in Macedonia and Achaia (15:22-29).

For this reason, Paul begs for them to join him in the struggle by their prayers to God in his behalf. He requests pray for his safety from the unbelievers, for acceptance of his assistance by the saints, and for a good trip to Rome. "May the God of peace be with you all. Amen." (15:30-33).

C. The Apostle's Personal Expressions of Greeting (16:1-24).

1. Commendation of Phoebe (16:1-2).

Phoebe is the bearer of this epistle. She is called a deaconess of the church of Cenchreae. A deaconess, like a deacon, was one who assisted the elders of the church. Paul asks that they welcome her in the Lord, as saints should. And if she needs help they are to give it to her. This shows that women do have a place in the church.

2. Greetings for Friends in Rome (16:3-16).

Paul's greetings to these believers is personal and shows the importance of the individual in the Body of Christ.

3. Warnings Concerning Dissenters (16:17-20).

This warning is not concerning heretics, but divisive leaders and movements that cause dissension and scandal, contrary to the Scriptures. These demand conformity to their standards to the exclusion of the diverse gifts of the Spirit. They are to be avoided after being identified. They only seek to serve themselves and deceive the simpleminded. "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

4. Greetings from Friends with Paul (16:21-24).

Paul lets his associates, including Tertius, the writer of this letter, have a part in this greeting.

D. The Apostle's Doxology (16:25-27).

Paul breaks out in praise to God for the Gospel which reveals the mystery hidden for many ages: justification and salvation through faith, with all the implications for Jew and Gentile that Paul has developed in this letter. Now to him that is of power to establish 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, 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: to God, only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

SOLA GRATIA! SOLA FIDEI! SOLI DEO GLORIA!

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