

# New Testament Letter: Romans Intro – 1:17

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**Writer:** Paul the apostle

**Date:** AD 55

**Purpose:** To defend an essential teaching of Christianity and its mission: justification through God’s righteousness in Christ.

**Luther on Romans:** In this epistle we... find most abundantly the things that a Christian ought to know, namely, what is law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross; and also how we are to conduct ourselves toward everyone, be he righteous or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe—and even toward our own selves. (AE 35:365, 380)

**Challenges for Readers:**

*Groups in Romans.* Names are often used in a variety of ways in Scripture. Here are some definitions and distinctions of groups important to the study of Romans.

**Israelites:** Descendants of Israel (Jacob), who typically believed in Yahweh (the LORD), the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**Hebrews:** A cultural description of Israelites based on their heritage language, Hebrew.

**Jews:** Used after the time of the OT [*the time between the Testaments was 432-5 BC*]... for people who were from the southern kingdom of Judah. Some of them believed in the Promised Messiah and were looking for His coming, while others believed in an elaborate system or works – that God would reward those who kept His commandments and punish those who intentionally broke His commandments.

*Universal Justification.* Paul clearly teaches that Jesus gave His life for the sins of the world. Because Jesus gave His life for all people, God declares all people justified by Christ’s sacrifice (4:5; 5:7–8, 10). However, God applies the benefits of His declaration to individuals through the Gospel (this is called

“subjective justification”). Paul does not teach “universalism,” which holds that God saves all people in order for hell to be empty. Despite God’s gracious declaration of justification, not every individual receives salvation, because some reject the Savior and persist in sin and unbelief. There will be judgment in eternity.

*The Israel of God.* Based on 11:26, millennialist groups teach that all Jewish people will be saved at the end of the world. However, Paul teaches that the new Israel is all who trust in Christ, be they Jews or Gentiles. These references in Romans actually describe the Church [*believers*] and not an end times conversion of all Jews (cf 9:6; Gal 6:15–16).

**Blessings for Readers:** Romans explains, step-by-step, why and how God saves us in Jesus. As you read the Letter, reflect on the examples of faith Paul provides from the OT and from his personal struggles. These examples show how God works through the Word in our lives, despite our weaknesses. The final chapters apply these Christian teachings in practical ways for individuals, families, and congregations.

**Outline:**

- I. Introduction (1:1–15)
- II. Theme of the Epistle: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (1:16–17)
- III. Who Is Righteous? The Wrath of God Revealed against All (1:18–3:20)
- IV. God Is Righteous! The Righteousness of God Revealed for All (3:21–4:25)
- V. The Righteous by Faith Truly Live (chs 5–8)
- VI. Righteousness by Faith That Leads to Life Is for “All Israel” (chs 9–11)
- VII. The Life Lived by the Righteous by Faith (12:1–15:13)
- VIII. Conclusion (15:14–16:27)

**ESV Summary:** Romans is the longest and most systematically reasoned of Paul's letters. Paul announces its theme in 1:16–17: the gospel is God's power for salvation, because it shows us that the righteousness of God is through faith for all who believe. Paul explains the need for justification through faith because of sin (1:16–4:25). He then spells out the results of justification by faith in terms of both present experience and future hope (5:1–8:39). In the next three chapters, he expresses his sorrow that many of his fellow Israelites have not embraced the gospel, and he wrestles with the theological implications of this (chs. 9–11). He concludes by describing how the gospel should affect one's everyday life (chs. 12–16).

### Greeting: 1:1-7

1. **1** Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel [good news] of God, **2** which he [God] promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, **3** concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh **4** and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness [thus, the Holy Spirit] by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, **5** through whom we have received grace [undeserved love] and apostleship [having been sent by Jesus] to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, **6** including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, **7** To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. // *obedience of faith. ...to trustingly hear and follow what someone says. Not sanctification (obedience that results from faith) but justification (obedience that consists of faith).*

### Longing to Go to Rome: 1:8-15

2. **8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is

proclaimed in all the world [you have God-given faith and many are aware of it]. **9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you **10** always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you [Paul had heard about them, prayed for them, and longed to visit them]. **11** For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— **12** that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine [when believers are together – speaking and living for Christ, they encourage each other]. **13** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers [and sisters], that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles [possibly as the Spirit worked through his preaching and teaching to bring people to faith in Jesus]. **14** I am under obligation [having been called by the Christ to proclaim the good news to all Gentiles (Acts 26:17b-18 – as Paul restated what happened in connection with his conversion)] both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. **15** So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

### The Righteous Shall Live by Faith: 1:16-17

3. **16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it [in the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." // Luther: I finally examined more carefully the word of Habakkuk: 'The just shall live by his faith' (2:4). From this passage I concluded that life must be derived from faith.... Then the entire Holy Scripture became clear to me, and heaven itself was opened to me.... Faith is God's gift created by the Gospel, and faith receives the gifts of the Gospel. It is entirely God's work.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 1:18 – 2:11

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### God's Wrath on Unrighteousness: 1:18-32

4. <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth *[for some details about God's wrath, see vv. 24-32]*. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them *[as explained in verse 20]*. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse *[we live in such an awesome world among awesome creatures created by an awesome God, yet many deny God's existence ☹]*.
5. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew *[about (James 2:19)]* God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking *[unable to think clearly or correctly]*, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things *[such as the golden calf]*.
6. <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature *[something God made]* rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. // God gave them up. **Although God does not force the unrighteous to sin, He does not prevent their sinful, degrading acts.**
7. <sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions *[indicating that some passions are okay]*. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that

are contrary to nature; <sup>27</sup> and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

- a. **Only the misuse of God's gift of sexuality brings dishonor.**
  - b. **exchanged**. Sin substitutes inferior things for God's good gifts.
  - c. **contrary to nature**. Homosexual activity, referred to here, is a departure from the natural order.
  - d. **due penalty for their error**. The Greco-Roman world was generally open to homosexuality, though there were critics, including Jews, Christians, and some philosophers. Homosexuality is an example of how something that seems obvious from nature (the relation of two sexes; the body was not designed for homosexual activities) is exchanged for something unnatural.
8. <sup>28</sup> And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God *[even though they saw the evidence of God]*, God gave them up to a debased mind *[corrupted, unworthy mind]* to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness *[a desire to do evil]*. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers *[spreading evil reports]*, haters of God, insolent *[violent]*, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup> Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

- a. **VV. 29-31:** These things disrupt the harmonious life and relationships that God would have us enjoy. Though some of these sins seem more significant than others, each one evidences idolatry and rebellion against God.
  - b. *they know God's decree.* God's Law is on their hearts (2:15).
  - c. *deserve to die.* Any violation of God's Law merits death (6:23).
9. **VV. 1:18–32:**
- a. **Summary:** We love to condemn the sins of others. We might not have committed some of the acts Paul condemns here, but we all have sinned. We have exchanged God's truth for human foolishness. Seeing sin, we ought not respond defensively but in confession. We know God's response to sin: He sent His Son to die for sinners.
  - b. **Prayer:** Lord have mercy on me, a sinner. Grant me sincere confession and compassion for other sinners. Amen.

### God's Righteous Judgment: 2:1-11

1. **Chapter 2 Summary by Dr. Luther:**  
 "...[Paul] extends his rebuke to include those who seem outwardly to be righteous and who commit their sins in secret.... This is the nature of all hypocrites, to think of themselves as pure, and yet to be full of covetousness, hatred, pride, and all uncleanness, Matthew 23[:25–28]. These are they who despise God's goodness, and in their hardheartedness heap wrath upon themselves. Thus St. Paul, as a true interpreter of the law, leaves no one without sin, but proclaims the wrath of God upon all who would live well simply by nature or of their own volition. He makes them to be no better than the obvious sinners; indeed, he says they are stubborn and unrepentant" (AE 35:372–73).
2. **2** Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges [regarding the

- sins mentioned in chapter 1]. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. <sup>2</sup>We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. <sup>3</sup>Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? <sup>4</sup>Or do you presume on [literally, think little of] the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance [if we think little of God's kindness, then it will NOT lead us to repentance]? <sup>5</sup>But because of your hard and impenitent heart [without sorrow for sin and faith in Jesus] you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.*
3. <sup>6</sup>He will render to each one according to his works [thus works done in connection with faith in Christ]: <sup>7</sup>to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; <sup>8</sup>but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. <sup>9</sup>There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, <sup>10</sup>but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. <sup>11</sup>For God shows no partiality.
  4. **VV. 2:1–11:**
    - a. **Summary:** When we pass judgment on another, we condemn ourselves (v 1). It is easy to recognize and condemn sin in others while overlooking our own sin. Paul's teachings are clear: all have sinned. Without God's patience and forbearance, we would all be condemned.
    - b. **Prayer:** O God, thank You that our Savior, Jesus, has redeemed us! Send us forth today to proclaim this Good News. Amen.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 2:12 – 3:8

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### God's Judgment and the Law: 2:12-29

5. <sup>12</sup> For all who have sinned without the law [namely, the Gentiles, who did not have the Torah] will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law [namely, the Jews, who do have the Torah] will be judged by the law. // So with or without the law, judgment is coming.
6. <sup>13</sup> For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.
  - a. Does that mean a person could *do the law* and justify himself? No! The ONLY ONES who actually do the law – to some extent – are those who are righteous in God's sight through Jesus.
  - b. "The 'doers of the law' are those who by faith and a new heart actually do what God bids and by their doing demonstrate their faith..." (Lenski, 160).
7. <sup>14</sup> For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. <sup>15</sup> They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness [to what is written on their hearts], and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them <sup>16</sup> on that day when, according to my gospel [the good news of Jesus' saving work], God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.
  - a. For all people the law is written on their hearts, so their conscience is at work to excuse them or convict them.
  - b. However, everyone person, *when he is honest with himself*, knows he has violated his conscience; he has done wrong and cannot remove his wrong, so he is in need God's work through Jesus.
8. The focus here is on the Jews: <sup>17</sup> **But if you call yourself a Jew** and rely on the law and boast in God <sup>18</sup> and know his will and approve

what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; <sup>19</sup> and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, <sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— <sup>21</sup> you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? // Those who know God's law can be a blessing to others; first they should apply the law to themselves, which will show them that they are sinners.

- a. **While you preach against stealing, do you steal?** <sup>22</sup> You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? // Those who think they have kept God's law have, in fact, fallen short.
- b. **You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?** // **Some Jews stole from pagan temples to show their contempt for idolatry, but this violated the Seventh Commandment.**
- c. <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the law [boast about being a Jew who has the law] dishonor God by breaking the law [by thinking you are better than others]. <sup>24</sup> For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." // **Israel's failures caused the Gentiles to mock and blaspheme God. Here the hypocritical actions of Jews give rise to similar blasphemy.**
  - i. Have our past actions have caused unbelievers to mock God? Y N
  - ii. For all sinners, this is important:  
NAU **2 Corinthians 7:10** "For the sorrow that is according to *the will of God* produces a repentance without regret, *leading* to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death."  
// What is included in God-pleasing sorrow? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. <sup>25</sup> For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the

law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

- i. *circumcision*. Outward sign of God's covenant with the Jews (Gen. 17).
  - ii. *your circumcision becomes uncircumcision*. Outward signs without faith are worthless.
- e. <sup>26</sup> So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit [who gives faith in Jesus], not by the letter [not by keeping God's law]. His praise is not from man but from God.
- i. *matter of the heart*. God called His people to faith. Outward ceremonies were not an end in themselves.
  - ii. *by the Spirit, not by the letter*. Many followed the Law in detail, though they lacked genuine faith in God's forgiveness through the Messiah...
  - iii. *His praise*. Humans may be impressed by outward acts, but God sees the heart and motives.

#### Dr. Luther's partial summary of Chapter 3:

"...[Paul] throws them [Jew and Gentile] all together in a heap, and says that one is like the other: they are all sinners before God. He... proves also by Scripture... that by the works of the law nobody is justified, but that the law was given only that sin might be known.

#### God's Righteousness Upheld: 3:1-8

1. **3** Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? <sup>2</sup> Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles [sayings] of God [the word of God]. // God's word remains valuable, even if we reject it.

In sections 2-4 below, note the key words that are highlighted or underlined.

2. <sup>3</sup> What **if** some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? <sup>4</sup> **By no means!** Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written [by David], "That you [God] may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged." // Although Israel broke the covenant, God kept His promises.
3. <sup>5</sup> But **if** our unrighteousness [sin] serves to show the righteousness [holiness] of God [like more darkness shows more nighttime stars], what shall we [I, Paul, and my Christian readers] say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way [excusing myself for proposing the question].) <sup>6</sup> **By no means** [that is certainly NOT true]! For then how could God judge the world? // God is fully righteous, and fully qualified to judge.
4. <sup>7</sup> But **if** through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? <sup>8</sup> And why **not** do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just [what they deserve]. //

  - a. "When our sin makes God's faithfulness, righteousness, and truth stand out, this is due, not to a service we render to God, but a service which God forces our sin to render" (Lenski, 227).
  - b. "Rightly he damns the sinner, especially the one to whom he has given the tremendous advantage of his Word and who abuses that advantage" (Ibid.).

5. **Romans 3:1-8:**
  - a. Summary: Human sinfulness shows the radical difference between God's holiness and humanity's unrighteousness. God made covenants with His people, but we have broken our promises. How blessed we are that our unfaithfulness cannot nullify His faithfulness. He redeems us because He is gracious.
  - b. Prayer: Loving Father, thank You for Your grace and faithfulness. Empower me by Your Spirit to be faithful to You. Amen.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 3:9-31

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### No One Is Righteous: 3:9-20

6. <sup>9</sup> What then? Are we Jews any better off [than the Gentiles]? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written:
- a. In Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3 and Ecclesiastes 7:20; note the all-inclusive words: “None is righteous [none is rightly related to God – because of who he is or what he does], no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God [because of the fall into sin and each person inheriting sin, all people are spiritually blind (1Co 2:14-15), dead (Eph. 2:1), and enemies (Rom. 8:7) of God]. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless [morally corrupt]; no one does good, not even one.”
- b. In Psalm 5:9; 140:3; and 10:7; note the organs of speech: <sup>13</sup> “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps [the Egyptian cobra or snakes in general] is under their lips.” <sup>14</sup> “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”
- i. “What is in a man shows in his speech” (Lenski, 234).
- ii. <sup>NAU</sup> Luke 6:45 [Jesus said:] “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.”
- c. In Isaiah 59:7-8; note the words related to movement: <sup>15</sup> “Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> in their paths are ruin and misery, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace [of salvation] they have not known.”

- d. In Psalm 36:1: <sup>18</sup> “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” // Without the fear of God, people are doomed!
- i. <sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments...
- ii. <sup>NAS</sup> Proverbs 1:24-29 “Because I called, and you refused; I stretched out my hand, and no one paid attention; And you neglected all my counsel, And did not want my reproof; I will even laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, When your dread comes like a storm, And your calamity comes on like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come on you. Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they shall not find me, Because they hated knowledge, And did not choose the fear of the LORD.
- iii. <sup>NAS</sup> Matthew 10:27-28 [Jesus said:] “What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
7. A summary of verses 9-18: <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says [God’s Word of Law] it speaks to those who are under the law [which is EVERYONE], so that every mouth may be stopped [from saying he is innocent], and the whole world may be held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup> For by works of the law [by diligently doing all that God’s Word says] no human being will be

justified in his [God's] sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

- a. What does it mean to be justified?  
God sees me JUST [as] IF I'D never sinned! We are holy ones – by grace through our God-given faith in Jesus!
- b. What are the three uses of the law and the purpose of each?
  - i. C \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. M \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. G \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Righteousness of God Through Faith: 3:21-31

8. <sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested [revealed] apart from the law [apart from us doing what is right], although the Law and the Prophets [the OT Scriptures] bear witness to it [the righteousness of God]— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

- a. The righteousness of God is what everyone needs the most!
- b. It's available through faith in Jesus!
- c. Only those who believe in Jesus for eternal life, for their entrance into heaven actually have that precious gift!

9. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God [Why have we all fallen short? Because we have all sinned!], <sup>24</sup> and are [objectively, actually] justified by his grace [by God's undeserved love and favor] as a gift, through [because of, on the basis of] the redemption [the action of God to buy back all people] that is in Christ Jesus [the purchase price was not gold or silver, but Jesus' sinless life, holy precious blood, and sacrificial death], <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

- a. God put forward as a propitiation by his blood. Those words should remind us of what was done each year on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16); animal blood was used to atone for – to cover – the sins of the high priest and the people; that blood could not actually remove

sins, but it pointed ahead to the work Jesus would accomplish.

- b. to be received by faith.
  - i. During the time of the OT, the Day of Atonement and the sacrificial system were put in place to point ahead to the coming and work of the Messiah. For those who were sorry for their sins and believed in the coming Savior, they were in possession of God's forgiveness.
  - ii. During our present NT era, "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup [referring to the Lord's Supper], you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26 ESV). For all who are sorry for their sins and believe in Jesus as their Savior, they are in possession of God's gift of forgiveness.

10. This was to show God's righteousness [that He does not just excuse our sin], because in his divine forbearance [patient restraint] he had passed over former sins [prior to Good Friday]. <sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just [without compromise] and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

11. <sup>27</sup> Then what becomes of our boasting [us saying we are good enough to get into heaven]? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works [because of what we have done]? No, but by the law of faith [God-given faith in Jesus]. <sup>28</sup> For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. <sup>29</sup> Or is God the God of Jews only? [No!] Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, <sup>30</sup> since God is one— [He] who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through [the same] faith. <sup>31</sup> Do we then overthrow [abolish, cancel out] the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold [endorse] the law.

12. Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world, thank You for Your salvation. Empower me to share Your gift with others. Amen.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 4:1-25

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### Abraham Justified by Faith: 4:1-12

1. **4** What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh [that is, because of things he did by his flesh]? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. [However, he was not justified by works.] <sup>3</sup> For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God [he had God-given faith], and it was counted to him as righteousness.” // That means that God – on the basis of the Coming Messiah and Abraham’s God-given faith – credited Abraham with righteousness. That is not actual righteousness, but declared righteousness!
2. **4** Now to the one who works [trying to earn his way into heaven], his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due [he may think he has earned heaven, yet no one actually can – see below]. <sup>5</sup> And to the one who does not work [to earn heaven] but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, <sup>6</sup> just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: <sup>7</sup> “**Blessed** are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; <sup>8</sup> **blessed** is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”
  - a. Heaven requires righteousness – not what WE say is right, but what GOD says is right; not basically right or mostly right, but perfectly right!
  - b. <sup>NAU</sup> **Romans 10:3** ...not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.
  - c. <sup>NAU</sup> **Galatians 3:10** For as many as are of the works of the Law [thus doing the Law for the purpose of earning heaven] are

under a curse; for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.”

3. <sup>9</sup> Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. <sup>10</sup> **How** then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. <sup>11</sup> He received the sign of circumcision as a seal [in the sense of an official mark showing authenticity, certification, confirmation, proof (Friberg, BW)] of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised [the Gentiles], so that righteousness would be counted [credited] to them as well, <sup>12</sup> and to make him [that is, Abraham] the father of the circumcised [the Jews] who are not merely circumcised [only having a mark on the outside of their bodies] but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. // Those who have the faith of Abraham also live by the faith of Abraham, thus they seek to know and follow the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, what are some basic actions of Christians?
  - a. They meet together (Exodus 20:8; <sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 10:24-25** and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.)
  - b. They learn the Bible (read, study, memorize) (Psalm 119:105; Matthew 4:4; <sup>NAS</sup> **Joshua 1:8** “This book of the

law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”)

- c. They express their trust through their giving (Proverbs 3:9-10; 11:24; <sup>NIV</sup> **Luke 6:38** “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”)
- d. They serve as gifted (Romans 12:6-8; <sup>NAU</sup> **1 Peter 4:10** As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.)
- e. They take action to love others (1 John 3:18; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-8)

#### **The Promise Realized Through Faith: 4:13-25**

- 4. <sup>13</sup> For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world [*As Abraham became the father of many nations, the world would, in a sense, belong to him.*] did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null [*empty*] and the promise is void [*abolished*]. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath [*because we cannot fully keep it*], but where there is no law there is no transgression [*if there are no rules, then no rules can be broken*]. // Remember, no one can become an heir through the law, *since no one can actually keep it*; therefore, God, in His mercy, *makes us heirs through faith!*
- 5. <sup>16</sup> That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace [*grace is God's undeserved love to us, which is always certain; our works are always uncertain*] and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law [*the Jews*] but also to the one who shares the faith of

Abraham [*the Gentiles*], who is the father of us all, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations” [*Gen. 17:5*] [*that is God's promise, spoken before Isaac was born, yet as good as done*]—in the presence of the God in whom he believed [*God spoke the promise recorded in 17:5 in the presence of Abraham*], who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. // Even though Abraham's body was as good as dead – regarding him becoming a father, he believed God was able and would do what He said!

- 6. <sup>18</sup> In hope he believed against hope [*Lenski: “...beyond hope yet upon hope did believe”*; in other words, Abraham's physical situation was beyond hope, nevertheless, he did believe in God, His promise, and His power, so he was confident God could and would do what He promised], that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” <sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. <sup>20</sup> No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. // May we also have such faith in God's promises!
- 7. <sup>22</sup> That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” [*Because, by God's grace, he believed what seemed impossible!*] <sup>23</sup> But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, <sup>25</sup> who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. // We have God-given faith, so we ♦see our sins, ♦trust in Jesus and His sacrifice, and ♦know He was raised – proving God's acceptance, and assuring us of our forgiveness, the reliability of Jesus' teachings, and our resurrection.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 5:1-21

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### Peace with God Through Faith: 5:1-11

1. **5** Therefore, since we have been justified by faith [which was the topic of the second half of chapter 3 and chapter 4], we have peace [reconciliation] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him [Jesus] we have also obtained access by faith into this grace [this undeserved love and forgiveness] in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope [in certainty] of the glory of God [the promise of eternal life in heaven].
2. **3** Not only that, but we rejoice [boast] in our sufferings [troubles brought on by others – because we are in Christ, and not because of our own sins],
  - a. knowing that suffering produces endurance [“a steadfast adherence to a course of action in spite of difficulties and testings” (Friberg, BW)],
  - b. **4** and endurance produces character [a level of maturity that is able to stand and not fall],
  - c. and character produces hope [the expectation that God is with us, His promises will not fail, and He will carry us through], **5** and hope does not put us to shame [disappoint us], because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. // Therefore, by the Holy Spirit, we are in Christ – thus forgiven and reconciled! The HS is also with us to ♦teach us the Bible, ♦strengthen us in Christ, ♦enable us to endure, and ♦keep us confident in God’s promises!
    - i. When we are in the Word and the Spirit is at work, **we are blessed!**
    - ii. For all who avoid the Word – no matter why, **they are in trouble!**
3. **6** For while we were still weak [powerless, helpless morally, having no ability to save

ourselves], at the right time [at God’s appointed time] Christ died for the ungodly. // All are “ungodly” ones, so Christ died for all! However, it is vital for each person to ♦know his condition – ungodly, ♦know his need – *for forgiveness*, and receive Jesus – *as his Savior*. All such things happen by the Holy Spirit working through the Bible.

4. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person [someone who is diligent in doing what is morally right] —though perhaps for a good person [someone who takes action to do good for the benefit of others] one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners [not admitting our sins, not being sorry for our sins, and not turning from our sins], Christ died for us. // Therefore, let us never think it was a quality in us or our goodness that moved God to send His Son or Jesus to live, suffer, and die for our salvation!
5. **9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood [that is true now; we are just in God’s sight through Jesus], much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God [since we are blessed now in Christ, we will also be blessed forever when He returns]. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. **11** More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. // Because of our sins, we were ☹dead, ☹separated, and ☹distant; YET NOW, in Christ, we are ☺alive, ☺united, and ☺close to God and His Son!

### Death in Adam, Life in Christ: 5:12-21

6. **12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man [Adam], and death

through sin [6:23], and so death spread to all men [all people] because all sinned—<sup>13</sup> for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

- a. How many years before Christ did sin enter the world? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. How many years before Christ was the time of Moses? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Were there written Scriptures before the time of Moses? Y N
- d. Who wrote down the first five books of the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Adam sinned when he d \_\_\_\_\_ God's law.
- f. How did people sin between Adam and Moses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g. How was Adam a type of Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. <sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass [so it is not a perfect parallel]. For if many [“the Semitic inclusive sense is to be understood” (Friberg, BW), so many means “all”] died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many [all; 1 John 2:2]. // **Sin:** Adam was the first person, the representative of the human race. Eve sinned first; then, when Adam sinned, sin passed through him to all future people:

- a. This is how Adam and Eve were made:  
<sup>ESV</sup> **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”
- b. After Adam fell, he could not pass on the image and likeness of God:  
<sup>ESV</sup> **Genesis 5:3** When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named

him Seth. // Though not recorded in the Bible, the same was true for Cain and Able.

- c. David said of himself: <sup>NIV</sup> **Psalm 51:5** Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
8. <sup>16</sup> And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin [not a perfect parallel]. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation [to all], but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification [making it available for all]. <sup>17</sup> For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. // **Righteousness:** Sin automatically passed to all; God’s gift of righteousness has been won for all, *but it does not automatically pass to all*. It must be received by the work of the HS *through baptism (water and word) and through the Bible* – showing the need thru the law, and giving the remedy thru the gospel.
9. <sup>18</sup> Therefore, as one trespass [Adam’s first sin] led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness [the sinless living and sacrificial dying of the Son of God in human flesh] leads to justification and life for all men [people]. <sup>19</sup> For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> Now the law came in to increase the trespass [to show people how sinful they really are; we need the law for that same purpose], but where sin increased [**wow**, I’m so sinful], grace abounded all the more [**wow**, God’s kindness is SO GREAT; in Christ all of my sins are forgiven], <sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death [all sinned, all died], grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. // I deserve condemnation, but, IN CHRIST, I have the gift of salvation, my get-out-of-jail-free card, my ticket for heaven! *Let us GLADLY live each day for Christ, our Lord!*

## New Testament Letter: Romans 6:1-23

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### Dead to Sin, Alive to God: 6:1-14

1. **6** What shall we say then [in regard to grace increasing as sin increases]? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?  
**2** By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it [now, let's remember what happened when we were baptized, and who we are now – because we are in Christ]? **3** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.
  - a. Jesus: He is the Son of God and never sinned; then He received our sins and our eternal punishment; then He laid down His life; and then the Father raised Him up on the third day!
  - b. Us and our baptism into Christ: When Jesus died, *He died to the physical things of this life on earth*. Since we have been baptized into Jesus' death, *we should consider ourselves dead to the sin of this life on earth*.
  - c. What about baptized people who live like the sinful world? <sup>NAS</sup> **1 John 3:7-8** "Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil..."
2. **5** For if we have been united with him in a death like his [by which we received the benefits of His work], we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. // <sup>NAS</sup> **Titus 3:5** "[God the Father] saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit [thru baptism]..."
3. **6** We know that our old self [our sinful nature] was crucified with [Christ] in order that the body of sin [us being controlled by sin] might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. **7** For one who has died [through his baptism into the death of Christ] has been set free from sin [being his master].
  - a. enslaved to sin: A slave does what his master says. Who is your master, who are you listening to, which one is controlling your life? Sin or Jesus.
  - b. **We should expect a struggle!** We still have the old nature, *which wants to obey sin!* In Christ, we also have the new nature, *which wants to obey Jesus!* These are things we should do:
    - i. <sup>ESV</sup> **Ephesians 4:22-24** "...put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." How? For example, see Ephesians 4:25-32
    - ii. Dr. Luther: What does such baptizing with water indicate? "It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition [sorrow for sin] and repentance [faith in Christ] be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever" (Small Cat.).
4. **8** Now if we have died with Christ [through baptism], we believe that we will also live with him [in eternity]. **9** We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over

him. <sup>10</sup> For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

- a. While Jesus lived on earth, *He was tempted in every way – just as we are* (Heb. 4:15); however, having been raised, He is no longer tempted by sin; instead, He is dead to sin.
  - b. Think about an adult convert to Christianity: He was alive to sin – *thus controlled by sin*; then, *converted and baptized into Christ*, he should go forward considering himself to be dead to sin and alive to God!
  - c. If I, being physically alive, talk to a person who is physically dead, I will get no response. That is how we should be when sin talks to us; we are dead to sin, *so we give no response!*
5. <sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions [rather, be dead to sin]. <sup>13</sup> Do not present your members [the members of your body – hands, feet, etc.] to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life [overflowing with gratitude], and your members to God as instruments for righteousness [to do God's will]. <sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you [thus, it will no longer be your master], since you are not under law but under grace. // There is an important difference between believers and unbelievers – THEIR MOTIVATION! Believers, *motivated by the gospel*, want to please God to express their thanks; unbelievers, *motivated by the law*, try to please God to earn His favor.

### Slaves to Righteousness: 6:15-23

6. <sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace [in other words, since we have God's forgiveness, is it now okay to sin]? **By no means!** <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to

anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? // There are two potential masters: Sin and Jesus! As Christians, both are giving us commands, but which one is our master? *The one we obey!* The consequence is hell or heaven!

7. <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin [unbelievers] have become obedient from the heart [through God-worked sorrow and faith] to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup> and, having been set free from sin [through your baptism into Christ], have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup> I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations [by the way, you still have the sinful nature]. For just as you once [were slaves to sin and] presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, **so now** present your members as slaves to righteousness [thus, to what is right and pleasing to God] leading to sanctification [holiness (now, we are holy in God's sight; when Jesus comes, the era of sin will end)].
8. <sup>20</sup> For when you were slaves of sin [unbelievers], you were free in regard to righteousness [having no obligation to please God]. <sup>21</sup> But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death [that is, eternal punishment]. <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin [through your baptism into Christ] and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification [holiness] and its end, eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death [as we work and earn our wages, so we sin and earn death, that is, eternal punishment], but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. // Left to ourselves, we will obey sin and go to hell. However, because of God's great love, He has taken radical action to remove all sins, unite us to Christ, fill us with joy, and motivate us to honor Him in our lives! Lord, please help us!

## New Testament Letter: Romans 7:1-25

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### Released from the Law: 7:1-6

1. **7** Or do you not know, brothers [BTW, you should know] —for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? <sup>2</sup>For [example] a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. <sup>3</sup>So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man (v. 3 is NAU). // That is a simple example, showing that the death of a spouse ends the law of marriage for the survivor.
2. <sup>4</sup>Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law [to keeping the law for salvation] through the body of Christ [through His death and your baptism into His death], so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. // Remember, we **were** slaves to sin; however, **now**, we are dead to sin—being our master and, instead, have Christ—as our master.
3. <sup>5</sup>For while we were living in the flesh [not believing in Jesus and enslaved to sin], our sinful passions, aroused by the law [thus determined to oppose the law by breaking the law], were at work in our members [in the various parts of our bodies] to bear fruit for death. // Slaves always bear fruit; slaves to sin bear fruit leading to eternal punishment; slaves to Christ bear fruit leading to eternal life.
4. <sup>6</sup>But now we are released from the law [from keeping the law to be saved], having died to that which held us captive [when we were baptized into the death of Christ], so that

we serve in the new way of the Spirit [thus with **gladness** and **thanksgiving** as forgiven slaves of Christ] and not in the old way of the written code [thus **begudgingly** trying to keep the Ten Commandments for the purpose of earning our salvation]. **BIG DIFFERENCE!**

### The Law and Sin: 7:7-25

In this section, Paul uses “I” many times to refer to himself; he is referring to himself as *one who has been regenerated, converted!*

5. <sup>7</sup>What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet [sinfully desire].” <sup>8</sup>But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead [1Co 15:56].
  - a. *sin, seizing*. ...sin’s iron grip... corrupts even our hearing of the Commandments.
  - b. *covetousness*. God’s Ninth and Tenth Commandments may cause fallen humans to rebel and do the exact opposite.
  - c. *apart from the law, sin lies dead*. Something is only sinful if God forbids it. The Law naturally stirs up rebellion in sinners.
6. <sup>9</sup>I was once alive apart from the law [that is what I, Paul, **thought at the time**, when I was keeping the law for my salvation], but when the commandment came [when God showed me my inability to **fully** keep the law], sin came alive and I died [...what changed was Paul’s understanding of the truth]. <sup>10</sup>The very commandment that promised life [keep it and live] proved to be death to me [because

I could not **fully** keep it]. <sup>11</sup> For **sin** [the power of sin, which is the law (1Co 15:56)], seizing an opportunity through the commandment, **deceived me** [by convincing me that I **could** keep the law for my salvation] and through it [the commandment] **killed me** [thus kept me killed me spiritually, as I continued to embrace my own works for my salvation]. <sup>12</sup> So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. // God's law is always holy and righteous and good; however, the devil, the world, and our sinful nature try to ruin us eternally in these ways:

- a. Tempt us to sin, and help us justify, *thus be comfortable with*, our sin.
  - b. Convince us that we are good enough because we try to be good and have not murdered anyone.
  - c. Convince us that God will overlook our sins and welcome us into heaven because a loving God would never send anyone to hell.
7. <sup>13</sup> Did **that which is good** [that is, the law], then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good [so the law, showing me my inability to perfectly keep it, showed me that I was spiritually dead], in order that sin might be shown to be sin [God's law, which is good, is the means through which the HS works to show us our sin], and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. // So let all of us agree: **We have sinned and are helpless!**
8. <sup>14</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual [of divine origin], but I am of the flesh [part of the fallen world], sold under sin. <sup>15</sup> For I do not understand my own actions [let me explain...]. For I [now being alive in Christ] do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate [which is sin]. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. // Lenski: "Paul seconds the righteousness which the law requires and abominates the sin which [the law] forbids.... **As long as he does** [seconds and abominates] **he remains regenerate.**"

9. <sup>17</sup> So now it is no longer I who do it [regarding the sin], but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. // Lenski: "...it is easy for Paul to will the morally and spiritually excellent but not easy to bring it to completed action." Also true for us 😊!
10. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. // Lenski: "Paul does not here use *πονηρὸν*, 'what is actively and viciously wicked [premeditated].' ...his flesh... makes him do 'what is bad,' good-for-nothing morally and spiritually... He does not [imply] 'what is wicked.'"
11. <sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law [a regular occurrence] that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand [trying to pull me into sin]. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being [according to my new nature], <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members [in my physical body] another law waging war against the law of my mind [the new mind that I have in Christ] and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. // Have you ever felt, or do you constantly feel, that way – that, on one hand, you genuinely desire to do God's will; yet, on the other hand, you have a definite desire to go the way of sin?
12. <sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death [with that question, Paul admits his own helplessness to deliver himself]? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus [His person] Christ [His office] our Lord [His relation to us Christians]! // Paul is not yet fully delivered, but He knows it will be completed when Jesus' returns!
13. So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind [I know what is right and want to do it], but with my flesh I serve the law of sin [being tempted, sometimes falling, being sorry, and looking to Jesus for forgiveness].

## New Testament Letter: Romans 8:1-30

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### Life in the Spirit: 8:1-11

1. **8** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
  - a. In chapter 7 Paul reminded us that, *through our baptism into the death of Christ, we are now dead to sin, which means we no longer try to keep the law for the purpose of being saved.*
  - b. Paul also told us about his inner struggle – *wanting to do what is right but finding himself doing what is wrong.* When we see the same in our lives, it can be unsettling and cause us to question our salvation; however, as noted above in vv. 1-2, when we are IN CHRIST, *we are saved and set free!*
2. **3** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do [thus, since we cannot perfectly keep the law, it cannot save us; so God...]. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. // Since we are helpless to meet God's requirement of PERFECT RIGHTNESS, God sent His Son to meet that requirement in our place, and then to bear our sin and our eternal punishment.
3. **5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on [keep thinking about] the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on [keep thinking about] the things of the Spirit. **6** For to set the mind on the **flesh is death**, but to set the mind on the **Spirit is life and peace**. // We all want life and peace; therefore, *by the leading and power of the*

- HS, let us keep thinking about spiritual things – by ♦reading and thinking about the Bible, ♦memorizing a verse each week, ♦praying for the salvation of others, and ♦sharing the word with whoever will listen.*
4. **7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God [even hateful toward God], for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. **8** Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. // Such people are spiritually dead, w/o the HS, and heading for hell☹.
  5. **9** You [Paul's readers, even you and me], however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. // How do we know? Ask yourself:
    - a. What am I trusting for my entrance into heaven – ☹my work or ☹Jesus' work, or ☹both?
    - b. Think about the beatitudes (Mt. 5):
      - i. Do I believe that spiritually, of myself, I am beggarly poor?
      - ii. Do I mourn over my sin because unrepentant sin separates me from God?
      - iii. Am I hungry and thirsting to know and do what is right?
  6. **10** But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. **11** If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. // When we are repentant, thus ♦knowing of our spiritual helplessness, ♦being sorry for our sins, and ♦having God-given faith in Jesus; *then we also have the Holy Spirit!*

### Heirs with Christ: 8:12-17

7. <sup>12</sup> So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if **by the Spirit** you put to death the [sinful] deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God [so who is YOUR leader]. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear [regarding your salvation], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" [Think about the L. P. Intro and Luther's expl.] <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. // How does the HS bear witness to us? When `Jesus is OUR Savior, we ♣will desire to live for Him, **and** ♣will be persecuted.

### Future Glory: 8:18-30

8. <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings [due to persecution] of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us [let us remember that AMAZING things are coming]. <sup>19</sup> For the creation [what God created] waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. [Why?] <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility [frustration, purposelessness], not willingly, but because of him [God] who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. // When the people fell, the creation was corrupted, yet freedom is coming!
9. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now [a VERY LONG delivery]. <sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit [thus blessed now in many ways, and yet we know much more is coming], groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as

sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. // For sure – God will keep His promises!

10. <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he [God] who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for [speaks on behalf of] the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God [who have God-given faith in Him] all things work together for good [maybe not each thing, but all things together], for those who are called according to his purpose [that is, to bring us back into His family]. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew [knew in advance – even before He created the world] he also predestined [chose or appointed] to be conformed to the image of his Son [which is righteous, sinless, holy], in order that he [God's Son] might be the firstborn among many brothers.
11. This is the order of salvation:
- <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined – God the Father, before creation, chose certain people to be holy in His sight through faith in the coming Christ.
  - he also called – Now in time, God the Father, working in conjunction with the Spirit and through the **law**, is calling the predestined ones to be sorry for their sins and recognize their helplessness to save themselves.
  - and those whom he called he also justified – God the Father, working in conjunction with the Spirit and through the **gospel**, is giving the called ones the gift of saving faith in Jesus.
  - and those whom he justified he also glorified – God the Father, in eternity, after Jesus' return, will give a high status to the predestined ones forever!

## New Testament Letter: Romans 8:31 – 9:18

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### God's Everlasting Love: 8:31-38

12. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things?  
If God is for us, who can be against us?  
<sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
- What 4 things (think back to 8:30)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Since God is for us, why can no one successfully be against us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Why can we be confident that God will give us all that is good? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
- Who are God's elect? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What factors make it *impossible* for anyone to successfully accuse God's elect? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." // Those verses list 9 horrible things; *should we fear such things?* Y N
15. <sup>37</sup> **No**, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.  
<sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from

the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. // Tenfold list is all-embracing inventory of superhuman realities that threaten, in vain, to break the grip of Christ's love. ☺

**Summary of Chapters 1-11:** "Paul first directs people to repentance [Ch 1–2], to knowledge of sins [3:1–20], to faith in Christ [3:21–5:21], to divine obedience [Ch 6–8]. Then he speaks of the mystery of God's eternal election [Ch 9–11] ...." (FC Ep XI 11).

**Luther:** "In chapters 9, 10, and 11 [Paul] teaches of God's eternal predestination... in order that our salvation may be taken entirely out of our hands and put in the hand of God alone.... For we are so weak and uncertain that if it depended on us, not even a single person would be saved; the devil would surely overpower us all. But since God is dependable—his predestination cannot fail, and no one can withstand him—we still have hope [certainty] in the face of sin."

"Here, now, for once we must put a stop to those wicked and high flying spirits who first apply their own reason to this matter. They... worry in vain about whether they are predestinated. They are bound to plunge to their own destruction, either through despair, or through throwing caution to the winds."

"But you had better follow the order of this epistle. Worry first about Christ and the gospel, that you may recognize your sin and his grace. Then fight your sin, as the first eight chapters here have taught. Then, when you have reached the eighth chapter, and are under the cross and suffering, this will teach you correctly of predestination in chapters 9, 10, and 11, and how comforting it is..." (AE 35:378).

## God's Sovereign Choice: 9:1-29

- 9 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—<sup>2</sup> that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.<sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers [*the Jews*], my kinsmen according to the flesh.<sup>4</sup> They are Israelites, and to them belong the **adoption**, the **glory**, the **covenants**, the giving of the **law**, the **worship**, and the **promises**.<sup>5</sup> To them belong the **patriarchs**, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the **Christ**, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

  - Who was the first of God's chosen people? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Who are the Israelites? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What part of the Bible focuses on God's chosen people? **From** \_\_\_\_\_ chapter \_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_ chapter \_\_\_\_.
  - Did God's chosen people have every advantage to believe? Y N
  - Give an example from the Bible when most of God's chosen did not believe:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- <sup>6</sup> But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For **not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel**,<sup>7</sup> and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."<sup>8</sup> This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.

  - not all ... Israel*. Key distinction to understanding chapters 9–11: Israel according to physical descent and Israel according to faith in the promise.
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **Rev. 2:9** "...the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not [*also 3:9*], but **are** a synagogue of Satan."
  - Who belongs to the **true Israel**? \_\_\_\_\_
- <sup>9</sup> For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah

shall have a son."<sup>10</sup> And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,<sup>11</sup> though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—<sup>12</sup> she was told, "The older will serve the younger."<sup>13</sup> As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

- What **nation** is from Jacob? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What **nation** is from Esau? \_\_\_\_\_
  - loved... hated*: Refers to the two nations; also, not *literal hatred*, but God *preferred* the one He *loved* (compare Luke 14:26).
- <sup>14</sup> What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!<sup>15</sup> For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."<sup>16</sup> So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. // Some get the impression that verse 15 is expressing a *limit* on God's mercy, *but it is actually the opposite*. Some may consider others *unworthy* of mercy, but God extends mercy to *everyone* – because of *who He is*, and not because of *what we do*.
  - <sup>17</sup> For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."<sup>18</sup> So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

    - Did Pharaoh seem strong while enslaving the Israelites and rejecting God's command to let them go? Y N
    - Is God super-strong, since He ♦brought the ten plagues, ♦freed the Israelites, and ♦wiped-out Egypt's army? Y N
    - Was God unjust and unmerciful to Pharaoh, or did Pharaoh bring God's wrath upon himself (*see the supplement*)? \_\_\_\_\_

## New Testament Letter: Romans 9:19 – 10:13

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### God's Sovereign Choice: 9:1-29 – Continued

6. <sup>19</sup> You [my readers] will say to me [Paul] then, “Why does he [God] still find fault? For who can resist his will?” // In other words: **If God's sovereign will is always done, how can anyone be held responsible for his or her actions?**
7. <sup>20</sup> But [let us put things into the proper perspective,] who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” <sup>21</sup> Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? // **The Creator is free to exercise His will and right, but that does not mean He does so without mercy.**
8. <sup>22</sup> What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience **vessels of wrath** [those ignoring, rejecting, hating God] prepared for destruction, <sup>23</sup> in order to make known the riches of his glory for **vessels of mercy** [those who are repentant], which he has prepared [predestined] beforehand for glory— <sup>24</sup> even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? // The big picture:
  - a. God predestined – when? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Since God predestined, what three other things will God surely do?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Two examples of God enduring with patience include Pharaoh – *who hardened his own heart many times*, and Judas – *whom God kept calling to repent, even during the Passover meal*.
  - d. Lenski:
    - i. *vessels of wrath*: “God should have destroyed them long ago, but delayed and delayed. Although

they are intolerable to him, he tolerated them” (623).

- ii. “God exercised his longsuffering because of his immense purpose of mercy.... Who would have known about God's mercy toward the church that was made up of Jews and Gentiles if God had destroyed the Jewish nation when Herod killed the Baptist, or when the Sanhedrin first plotted Jesus' death?” (623-624).
9. <sup>25</sup> As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’” <sup>26</sup> “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’” // **Two quotes from the prophet Hosea. Paul contends that if God could restore the 10 tribes of Israel (Northern Kingdom), who had abandoned Him, He can also call Gentiles to be the recipients of His mercy (cf 1Pt 2:10).**
10. <sup>27</sup> And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, <sup>28</sup> for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.” <sup>29</sup> And as Isaiah predicted, <sup>9</sup> “If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring, we would have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah.”
  - a. Who are “the sons of Israel”? The descendants of \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Who is the “remnant”? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How many survived God's wrath upon Sodom and Gomorrah? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. What is true of all who are finally saved? \_\_\_\_\_

## Israel's Unbelief: 9:30 – 10:4

11. <sup>30</sup> What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; <sup>31</sup> but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. <sup>32</sup> Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works.
- That Gentiles should obtain what they did not pursue [*i.e. righteousness*] was confusing to the Jews [*who were actively pursuing righteousness through the law*].
  - What two ways do people pursue righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Why do so many continue to pursue a way that will **not** succeed? \_\_\_\_\_
12. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, <sup>33</sup> as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."
- Why, especially to Jews, is Christ crucified a stumbling stone (Gal 3:13)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - What is your response to Christ Crucified? Thanksgiving **or** Rejection
  - Many, based on common sense, pursue righteousness through the law; however, the remnant, those who trust in Jesus, have – by God's grace – ✦ seen the truth of God's Word, ✦ set aside common sense, and ✦ embrace Christ alone as their Savior!
1. **10** Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them [*the Jews*] is that they may be saved. <sup>2</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God [*not knowing that His requirement is holiness*], and seeking to establish their own [*level of rightness*], they did not submit to God's righteousness. <sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

a. How are believers done with the law?  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Why should believers keep the law?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Message of Salvation to All: 10:5-21

2. <sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. // One who kept the Law perfectly was promised life (Lv 18:5), but no sinful human could reach this standard of holiness.
3. <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do **not** say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). // Christ is not unreachable... He does not require us to search for Him in inaccessible regions high or low. For He has become one of us, has died, and has risen from the dead for our justification.
4. <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); <sup>9</sup> because, if you **confess** with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one **believes** and is justified, and with the mouth one **confesses** and is saved. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. <sup>13</sup> For "**everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
- confess... believe... believes... confesses:* Emphasizes the unity of *inward belief* and *outward confession!*
  - Paul says there is an **inseparable link** between faith as expressed outwardly and possessed inwardly.
  - As all Jews and Gentiles are equally sinners (3:23), so the gates of God's mercy are open to all.

## New Testament Letter: Romans 10:14 - #####

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### The Message of Salvation to All: 10:5-21 – Continued

5. <sup>14</sup> How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup> And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” <sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
6. <sup>18</sup> But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”
7. <sup>19</sup> But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”
8. <sup>20</sup> Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, “I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”
9. <sup>21</sup> But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

### The Remnant of Israel: 11:1-10

1. <sup>11</sup> I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? <sup>3</sup> “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have

demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” <sup>4</sup> But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” <sup>5</sup> So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. <sup>6</sup> But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

2. <sup>7</sup> What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, <sup>8</sup> as it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.” <sup>9</sup> And David says, “Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; <sup>10</sup> let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever.”

### Gentiles Grafted In: 11:11-24

1. <sup>11</sup> So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. <sup>12</sup> Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!
2. <sup>13</sup> Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry <sup>14</sup> in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. <sup>15</sup> For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? <sup>16</sup> If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

3. <sup>17</sup> But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, <sup>18</sup> do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. <sup>19</sup> Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” <sup>20</sup> That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. <sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. <sup>22</sup> Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. <sup>23</sup> And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. <sup>24</sup> For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

#### **The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation: 11:25-36**

4. <sup>25</sup> Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; <sup>27</sup> “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”
5. <sup>28</sup> As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. <sup>29</sup> For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup> For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they too have now

been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. <sup>32</sup> For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

6. <sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! <sup>34</sup> “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” <sup>35</sup> “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” <sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

#### **A Living Sacrifice: 12:1-2**

**12** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

#### **Gifts of Grace**

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup> Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup> the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

#### **Marks of the True Christian**

<sup>9</sup> Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Love one another

with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup> Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. <sup>17</sup> Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup> To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### **Submission to the Authorities**

**13** Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, <sup>4</sup> for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup> Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. <sup>6</sup> For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom

revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

### **Fulfilling the Law Through Love**

<sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>11</sup> Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

### **Do Not Pass Judgment on One Another**

**14** As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. <sup>2</sup> One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. <sup>3</sup> Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. <sup>4</sup> Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

<sup>5</sup> One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. <sup>6</sup> The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks

to God. <sup>7</sup> For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. <sup>8</sup> For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup> For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

<sup>10</sup> Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; <sup>11</sup> for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,

and every tongue shall confess to God.”

<sup>12</sup> So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

### **Do Not Cause Another to Stumble**

<sup>13</sup> Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. <sup>14</sup> I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. <sup>15</sup> For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. <sup>16</sup> So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. <sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. <sup>19</sup> So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

<sup>20</sup> Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. <sup>21</sup> It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. <sup>22</sup> The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. <sup>23</sup> But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

### **The Example of Christ**

<sup>15</sup> We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup> Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. <sup>3</sup> For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” <sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

### **Christ the Hope of Jews and Gentiles**

<sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, <sup>9</sup> and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,

and sing to your name.”

<sup>10</sup> And again it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

<sup>11</sup> And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,  
and let all the peoples extol him.”

<sup>12</sup> And again Isaiah says,

<sup>j</sup>“The root of Jesse will come,  
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;  
in him will the Gentiles hope.”

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

### **Paul the Minister to the Gentiles**

<sup>14</sup> I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. <sup>15</sup> But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God <sup>16</sup> to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. <sup>17</sup> In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. <sup>18</sup> For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, <sup>19</sup> by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; <sup>20</sup> and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, <sup>21</sup> but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him will see,  
and those who have never heard will understand.”

### **Paul’s Plan to Visit Rome**

<sup>22</sup> This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. <sup>23</sup> But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, <sup>24</sup> I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. <sup>25</sup> At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. <sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. <sup>28</sup> When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for

Spain by way of you. <sup>29</sup> I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

<sup>30</sup> I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, <sup>31</sup> that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, <sup>32</sup> so that by God’s will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. <sup>33</sup> May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

### **Personal Greetings**

<sup>16</sup> I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, <sup>2</sup> that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

<sup>3</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, <sup>4</sup> who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. <sup>5</sup> Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. <sup>6</sup> Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. <sup>7</sup> Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. <sup>8</sup> Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. <sup>10</sup> Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. <sup>11</sup> Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. <sup>12</sup> Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. <sup>14</sup> Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. <sup>15</sup> Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. <sup>16</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

## **Final Instructions and Greetings**

<sup>17</sup> I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. <sup>18</sup> For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. <sup>19</sup> For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. <sup>20</sup> The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

<sup>21</sup> Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

<sup>22</sup> I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

<sup>23</sup> Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

## **Doxology**

<sup>25</sup> Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.