

1. 1:1-7 Introduction and greeting.
  - a. 1:1 Author: Paul the Apostle
    - i. A bondservant of Christ, (slave to, belonging to Christ)
      1. All Christians truly belong to Christ as gifts from God the Father to His Son. (John 17:6-12, 6:39-40)
        - a. Purchased and redeemed by His blood. (1 Cor 6:19-20, Acts 20:28, Gal 3:13)
        - b. Part of His own body. (1 Cor 6:15)
        - c. Is there any greater honor than to be called one of Christ's sheep, whom He personally watches over as the Good Shepherd? (John 10:1-16)
        - d. And yet, while we have been purchased, Christ does not see us in this way. We are His friends. And brothers through adoption. (John 15:15)
        - e. Forever set free from the power of sin. We willingly give ourselves to Christ as slaves to righteousness, which comes from Him. (Rom 6:16,20-22)
      - ii. Called to be an apostle
        1. Directly by Christ (Acts 9:1-15, Gal 1:1)
        2. Into the office of Apostle. The New Testament version of a prophet. He received direct revelation from Jesus and preached this message. (Gal 1:11-12)
        3. In a similar manner, the church and every individual Christian is called out of the world. Out of darkness and into light. (1 Peter 2:9)
      - iii. Separated to the gospel of God
        1. Paul gave the rest of his life for this purpose. To spread the gospel of God.
        2. The gospel isn't just good news, but God's revealed plan for our salvation.
    - b. 1:2 This gospel was promised through His prophets and Holy Scripture.
      - i. Though it is called the New Testament, the gospel is not new and had been foretold throughout the Old Testament, though veiled in parts. (Col 1:26-27)
      - ii. Gen 3:15 is the first mention of this gospel. When the serpent is told by God that the seed of the woman would bruise His head.
    - c. 1:3 The gospel is about Jesus, our Lord. The promised Christ, descendant of David in the flesh.
      - i. 2 Sam 7:12-13 God promised to establish the throne of David forever. Jesus is the Son of David, directly descended. Luke's gospel traces the line all the way from Adam. (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38)
      - ii. Jesus is Lord over all. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. (Mat 28:18) Every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.
    - d. 1:4 Powerfully demonstrated to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.
      - i. Amongst other signs, the resurrection proved beyond doubt that Jesus was the Son of God. (John 10:25-30, Acts 2:24)
      - ii. Christ prophesied His own death and resurrection, proving His knowledge of the divine plan. (Mark 8:31)
      - iii. According to this verse He was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit. But all members of the trinity were involved. (Gal 1:1, 1 Peter 3:18, John 10:18)
    - e. 1:5-7 Through Christ there is grace as well as instruction for His saints.
      - i. The apostles were sent with declarative authority to bring people to the obedience of faith throughout all the world. (Mat 28:16-20)
      - ii. Paul addresses the epistle to the saints in Rome, beloved of God.
        1. All true believers are saints. Set apart and justified by His blood.

2. The beloved Son was Jesus (Mat 3:17, 17:5), but through His Spirit we are also beloved and adopted into His family. (Rom 8:15-16, Eph 1:5)
- iii. Grace and peace from God and Christ. Can there be any greater comfort outside of God's grace and peace?
2. 1:8-15 Paul desires to visit Rome and details his thoughts concerning them.
  - a. Notice the general spirit of grace and praise from verse 1 through 9. In this short space, Paul honors God, gives instruction, and encourages these saints whom he has not yet even met. What have we lost in modern communication?
  - b. 1:8-10 He offers prayers for these believers. Giving thanks to God for their faith. This is something to be emulated. We should pray for all the saints. "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." (Mat 6:10)
  - c. Rome was known for their faith and Paul asked God to find a way to get to them. The irony being that when he does finally reach Rome, it is as a prisoner.
  - d. 1:11-12 His desire to visit was for their benefit as well as his own.
    - i. To impart some spiritual gift:
      1. Paul had been given the power to perform miraculous signs. (Acts 19:11-12)
      2. He wished to go to Rome and strengthen them however he could to help establish them, to check and secure a firm foundation for them, as the early church was under constant threat from within and without.
    - ii. He was hoping and expecting mutual encouragement, something that should be familiar amongst believers as we are all members of the same body of Christ. (1 Cor 12:12-14, Rom 12:4-5)
    - iii. 1:13-15 Though he has been hindered in his desire to visit the saints in Rome, he wishes to visit that he might have some fruit among them as He has had with other Gentiles.
      1. 1:13 Notice his care for what might seem a trivial thing. Their feelings and thoughts regarding His lack of visit. He takes the time to assure them, he wanted to come sooner, but was prevented.
      2. The fruit spoken of here is the work of conversion.
      3. 1:14 It is for this reason that Paul owes a debt to the Greeks and barbarians. For though his commission is from Christ, it is thanks to them that it is being fulfilled.
      4. 1:15 Therefore he is eager to go to Rome. Ready to preach to everyone. Something that does not sound appealing to most ears, especially under the circumstances he endured. But he understood the importance.
3. 1:16-17 The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation.
  - a. 1:16 He is not ashamed of this gospel.
    - i. Though it is foolishness to those who are perishing, it is the power to us who are being saved. (1 Cor 1:18-28)
    - ii. Neither can we be ashamed. For Jesus says "whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26)
  - b. God's power is on display in the resurrection and revealed in multiple aspects through the Gospel of Christ. This is why he was so eager to preach. He knows that it isn't empty philosophy.
  - c. This salvation is available to everyone who believes, but the Jew first, because the promises, prophets and Christ came through them. ( Mark 16:16, John 3:16, Acts 13:38-39, Rom 10:9-13)
  - d. The gospel reveals and grants the righteousness of God to those who will live by faith. (Eph 2:4-10)

4. 1:18-32 Paul now begins to lay down the foundation of his doctrine. That God's wrath is fully justified and deserved. Notice the abrupt change in his tone. Immediately after a pleasant greeting, and declaring that the just shall live by faith, we come to the serious reality of divine wrath. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Pro 9:10)
  - a. 1:18-19 Though it is not popular to preach the wrath of God in some churches today, it is nonetheless a reality spoken of throughout Scripture. Can you imagine, even briefly, the horror of the all powerful God doling out His wrath and punishment? What does it look like and how could any man stand against it?
    - i. We see some powerful examples of God's wrath in the Old Testament. The story of Noah is a perfect example of this. (Gen 6:5-7) Every living creature on the face of the earth was destroyed except those on the ark.
    - ii. The wrath of God is promised to all sinners in hell. And Jesus spoke of this frequently. (Mat 5:21-22 & 27-29, Mat 8:10-12, Mat 10:28, Mat 18:8, Mat 23:33, Mat 25:31-46)
    - iii. The only way to stand against God's wrath is through His mercy and grace. This began before time and the creation of the world. (Eph 1:3-6) And was promised to mankind through the Seed of the woman. (Gen 3:15) Finally fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ. (John 19:28-30, 1 John 4:10)
    - iv. "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." There is nothing hidden from the Lord and all will be punished according to their deeds. (Hebrews 4:13)
      1. There are many different forms of ungodliness and unrighteousness. Ungodliness may be seen as anything that lacks the consideration of the Holy and living God. I.e. Atheism, pride, prayerlessness, lack of due recognition to His expressed will. Whereas unrighteousness may be more of the actual lawless deeds of man. I.e. murder, rape, theft.
      2. It is not simply that people are unaware, but that they actively suppress the truth and knowledge of God. We know this to be a vain exercise as no man will escape the judgment of God. (2 Cor 5:10-11)
    - v. God's wrath is righteous and deserved. His law has been written on our hearts and made known to all men. Therefore to reject God is a deliberate and willful act of disrespect and ingratitude. But this is what we all do and why we need God's mercy.
      1. This is speaking of general revelation as opposed to special revelation which came in the form of His prophets, His Son and Holy Scripture.
  - b. 1:20 From the beginning of time, God's work has revealed His nature. His power, wisdom and order. These attributes are seen and understood by His creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1)
    - i. This does not mean all things can be understood. But the evidence for the creator is seen everywhere. (Isa 40:21-25, Job 36:22-31)
    - ii. Have you ever stood on the ocean shore or in front of a vast array of mountains? Proper perspective puts us in a place of lowliness, how truly small we are compared to His majesty.

- iii. Our intellect and pride can be dangerous things, but God will humble the proud. (Mat 23:12)
  - iv. Now that the word has become flesh and Jesus has come to the earth, there is even less excuse to those who have heard the gospel. This is not to say that there ever was any excuse to begin with as we will see in the next verse. (John 15:22)
- c. 1:21 They knew God, therefore there is no excuse at all for those who reject God. Atheist or agnostic, to claim ignorance or claim there is no evidence is to call God a liar.
- i. Everyone is aware of God, but instead of giving Him the due glory and thanksgiving, they reject Him and set their attention on the benign, the useless.
  - ii. As a result, all of their thoughts from that moment forward are empty and blind because they have no truth or light. Though this is not a preventative for them and in their foolishness, love the darkness. (John 3:19)
  - iii. Even Christians can be guilty of this. We commit sins of omission through lack of knowledge or desire to understand His word. Neglect of duty, unfruitfulness or unfaithfulness.
- d. 1:22 Those who prop themselves up against God and His wisdom only show how much of a fool they truly are. (Pro 26:12)
- i. Without fear of the Lord, there is no true wisdom. Psalm 14:1 - "The fool has said in his heart, 'there is no God.'" (1 Cor 3:19)
  - ii. This becomes our permanent state of existence. When we reject God, we profess ourselves to be wiser than our creator and our entire world is built on lies. Even to the point that we create false gods in imitation of our suppressed knowledge.
- e. 1:23 Through this self deception mankind has routinely created idol after idol. Giving the due glory of God to corrupt man and lifeless statues of animals. (Exo 32:1-4)
- i. This is a violation of the first and second commandment of God. (Exo 20:1-6)
  - ii. Though idols are nothing but the work of men's hands, unaware and unworthy of worship, man still goes through the motions to appease their conscience, praying in vain to lumps of wood. (Isa 45:18-20, Zec 10:2)
- f. 1:24-25 Man is created in the image of God. When we reject God, we inevitably reject ourselves believing we are smarter than we truly are. Therefore, in His divine wisdom God allows those who reject Him to fulfill their lustful desires. Which ultimately dishonors themselves.
- i. Given up to uncleanness, in the lust of their hearts, they dishonor their own bodies.
    - 1. How filthy is man's heart? We have countless perverse examples throughout history made publicly known. How much worse is that which is hidden?
    - 2. As Christians our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Any sin against the body of a believer is directly against the Spirit as well. (1 Cor 6:17-20)

- ii. Exchanging the truth of God for a lie.
  - 1. The glory and truth of God's revelation is given up in favor of man's vain imaginings. We can see this at work in today's modern "gender theory". The idea that a man can be a woman if he simply "feels that way". And the world is pushing hard to accept this as normal.
  - 2. Satan is at work in this matter. For he is the father of lies and blinds the minds of the unbelieving. (John 8:44, 2 Cor 4:4)
- iii. Serving the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.
  - 1. This is known as idolatry which manifests itself in many ways. From worshiping nature, statues, ourselves or creating a god in our own mind that doesn't truly exist. There is no difference between these things. All of them are lies that set people against the one true living God. And there are countless people today who are deceived into the latter by false teachers.
  - 2. "Do as thou wilt" is a common philosophy of those who reject God. And with no true object to ground ourselves in reality, this will be the standard default. Where every man does what is right in his own eyes. (Pro 14:12)
  - 3. Notice that Paul cannot mention God without giving praise. Let us learn to do the same. Praise God!
- g. 1:26-27 When people forsake God, God allows them to reap the due penalties of their sinful acts. He steps out of the way and their unchecked vile passions ultimately lead to rampant homosexual behavior.
  - i. Paul mentions vile passions in association with homosexual behavior. All sin is wrong and against God's law, but this one is highlighted as unnatural and shameful for it is against the foundational design of God's order. (1 Cor 6:17-20)
    - 1. Homosexual behavior is prohibited in Leviticus 18:22 as an abomination and maintained throughout the Bible. 1 Cor 6:9 addresses this again and says, amongst other things, that No homosexual will enter the kingdom of heaven. God's natural design is for male and female to join together as one flesh. (Mat 19:4, 1 Cor 6:15-20)
    - 2. God does not cause this sin. Many people say "I was born this way", but God does not tempt anyone to sin. (James 1:13-15)
  - ii. When our passions and lusts are not bridled by the truth of God, we regress to animalistic behaviors, convincing ourselves there is no right or wrong, but doing only what feels good.
  - iii. The penalty mentioned in verse 27 is not explicit, however we know it is the result of abandoning God's designed order. And in today's world the CDC states that AIDS is primarily spread through male to male sexual contact.
- h. 1:28 Re-emphasizing the point; as a result of man discarding the knowledge of God, God gives them over to their own debased thoughts to do those things they ought not do. (Eph 4:17-19) see vs 1:21
  - i. The depravity of man is a doctrine, which says in effect that man is incapable of doing good. A result of the wretched effects of sin which spread to mankind through our federal head and first man, Adam. When left to our own devices we will choose to live a sin filled life. And

without God's direct intervention, we would not, could not choose to serve Him. (Isaiah 64:1-7 begins a powerful prayer asking for God's mercy in spite of this.)

- ii. Those under the influence of Satan will extol the virtue of sin, creating excuses and eventually praising it as something good to be desired. They seek freedom from God, but apart from his mercy, they will run to their own demise in hell.
  - iii. And once more, let us remember that the problem isn't simply that men do not know, but that they choose to discard the knowledge God has given them. And as such God gives them over to their own perverted thoughts.
- i. 1:29-32 We now see a host of sinful behavior which results from the fact mentioned in verse 28. That men do not like to retain the knowledge of God. The following sinful behavior is not to be considered exhaustive, but a mere sample of common sin practice.
- i. Sexual immorality - Though lacking a complete and precise definition, sexual immorality is generally understood as any sexual behavior outside of husband and wife intimacy. This is a wide category of sin, but includes anything from fornication to homosexual practice and bestiality. It has become a common practice in our world to see people never getting married though living together and having children.
  - ii. Wickedness - a general demeanor of disregard for God's law and authority. Webster's dictionary defines this as morally bad: evil, disgustingly unpleasant: vile.
  - iii. Covetousness - To wish for or desire that which belongs to someone else. It is the last commandment listed in Exodus 20:17 and it will lead us astray. (James 1:14-15)
  - iv. Maliciousness - Having a desire to cause harm. Malice (1) - desire to cause pain, injury or distress. Malice (2) - intent to commit an unlawful act or cause harm without legal justification or excuse. (Mark 11:18)
  - v. Envy - A painful or resentful awareness of someone else's belongings or advantages. Oftentimes leading to sabotage or slander. (Gen 37:3-4)
  - vi. Murder - The deliberate unlawful killing of another person. Jesus compares anger with murder in Matthew 5:21-22. And 1 John 3:15 reads: "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer" (Gen 4:8 First murder)
  - vii. Strife - Bitter conflict and contentions, prolonging argument. (Pro 28:25, Gen 13:7-9)
  - viii. Deceit - Dishonesty, lying, deception. (Acts 5:1-11) However, there are some exceptions mentioned in Scripture. (Exo 1:15-21, Jos 2:1-7)
  - ix. Evil-mindedness - Having evil thoughts. In the case of depraved sinners, this is most if not all the time. (Pro 24:17)
  - x. whisperers/gossips - Speaking behind people's back, spreading rumors or sharing information that doesn't need to be shared. (Pro 11:9, Eph 4:29)
  - xi. Backbiters - To say mean or spiteful things about someone not present. (Pro 25:23)
  - xii. Haters of God - This is self explanatory, but they hate God and blame Him for their own troubles and evil doings.
  - xiii. Violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil - When there is no regard for God, there is no regard for anything except personal desires and fulfillment. All of life becomes selfish and vain and people will not only practice all manner of evil, but will continue to find new ways to shame and dishonor themselves before God. Though they will reject this shame and proclaim it as something good, willing to fight those who expose evil for what it is. (Mat 14:3-11)

- xiv. Disobedient to parents - God considers this so important as to be mentioned in the ten commandments. And violation of this commandment was punishable by death (Exo 21:15&17, Deut 21:18-21) As well as multiple times throughout the new testament. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (Eph 6:1-3, Mat 15:4, Col 3:20)
  - xv. 1:31 Paul finally ends this list with some negative examples of things people lack. First of all discernment, which is the ability to judge well. They can't be trusted, they do not love others, neither do they forgive or have mercy.
  - xvi. 1:32 But worst of all is that they know the righteous judgment of God. They know that those who practice these things are deserving of death, yet still do them. And not only do they know this, but they encourage others to do the same. "Pride" parades openly celebrate hostility towards God. And those who support these parades and lifestyles advocate a path that leads to death. (2 Pet 2:12-14, Pro 17:15, 28:4, Isa 5:20, Eze 13:22)
5. Self test Introduction and chapter 1
- a. Who wrote the Epistles to the Romans?
  - b. How did he receive his teaching and apostleship?
  - c. What is the main theme of this Epistle?
  - d. What is the biblical meaning of the word saint?
  - e. Why was the author eager to go to Rome?
  - f. Why has God revealed His wrath on mankind?
  - g. What is the difference between ungodliness and unrighteousness? Are they the same?
  - h. What is the only valid excuse to reject God and be spared from the pit of hell?
  - i. Name at least 2 things that happen to those who knowingly reject God?
  - j. Who is more guilty and therefore more likely to be punished by God: the one who commits sin or the one who condones it?

6. Review of chapter 1. After a personal greeting to the saints in Rome, wherein Paul declares the gospel of Christ as the “power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”, and that the “just shall live by faith”, he begins to lay the foundation for this gospel and why we need it in the first place. Addressing the guilt of man and the righteous indignation of God, he establishes that the knowledge of God is undeniable throughout creation. God has made Himself known and there is evidence to be seen everywhere. Sinful man intuitively knows His creator, yet suppresses the truth of God in unrighteousness. Therefore God allows sinners to fulfill their unrighteous desires and reap the consequences of their actions.
7. 2:1-16 Paul now begins to address those who claim to know better. This would include the Jews of his time and any moralist who might think themselves better or judge others for their sins. (“God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.” - Luke 18:11) Those who claim to have the truth and judge others only store up wrath for the day of judgment. For the more knowledge we have, the higher the accountability. (Hebrews 10:26-27, James 3:1)
  - a. 2:1 There is no excuse for anyone to judge another based on their sins. We are all sinners in need of God’s grace and mercy. By wrongfully judging others, we only condemn ourselves, for we admit knowledge of God’s standards, yet we are just as guilty of violating His law.
    - i. Self righteousness is a common problem for mankind. People often have a substandard knowledge of God’s holiness and will convince themselves they are good. (Pro 20:6) Instead of investing time to understand God and reflect on His word, they will overlook their own sins and focus on the lives of other people. (John 8:9)
    - ii. The Jews believed they would inherit the blessings promised to Abraham simply because of their heritage. In a similar manner today, there are many who believe they will automatically go to heaven because they were baptized as an infant or go to church. Yet neither of these facts alone will save a person. Do you know what is necessary to save a soul? (Mark 1:15)
    - iii. (1 Cor 5:11) This is not an all out ban on judgment. Christians are called to use righteous judgment in accordance with God’s truth. We must use wise discernment to rebuke or distance ourselves from professing Christians who knowingly sin, to sift through false teachers or to enact church discipline. (John 7:21-24, Mat 7:1-5)
  - b. 2:2 “But we know”, that is, those who have been taught the law of God and or understand that there is a difference between good and evil. We know that God judges righteously and true against all sin.
    - i. (Isaiah 45:19) The judgment of God is according to truth because it is God who establishes truth. He is the standard by which all truth is measured. His work is perfect and without injustice, therefore His word cannot deceive. (Deut 32:3-4, Psalm 33:4-5, Titus 1:2, Heb 6:18)



- ii. (Jer 17:10) When God judges a man, it is without error and is perfect judgment because He sees through the outward appearance and into our secret thoughts.
- c. 2:3 If we are judging others in any capacity, we must have a real understanding and knowledge of our own sin state. For those who judge others will be held accountable, not only to their own standards, but also to God's holy standard. (Luke 6:37-38)
  - i. There is a measure of self deceit and lack of awareness in the sin of hypocrisy. To overlook our own sins while pointing out others, seems to be inviting God for His immediate judgment. (Mat 23:29-33, Pro 16:5)
  - ii. Consider the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35. The king forgave a servant who owed an enormous debt after he begged and pleaded. But afterwards, this same servant went out and demanded repayment with violence for a debt he was owed. When the king found this out he ordered that the wicked servant be tortured. At the end of the parable Jesus said "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."
  - iii. None will escape the coming judgment except those who are covered by the blood of Jesus and wear His righteousness.
- d. 2:4 God's goodness is unparalleled and it is only because of this fact that we come to repentance at all. (Eph 2:8) He displays this goodness to all men, and far more than is rightly deserved. But Instead of contemplating on this goodness, it is wholly taken for granted.
  - i. (Eze 18:31-32, 33:11) Our days on this earth are numbered. And it is only by the grace of God that we stand moment to moment. His goodness allows us time while we still have breath to turn away from sin. Can you name one good reason that God should allow you another day on this earth? Let us give Him thanks for His mercy.
  - ii. (2 Pet 3:1-9) Forbearance and longsuffering - God holds back His immediate judgment. With enduring patience He is slow to anger and abundant in mercy. He will forgive those who turn to Him in repentance. But He will by no means clear the guilty. (Num 14:18)
  - iii. It is thanks to the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. (Tit 3:3-7)
- e. 2:5 (Ecc 8:11) Those self righteous persons who will not humble themselves to acknowledge their own sins will do nothing, but add to their own negative account for the day of judgment.
  - i. Without Christ, this is the only possibility. For He is the only way offered for the forgiveness of our sins. Every evil deed will be weighed and counted on the day of judgment. Even every idle word we speak and those things we do in secret. (Rom 2:16, Mat 12:36)

- ii. (Heb 3:12-15) The hardening of our hearts leads us away from God. Even those who believe they are in God's will can, and will, be deceived by sin if it is allowed to run free. Therefore diligence on our part is required that we do not stray. We must repent of any sin as soon as we become aware of it. And exhort each other to repent if we become aware of the sins of another.
  - iii. (Rev 16:8-11) When the day of judgment arrives, those who have rejected the grace of God still will not repent of their sins, but blame Him for their troubles.
- f. 2:6-11 "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" Everyone will stand before God. The righteous and the unrighteous. God, who is righteous and just will give to everyone exactly what they deserve. Nothing will be hidden, for God knows all. (Job 34:11, Jer 17:10, Heb 9:27)
- i. (2 Cor 5:10) At this time, our deeds will be taken into account and punished or rewarded as God sees fit, according to what we did with the life and talents He has given us. And though the just will be saved by grace through faith in Christ, God will repay us for our righteous efforts or for our evil deeds. (Mat 6:19-22, 10:28, 16:27)
  - ii. (Rev 7: 9-17) Heaven is a place for glory and honor and peace. Called the heavenly Jerusalem and city of the living God, it is a place to worship the Lord and there will be an innumerable number of angels as well as men and women from all nations and tribes of the earth. Jesus will dwell among the inhabitants of heavens and there will no longer be any hunger or thirst or tears for any reason. (Heb 12:22, Rev 7:9-10, 16-17)
  - iii. (Mat 13:41-42) Hell on the other hand, is also a real place, described by Jesus as a place of torment and everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But everyone who does not have the blood of Christ to cover their sins will find themselves here as well. (Mat 25:41, Rev 20:15)
  - iv. Additionally, there will be degrees of rewards or suffering accordingly. (Luke 12:47-48, 1 Cor 3:11-15)
  - v. (V7)"patient continuance" We are counseled many times regarding the importance of perseverance. It is regarded as a mark of true conversion. Those who run the race till the end, whose eyes are always on the prize, seeking for the glory and honor only He can bestow, will live in peace in His immortal presence. (1 John 2:19, Mat 24:9-13, Mat 10:22)
  - vi. (John 15:1-4) It is not accurate to say that we must act and do good or else be punished, but that our actions are a reflection of the reality within us. Our good deeds are evidence of our salvation and not the cause for it. (James 2:14-17)
  - vii. (2 Cor 5:17) Those who are truly saved have been regenerated. They are a new creation by an act of God and are in the process of being sanctified. Which process does not end until it is complete and we are glorified with Christ. (Php 1:6)
  - viii. On the other hand, those who do not obey God, but rather obey their own selfish and lustful hearts, will receive their due reward, which is wrath and indignation. (1 John 2:15-17)

- ix. (2 Cor 13:5) We must be diligent in this matter. For it is possible to deceive ourselves. There are many false professions and there are many corrupt teachers. Some people think they can pick and choose which parts of the Bible to follow while others have never opened it at all, making up their own ideas as they go along. But claiming a belief in God is not enough and will not save you. (165 million adults in America profess to be Christian.) (1 John 2:3-4, Jer 17:9,)
- x. (V9-11) (Mark 12:14) God does not show favoritism to anyone. Your race, nationality and or ancestry matter nothing when it comes to salvation. You will be dealt with according to your own sins. "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." (Eze 18:20)
- xi. However, we are held accountable for the degree of truth and light that has been given to us. Such is why the Jews are mentioned first. They hold a special place in God's plan for salvation. Given the law and prophets, they should be the first to understand that grace is by faith. "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:47-48)
- g. 2:12 Everyone who sins is guilty, period. Whether they live in the remote places of the earth and only have a general revelation of God or they have been privileged to know the special revelation of God. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." and "The soul who sins shall die." (Rom 1:18, Eze 18:20)
- h. 2:13-16 The Jews have the written law which judges them. But the gentile world has God's law written in their hearts and as such, are just as guilty. For their conscience bears witness against them and God knows the truth of our internal reality when we ignore or obey our conscience.
  - i. (V13) Not the hearers, but the doers. The Jews did not garner any special favor in God's eyes, simply because they heard the law spoken or because it was passed down through generations of their bloodline. Nor is anyone granted access to heaven simply because they might go to church on Sundays or listen to so-called Christian radio. (Mat 3:9, 7:24-27)
  - ii. It is easy to discard the role of works in regards to our salvation. But Scripture warns us that righteous works should be evident and Jesus said "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Mat 7:15-27, James 2:14-17)
  - iii. (V14) Though they "do the things in the law" that is not to say that any of them have done such a good work as to merit heaven. Or that they have kept the law where the Jews could not, but only that the law is shown to be at work inside them by their refrain of certain evils. ("shall not murder, shall not commit adultery.")
  - iv. (V15) "work of the law written in their hearts" Even those who declare themselves atheist still show understanding of the natural law. That there is a difference between right and wrong. Although the suppression of truth is at work and blatantly expressed in

- postmodern theories, you would be hard pressed to encounter someone who believes it is right to steal or rape a child. (Job 9:20)
- v. "Conscience also bearing witness" The conscience is not the law. God's law exists eternally unchanging. But our conscience is a tool given to us by God, to observe and direct us according to His law. And the fact that we have a conscience is proof that we are aware of right and wrong. Therefore our conscience will bear witness against us. Either to excuse or accuse us on the day of judgment against His law.
  - vi. (V16) Every man and woman will be judged through Jesus Christ. (Mat 25:31-32, John 5:22)
- i. 2:17-20 The Jewish nation was an honored one. A chosen people, to whom God had revealed Himself directly, to give them the law and from their line, bring forth Christ. Having the privilege of God's written word, they should know with certainty, His will and what was truly good and bad. But this only brought about a sense of superiority and a religious dogma void of true understanding and spirituality.
- i. (V17) They may have been called Jews, but they were legalists relying on their own understanding and application of the law. Their entire understanding was void of the larger implications and necessary faith in Christ. (Mat 27:6, Mark 3:1-4)
  - ii. It is proper and right to boast in God. For there is nothing to boast of in ourselves. He is worthy of all praise and worship. "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. (Ps 34:1-3, 1 Co 1:31, 2 Co 10:17, Jer 9:24)
  - iii. (V18) Having been instructed by the law, the Jews had the possibility for proper knowledge and the ability to approve that which is right and good, but they relied on themselves and didn't have a right relationship with God. They did not know what Jesus meant by "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." (Ho 6:6, Isa 1:11-17, Mat 9:10-13, 1 Tim 1:8-10)
  - iv. (V19) Their self confidence was a hindrance. They were so certain of themselves to be a guide to the blind, and a light to those in darkness that they were blinded themselves as Jesus said of them, "They are blind leaders of the blind." (Pro:14:16, Mat 15:14)
  - v. The world teaches that self confidence is a grand thing to be desired, but such confidence in ourselves is a dangerous belief that turns us away from God. Everything we have is a gift from God. From our life and bodies, to our personalities and talents. We can not live without God and would not know love apart from Him. He is the author and finisher of our faith. And in Him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:2, Heb 12:2)
  - vi. (V20) (Mat 15:8-9) They had the form of knowledge and truth, but were lacking in reality. Jesus said of the Pharisees that they tithed mint and cumin, but neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. All the "good" a person might do in their life is irrelevant without God.

- j. 2:21-24 Coming back around to how the chapter began, Paul questions the self righteousness and hypocritical nature of the Jewish people. Yes, they had been given the law and honor that other men did not receive, but were they using this knowledge to their advantage? It would seem evident they did not. For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." (2 Sam 12:14, Isa 52:5, Eze 36:16-21, Mat 3-5)
- k. 2:25 Circumcision was an important part of Jewish tradition. It originated as a sign of the covenant given to Abraham by God and was to be maintained throughout generations. It was so serious in God's eyes that if a male child was not circumcised, that child must be cut off from among his people. In the time of Moses, the law was introduced and the obligation of circumcision was renewed. Paul is expressing in this verse, that the law and circumcision are inseparably tied together. He is saying that if the neglect of circumcision violates and nullifies the law. Then to violate and neglect the law was to nullify the circumcision. Therefore circumcision is only profitable if you keep the law, which none of them could do. (Gen 17:9-14, Ex 4:24-26, Lev 12:2-3)
  - i. Though Jesus Himself was circumcised, circumcision is no longer required as a sign of the covenant. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Acts 15, Rom 10:4, 1 Cor 7:18-20)
- l. 2:26-29 Continuing in this line of thought, and bringing the chapter to a close, once again we find that God is a discerner of the heart. Circumcision, an act done to our flesh, means nothing if it is not accompanied by a renewed spirit and actions that match our profession. In this we have the principle understanding regarding the circumcision of the heart. (Deut 10:12-17, 30:6, Jer 4:4, 9:25-26)
  - i. (V26) As mentioned earlier in this chapter, verse 11, God shows no partiality. Jewish or Gentile, It is not our words that justify us, but our hearts. What are the motives behind your actions? God sees through it all and will reward those who truly turn to Him in fear and love. (Eze 33:19, Acts 10:34-35)
  - ii. (V27) Jesus made this same declaration in Mat 12:41-42. Those who fulfill the will of God will be set in high places. It doesn't matter what knowledge or experience you may have had in life, it is to no avail if you do not come to the cross and acknowledge your need for the salvation Jesus offers.
  - iii. (V28-29) Our heritage, and upbringing hold no value in regards to salvation. Neither does the name by which we call ourselves. Even if there is an outward appearance of righteousness, without an inward change and a renewed heart there is nothing to expect, but condemnation and judgment. If we are to find favor in the eyes of God we must believe in His Son and trust what Jesus told Nicodemus "unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And such a birth does not occur through the letter of the law, but by the Spirit of God. (John 3:3, Php 3:2-3)

8. Self test chapter 2

- a. In verse 1, we are told that those who judge others only condemn themselves. Does this mean Christians should never judge others?
- b. How or in what way is the judgment of God according to truth?
- c. Why are forbearance and longsuffering considered to be riches of God's goodness?
- d. Paul writes that God "will render to each one according to his deeds." Does this mean we will be judged by our works? Explain
- e. True or false: The Jews hold a special place in God's plan for salvation.
- f. In regards to the last question. Is this a benefit or a burden?
- g. If the gentile world never received the law, how are they a "law to themselves"?
- h. Is it appropriate or inappropriate to "boast in the Lord"? Why?
- i. True or false: Circumcision was given to Abraham from God as a sign of His promise. And it was to be maintained throughout all generations. This is why Jesus was circumcised and since we are to emulate Christ, it is important that we continue the tradition set before us.
- j. What does this statement mean? "He is a Jew who is one inwardly" ?

9. Review of chapter 2: Moving forward with his argument, Paul shifts his focus from the heathen world who live without any acknowledgement of God, to those who believe in morality and the Jews themselves. Starting off by calling attention to the sin of hypocrisy, he addresses the fact that those who judge others only condemn themselves, for they practice the same things. And as God is the ultimate judge who knows the secret things in our life, we should keep this in remembrance. For God's goodness is the only thing that brings us to repentance. His forbearance and longsuffering are truly gifts we don't deserve. And so long as we do not acknowledge His goodness and do not repent, His wrath is being stored against us, accumulating like a treasury of fearful anticipation for the day of judgment.

On the day of wrath and revelation, God "will render to each one according to his deeds." To those who live a life of unrighteousness, who do evil and are self seeking, not obeying the truth, these will receive indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish. But those who work what is good with patient endurance, seeking the glory and honor of God will find eternal life. This judgment will come through Jesus Christ upon every man and woman, Jew or Gentile. For God shows no partiality and there is simply no excuse. The Jews have the written law of God, but the Gentiles show the work of the law written on their hearts and have their conscience to bear witness against them.

The chapter ends with the clarification of the fact that Jews will have no special favor in the eyes of God for the mere fact of their birth or circumcision. For while they have been instructed in the law and make their boast in God, they are overconfident and self righteous, forgetting their history and sinful past. They too are hypocritical and the Gentile world blasphemes the name of God because of them. They may have the sign of the covenant through circumcision, but that means nothing if they do not fulfill the law. Therefore the true Jew, whether a descendant of Abraham or not, is the one who has his heart circumcised by the Spirit.

10. 3:1-9 Having made a bold claim in the previous chapter regarding the Jews and their standing before God, Paul anticipates the questions and arguments that will be raised and seeks to answer them in advance.
  - a. 3:1-2 Naturally the Jewish nation would feel themselves to be honored as they were God's chosen people and even given a sign of promise in the circumcision. But if they didn't receive any special favor because of these things, what benefit or advantage is there to circumcision or being a Jew at all? In fact being a Jew could be seen as a potential burden for the unrepentant because they have received greater knowledge. (Luke 12:48)
    - i. Paul's response is emphatic and for good reason. The Jews had been given the greatest advantage and benefit by their proximity to the word of God. For no other people in history have been called out and instructed by God Himself until Christ died and salvation was preached to the Gentiles. (Deut 4:8, 26:16-19)

- ii. Israel in the Old Testament can be seen as a type of Christ's church today. In that as the Jews had the privilege of God's revelation, Christianity has the benefit and privilege of the full revelation of God. And as the Jews had the sign of circumcision, Christians have the sign of baptism. (Though it should be noted and observed from chapter 2 that such a sign is no guarantee. He is not a Christian who is one outwardly, but one who is inwardly born of the Spirit.)
  - iii. To put it simply, if there was any advantage to be had in regards to salvation, the Jews had it. The law was passed down and preserved through their ancestors, written in their language. The prophets who spoke for God were born in their bloodline, and all the prophecies and types from the old testament pointed to Christ. What benefits do we have today?
- b. 3:3-4 If the Jews had all the advantages, yet most of them did not believe the gospel of Christ, and as such would not inherit the promised salvation, does this make God a liar? Absolutely not, in fact though every man agreed to falsehood, God would remain the standard of truth.
- i. God has a special relationship with the Jews. He has called them to be a treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. This is undoubtedly a gift of grace and what He has spoken will come to pass even if His words are not fully understood at the time. But it should be understood that belief in His word is the baseline standard for salvation. Not only this, but we are expected to heed His words, as He is the Almighty Creator. And in no way can the disbelief of men invalidate His promise. (Exo 19:5-6, Deut 28)
  - ii. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." God cannot lie. He promised the world would be blessed through Abraham, He promised that David's offspring would inherit the throne of his kingdom forever. The Jews were waiting for the messiah, but didn't understand the full revelation of God and rejected the truth when it was revealed to them. (Deut 32:4, Gen 12:3, 2 Sam 7:12-13, Isa 53:1-3, Heb 6:18))
  - iii. It is a natural thing for men to lie and blame others, or even God, for their own shortcomings. But with a proper understanding, we can take comfort knowing His word is truth. As Psalm 51:4 is here quoted. In this verse David, understanding that the Lord is righteous and just, having every right to condemn him, acknowledges his own guilt and asks for mercy according to the loving-kindness of God. God will be vindicated no matter the situation. The sooner we acknowledge this the better.
- c. 3:5-6 There are some who might argue that God's righteousness is revealed all the more clearly in contrast to our unrighteousness. And this is evidently so, but is God therefore unjust for punishing us when our evil deeds actually bring Him more glory? Once again, absolutely not. If this were the case then God would have no reason to judge us at all. (Rom 7:7, Gen 18:23-25, Eze 18:20)



- d. 3:7 "If my lies highlight His truth which actually brings Him glory, why am I still considered a sinner?" Another similar argument made by unbelievers is that "if God is sovereign, he can choose to save me, and if He doesn't, it's actually His own fault." Sinners will attempt to justify themselves any way possible. But God commands us to repent of our unrighteousness and to believe in His Son. When we attempt to shift the blame or discount our sin it only makes things worse as our hearts become hardened. (Acts 17:30-31, 1 John 3:23, Pro 28:13-14)
  - e. 3:8 The logical conclusion to this line of thought must be that if our unrighteousness brings God glory, then why not do evil so that God will continuously be glorified? Apparently the apostles were accused of such a thing. (And I would here note that slander against God's people will be seen as a normal occurrence as Jesus said "if the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.") It is true that God can use something evil planned by men and turn it into something good as happened with Joseph and his brothers in the book of Genesis. But the end does not justify the means. If such were the case we might be able to thank Judas for betraying Jesus. But as Paul rightly concludes; "Their condemnation is just."
  - f. 3:9 So what does all this mean? Are the Jews who held all the advantages, better than the Gentiles? Not at all, as Paul has already made this apparent in the first two chapters. Are Christians better than the unrepentant? Absolutely not. Whether Jew or Gentile, Christian or pagan, all have fallen under the taint of sin and are without excuse. The only hope of salvation for anyone is to transfer all trust to Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:11-12)
11. 3:10-18 The depravity of man, sometimes referred to as the doctrine of total depravity, teaches that mankind is sinful by nature and by practice. It does not mean that we are as sinful as we possibly could be, but that sin has permeated every aspect of our lives to the point that no one can live up to the holy standards of God and merit salvation on their own. And not only this, but that without God's grace it is impossible to even understand the seriousness of our offense or need of salvation. (Gen 6:5, Psa 14:1-3, Eph 2:1-3)
- a. 3:10-12 No one, but Jesus Christ has ever walked the earth in true righteousness. Though there are men and women throughout the bible that have been called righteous or just, it is only in comparison to other men and women by human standards. But by the holy standards of God, none are righteous. "Be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Mat 5:48)
  - i. (V10) There are none righteous - (Isa 64:6) Many people believe in the common good of man, but we cannot do any good without the power and love of Christ. Even those who appear to do good by giving to charity and or try to be helpful are doing so with a false understanding and impure motive. For it is impossible to please God without acknowledging Him in faith and repenting of our sins. (John 15:4-5, Gen 6:5, 8:21, Heb 11:6)

- ii. (V11) There are none who understand - (1 Cor 2:13-14) In order to understand the spiritual things of God, we need His help. Because all thinking outside of Christ is vain and deceitful and sinners actively suppress the truth for the love of their sins. (Rom 8:7, John 3:19,10:26)
  - iii. There are none who seek after God - (Rom 8:5-8, John 6:44) In the unsaved condition, we are hostile towards God and slaves to sin. Left alone, we will find all varieties of vice and idols to usurp His rightful place in our hearts. This is why there is no room for boasting, as Jesus makes it clear in John 6 that we cannot turn to God unless He calls us to do so, which is a sovereign act of grace. (Rom 6:16-20, John 8:34, 1 John 4:19)
  - iv. (V12) They have all turned aside and become unprofitable - (Rom 1:21-22) When the thoughts of man are not centered on God, everything becomes a practice in futility. The more we sin, the more our hearts are hardened and the further from God we separate ourselves. (Isa 53:6)
  - v. There is no one who does good - (Mat 19:16-17) This idea has already been presented in verse 10, but there is a need to emphasize it once more because people naturally believe themselves to be good. Though the reality is that we simply cannot do good as criminals and felons against God because our hearts are against Him. God examines the actions and intents of our hearts. If our motive does not begin with love for God, it cannot be good. (pro 20:6, Ecc 7:20)
  - vi. This list of indictments can be seen in a naturally flowing presentation of logical fact. If no one is righteous, then they cannot understand the righteousness of God. And if they do not understand His righteousness, they will not seek after Him. If they do not seek Him, they will turn aside to their own perverted thoughts where nothing profitable can be derived.
- b. 3:13-18 Expanding on the utter sinfulness of man, Paul now uses parts of the human body, originally designed for righteousness, to illustrate the evil aspects of sin that come natural to us in word and deed.
- i. (V13) The throat as an open tomb; The Jews had strict laws concerning dead bodies. To touch a dead body would make you unclean and therefore you must isolate yourself from everyone else for a prescribed time. With this in mind, our throats are freely used to give voice to the evilness inside of us. They are an open tomb exposing that which defiles us, the overflow of our hearts, which as it were, are desperately wicked, full of malice and cruelty. (Num 19:11-13, Jer 17:9, Mar 7:20-23)
  - ii. (Jam 3:5-8) Our tongues are like a vicious animal. A lit match in a dry forest. An untamable, unruly evil and full of poison. With it we practice deceit and bring harm to others in a variety of ways. Unkind remarks, deliberate insults, slander, gossip not to mention the harm we bring to ourselves by blaspheming God, using His name in vain and making a mockery of truth. Those who use their tongues in this manner as a practice, manifest themselves as children of the devil for he is the father of lies. (John 8:44)

- iii. (V14) (Jam 3:9-12) As Christians, it is important to understand the seriousness of our language. We know that God is holy and expects us to be holy. And it is from our hearts that we speak. Therefore to be careless in this regard must be seen as sin. And when we hear ourselves speaking in this manner, we should ask for God's forgiveness and examine our hearts. Curse words are generally filthy and not representative of the Holy Spirit within us.
  - iv. (Eph 4:29-31) Bitterness: "a feeling of antagonism, hostility, or resentfulness". Is another example that we are lacking in fellowship with God. For He is the divine authority who gives us what we need and determines what we don't. If we are angry that someone else received a promotion over us, or has something we do not, then we are not giving God all due respect for His decisions. The story of Cain and Abel is a prime example of the danger associated with bitterness. If we allow ourselves to harbor bitterness, it sets the stage for what Paul follows with next. Violence towards others. (Gen 4, 2 Cor 12:9-10, 1 Tim 6:6-9)
- c. (V15-18) It is only natural that a depraved mind full of bitterness would turn to violence. Yet Paul highlights the quickness with which we do so. It is said that patience is a virtue. And while God is longsuffering, mankind is not. History reveals the violence we are prone to with countless wars for a wide range of reasons. Money, territory, religion, personal offense, spite, revenge etc.. And the list goes on. On a smaller scale and in our personal lives, we can see these things play out before us. Road rage that ends in violence. Domestic abuse. Political disagreement. A sporting match that doesn't go your way. A sporting match that does go your way. Mankind is quick to shed blood and destruction and misery cannot be separated from this fact. World peace or an ideal utopia are spoken of at times, but without the knowledge and fear of God, the idea becomes a nightmarish circle of violence and reform as people try to make it happen. Quite simply, mankind is evil, miserable and destructive because they do not reverently fear God.

12. 3:19-20 The final conclusion in this argument, which began in chapter 1, is that all men are guilty under the law of God. Therefore no one may be justified by the law, by the things they do because of the law, but through the law we gain the knowledge of our sin.
- a. (V19) Who is under the law? Is it the Jews only? If we turn back to 2:12 he says that "as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law." But as he continues in 2:14-15 he says in effect: though they do not have the written law, they prove to have the law of God written in their hearts." Therefore the whole world is under the law of God. And when they are confronted with this law they can do nothing but shut up. For there is no excuse to be made and all are guilty in the eyes of God.
  - b. (V20) Therefore as no one can claim innocence, no one can use the law as a means of justification. Though the question might be raised, if we cannot be justified by the law, what purpose does it serve? Gal 3:19-25 answers this exact question. The law was added because of transgressions. "Till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made."

No matter what you have done because the law said to do it, or even in terms of "good deeds", the law is and will be used to bring knowledge of your sin. The straight edge of A ruler to see our own crookedness. A tutor that brings us to Christ. (Galatians 3:19-25)

13. 3:21-26 The bad news for mankind is that all men, everywhere are guilty. God's wrath is being stored up and will be poured out on all ungodliness. And now that the mouth of the sinner is stopped, the good news of faith, first mentioned in chapter one is brought to light. That the gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. God's righteousness is now demonstrated, apart from the law, through the blood of His own Son. His grace and mercy are now freely available to all who put their faith in Jesus.
- a. (V21) The righteousness of God - In a sense, the law might be seen as a shorthand written approximation of God's righteousness. Certainly not capable of describing and capturing all the glory of His righteousness, but it is His directive to mankind with a promise that the one who keeps His statutes and judgements "shall live by them." But as no man could keep His statutes and judgments He revealed His righteousness apart from the law through His Son. Jesus fulfilled all righteousness and was Himself, the embodiment of righteousness as He is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person. (Lev 18:5, Heb 1:3)
  - b. Apart from the law - (John 5:39-40, 45-47) This was a direct departure from Jewish tradition and one of the major stumbling blocks for the Jews. They held the law in high esteem and rightly so. But most of them did not recognize or were too afraid to admit the scriptures pointed to Jesus. One reason may be they believed the law already provided a remedy for sin through the sin offering and Day of Atonement. But these were not truly effective and had to be repeated continually due to mankind's sinfulness. (Lev 17:11, Lev 4:1-3, Lev 16:29-34, John 5:39-40, 45-47)
  - c. There were also Jews at this time demanding that Christians become obedient to the law of Moses. But as we have noted, in Acts 15, the apostle Peter makes it clear that this should not be, saying "Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." (Acts 15:1-11)
  - d. That God would provide a means of salvation apart from the law is spoken of throughout scripture in the form of prophecies, types and shadows. The Bible is God's revelation to mankind and God used men to communicate His truth as Peter tells us in 2 Peter that "prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (Acts 10:43, 2 Peter 1:21)
  - e. (V22-23) Revealed to all and on all who believe - Apart from the law the very righteousness of God has now been revealed in His Son, who is the express image of His Father. The righteousness of His glory and goodness are now offered to all as if it were a robe to wear. To Jew and Gentile alike without exception to all who exercise faith in Jesus. He will take away our filthy garments of sin and iniquity and cloth us in His very own fine linen. (Heb 1:1-4, Rev 19:8, Isa 64:6)

- f. All have sinned and fall short - Paul has already asserted that no one is righteous or good. All have sinned against God. And John agrees with him "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Yet the point here is not to condemn us again, but to express the good news of the amazing gift. Wherein if we humble ourselves and transfer our faith to Jesus, He grants us this righteousness. And all our sins will be washed away. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9)
  - g. (V24) Justified freely by His grace - Justified in this sense is in relation to our legal standing before God. Completely unmerited, apart from any good deeds we have done and only on account of His grace, we stand before God justified (not guilty) through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the righteousness He grants to us. Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life. He fulfilled the law in its entirety. Through faith in Christ, we are redeemed by His perfection. (Rom 5:15, 6:3-5, 1 Cor 1:26-31, Eph 2:4-5)
  - h. (V25-26) Christ set forth as a propitiation- Propitiation: is defined as "the act of gaining or regaining the favor or goodwill of someone or something" Propitiation in this sense is the act of turning away God's anger. The wrath of God, which we deserved, was poured out on Jesus. His death satisfied the requirement of punishment for guilty sinners. And now we are free from the bondage of the law. (Isa 53:10-12, 2 Cor 5:21)
  - i. By His blood - (Lev 17:11) His blood was poured out as an offering on our behalf. In the Old Testament it was necessary to sacrifice animals in order to purify the priests and atone for sins. But the death of Jesus put an end to the sacrificial killing of animals forever. "It is finished." (Lev 17:11, Heb 9:13-14, John 19:30)
  - j. Through faith - (Heb 11:6, 4:2) Faith is a necessary component for salvation. To read or hear the gospel without faith is of no profit. Intellectual assent or knowledge of God alone will not save us, as even demons have knowledge of God and tremble in fear. We need to put on faith like a warrior puts on armor. To trust the promises of God as a guarantee. For faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Without faith it is impossible to please God. (Rom 9:30-32, Heb 4:2, 11:1-6, James 2:19)
  - k. To demonstrate his righteousness, He is just and the justifier - God has granted the forgiveness of sins to those who exercise faith in His Son. But this presents a problem to human minds. For justice demands that crime be punished. Though in order to demonstrate how righteous and merciful He truly is, He has provided a legal means of transference. Allowing His Son to stand in our place and receive punishment on our behalf. And now His wisdom is on display for He is just and at the same time the justifier. This whole idea is foolishness to the world, but "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." (1 Cor 1:18-25, (forbearance Mat 6:14-15), 18:35)
14. 3:27-31 As it has now been made abundantly clear, God in His divine wisdom, has redeemed sinners to Himself by His own efforts. We have violated the law and therefore cannot save ourselves, nor is there a way to make up for our sins even if we wanted to, (which according to v11, we don't want to). But the work of His Son has satisfied every requirement of the law and

therefore the only necessity to enter heaven is to place your faith in Jesus Christ. And as no work is required for this to happen, there can be no boasting.

- a. (V27-28) (Eph 2:8-9) Boasting, in the first place, is anti-christian behavior. Jesus is our example and His message was one of humility. "But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Additionally, we have absolutely nothing to boast about. Our talents, gifts and physical attributes all come from God. And finally, we are all sinners on the fast track to hell without the mercy and grace of God. If He did not call out to us we would still be dead in our sins. (Eze 28:11-17, Mat 23:11-12, John 15:16, Eph 2:8-9)
- b. Justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law - (Rom 9:30-33) There are many people who believe in the see-saw doctrine or the scales of justice. Whereby if their good deeds outweigh the bad deeds, they will go to heaven. Scripture says otherwise. Also of note, though our salvation is not contingent on the law or the works we do, those who are saved should produce fruit of some kind. Not because they have to, but because fruit bearing is evidence that you are saved and our outward lives should reflect the inward reality. (John 15:1-6, Jam 2:14-26)
- c. (V29-30) (Acts 17:24-27) In the beginning God created mankind. Though He directly dealt with the Jews and gave to them the covenant, the law and the prophets, there is truly only one race, the human race. And God is the Father of all showing no partiality to the color of skin, place of birth or position in society. (1 Cor 8:6, Eph 4:6)
- d. (V31) We come now to a vital point of understanding and what might be seen as *the* stumbling block, especially for the Jews, as the law was their inheritance. The gospel puts forth that faith in Christ is the only requirement for righteousness and access to heaven is exclusively through this faith. But if this is true, doesn't that negate the law and make it void? Certainly not! The need for Christ's death proves the truth and reality of the law. Furthermore the law is still necessary as a mirror to show sinners the depths of their sinfulness.

Christ upheld the importance of the law and said "do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." That fulfillment was completed upon His death because the penalty for violating the law is death and He stood in our place to pay the price. "The soul who sins shall die." "The wages of sin is death." If we die outside of Christ, lost in our sin, we pay that fine personally and will find ourselves weeping in hell. But whereas He was not deserving of death, and His blood holds infinite value, His sacrifice may be appropriated by all who believe in Him. Therefore the gospel does not void the law, but shows the serious nature of the law and the consequences for breaking the law. To such a degree that the Son of God had to die in order for us to live. (Eze 18:20, Mat 5:17, Rom 6:23, 8:1-4, 2 Cor 5:21)

## 15. Self Test chapter 3

- a. What is(are) the advantage(s) of being a Jew?
- b. True or false: Because there are so many Jews who do not believe the gospel or even in the prophets, God has decided He will no longer fulfill His promise to them. Which is why salvation is now offered to all, Jew and Gentile alike.
- c. It seems evident that our unrighteousness magnifies God's righteousness by contrast. If this is true, does this make God unjust for punishing us?
- d. There is a doctrine known as the depravity of man. What does this teach?
- e. If we cannot be justified by the law, what then is the purpose of the law?
- f. What does it mean that God's righteousness is now revealed apart from the law? Vs 21
- g. In verse 3:24, Paul says we have been justified freely by His blood. Explain what it means to be justified in this sense.
- h. How can God be considered just and the justifier at the same time?
- i. True or false: If a man truly works hard while giving all glory to God, he may not be able to say that he has earned his salvation, but he can at least boast in his own efforts.
- j. Vs 31 - The law is not void because of faith, on the contrary the law is established. How is this so?

16. Review of chapter 3 The chapter begins with a defense of God's judgments. After telling the Jews in chapter 2 that they will receive no special favor because of their circumcision, he anticipates the questions that might follow and cuts them off short. God's actions do not require a defense. The Jews had every advantage possible and still turned away from God. They had been given the law and the prophets, but turned to idols and unrighteousness anyway.

As it stands, no one is good, no one is righteous or even desires to seek after God. But all have turned away as enemies and become unprofitable. In word and deed we are wicked, having no fear of God. Which is why the law was given, to stop every mouth that might attempt to proclaim its own goodness. But now, in His infinite wisdom and divine mercy, God has revealed His righteousness apart from the law through the sacrifice of His Son.

The blood of Jesus was the propitiation for our sins and God has accepted His sacrifice on our behalf. The just demands of the law have been satisfied by His death and now His righteousness is offered to all who put their faith in Him. Therefore it is evident that God is just and the justifier. Fulfilling the law, and offering a way of redemption through His Son. As such, no one can rightfully boast. For they have done nothing worthy of boasting nor have they saved themselves, but God has thrown a life raft to our drowning souls.

The chapter ends with a question regarding the status of the law. If God has made salvation a matter of faith so that we are no longer obliged to fulfill the law, does that mean the law is now void? No it does not. On the contrary the law is established by these things. For it demonstrates the seriousness of the law. In that God had to actively save us from ourselves by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who we know to be God in the flesh.

17. 4:1-4 At the end of chapter 3 Paul shifts from the condemnation we all mutually experience under the law, to the unpopular idea that the righteousness of God is revealed apart from the law. Having first articulated that all are sinners and therefore will not be justified by their own merits, he then establishes that the righteousness of God is inherited through faith in Jesus Christ. And therefore a person is justified on the basis of faith whether circumcised or not. Chapter 4 continues this line of argument and the concept of justification by faith alone is developed. Verses 1-12 are a rather straightforward presentation of fact using the patriarch Abraham as the primary example to prove his point.

- a. (V1-2) What has Abraham found according to the flesh? Was circumcision something to boast about? Was the promise of his seed that would bless the world by means of His own doing? Of course not. If it was something he did that justified him before God, then he would have something to boast about. But we know that isn't the case for him or anyone. (Rom 3:20) The only boast worthy of our time is boasting in the greatness of our God.
- b. Our works cannot justify us because they are insufficient for reasons previously discussed. Primarily because we are sinners and therefore even our good deeds are like filthy rags.



Also because whatever talents we possess that may have attained to some manifest goodness are but gifts from God (to be used for His own purposes), and therefore we owe a gratitude and still have nothing to boast about. "But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me." (Isa 64:6, Jer 9:23-24, Mat 7:22, Gal 2:16, 2 Tim 1:9, John 6:28-29, Tit 3:4-5)

- c. "Abraham our father". In this particular context, Paul is referring to the Jews, which of course includes himself. That Abraham is the father of the Jews was nothing contrary. And hence why he initiates this line of argument. If the case is true regarding one of the greatest patriarchs, then at very least, it could be true about others. Though Paul makes such a case that any differing idea seems ridiculous.
  - d. (V3) What does Scripture say? (2 Tim 3:16-17) Godly men and women understand the authority of Scripture. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit and scripture is to be taken at face value, true and complete with all questions of uncertainty clarified by and contrasted against more clear portions of scripture. Without knowledge of scripture we are defenseless against the evil influences of the world. Jesus quoted scripture while being tempted by the devil. He also quoted scripture to teach and correct the understanding of the people. This was one of the reasons His authority was apparent when He spoke. It was declarative, expanding what the scripture says and not quoting other men like many teachers do. The apostles also quote scripture numerous times to make certain points of doctrine more clear as Paul does here with Gen 15:6. (Mat 4:10, 19:4, Acts 17:11)
  - e. Abraham believed and it was *accounted as* righteousness. - This is the argument Paul has been developing. (Rom 3:26) Accounted means: To regard or be considered as, credited. God didn't look at Abraham and see a righteous man free of sin and therefore deserving of salvation, but because Abraham believed, God counted him as righteous. This is the same process and justification for those who believe and put their faith in Jesus. We are accounted as righteous though we do not deserve to be.
  - f. (V4) "A laborer is worthy of his wages." We expect to get paid when we go to work because we are trading our labor for money or goods of some sort and rightfully so. This is the essence of what is being said. If we worked for and earned our salvation, then God would owe us the right to enter heaven and it would no longer be considered grace. But "All fall short of the glory of God", therefore grace is needed. Furthermore, God created us and expects us to glorify and worship Him. Therefore to do so is only doing what we ought and still not considered a righteous deed worthy of repayment. (Luke 10:7, 17:7-10, Rom 3:23)
18. 4:5-8 Being that Abraham is the father of the Jews and the one through whom God first made a covenant to "make him a great nation", he is the perfect example to express that righteousness comes through faith apart from works. But David also understood the greatness of God, that He is merciful and forgiving and will not impute sin to those who believe and trust in Him. "Blessed is the man whose lawless deeds are forgiven."
- a. (V5-6) (John 6:28-29) Apart from all work, it is the one who believes the promises of God who will have righteousness accredited. This is what David is describing when he writes in Psalm 32:1-2

- b. This particular detail regarding salvation, may be one of the more difficult concepts for people to grasp and accept as we have a natural understanding and inclination for justice. That a perfect and righteous God, would not charge us with our crime, but freely forgive those who simply trust Him. And yet, here is a beautiful picture of the reality, that of a loving Father forgiving His children.
  - c. (V7-8) Can it be otherwise? To impute means the same as to credit, to lay the responsibility or blame for something. Therefore the person described in this Psalm is certainly blessed. Whose sins are not imputed against him while the righteousness of God is. For we have no way to atone for our own sins. And if not for His abounding love, we would be lost and cast aside in torment. But glory be to God that Jesus Christ has covered our sins with His very own righteousness. This is how and why we are justified before God. Because our sins are covered and He does not count those sins against us, but we are seen as something new and clean. (2 Cor 5:17-19) A work that only He was capable of doing. .
19. 4:9-12 Coming back around to the concern of circumcision. Paul sets out to prove once and for all the truth of the matter. For even Abraham, the father of all the redeemed souls received this righteousness before circumcision. And circumcision was given only afterwards as a sign.
- a. (V9-10) 2:25-26. Paul has already addressed the idea that circumcision isn't a guarantee of salvation. But he loops back around with this masterful argument to reinforce what he said earlier. Circumcision of the flesh begets nothing without the circumcision of the heart. Righteousness was not accounted to Abraham because he was circumcised, but granted to him while he was uncircumcised. Which proves that it is not a requirement for salvation.
  - b. For a further look into the life of Abraham; justified by faith while uncircumcised: Gen 15:6 is where scripture says righteousness was accounted to Abraham. When God promised him an heir that would come from his own body though he was advanced in years and that his descendants would be as numerable as the stars in the sky. Abraham believed in the Lord, "and He accounted it to him for righteousness." Then in chapter 16 Abraham conceives a child with Hagar (16:1-4). In verse 3 it says he had dwelt in the land of Canaan for ten years. And down in verse 16 it says he was 86 years old when Ishmael was born. Turn to chapter 17 and Abraham is now ninety-nine and this is when God gives him the covenant and the sign of circumcision (17:1-14). Which means Abraham walked the earth at least 14 years already righteous in the eyes of God before he was circumcised.
  - c. (V11-12) "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith." Circumcision was the visible sign of an invisible promise. The seal of an agreed upon covenant. In Gen 17 God establishes the covenant with Abraham, to be his God as well as his descendant's and to give them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. God then told Abraham that he must be circumcised and every male child must be circumcised. "and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." We can see why the Jews held circumcision in high regard. It was a literal sign of the covenant to be the people of God. And those who were not circumcised were to be cut off from the people. (Gen 17:1-14)

- d. Abraham is "the father of all those who believe." (Gal 3:5-9) We know that God's wisdom is beyond comprehension, but this is one of those details that highlights His foreknowledge and amazes me. Abraham walked in the righteousness of faith 14+ years before he was given the sign of circumcision. And Paul uses this detail to prove that God is the God of the uncircumcised also. And that circumcision was a seal of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised. Because in Christ, all are "renewed in knowledge" according to His image "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised." (Col 3:11)
- e. A seal - oftentimes an official stamp of authority or marking to prove the validity of a thing. In this sense the seal would mean "a thing regarded as a confirmation or guarantee of something." The circumcision was a physical representation of the guarantee that existed in the covenant between Abraham and God. But what the seal signified on Abraham's part was his faith in God. And thus Abraham is the father to all who place their faith in God.
- f. In verse 12 he is repeating an idea he has already addressed to complete the whole picture. (Rom 2:28-29) To be circumcised was an honor and privilege that you would be counted among the children of Abraham, but without the circumcision of the heart, the mark of flesh means nothing. Abraham is the father of faith and of circumcision, but only those who walk in his footsteps to humbly circumcise their hearts and place their faith in God are his children. Jesus reinforces this principle in Matthew 7:21. "Not everyone who says to me.." A difficult reality to accept for those who placed all their trust in the works of the law or of the sacraments required by an institution.

20. 4:13-16 The promise given to Abraham was done so while uncircumcised and while there was no law given as of yet. Therefore the promise given to Him and to his seed must have been through faith. Because if it was otherwise, i.e. through the law, faith would be irrelevant and the promise would have no effect because the law brings wrath.

- a. (V13) (Gal 3:16-18) God did not establish the law as a means of righteousness nor as a medium of grace. But it came later on "because of transgression" hundreds of years after God made this promise to Abraham. In contrast to the law in which one might demand fulfillment, the promise was made through the righteousness of faith. A faith that believed in God, listened to and trusted Him completely.
- b. (V14) If God had made a promise to Abraham through the law, there would be no need for faith. The fulfillment of the law would thereby purchase the obligatory promise. Which in a sense would no longer even be a promise, but a matter of law that could be demanded. But that isn't exactly what Paul is saying here about the promise being made of no effect.
- c. (V15) What He is saying is that the promise could not be through the law because the law brings wrath. We are all sinners, confined under sin. (Rom 3:20) The law can only bring us to this knowledge. (Rom 7:7-9)
- d. (V16) Therefore the promise must be of faith for multiple reasons. First, that the grace of God would be on display, undeserving and unmerited grace which brings Him glory and praise as we sing how amazing and sweet it is. Second, that it would be taken out of our

hands and secured by His own efforts. Because humans are weak and carnal, caving to the demands of the flesh, doing those things we ought not to do and not doing the things we ought. But praise God the promise is secure in His hands through Christ. And lastly it is of faith so that it is not limited exclusively to those given the law, the Jews, but to all the world and everyone who places their faith in Him.

21. 4:17-22 Paul has effectively argued that it was the faith of Abraham alone which God looked on to count him as righteous. Uncircumcised, with no law in place, Abraham was pulled out of the world and followed the instructions of God. This next portion of Scripture highlights this faith more closely and looks to explain what was so special about that faith in the first place and why Abraham was counted righteous because of it.

- a. (V17) A father of many nations - In Gen 17:5 God gave Abraham a new name. Though technically Abraham was the new name. Prior to Gen 17:5 his name was Abram. The reason for this as explained by God and what Paul alludes to "as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations." (17:6) Is because in that moment God was declaring what would be a new reality for Abraham. At 99 years old God made a promise to Abraham that said: "I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you." Up until this point Abraham had one child, Ishmael, born to his wife's maidservant, Hagar.

At this time God was confirming the terms of a covenant, which said in effect that 1. God would multiply Abraham exceedingly making him the father of many nations. 2. That The Lord would be God to Abraham and all his descendants after him. 3. That the land of Canaan would be given to him as an everlasting possession. These were the general terms of the covenant from God to Abraham. And as sign of the covenant, God instituted circumcision. That Abraham, and his descendants, every male child who is eight days old shall be circumcised. Abraham likely believed all of this and was even willing to be circumcised, but there was one additional promise. As with himself, his wife Sarai shall have a new name, Sarah. She would be blessed by God, and bear a child, becoming the mother of many nations at 90 years old. (17:16) Abraham fell on his face and laughed. This particular detail was difficult to accept. "Shall a *child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a *child*?" (17:17) But notice, this is what he said in his heart, unwilling to speak it out loud. Instead he said "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" (17:18) But God confirmed the promise, "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his descendants after him." (17:19)

If you remember, the original promise to Abraham in Gen 15:1-6 was that an heir would come from his own body and that his descendants would be as numerable as the stars in the sky though he was advanced in years. Which would be difficult enough to accept, but Abraham believed in the Lord and it was accounted as righteousness. He then had a child with Hagar and likely believed the promise had already begun to be fulfilled, but when the

child was 13 years old, God had further plans to make his barren wife, 90 years old at this point, to be with child. That Abraham believed is evidenced by his legacy in scripture and his actions which followed. He immediately fulfilled what the Lord had commanded him to do, circumcising himself and every male in his house. (Heb 11:8-11)

- b. In the presence of Him whom he believed - We have seen the extraordinary faith that Abraham exercised to believe these things. But what does that say about Him whom he believed? "God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did" (Heb 11:17-19) It wasn't some magic man that made arbitrary promises, or an idol void of life and spirit, but the one and only God who gives life to the dead. Abraham understood and accepted that God had the power to give life, to make him young again if so desired being that he was practically 100 years old, or to give him a child in his old age. There was no question of these things because he understood that God could "call those things which do not exist as though they did". Abraham may not have understood how these things would happen, but he knew and believed he was speaking to the Creator of the universe. And if He could form the universe, creating man from the dust of the earth, surely He could fulfill any promise He chose to give.
- c. (V18) who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, - This is the struggle of our mortality, sense and reason. What hope should he have had? He understood the way nature worked. He was 100 years old. His wife was 90 years old. He had likely seen other children born and understood that women do not give birth past menopause, especially those who have been barren. Everything inside his brain would have told him all of this was impossible, and he had plenty of reason to have no hope at all, yet hope he did, anchored in God who could do all things. (Mat 19:26)
- d. This was all God's doing. Ephesians 2:8 says we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God. Abraham was called from obscurity for no special reason in himself. Christians are called for no special reason in ourselves, we are full of sinfulness, yet God chooses to display His grace and bestow upon us the faith we need to believe in Him and understand who He is. When we hear His word we are responsible to respond appropriately. Abraham thus believed God against any reasonable hope outside of God's greatness and became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken "so shall your descendants be".
- e. (V19) Abraham was not weak in faith, but believed against hope. It seems Paul appreciates the facts of this story and uses colorful language to make his point. Abraham was just about dead with no reason to believe any of the things God has said, he even laughed when God told him these things, yet he was not weak in faith and believed that God could do any and all things. That his body was 100 and his wife's 90, meant nothing to the one who created all things. For Christians we can meditate upon this faith. How strong is our faith? How firm do we believe in and trust in God? Do we fear the world, or worry over things arbitrary and carnal? Or do we rely on the strength of God, choosing to believe His promises? That He will supply all of our needs (Mat 6:33) and comfort us in our tribulations (2 Cor 1:3-4). He promises to guard our hearts with peace through prayer (Phi 4:6-7) and that all things will work together for good according to His purposes (Rom 8:28). Most importantly of all, we are promised the forgiveness of our sins (1 John 1:9) and eternal life

(John 3:16) through Jesus Christ who promised to come back for us himself (John 14:1-3). It is easy at times to get sucked into the smaller things of life forgetting these promises. So let us determine within ourselves to trust in God and set our minds on things above, like Abraham, even against hope because God is faithful.

- f. (V20) He did not waver in unbelief, but was strengthened in faith - It is this more than anything we can do which brings God glory. It affirms we believe in Him and trust in Him. Jesus commends the great faith of the centurion and the Canaanite woman (Mat 8:10, 15:28). He also condemns what little faith the apostles had in Him when the boat was swaying in the wind. (Mat 8:24) And when Peter started to walk on the water but then sank (14:31). He told us that if we had faith as small as a mustard seed we could tell a mountain to move and it would. (Mat 17:20) And it is through faith in Christ we are saved. It seems then, that while saving faith may be a gift of God, in which He reconciles our relationship so that we are no longer enemies, we can choose to further participate in this faith to some degree and set aside our remaining disbelief as evidenced by Peter first walking on the water with Jesus. We are told to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom 12:2). The more we know and understand God, the more we believe and trust His word, the more glory He receives because of it. We can be active participants in our sanctification and strengthen our faith so that we believe against hope, giving glory to God.
- g. (V21-22) Fully convinced - This is the essence of saving faith. Belief. Being fully convinced. To accept something as true. Rom 10:9-10 "if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **For with the heart one believes unto righteousness.**" John 3:16 "whoever believes in Him will never perish" / John 11:26 "whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" / John 3:36 "whoever believes in the Son has eternal life" / Rom 1:16 "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation for those who believe." / Rom 3:21-22 "the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe..... believe in what? The gospel of Jesus Christ. That He came to save the world from our sins. Taking our punishment, paying our debts, being crucified and brought back to life and now offering eternal life to those who trust in Him. Oftentimes people will say they believe this or that, but their heart and actions say otherwise. This is why we are exhorted to examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith.
- h. What He had promised He was able to perform - saving faith is being fully convinced that what God has spoken will come to pass. God is omnipotent- all powerful. There is nothing that has ever been done, that God cannot do. But there are untold numbers of things God can do that have never been done. God spoke and the world was created. God breathed into dust and it came to life. Any unbelief in the capabilities of God are due to ignorance of His word, or lack of faith in His power. Anxiety is common these days and described as persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. What blessed relief God has to offer those who believe life is chaos and out of control. But Abraham was not so. He was fully convinced that what God had promised He was able to perform and with such a confidence that God granted him righteousness and went above and beyond anything Abraham could have imagined. (Eph 3:20-21)

22. 4:23-25 Scripture never was for one man alone. Nor was it written down for the sake of honoring those who are our spiritual heroes. But it was written down for future generations as witness and testimony, examples to pattern. That all signs might point to Christ, the redeemer of our souls and that we should believe in Him. (1 cor 10:11) ( Rom 15:4)
- a. (V23-24) We have 2 different ideas being presented here. First is that all of these things that we have thus far discussed regarding Abraham, were not just written for his sake alone so as to honor, but for us who came after. That Abraham would be the demonstration and example for how we could be justified by faith alone. And the second idea is that, It wasn't some peculiar act that applied to Abraham only, but the same process of imputation will apply to us as well and everyone who believes in God almighty. Abraham's sin was not imputed to him, but instead righteousness through faith in God, so too will righteousness be imputed to us who believe in the One who raised Jesus from the dead.
  - b. A note about this faith - Abraham believed the impossible. Not because he was delusional, but because he believed in the power of God. He understood that it doesn't make sense, but God promised it and so it would be. And this is the essence of his faith. Trust in the word and power of God. He didn't understand how it would work but he knew God was capable of all things. In similar manner the resurrection of Jesus is the wall that must be figuratively climbed by a professing christian. To trust that God has the power and willingness to raise a dead man from the grave. And to trust His promise that He will forgive us and that he is able to use the life and death of Jesus to pay for our sins.
  - c. (V25) delivered for our offense and raised for our justification. This is the gospel in brief. That Jesus died for our sins and was raised that we might be justified by His righteousness. He was delivered by divine providence according to plan. Yet He also willingly delivered Himself, a sacrifice to atone for the sins He did not commit. His death paid the penalty due for sins against God. After 3 days God raised Him from the dead, the sacrifice accepted. And now he lives as guarantee for those who put their faith in Him. Offering forgiveness and salvation for those who understand it is He who did it all. Nothing we could do, but only by the all powerful God of creation, who has life within himself to create something new from what was dead.

### 23. Self test chapter 4

- a. True or false Abraham was counted righteous only after he fulfilled his end of the covenant and circumcised himself, thus proving his faith in God.
- b. Is Abraham the father of the Jews alone?
- c. In verse 3 Paul asks, "what does Scripture say?" Should scripture be used as a legitimate reference?
- d. Was Abraham justified before or after circumcision? Before, because he believed in the promise and power of God.

- e. What does Paul say about the purpose of circumcision?
- f. Reference 4:14, list 2 reasons why faith would be made void and the promise of no effect.
- g. Give 1 other reason than the above for why it is good that heirs are through faith.
- h. How old was Sarah when God promised her a child through her barren womb?
- i. Name something exceptional about Abraham's faith.
- j. Who was the story of Abraham written for and why?

24. Review of Chapter 4 This chapter is dedicated to highlight and display the faith of Abraham. To prove that it was his faith alone that justified him in the eyes of God and that circumcision was a sign of his faith and a seal of the covenant between him and God. Paul uses sound logic and relies on scripture to show that Abraham was accounted righteous not because of the things he did that might earn him this designation, but because he believed the promises of God. David is brought in as a second testimony to show that God is willing to cover our sins and impute righteousness apart from the works of the law.

The second half of the chapter is used in part to show the need for the promises of God to come through faith and not by law. For by faith, the grace of God might be on display and sure to all who place their faith in God. Which makes them the spiritual descendants of Abraham, affirming scripture and the promise of God which said "I have made you a father of many nations". Abraham's faith is to be emulated. He is the prime example of faith for all the world. Who believed in God and His word despite the difficulties or challenges to his reasoning. He trusted God more than he trusted his current base of knowledge, believing contrary to hope.

Unlike Abraham, we now have an object reason for hope in Jesus Christ. Abraham lived before Christ, but looked to the future promises of God as a sure thing and therefore God counted his faith as righteousness. But we are blessed in the fact that we can look back to the life of Christ and the testimony of His apostles. And for those who believe in the power of his death and resurrection, God will forgive our sins and justify us the same way he did with Abraham. By imputing to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ.



25. 5:1-5 Beginning in chapter 3:21 through the end of chapter 4, Paul has presented a strong argument with evidence that faith is the means by which we are justified in the eyes of God. He now begins to speak of the positive outcomes of this faith, the implications, and what it inevitably leads to.

- a. (V1) Therefore - a summation which gathers together the entire argument that came before it. (the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed (3:21), through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.(3:22), Being justified freely by His grace (3:24), God had passed over the sins that were previously committed (3:25), that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (3:26), Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded (3:27) Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law (3:28), For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (4:3), David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works (4:6), Blessed *is the* man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin." (4:8), *Does* this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only*...*For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness*(4:9), How then was it accounted...while uncircumcised (4:10), that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised (4:11), For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not ...through the law... but through the righteousness of faith. (4:13), For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect (4:14) Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace... sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham (4:16) who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations (4:18), He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."(4:20-22)
- b. Having been justified by faith - To justify is to judge, regard, or treat as righteous and worthy of salvation. When we speak of justification, it is the same as a legal verdict in the eyes of God. We are sinners, guilty of numerous transgressions against our holy God; criminals worthy of proper punishment. But through faith in Him and His promises, as with Abraham, God freely justifies us. This justification happens the moment we exercise saving faith. For in this moment we are born again, given a new heart and become a new creation. What is saving faith? Paul just described why Abraham was justified and counted righteous in 4:20-22. He did not waver at the promise of God and was fully convinced that what He promised He was able to perform. Thus saving faith in essence is wholehearted trust in God. (John 3:3, 2 Cor 5:17)

In the beginning of Romans, 1:16 Paul says "the gospel of Christ... is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes". Abraham did not know Jesus, but he had the promise of God and rejoiced for the day of our savior. (John 8:56). Today we have the testimony of the apostles and the entirety of scripture, full and complete. The promise of God is salvation, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ,

who is Lord of all, King of kings and the Creator of the universe. As well as the promise of the Holy Spirit and the fruit that He produces in us. Though it must be said that there are many who think they believe and yet are mistaken. False teachers have skewed the gospel truths in terrible fashion and there are many who will be turned aside in the day of judgment having never truly known Jesus. (Mat 7:21-23). Therefore it is vital that we understand the whole gospel. For John 3:16 is truth, and a glorious one, but so is Mat 7:21-23. Our faith must be focused and directed on Jesus and His work on our behalf. Understanding that we need Him in our lives for everything, and that we are sinners with no hope of heaven without His forgiveness, that comes through our repentance and faith in His blessed sacrifice and resurrection. It is in this belief that we are justified.

- c. We have peace with God - The first thing we should notice is what this statement is not saying. That we have the peace **OF** God. (Gal 5:22). The peace of God is certainly a benefit of salvation and fruit of the Spirit when we are born again. In such a way that we have peace of mind, serenity, calmness of heart as we are freed from the anxieties of this life. The more we give up the burdens and heaviness of sin and learn to trust more fully in Him as we take up the yoke of Jesus which is easy and light, (Mat 11:30) the more we experience this peace. However, the wording here in verse 5:1 is deliberate to say that we have peace with God, which is saying something entirely different.

To have peace **WITH** God is far greater than to have calmness of heart. Because peace with God means that God is at peace with us. (Rom 8:7, 5:10) Before we exercise saving faith, we are at war with God; enemies against His kingdom. Either in open rebellion or under the delusion of this world. Which is why the idea that "God loves you unconditionally" is a very dangerous one that prevents many people from understanding the truth, not realizing that they need to repent and turn from sin. And not because turning from sin is what will save them, but because God hates sin, and those who love God desire to please Him. Indifference to sin is a bright flashing warning sign which means that you either do not understand scripture and the holiness of God or you are not saved. Sin should cause us explicit grief because God has taken up residence inside those who are saved and it was because of sin that Jesus had to die. (1 Cor 3:16, 2 Cor 13:5)

This is a serious problem in today's televangelist style preaching that avoids the discussion of sin. In Matthew 7:13-26 Jesus speaks of the narrow gate and the difficult way which leads to life. It's difficult because people love sin and will find any reason or excuse to continue partaking of this sin. If they hear that God loves them just the way they are, there is no reason to believe they need to change. This kind of message breeds complacency instead of the godly sorrow which produces repentance and leads to salvation. (2 Cor 7:10) But scripture is clear that there are only two sides. You are either with Jesus or against Him and there is no in between. (Mat 12:30) When Jesus tells those who call out "Lord Lord" to depart from Him (Mat 7:23), His response is that He never knew them. It isn't that He once knew them or kind of knew them, but He never knew them. They are workers of iniquity and regularly practice lawlessness. He then explains it is those who do the will of His Father who will enter the kingdom. (Eph 2:1-3) Because when someone is saved they become a

child of obedience through the power of God. A new creation, freed from the power of sin and no longer subject to the prince of this world as a child of disobedience. (2 Cor 5:17)

Peace with God is a treaty: A forgiveness and reconciliation offered by God to those who humbly repent and place their faith in Him. And no one is at peace with God until this faith is exercised. (Psalm 7:11-13) God is angry everyday and this should be a frightening thought. If there is anyone we care for who is unsaved, we should picture them with satan's military uniform and that may alter our perspective and let us try harder to persuade them. It's not simply that they do not believe, but they are at war with God. And God will destroy His enemies. (Psalm 68:19-23 N.A.S. version says He will shatter their heads.) If not for His patience and longsuffering, we would all be dead the moment we sin, but God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked and offers us the opportunity to repent. (Eze 33:11) And when we do, when we are born again, there is no longer any condemnation as all of our sins are forgiven, we are no longer enemies and we have that blessed rest and peace with God.

- d. Through our Lord Jesus Christ - Once again, I will emphasize the importance of being children of obedience. Paul here refers to Jesus as Lord and in the very beginning of Romans he calls himself a bondservant or a slave of Jesus Christ. The role of a Christian is one who is subservient to the will of his Master, his King. For the glory of God. (John 17:6) Imagine two armies at war and one soldier comes to the other side in surrender, asking forgiveness and also asking to be allowed on their side. But he also says "I have no real intention to change my ways or do what you say or even alter what I think, but please forgive me anyway and let me on to your team." It's just not an appropriate or feasible thought and no one would accept that surrender. And neither will God.

Christ is our Savior. We are justified by faith and have peace with God through Jesus Christ. (Eph 2:14) Jesus Himself is our peace and without Him, we are enemies of God. For He willingly offered Himself to God the Father as a substitute on behalf of all who would believe in Him. Propitiating, appeasing or placating the wrath of God. (Rom 3:25) And God has accepted this substitute, granting to those who believe, the righteousness of Christ. Jesus is everything for the believer. He did it all and continues to do it all. It was His earthly walk that fulfilled all righteousness committing no sin. (1 Pet 2:22) It was his bloody death that satisfied the wrath of God and covers our sins. It was His resurrection that proved He was the Son of God (Rom 1:4) and accomplished His purpose, strengthening the faith of the apostles who began to spread the gospel around the world. It was His prayer that the Holy Spirit be sent to believers, empowering them to endure tribulation and to die for their convictions. It is His guidance and mastery as a shepherd to keep us from going too far astray. It is His current work as priest and mediator that allows us to be forgiven any future sins. And it is His righteousness that God sees when He looks upon us, allowing us the unfathomable privilege to be adopted and called children and co-heirs with Him. (Rom 8:17) We have done nothing to deserve this and can do nothing to earn this. But through His Son, His mercy and love for the world are on display. Our role is to surrender to Him. "He must increase, but I *must* decrease" (John 3:30), learn from Him through Scripture, and actively

participate in our sanctification by prayer and practice. Renewing our minds daily by the washing of the word. (Rom 12:3, Eph 5:26)

- e. (V2a) through whom also we have access by faith into this grace - Once again, it is by faith. Faith in Jesus Christ is the key for all spiritual matters regarding salvation and sanctification. (Heb 11:4-6) Through Jesus our reward is, to a large degree, incomprehensible. However, Scripture does give us some insight into this matter. Abraham for his faith was accounted righteous and given descendants as numerous as the stars, David also was counted as righteous and upright by God and given the promise of an eternal dynasty. We cannot expect such grand things from the Lord, we can't even expect Him to fulfill smaller wishes unless it is within His will, but scripture does promise us the Holy Spirit as well as the righteousness of Christ. And these things come with a benefit greater than grandchildren and a throne. Now that we are no longer enemies of God, He grants us access to Himself and lives inside of us through the Holy Spirit. Of the many benefits this brings, one of the more special privileges is access into His grace. Which is not something that could be expected before Jesus.

When Moses went up to the mountain there was a boundary set up and the Israelites were instructed to stay away and not even touch it lest they should die. The tabernacle and temple were set up with inner and outer courtyards setting boundaries for how close you could approach depending on your status as male or female or gentile. And the innermost portion was partitioned with a veil and not to be entered except by the high priest who had to be ceremonially washed and cleansed before he could approach to make a sacrifice and even then it was a frightening thing. And I'm sure you will recall When Uzzah tried to catch the ark of God from falling and he was struck dead. The old testament does not invoke the idea of intimate access to the grace of God. However, the veil was torn in two when Jesus died. His sacrifice opened the door to God for all who would enter through Him. (Heb 4:14-16) Jesus is the eternal high priest who needs no cleansing to enter the holy place and currently sits at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. Through Him, we not only have access to the grace and mercy of God, the free offering of forgiveness, but can stand in this grace before God as He continually mediates between us. (Gen 22:17, 2 Sam 7:16, 1 Cor 3:16, Ex 19:12, Ex 40:1, Lev 16)

- f. (V2b) Rejoice in hope of the glory of God. - When the world speaks of hope, it might as well mean wishful thinking. People hope they will have good luck and win the lottery or they hope to get a promotion, pass a test, find a date to prom. But biblical hope is something different. When the Bible speaks of hope, it carries certainty with it; a confident expectation. (Heb 11:1, Rom 8:23-25) We exercise faith because of hope and our hope exists because the Lord has given us His word. We are not wishful thinking, but trusting in His promises. Therefore we rejoice in the hope He has created in us. And what is this hope? The glory of God. (John 17:20-24) That we may be one with Jesus and the Father, to know that He loves us, and to be with Him and behold His glory in heaven. (2 Cor 3:12-17) And to be transformed into His likeness. (1 John 3:2-3)

- g. (V3a) And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations - As if all that wasn't enough; that we now have peace with God, no longer enemies, but friends, even children. That we have access to His grace and forgiveness, that He mediates on our behalf, that we will be transformed into His likeness and be with Him to behold His true glory which shines brighter than the sun. Not only all that, but we also may glory in tribulation. Glory as a verb is defined as taking great pride or pleasure in something. The something Paul is describing is tribulation. And we might think to ourselves "how is it possible to glory in tribulation?" First, to answer that question. It's possible through the strength of God and the hope within us. Recall that our hope is not a wish but an expectation for the fulfillment of God's promise.
- h. (V3b) knowing that tribulation produces perseverance - Tribulation is "a cause for great trouble or suffering". We can glory in this suffering for multiple reasons. As Paul says here, tribulation produces perseverance. And knowing this makes any of our troubles more tolerable as there is a clearly defined reward. But there is another reason (2 Cor 12:7-10). When we are weak, Christ's strength shines all the more. (Mat 5:11-14) We are the salt and light of the earth. The more we endure tribulation the more tribulation we can endure. And the more we can endure with a bright and hopeful spirit the more others will be drawn to us and want to know why we are so hopeful, which glorifies God and allows us a direct opportunity to share the gospel. Jesus spoke of persecution, but that isn't the only kind of tribulation. Any cause for great trouble or suffering is tribulation. Which could be any variety of issues such as financial hardship, marital issues, children, work related. But if we can recall the promises of God, we can rest in our hope and glory in our tribulations, knowing that all things work together for good for those who love God. (Rom 8:28) We can also recall that we are not alone. We are members of the body of Christ and our brothers and sisters will help us carry our burdens. On top of this, we have history and the saints who came before us. (Heb 12:1-6) And most importantly we have the Holy Spirit within us and the example of Christ Himself, who endured the cross for the joy set before Him.
- i. (V4) Perseverance produces character which produces hope - (James 1:2-4) what is perseverance? It is "continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition". We wouldn't need perseverance if we could accomplish our goals the first time through. Perseverance implies there will be difficulties and hardships. James says to count it joy when we fall into these trials. As the testing of our faith produces patience. There is no way to know exactly what troubles we will fall into as the Lord has different plans for everyone. But we can be certain of a few things. For one, we know that the Lord prunes His branches and disciplines His children. (John 15:2, Heb 12:6-15) Paul says to endure suffering as if it were discipline. When we endure and persevere it produces character. (Heb 12:11 "No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who have been trained by it.") God does nothing flippantly and there is a purpose for everything. Tribulation, suffering and persecution are for our benefit. The more we endure the stronger we become and the more confidence we have in God, which produces a more firm hope in Him and His word. And the second thing we can be sure of: (John 15:18-21) Those who hated Jesus will hate us as well. The more openly we discuss the truth of the gospel, the more the world will treat

us like Jesus. Remember the prince of this world is satan and his followers are everywhere. Our war is spiritual; against principalities and ideas. The truth is despised by those who love darkness and bearers of the light are not welcome amongst the children of disobedience.

- j. (V5) Hope does not disappoint - Because our hope in God cannot disappoint. It is our great honor and privilege to know and trust in God. The Good Shepherd has chosen us out of the world to bear fruit. (John 15:16) And the more intimately we know Him, the less we fear the world. Let God be true, but every man a liar. (Rom 3:4) If our God is faithful to fulfill His promises, how can we be disappointed? What holds us back from complete trust is a lack of knowledge in His word and or the absence of trials in our life that help us grow in faith. What we don't want to do is rush ahead in any area of our life in impatience without consulting God like the Israelites when Moses delayed coming down the mountain. (Exo 32:1). (Isa 40:28-31) Our hope is the everlasting God and those who wait on Him, trust in Him will renew their strength in hope and not be disappointed.
- k. Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us - (Psalm 23) "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want... though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Such trust can only be granted to one we love because we know they love us. How do we know He loved us? Because He does not make us drink from the cup of His wrath which we deserve and has allowed His Son to stand in our place. And not only did this happen, but it was while we were still sinners and enemies against Him. (Rom 5:8)

(1 John 4:7\*) To love is to be born of God. We cannot truly love without understanding what love is. If we recall what Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me" (Mat 12:30) and see that Paul calls us enemies of God (Rom 5:10) we understand there are only 2 sides. Children of God or Children of the devil: Children of obedience or children of disobedience: Saved or unsaved and there is simply no inbetween. We cannot know love as children of the devil. But we come to know love when we receive the Holy Spirit and are born again and the love of God is poured into our hearts. (1 John 4\*8) Feelings of hate, indifference to sin and the unwillingness to bend our will to His, demonstrates we do not love God, because the Holy Spirit within us cannot do anything, but love God. And if we do not love, we do not know God. (1 John 4\*9) For we were dead in our trespasses, but through Jesus we can live. (1 John 4\*10) We didn't love God, but He loved us and the more this sinks in the more we realize how much has been poured into us.

26. 5:6-11 Having just spoken about some of the privileges and benefits we have received through salvation, Paul finally mentions one of the greatest gifts we could receive. The love of God, poured out in our hearts. He now expands on this love with multiple levels of reasoning to make it very clear just what this means. Through his reasoning we can see that our salvation is secure because of the Lord's love for us. In these next verses He uses 4 descriptive words/ideas to highlight our standing before we came to God. Without strength, ungodly, sinners and enemies. It is in this condition that He died for us. And if He died for us while we were enemies, will He not then do more for us now that we have been reconciled?

- a. (V6) For when we were without strength - To one who has been saved there is no question about this. We understand that we did not have the strength in ourselves to overcome sin and the evil of the world. And not only did we not have the strength to overcome it, but we didn't even see anything wrong with it because we actively suppressed the truth (Rom 1:18), preferring darkness to the light (John 3:19) and we took pleasure in our old ways, not wanting to change anything.
- i. "We were" He is speaking to the saints. Remember, there are none good, none righteous. It's easy to consider these things as true regarding unrepentant sinners. They all need the light of the gospel. But we all were or still are children of disobedience (Eph2:2) attempting to convince ourselves there is no God or else create our own gods and idols that don't mind our immorality. (Rom 1:23) And it was in this time of sin and rebellion that Jesus died for us.
  - ii. "Without strength" Eph 2:1 says "And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Dead people have no strength. Unrepentant sinners are dead bodies walking aimlessly; blown by the wind with no real purpose. Here one day and gone the next, they are driven by temporal pleasures and take pride in what should be their shame. (Phi 3:19) Though they suffer, they have no idea why and without the light of the gospel there is no true hope in which they can stand. But this presents a problem.
  - iii. (1 Cor 2:14) "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God...nor can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Even those who understand they are suffering and want to do something about it will focus on anything but the real cause, because their thoughts have become futile. And even if they do hear the gospel, it would sound like foolishness to them. (Rom1:21) And if by chance, they succeed in distracting themselves with something they perceive to be positive, perhaps fame, fitness or fortune, they soon realize these are empty pursuits and the cycle begins again, looking for some new distraction. (And this doesn't even begin to address those who turn to drugs, gambling, pornography or any other variety of destructive habits.)
- b. In due time Christ died for the ungodly. - At just the right time in history, Jesus came to this earth and died for us. At just the right time in our personal lives, God called to us when we needed Him to. (Jer 29:11-14)God's timing is impeccable and He is always working for His and our benefit(John 5:17, Rom 8:28). But notice that it is not when we were on our best behavior or even when we necessarily wanted it, but on his time and without anything from us, He died for the ungodly. And this death was a necessary thing. Remember that God is a just and holy God. The righteous demands of justice require that the penalty is paid. The penalty for sin is death and therefore Jesus had to die. To stand in our place and take the punishment for sin. (John 15:12-13)
- c. (V7) Scarcely for a righteous man will one die - We are not reading about someone righteous in the eyes of God, but one relative to human standards. Perhaps someone who is law abiding, generally upright in his business dealings, tries hard to keep his word and fulfill promises, Isn't known for lies or deceit and goes out of his way to help others. What Paul is saying is that it is rare for someone to give up their life even for someone like this.

- d. Yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. - As we will see in the next verse the argument he is presenting is from the greater to the lesser. Rarely will someone die for a righteous man, though maybe someone might even die for a good man. And again, this is not saying anything about goodness in the eyes of God, but only by man's standards. Despite what some believe, mankind is selfish by nature and our drive to live and have more causes many to do evil things. But throughout history there are examples of people dying for others. Firefighters running into burning buildings to save others, soldiers dying for their friends. Even random strangers performing heroic acts of kindness. But this is not the normal course of action and is the exception to the rule. And notice the manner in which he is describing this action. Daring to die (John 15:13)
- e. (V8) But God - The next presentation of God's love. People will not die for other people, though perhaps in rare cases someone might dare give their life, But God demonstrates His love toward us through Christ's willing sacrifice. And this while we were still sinners. (Mat 5:44-48) Criminals, guilty of our crimes against God, deserving of the punishment that awaited us. But God demonstrated His own love toward us at a personal cost. This verse has been described as the "John 3:16 of Romans". And rightly so, as in this one truth God's love is magnified and He is glorified. For God so loved the world that He was willing to take pain and penalty for those deserving of nothing less than the fires of hell, especially in consideration of verse 10.
- f. (V9) Much more then - This is the turning point of the argument. He has demonstrated the love of God already. When we were without strength (V6) and ungodly, Christ died for us. Still reveling in sin with no plans to change, Christ willingly died for those who were unworthy of such a love, in order to produce a change in their hearts. And here we dive deeper into God's love once again. The security of believers.
  - i. Having now been justified by His blood - Justification is the first process of change for the new believer. The moment we believe, our standing with God is reversed and we have now become friends, allowed to enter into the inner sanctuary where before there was a veil. Christ's death has torn the veil and He has taken it upon Himself to overcome the necessary obstacles in order for us to become partakers of His grace. But it is said that we are justified by His blood because God has revealed that the "life of the flesh is in the blood". (Lev 17:11) And without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. (Heb 9:22)
  - ii. We shall be saved from wrath through Him - "Much more then" if He did all of this while we were sinners, how much more will He do for us now that we are friends? If He died for us in an ungodly state of sin, how much more will we be saved from any possibility of wrath? For it is not in our own effort and power that we are saved, but through Him. He is the one who saves us, He is the one who keeps us and continues to work in us through His Spirit. And if we can be saved in a state of guilt without having known the love of God, how much easier will it be for Him to keep us away from wrath and in a state of grace now that His Spirit is within us?
- g. (V10) Continuing this line of thought, but an even stronger argument. We weren't just ungodly sinners, but we were enemies at war with God. God's love is an untold bounty of forgiveness, grace and mercy. And as traitors and rebels against His kingdom, we are not



deserving of any of it. Even human institutions charge death for the crime of treason. But God loved us, and so much so, that wanting to demonstrate this love, "He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16, C.f. 5:1)

- i. We were reconciled to God - Through His efforts, through His righteous life, through His unjust persecutions, beatings and shedding of blood. Through His death and resurrection we were reconciled to God. It cannot be emphasized too much that we have done nothing. Our forgiveness and reconciliation is entirely in His hands and by His efforts. We did not offer a peace treaty to God, but God has pulled us out of the filth and cleansed us with the blood of His Son. And having seen this love, our faith grows, and through this faith we are saved by His grace, a gift of God. (Eph 2:8) He reconciled us to Himself through the death of His Son.
- ii. Much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. - Much more, not maybe or perhaps it would reason, but much more. God did not go through all the effort to save us, to cleanse us and to reconcile us to Himself only to let us fall back into the filth of sin. (Phi 1:6, John 10:26-30) The cost of our reconciliation was a steep one, the death of the Son of God. And if, through His death we were reconciled, so much more so now that He lives, will we be saved. He did not stay dead, but rose from the tomb and spoke with many before He ascended to heaven in a glorious way. Christ is alive this very moment, seated at the right hand of God the Father (Mark 16:19) acting as priest, and making intercession for us. (Heb 7:25) And if He did all of that to reconcile us to Himself, much more we shall be saved by His life.
- h. (V11) In verse 2, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. In verse 3 we also glory in tribulation, but through it all, having now been saved by His love and reassured of our salvation through the life of His Son, we rejoice in God Himself. No longer enemies frightened or terrorized by the wrath to come, but as one time captives, freed from the bondage of sin, we give thanks and praise to our savior. We rejoice in God.
  - i. And all of this through Jesus Christ, our firm foundation. The only name under heaven by which men must be saved. He is the reason for our hope, and it is His Spirit that lives inside of us. It is through His life that we now have the power to overcome sin. (Gal 2:20, Php 4:13) Through Jesus, we have been reconciled to God. Through Jesus we can come directly to the throne of grace, through Jesus we are forgiven, it is all through Jesus and there can be no understating the importance of His person. He is our teacher and our example and it is for all these reasons and more that God has exalted His name.
  - ii. And through Him, most importantly of all, we have reconciliation. (1 John 2:1-2) Paul comes back around to this important concept. That Jesus was made to be the propitiation for our sins, to appease and turn away the wrath of God. Which was aimed at and prepped for us, just waiting to be unleashed. As Paul said early on in chapter 1, the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness. And only due to His patience and long-suffering do any of us continue to walk the earth. But through Christ, we are set at peace with God. Once ungodly, helpless sinners. Now made Saints, friends and children of God through His atoning sacrifice.

27. 5:12-21 How can the act of one man be enough? How can we all be justified by faith in Jesus? As we come to the closing argument in Paul's presentation for Justification by faith, we slow down to thoroughly examine the facts of the matter. Long before we had the righteousness of Christ imputed to our accounts, we had the sins of Adam imputed to us before we were even born. Through this next portion of Scripture, we will see how Paul compares and contrasts Adam to Christ and how the grace of God is more powerful than the sins of man.
- a. (V12) Through one man (Adam), sin has entered into the world. And thanks to Scripture we know that the penalty for sin is death. God told this to Adam before he sinned and also used His prophets to reinforce this truth. "the soul who sins shall die." "The wages of sin is death." Through Adam's act of disobedience the entire race of mankind has been tainted with sin. The world was cursed and we have inherited sin through Adam. Anyone who was ever born of man and woman has felt the repercussions and tasted death as a result.
    - i. Therefore - Once again we see the culmination and explanation of the preceding ideas. Remember this is all about justification, which is God declaring us to be righteous. We now have peace with God, though we were sinners and enemies. We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. And if He died for us, how much more will He live for us and intercede on our behalf? THEREFORE- (This is the beginning of his closing argument). And as we will see, he uses Adam and his actions as a type of Christ to explain how Jesus's sacrifice can cover us all.
    - ii. Just as through one man sin entered the world - ("Just as", Paul is setting up a comparison to be fully laid out shortly) It is taken for granted here that the reader knows how sin entered the world. And we can find this account in the book of Genesis chapters 2-3. God put Adam in the garden of Eden with his wife and told him he could eat from any tree, but one. Adam disobeyed and ate from that tree anyway so God placed a curse on creation and kicked them out of the garden. As a result, all of Adam's children would inherit the burdens of sin through him. You may have heard the term federal headship. And what this generally means is that there is one person who is a binding representative for others. We didn't have a choice in this matter, but not everything in life is a choice. Adam sinned, and as our binding representative his sins are imputed to us.
    - iii. And death through sin - Gen 2:17 "for when you eat from it you will certainly die." There was nothing uncertain or unclear about these instructions. The result of sin is death. The moment Adam sinned, he died spiritually and began to age, feeling the effects of his sin. God was gracious and did not abandon him entirely, but instead had a plan to redeem mankind. (Eph 2:1) We are dead in our trespasses and sins, condemned to an eternity of suffering if we do not receive the grace and mercy of God.
    - iv. And thus death spread to all men, because all sinned - We inherited this nature from Adam, but we all willingly continue on this path. And as such we cannot blame Adam anymore than he could blame Eve. (Eze 18:20) "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son." We are all responsible for ourselves. Despite the fact that our conscience bears witness and the law of God is written on our hearts. We all choose to sin. The result is death. And as we know, there are none who escape this fate, because all have sinned.

- b. (V13-14) One thing to note here before we move on. Verse 12 seemingly ends abruptly and sounds a bit strange when read aloud as if the idea is not complete. And that is because it isn't. Paul interrupts his line of reasoning here to interject an explanation of what he is saying. The idea presented in verse 12 picks back up in verse 18 "even so through one man..." However before we get to verse 18, Paul breaks down and explains what he is saying in verse 12. Primarily that the cause of death is sin and that death is the evidence to prove all have sinned even if our sins aren't exactly the same as Adam's.
- i. For until the law sin was in the world - (Rom 2:12&15) This will be an obvious truth to anyone vaguely familiar with the book of Genesis. With Adam's first two children, one of them was a spiteful murderer. A couple chapters later before Noah builds the ark we are told in [Gen 6:5](#) that "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Then in verse 6:7 "the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth," 6:8 although Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. And in 6:11-12 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth." But even Noah, who had found grace in the eyes of God, was a sinner and was found drunk and naked by his children (Gen 9:21), Abraham lied about his wife being his sister (Gen 20:2), Isaac also told the same lie (Gen 26:6), Jacob took his brother's birthright (Gen 25:31-33) and deceived his father for the blessing. (Gen 27), Joseph's brother's were jealous and sold him into slavery(Gen 37:28), and Moses murdered an egyptian. (Exo 2:12) The point is what is directly being stated, sin entered the world through Adam and existed well before the law was introduced.
  - ii. but sin is not imputed when there is no law - Though sin was in the world, the fact that there was no revealed law prevented those sins from being accounted the same way as Adam's sin. ([John 15:22-24](#)) Adam disobeyed the commandment of God. Those who were born outside of the garden and before the written law of Moses, effectively lived without any revealed commandments. However, what he is saying in this verse is to be used as a piece of evidence. As if to say, "though there was no law which did impute sin, we know sin existed, because death still reigned from Adam to Moses." The law of God still existed, just not in any written or expressed form and therefore the liability is lessened to a degree. The same way that those who hear the gospel today and reject it will be held more accountable than those who have never heard. (Rom 2:12, 7:7 5:20)
  - iii. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses - (1 Cor 15:21-26) Death reigned as an absolute despot and satan laughs the whole way through. Those who will not obey the light of God, will be humbled in death for death is the last enemy. It is an inescapable reality due to the all encompassing effects of sin in this world. Notice in 5:12 how it is mentioned that sin entered the world. Before sin there was no death, but for and because of sin, death entered the world and took hold over nature. However, it should be noted that this is the work of God and not of satan. Though satan deceived the woman, It was God who cursed the ground and promised death to Adam.

- iv. One thing to notice is that Paul is drawing a relation between sin and death. They go hand in hand. And if you have the NKJV of the Bible, this portion of scripture is titled "Death in Adam, life in Christ". God told Adam, "for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die". The effects were immediate and long lasting. Sin separates us from God and it cannot be washed away any more than our D.N.A. And it's not just death, but all things associated with death. Sickness and more evil, spiritual turmoil, distress, depression and hopelessness. Sin is also addictive and the more we do it, the more our hearts are hardened against God. Jesus said that whoever commits sin is a slave to sin. (John 8:34) And Paul repeats this idea in the next chapter. (Rom 6:16-18) There are only two choices. Death in Adam or life in Christ. Children of the devil or children of God. Enemies at war or friends with peace. The power of sin should not be underestimated.
- v. Death reigned "even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam" - Sin is like a disease and a hereditary one at that. Death reigned because the sins of Adam were imputed to us through him. Which is why it doesn't matter if our sins were like the sins of Adam. It doesn't matter that the law of Moses was thousands of years after Adam first sinned. The sins of the first man were passed down like an inheritance. We were born in sin. (Psalm 51:5) "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." Adam's sin was imputed to the world. The sins of the world were imputed to Christ and through his death and resurrection, Christ defeated death. And now His righteousness can be imputed to those who believe in Him.
- vi. Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come - A type is a resemblance or a pattern that foreshadows something in the future, be it a person or event. The sacrifice of Isaac or the passover are both types. The bronze serpent lifted up to save those who gaze upon it is another type. So as we will see in the next few verses, Paul is not favorably comparing Adam and Christ. But Adam is a type of Christ because of the federal headship. Because Adam stood as representative for all mankind and through his sin, sin entered the world. In like manner Christ stands for the world and His righteousness entered creation to be appropriated by those who choose to stand with Him.
- c. (V 15-17) Though Paul just mentioned Adam to be a type of Christ, he stops himself to clarify with a pointed "but". Adam may be like Christ in some way, but... Christ is better in every way. These next few verses highlight the differences. Contrasting the sin of Adam and its effects against Christ who died for sin and His free gifts to mankind. As we will see, we gain more through Christ than we ever lost through Adam. (Much more, abound, abundance).
- i. (V15) (Death and grace) The free gift is not like the offense in many ways. The first mention here is that through the offense many died. And what was that offense? Adam ate a piece of fruit? No, the offense was disobedience to the express command of God and because of this many died. We cannot trivialize sin, in effect or in the enormity. It took only one sin to cast the entire human race into condemnation. Sin is like a deadly poison. One drop pollutes an entire cup of water. Except sin is the deadliest of poisons and the reason all other poisons exist.

- ii. If by one man's offense many died - I just want to take a moment to highlight that Adam was a real man and to say that evolution is a lie of the devil. Scripture tells us God created man and breathed life into him. If Adam was a myth or a metaphorical representation, then Scripture is false, this entire argument is unnecessary and Christ's sacrifice makes no sense. First of all, the basis of hope in a messiah and the redemption of mankind is ground in the book of Genesis and the promise of God which immediately follows the fall. Also the imputation of Christ's righteousness would have no foundation and the need for His incarnation wouldn't exist. If sin didn't enter the human race through Adam, then it is either an inherent flaw, which means God's creation wasn't perfect or it is theoretically possible for someone to refrain from sin. But in either case, the need for Jesus' human nature doesn't exist. If sin is a natural flaw, God could just correct it the same way He created it in the first place. But this presents a problem as scripture says God does not tempt anyone to evil (James 1:13). And on the other hand if it is possible to refrain from sin, Jesus and Paul are liars, who both said that no one is good and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus becomes nothing more than a redundant safety net. If the first Adam did not pass down his sin nature, then there is no reason we need a last Adam. And if we look toward the end of 5:15, we see that Paul is emphasizing that Jesus also was a man. The sacrifice of one man reconciled the transgression of one man, though it did more than just reconcile.
- iii. Much more - And that it is much more is because it had to be much more. Our sins could be washed clean, but the forgiveness of sins wasn't enough. If all we ever did was get to the starting point our spiritual accounts would be set to zero. Adam never ate from the tree of life, he did not have eternal life. And the Israelites had their sins atoned for countless times through animal sacrifice. But those sacrifices did not last and had to be repeated. The forgiveness of sin is important, but we needed much more than that, we needed the righteousness of God. " Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (Rom 4:3) And Jesus made a point to tell His followers their righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees.
- iv. much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many - Christ is superior, the free gift is superior. If the sinful representative of mankind could cause such destruction with his sin, that spread to all mankind. Will the righteous representative of man have less of an effect? Absolutely not, and just as the acts were opposite, wherein Christ obeyed pleasing God, and Adam disobeyed angering God, the effects also are starkly contrasted. Adam gave us sin and death, Christ grants us His own righteousness and life. And herein we can see and feel the fullness of His loving grace. That He is not only willing to grant us this undeserved merit though we are empty handed beggars asking for mercy despite the fact that we are rebellious enemies and ungodly, helpless sinners. But His grace abounds. He stood in our place and took upon Himself the full wrath of God. He suffered in life that we would not have to suffer in hell. He gives us His very own righteousness, offers us eternal life, stands as our Counselor and mediator. He calls us friends and brothers, and co-heirs of God. It is safe to say the free gift is not like the offense.

- v. Once again, I would like to point out the emphasis Paul places on the one Man, Jesus Christ. He could have just said Jesus, but he was emphasizing Christ's humanity. A necessary component in the process of salvation. For one man's sin cast us out of the grace of God, but through the righteous life of the one Man, Jesus Christ, we are offered redemption and reconciliation.
- vi. Abounded to many - To clarify and prevent confusion, I should note that while Adam's sin spread to all of mankind, Christ's sacrifice is not applied the same way. Adam and Christ are both federal heads and representatives of a certain group of people, but not the same group of people. We all came from Adam, but we aren't all known by Christ. It takes a deliberate conscious act of faith in Jesus to be brought under His grace and into His kingdom. And therefore we are either in Adam or in Christ, but we cannot be in both and must actively choose Christ.
- vii. (V16) (Judgment and justification.) Again, the gift is not like the offense. The second contrast mentioned is the result of each act. Judgment and condemnation through the one who sinned, but justification through the one who took on the offenses of many. Adam was given fair warning and still chose to disobey God. The judgment was condemnation and it sits over mankind permanently. In John 3:18 Jesus said "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already" We don't have to do anything to be condemned, we are already in condemnation thanks to the offense of Adam.
- viii. But praise God that the gift is not like the offense. For the free gift resulted in justification and there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ. Where God not only overlooks our previous sins, but declares us to be righteous. And notice how it is we are able to receive justification. Through the offenses of many. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor 5:21) Our sins were imputed to Christ and the result is that His righteousness may be imputed to us. Which allows God to declare us righteous though we are not. We are not made righteous, but declared to be so through Jesus. God's verdict over our souls is condemnation through Adam's offense or justified through the free gift of Christ's sacrifice.
- ix. (V17) (Reign of death or life) God spoke to Adam and told him death would surely happen the day he eats from the forbidden tree. And so it did. Adam's spiritual death happened immediately. He was cut off from God, made aware of evil and no longer innocent. His corruption spread through his children, who were made in his own likeness and image (Gen 5:3) and now we all suffer the consequences. Scripture tells us Satan is the prince of this world and we are slaves to the one we obey. (Rom 6:12-16) (1 Cor 2:15) death reigns because "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him" nor can he know them, even if he wanted to because they are spiritually discerned.
- x. Once again, much more will the abundance of grace far exceed the power of sin. Where once death reigned, we now receive the gift of righteousness and eternal life through Jesus Christ. And not only this, but the glory of His Spirit who lives inside of us, will reign in life, causing us to desire righteousness over sin. (Rom 6:18)

- d. 5:18-21 As he concludes his argument on Justification by faith, Paul touches on a few ideas already presented, though reinforced with further clarification. These last few verses finalize what he began with back in chapter 3 having now proved his point with all due diligence "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed." And in these last few verses it seems he is summarizing the unasked questions... How is this so?(V18-19) And what then is the purpose of the law?(V20-21)
- i. (V18-19) Having gone through several comparisons already, it may seem as though he is somewhat repeating himself. However, verse 18 actually picks up from verse 12 – (As he interrupted his thought to explain an important doctrine. The concept of original sin.) Adam's sins were imputed to mankind. To impute is to credit someone's account as if they had personally made the transaction. Adam, being our federal head, was a legal representative. As such, through his offense we all suffer the consequence. The judgment, which is now binding on all of mankind, is that we are sinners and condemned to the penalty of death. (The opposite of justified) This is why children die though otherwise innocent.
  - ii. Even so - This is the remaining thought he broke off in verse 12. Justification is comparable to legal standing or a courtroom verdict. When someone is justified, they are declared to be righteous, whether or not they truly are. In verse 18 we see the entire picture. Through one man's guilty judgment, we have all been condemned through him. BUT even so, in the same way, through one man's righteousness, we may stand justified.
  - iii. That one Man is Jesus Christ and His actions stand in stark contrast to the first man. The first Adam was disobedient. His sin was disobedience. The law God had set in place was simple enough to follow, and the bountiful garden was more than he needed. Yet still he sinned against God and was therefore removed from the abundant and gracious life. His offense resulted in proper judgment and all his offspring to follow would be condemned to a cursed world, spiritually deceased, left with the futility of their own mind, and eventually suffer physical death as well.
  - iv. But just as credit for Adam's sinful disobedience was imputed to us, so also is credit for Christ's willful obedience available to us as a free gift. (The righteousness of God apart from the law. 3:21) And notice that Paul says it is through one man's righteous act. He may be referring specifically to the cross in this instance, however the cross would have been meaningless without His righteous life, sinless in every way. (Phi 2:8) Christ humbled himself to live in the corrupted world that Adam left us. Though He is God, he took on the flesh of man devoid of any privileges that existed for Adam and Eve in the garden. And though he was tempted in every way that we are, he did not sin. (Heb 4:15) Therefore being like us, though spotless as a lamb without blemish, the blood of His sacrifice is able to cover our sins. (1 Cor 15:48-49, Heb 2:17)
  - v. Came to all men - A distinction must be made here. Adam's sin did transfer to all men as all men came from and through Adam. But when Paul says the free gift came to all men, it is, as to say, available to all men. In no way does the righteousness of Christ cover the sins of every single individual. Jesus and the gospel are clear that one must repent and believe in Him for this transaction to take place. (Mark 1:15, Luke 13:3, John 8:24) It is called a free gift. A gift must be opened. In verse 19 Paul uses the word many, which is more accurate, however it is still a relative many and not referring to the same group of

people. (Luke 13:23-28, Mat 7:13-14) There can be no mistaking the words of Jesus, many will not be able to enter through the narrow gate. So in order to make sense of what Paul is saying, we must understand "all men" in verse 18 to be relative or else to say that it is presented to all men. It came to them, but not all men will accept the free gift. Yet those who do accept, will be made righteous.

- vi. (V20-21) Remember Paul's argument for justification by faith began in chapter 3. He said no flesh will be justified by the deeds of the law. (3:20) And then went on to explain how someone is justified. Through faith in Jesus Christ apart from the law. "But" says the Jew "what is the purpose of the law, why do we need it? Paul returns to the unanswered question.
- vii. The law entered that the offense might abound - (Gal 3:10-13\*) Abound means to exist in large numbers, to flourish, to proliferate. Therefore the law came into being that the offense might be multiplied, magnified. Why? (Gal 3:19-22) "Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."
- viii. But where sin abounded - The law serves a purpose to highlight our evil natures and turn us to Christ. When presented with the law we realize we are guilty and have no hope outside of mercy and forgiveness. As such we can either embrace our sinful nature and live for the pleasure of the moment until we die or else we can attempt to turn from our evil ways. Those who choose to turn from their ways quickly realize they cannot escape their sins and this is where the free gift of Jesus shines like a light from heaven.
- ix. grace abounded much more - No matter how often you sinned against God, no matter what the sins were, God's grace far exceeds your sin. A million sins could not exhaust the mercy and grace of God. Every single person in existence has sinned, but only one has not. The death of Jesus is the sacrifice of God. His life was given for ours and His blood is able to cleanse us from all sin. His grace abounds, plentifully, sufficient for all mankind, but accessed by few. His gift is forgiveness for all sins, His very own righteousness and eternal life.
- x. Sin reigned in death - (6:6,16) Satan rules as prince of this world and exercises his authority through sin leading to death. Just as with Adam and Eve, he doesn't necessarily do anything, but deceive. And yet through the powerful seduction of sin, he entices our attention away from God keeping us tied up in the chains of our own lusts. And just as a slave is driven mercilessly, with no rest until they die, so too is the one who is under the power of sin. There is no rest from sin. The world loves sin, and if you are not partaking in the lusts of the world, the world will despise you. (John 7:6-7) Not only that, but those who are held by sin are convinced they like it, not realizing it is the cause of all their suffering. (John 3:19)
- xi. Even so grace might reign through righteousness - (Mat 11:28-30) Jesus beckons those who need rest. He also rules, but with love and grace. And those who hear His voice and turn to Him will no longer be held captive by sin. He does have a yoke to carry, but it is easy and the burden is light. And the reward we receive is priceless beyond measure; eternal life through Jesus Christ. Through Him, His life, His death, His righteousness, we are set free from the tyrannical despot and brought into a family that would sacrifice themselves for our sake. Thank you Jesus.



## 28. Self test chapter 5

- a. How is it possible that are we no longer enemies with God?
- b. Why can we now glory in tribulation?
- c. What does it mean to be justified by faith?
- d. What is Paul's argument regarding the security of the believer?
- e. Explain the concept of original sin?
- f. How is Adam a type of Christ?
- g. Name two ways in which the free gift of Jesus is not like the offense of Adam?
- h. We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus, but why do we need more than to be cleansed?
- i. Why did the law enter the world?
- j. What does that mean, and why is it important?

29. Review of Chapter 5: Paul brings his argument of justification by faith to a close. Starting in chapter 3:21 he introduced the idea that the "righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed" through faith in Jesus Christ. He then proceeded to prove this point, calling on the witness of Abraham and David in chapter 4. And finally in chapter 5, he dives into the practical implications of such faith. That we have been reconciled to God, though not according to our own strength, but through the one who died for us while we were still enemies. He uses comparison to highlight the truth of the free gift which far exceeds the consequence of the offense. And demonstrates how the righteousness of Christ is imputed the same way as the original sin of Adam. Therefore though sin abounded, grace abounded much more.
30. Chapter 6 As we proceed, the topic of discussion shifts focus. We have been justified by faith through Jesus, but what does this all mean for us? What do we do now that we have been justified? If our sins have been forgiven does this mean we can just continue on the same way we always have? Of course not, we are no longer ruled by sin and blinded by its deceit, but we are ruled by righteousness through faith in Jesus. We have been justified, declared righteous, no longer enemies at war with God, therefore we should continue in this holiness which we have entered into. And not only should we, but God will see to it. Over the next few chapters we will explore the doctrine of sanctification. What it is, how it affects us and the end results.
- a. 6:1-2 Continuing over from the end of chapter 5:20-21, he preemptively answers an inevitable question that will arise. Similar to chapter 3:8, some had slanderously reported that Paul preaches a gospel of licentiousness, lawlessness. In today's world we hear preachers relentlessly talk about the love and grace of God while never speaking of sin as if the Bible has nothing left to say about it. But those who have been justified do not continue in sin the same as they always have.
    - i. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Or another way this might be asked, "If God's grace abounds in greater measure than our sin, why not just continue in sin? If we are already forgiven, why do we need to stress ourselves about sin? If God loves me for who I am, why do I need to change anything?" A true believer may ask this kind of question with an interest to the workings of salvation, but there are others who ask this with ulterior motives, who will use this truth (5:20-21) as a means to justify their wicked behavior and lifestyle. And yet, on the side there is another group of people, the legalists who understand the wickedness of man and reject the doctrine of grace out of fear of what it might lead to.
    - ii. The legalists are determined to maintain the law as the only way to heaven. They will argue against the doctrine of grace despite what the Bible says. The Jews had a hard time in this regard as they trusted in Moses, but didn't fully understand the purpose of the law. Today we have the Catholic church who preaches the law through sacraments. The legalist understands how a depraved mind could perceive the doctrine of grace.
    - iii. The group of people the legalists are concerned about want an approving cuddly god. They love the idea that grace abounds because they still love their sin and it means they don't have to change anything. God loves them for who they are and will forgive them for everything they've ever done. Why? Because their god is great and good and grace

- abounds. They pick and choose their preferred scripture as if it were a buffet. (2 Tim 4:3) They have itching ears and only hear what they want to hear. This is why we see lesbian women preachers and abortion advocates who proclaim to be Christian. But we know Jesus has said otherwise when it comes to workers of lawlessness.
- iv. Shall we continue in sin? Certainly not! - Paul wants to be clear about this and does not shy away. God forbid, of course not, may it never be, such an idea is abhorrent and wrong for so many reasons. No matter the reasoning or results, even if grace was highlighted all the more clearly, God hates sin. His Son had to die in order to redeem us from the consequence of sin. We were on a fast track to hell because of sin. The idea that we could or should continue in sin the same as we always have before we were "saved" is a sickening perversion of God's grace. And despite the fact that we may be fearful of the consequences in regards to those who abuse this truth, we must trust in God and believe what He says. For our wisdom is foolishness to God and His way is greater than ours, His thoughts superior to ours.
  - v. How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (1 Pet 4:1-3) If you have been justified and saved by Jesus Christ, you have died to sin. To the power of sin. Not individual acts of sin that may occur from time to time, but from the reigning control of sin in your life. Such is why (in 1 Pet 4:3-4) it was a past lifetime and others will think it strange that you no longer do these things. You are different now. You died to sin. You suffered with Christ. In the previous chapter of Romans (5:17) he says that death reigned because of one man's sin. But through Jesus the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life. The whole treatise in verses 5:12-19 is connecting sin with death, as the cause of death. How can we live in sin if we have died to it? We can't. (1 John 3:8-9)
  - vi. Notice also, this is in the past tense. It's already happened. He is speaking to believers, and all believers who have been justified, have been sanctified. 2 Cor 5:17 - "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (Have passed away, it's already happened). It is a spiritual work of God that has destroyed the power of sin. Believers have died to sin with Christ. And if we have died to sin how can we also live in sin? (6:3) "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"
- b. 6:3-4 We have discussed the federal headship of Adam and of Christ. You are either identified in Adam or in Christ, but cannot be in both. Adam cast the world into sin, but Christ redeemed mankind from sin through His death and resurrection. To place your faith in Jesus, is to make His sacrifice your own, as if you died with Him. To be baptized into Christ is to identify with Christ.
    - i. Or do you not know? This should be obvious to anyone who has sat under sound teaching. Though, admittedly it is not always easy to find such teaching. Which is why we need to be diligent with our choices. How we spend our time, who we choose to be around or learn from. It is easy to get turned around before you have secured your foundation. But once you understand basic doctrine it will be very difficult for anyone to deceive you.
    - ii. Baptized into Christ Jesus - Is Paul referring to water baptism here? Before Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist was baptizing people in water for repentance. Jesus and His

disciples continued this practice. And after His death, Jesus taught His disciples to baptize believers "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". (Mat 28:19) Baptism is what you did when you put your faith in Jesus. It is an act of obedience to our King. It does not impart salvation or guarantee it. But the word baptism doesn't necessarily mean water immersion. It can also be used to denote identification. To be baptized then, was an act to identify yourself with something or as part of something outside of yourself. And in this case Paul is actually referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit which John the Baptist mentions in (Mat 3:11) "He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." When we exercise saving faith, we are immediately baptized with the Holy Spirit who comes to dwell inside of us and thereafter, we are one with God and Christ. ( 1 Cor 12:13, Eph 4:4-5, Col 2:12)

- iii. Baptized into His death - Water baptism is a picture of what Paul is speaking about. Going under water invokes the image of death. But he is referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Which is when we are placed into Christ. And it is in such a way that we are identified with Christ as if the things that happened to Christ happened to us. When He was buried we were buried, when He was raised, we were raised. Just as if we were taken back in time and crucified with him. How this happens, only God knows, but our baptism of the Holy Spirit places us in Christ and we are now one with Him, one body with all believers and Christ as our head. The book of Ephesians chapters 1 and 2 have a lot to say about us being in Him. We were chosen in Him (1:4), in Him we have redemption (1:7), we have received an inheritance through Him, and have been predestined for this purpose (1:11), In Him we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance. (2:4-10 "and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus".) Christ is in us and we are in Christ. We share a spiritual life with Him.
- iv. Therefore, (because we are in Christ as one with Him) we were buried with Him through baptism into death. Jesus actually died. And our old man actually died with Him. (Gal 2:20) we have been crucified with Christ. (Rom 6:6) Again I want to point out the past tense here. We were buried. We have died. For believers in Christ, this is a reality that has already happened.
- v. Just as Christ was raised from the dead... even so we should walk in newness of life. - The moment salvation occurs we are justified and sanctified. We are declared righteous, the Holy Spirit takes residence inside of us and we are renewed, a new creation now identified with Christ. (2 Cor 5:14) If Christ is your representative, then you have died with Him. And if we have died with Him, we should also walk in the newness of life that He has given us. And just to note, he says walk in the newness. Our habitual daily walk. Not that we will be perfect, but we should be walking in the newness of life.
- vi. By the glory of the Father - This is another way to say by the Power of God. (Rom 1:4) The resurrection is the miracle of miracles. Displaying the authority and power of God, Jesus is declared to be the Son of God in such a powerful way. His resurrection is what gives us hope. Not only does it prove His words true, but it also proves His life as a righteous and acceptable sacrifice. As well as leading the way as the new Adam.

- c. 6:5-7 As in death, so in life. We have been inseparably united together with Christ. Whatever has happened with Christ has happened with us. What will happen to Him also happens to us. His death, which is now our death, has set us free from the reign of sin. No longer are we under the power of darkness, but we have been raised into a new life through the resurrection.
- i. If we have been- He says here "if", but he is using this question as a point of logic. "If this is true, then this also must be true..." But he is not implying uncertainty. If we have been united, should be taken to mean "since we have been united." The proceeding verses just declared how united we are. And he follows up with certainly we also shall be....
  - ii. Certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His death - I appreciate the clarity with which Paul desires to express himself. He is using somewhat repetitive phrasing, however the point is a serious one to make. And one that we shouldn't glance over. Certainly! If we have died with Christ, then we are raised with Christ and shall also be in the likeness of His death. Verse 4 ends with a seemingly suggestive thought. We should walk in the newness of life. And here he explains why. Because we have died and have been raised from the dead. We should be different than we were before, because our old self no longer exists. He died for sin, and we died with Him therefore we died to sin. We should be walking differently now that we have this life in us. It is not a suggestion, but a declaration of what should be. What we should see in ourselves.
  - iii. Knowing this - This should be something we all know. That we have been crucified with Him. Our old man, our sinful nature, was crucified with Him. Our baptism by the Holy Spirit has united us with Christ in such a way that we can rightfully identify ourselves with Him. When He died, our "dead in trespasses" sinful self went with Him. And in so doing He took our sins to the grave that the body of sin might be done away with.
  - iv. That we should no longer be slaves of sin - The power of sin in our life was destroyed. The death grip sin once held, is no more. (Rom 7:2, Rom 6:18) We were slaves to sin, lost in the futility of our mind. We could do nothing, but sin and we loved it, thinking nothing of it. We had been deceived into thinking it was something pleasurable though in reality it was our downfall. But Christ has released us from this torturous reality. He has set us free and broken the chains of bondage. (Rom 5:14-17) While death once reigned under the tyranny of the devil and of sin, we died that death in Christ. And we have now received an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness that will reign in life through Jesus Christ.
  - v. It must be said however, that while we have been set free, it is not to say that we have been perfected in righteousness. As we will see in the next chapter, sin retains a presence in our flesh. We may still have certain desires and unholy ones at that, but alongside those unrighteous temptations there should be a struggle, for we know the cost of sin, we know the price Christ had to pay. We should feel that price as we have died with Him. But while we face these temptations and succumb to them from time to time. We know that our God is faithful to forgive those sins. But by and large, our lives should be different than they once were. For as those who have been justified and sanctified, we should be able to look back and see the newness of life we have been granted as our old self has died to the overwhelming power of sin.

- d. 6:8-11 Here we see the repetition of ideas he just mentioned, though formatted in a different way. The significance of our connection and identification with Christ is an important one to understand which is why he is not moving from the subject just yet.
- i. 5 - "if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection,"
  - ii. 8 - "if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,
  - iii. 6- knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.
  - iv. 9 - knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.
  - v. 7 - For he who has died has been freed from sin.
  - vi. 10 - For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.
  - vii. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - viii. When placed next to each other we can see just how similar these verses are. The point that is being driven home is that if we have been united with Christ, then we have been united together with Him in all things, not just His death, though that is highly significant to say the least. His death, which is now our death, has accomplished the purpose of releasing us from the domineering power of sin in our lives. It's not that we can't sin, but we no longer have to sin because we have been released from its dominion over us. As if it once had authority over us, but we died and thus authority is not exerted over the deceased. Yet just as Christ has risen from the grave to be with the father, so too have we been given new life to live according to the power and will of God. And now that we are no longer constrained by the power of sin, but have the life of God inside of us we are free to do this. We are alive in Christ. He is alive in us and we in Him.
- e. 6:11-14 Beginning in verse 11 and continuing in 12 these are the first exhortations in the book of Romans. Up until this point, Paul has presented the need and means of salvation along with the initial implications of the substitutionary atonement. Five and a half chapters of sound doctrine have been taught before we proceed to any kind of practical application. But now that we understand how we have been justified and set apart for the purposes of God through Christ, we must set these truths in our minds and give ourselves to that purpose and Paul explains how we are to do that.
- i. (V11) Likewise... reckon yourselves to be dead - Having walked us through the meaning of our spiritual baptism, Paul tells us to reckon ourselves dead. What does that mean and why do we need to reckon it? He just told us it was true, that we've died with Christ, but obviously we are still breathing and walking this earth. Was this all metaphorical? No, it is real with real consequence and implications, so he goes on to explain a bit further the aftermath and reality of our new life because we still have mortal bodies.
  - ii. (V12) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies - Our sins have been taken to the grave by Christ. It was because of those sins that Christ died. Therefore, as we have just seen, sin and the devil are no longer our ruling king. We do not have to take orders from them. However, It is still possible to sin and to be influenced by the lust remaining

in our mortal bodies, but we must fight this with everything we can muster. Do not obey sin, for Christ is your master. His love has been poured out on you.

- iii. (V13) We have been washed and cleansed by His blood and set free from sin through death. Where once we had been filthy unrighteous creatures bound for hell, we have now been made new, holy and set apart. No longer a vessel of dishonor, but one for honor, created with a new purpose. As such we should give ourselves to this purpose and turn from the world in every aspect of our lives. With every fiber of our being.
- iv. (V14) Sin has no rightful claim over you any longer. From your beginning you were conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. But that man died with Christ when you were baptized by the Spirit. No longer are you confined under the ruling penalty of the law, but you are free under the prevailing grace of God.
  - 1. Notice how in these few verses Paul is carving out what we should and shouldn't do. In verses 12 and the first half of 13, he tells us what not to do. Followed by instruction as to what we should be doing in the second half of 13 and capping it off with the reason why in 14, although this line of reasoning really started in verse 11. Where he tells us to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to Christ. (But why?)
  - 2. He has just laid out how we have been baptized into Christ and what that means. In verse 2 he certainly implied that we have died to sin. And also that we died with Him and were raised with Him. And so in the same way that death no longer has dominion over Christ, we too should understand and reckon these things (that we have died to sin, but alive to God in Christ) as fact.
  - 3. But why do we need to reckon these things? He just told us over the last 10 verses that these things are true. What is there to reckon? First, to reckon is to establish by counting and calculation. To consider or regard something in a specific way. Basically to consider these things and come to the conclusion as a settled fact.
  - 4. Christ's death and resurrection on our behalf is the foundation of our faith. And verses 6:1-10 explain how and why we are no longer subject to the kingdom of darkness and the reign of death. And that's because we are in Christ from the moment we first believed. In such a way that we are partakers of Christ's life and He in ours. If we are to be of use, we must consider/reckon/know these things. We must resolve this in our mind and our hearts or we won't be able to comprehend the significance of our remaining time on this earth or why we need to do anything different than we have always been doing. (6:1 shall we continue in sin?)
  - 5. So now that we understand this, we must also understand that our mortal bodies are not part of the redemption, and will be changed into something immortal. (1 Cor 15:39-54) We will not enter heaven with these bodies that have been used for uncleanness, but will be given new ones. Ones that have not been corrupted. Ones that will never see decay. Even if Jesus comes before we die, our bodies will be transformed into something new.
  - 6. But in the meantime we are here, stuck in these bodies of corruption. And our bodies will be host to spiritual warfare, susceptible to attacks and temptations from our old master. And though satan is no longer our king, we are now at war with him the same way we were once enemies at war with God.

7. And so the exhortation is "do not let sin reign." And "Do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin." Sin is calling us, begging us, tempting us in any way possible that it might set us off track. Waiting and lurking, it "lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." (Gen 4:7) We must not let sin reign and give our bodies over to filthiness.
8. But present yourself to God as alive from the dead, and present your members as instruments of righteousness. We have a choice. We have been freed from the kingdom of darkness and the power of sin no longer rules over us, but we must fight. It will be a struggle. Which is what Paul addresses in the next chapter. But it's everywhere and everywhere. To present ourselves alive is to demonstrate our new righteousness. We can do this by presenting our members. Our body parts. Mind, eyes, ears, hands and feet. Col 3:5 says something similar: "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
9. Rom 12:1 Do not let sin reign, do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness. It is possible to use our bodies for unclean and unrighteous purposes. But we must fight those unclean thoughts and temptations in the battleground of our flesh and present our bodies as living sacrifices. But how are we to do this and what does it look like?
10. Well first, as to the how: (Eph 4:17-24, Gal 5:16) We must renew our minds and walk in the spirit, if we do this will be able to overcome these things. (Rom 12:2 "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind". Renew your mind. Replace the old garbage with the light and truth of Christ.
11. What does this look like? He uses the image of your members in verse 13 with good reason. Because every part of our body can lead us to sin or be used for holiness. Our bodies are a battleground. Our mind as well, and it must be renewed and focused on the spirit. All the different members; our eyes, what do we look at? What are we watching? We cannot be watching filth and grow in holiness. (1 John 2:16 For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.). Eve saw the tree (Gen 3:6) it was pleasant to her eyes. (Mat 5:28-29) Everyone who looks with lust has already committed adultery. He then says if your eye causes you to stumble to pluck it out. That's how serious sin is. But we can present our eyes as instruments of righteousness by looking on what is wholesome, by seeing people in need, seeing people without Christ, seeing if someone is discouraged, looking outside of ourselves. Also looking at and reading the word of God. Where are our eyes pointed, what are we watching? Next we have our ears. Are we listening to slander and gossip or someone who is always speaking negatively or are we around people who always speak hope and who speak positive things of God? Are we listening to false teaching or are we listening to sound doctrine? What kind of music are we listening to? What kind of lyrics are they, what are they singing about? Are we listening for opportunities to present the gospel? Another part of our body is our tongue. (James 3:2-6 "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a



perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.”) James speaks about the tongue as the rudder of our ship. It's little but can cause great problems. However it can also be used for God's glory. (Eph 4:29 5:4) We can speak up for the Lord, praise God, give thanks to God, to witness and give testimony, ask others how they are doing, pray for them as well. Our feet, they take us places. Where are we going every day? Our feet carry us where we go. Are we at a raunchy bar? Or at parties of debauchery? Our feet carry us to Bible study and church. Our hands, what are we doing with them? Are we sitting on them? (Mat 5:30 if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off.) Are we stealing, vandalizing? Or touching someone other than our husband or wife? Our hands are to be used for righteousness. (Eph 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”) We must labor and work. So long as it's honest work and we do it as unto the Lord. (Col 3:23-24) Driving, writing, cleaning. Hard work glorifies God. (1 Thess 4:11) Do what you are supposed to do and do not worry so much about others. Everything in our lives has been selectively placed or allowed to be here by God for one reason or another. We work to glorify God and the more we can give of ourselves the better our witness to others. It brings God glory. We aren't taking handouts if we are able to work, that is lazy. But we are to provide for and care for others in need. It all works together. Our bodies belong to God, and as Christians we were redeemed by Christ's blood. Therefore present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. Because if we are not presenting them to God we are presenting them to the devil. Be diligent, be wise and be discerning.

12. This is all by the reign of grace. It's not something we can necessarily just pull together and decide to do one day, but something the spirit inside of us enables us to do. We are no longer under the law, the penalty of sin no longer sits over our head and sin has no dominion over us. If we sin, we humble ourselves and ask forgiveness knowing He is faithful to forgive. We move on and proceed in peace because God will give us the strength we need to declare victory over these things. We cannot do it alone or without His help. But His Spirit strives with us and we do not need to stress ourselves about our violations. We should be receptive and perceptive, sensitive to our sins. But there is no more “or else” for we are now under grace.
- f. 6:15-19 What is a slave? It is a difficult concept for modern minds to truly imagine as most of us have never seen anything like it. The idea is repulsive and against even the lowest forms of morality. The word prisoner is loosely related, but doesn't quite convey the same meaning. A slave by definition is someone held in forced servitude or a person who is completely subservient to a dominating influence. A slave is made to work without pay, and has no choice in the matter. They are told what to do and do it. They are prisoners in a sense that they do not have personal freedom, but slaves are generally thought of as less than people, and more like animals. They are property and are owned by someone. And so, in this portion of Scripture, Paul uses this term to highlight the seriousness of the matter. Our actions are a reflection of who we serve. If we are using grace as an excuse to sin, there is a problem. So we must meditate on this and understand our position.

- i. (V15) Shall we sin because we are not under law? - Paul anticipates the question as he often does. Someone is bound to come to this conclusion. If we are saved by grace apart from the law and despite our sin filled lives, then why do we need to change anything? God saved us in a wretched state when we were enemies, can't we just live how we want to, especially now that we are not under the law? Certainly not! May it never be, God forbid! Emphatically NO! Unless you are trying to understand the doctrine more clearly, this question should not be in your mind. If you are looking for an excuse to sin, your heart is in desperate need of renewal. But there are people who believe themselves to be saved while never having experienced any change whatsoever thanks to the poor teaching that hyper focuses on the love and grace of God, without also teaching about the holiness, justice and wrath of God.
- ii. He is writing to believers. And as those who have been redeemed, this is the life we have been taken from. We walked in sin and loved it at one point in our lives. But may it never be so now. While the law may not loom over us demanding obedience or death as it once did, we are still bound to law for the purposes of sanctification. (Mat 5:17-19) The 10 commandments are known as the moral law and Jesus speaks about those who break the law as being least in the kingdom of heaven. And not only this, but as we were baptized into Christ, we are now being conformed into His image. Jesus came to fulfill the law, and it should be in our hearts to do the same.
- iii. (V16) Do you not know? - Once again the question implies the following statement as an obvious and foregone conclusion that we should all be well aware. In this case, it is the fact that slaves obey their master.
- iv. You are that one's slaves whom you obey - Your actions speak for themselves. And while this is obvious, it should be in your awareness. Who or what do you present yourselves to obey? Sin? God? Yourself? If you are a Christian you are already a slave of obedience leading to righteousness. It's not a question of when or if this will happen. The moment you are born again you are removed from the kingdom of darkness, the reign and tyranny of sin over you have ceased and you have entered into the kingdom of righteousness. You are now a slave of obedience. (Eze 36:26-27) God gives us a new heart and causes us to walk in His statutes.
- v. It's natural to bristle at the idea of being a slave, however we need to remind ourselves of a few things. First, we are a creation, the clay of the master Potter who can do with us as He pleases. He could have destroyed us the moment we turned out to be dishonorable vessels, but He didn't. Instead of giving us what we deserve, He came into this world to redeem us at the cost of His Son's blood. And as we are saved, He recreates us into that vessel of honor which is a miracle in itself. Second, being a slave to the obedience of God is nothing like being a slave to sin. The latter leads to death, while the former leads to righteousness and eternal life. Being a slave to Jesus is the best thing that could possibly happen. For God gives life. His laws and statutes are declarations of what should be, what is actually good and right and true. If we desire righteousness, we need to learn to follow these steps to life. And lastly, our new master loves us. We aren't slaves bought with filthy money. We were purchased at the cost of His life and blood. He gave Himself to us so that we might in turn give ourselves to Him.

- vi. (V17) But God be thanked - Praise God, sing songs of blessing. Do you have hope and joy in your life? You should if you have been saved? The temporal world may get us down, but thank God for His love and mercy.
- vii. you were slaves of sin -God be thanked because this was your former life. A slave to sin. Thank Him for the work He has done in your heart and soul. Thank Him for the price He paid to redeem you from the clutches of sin. Thank Him for what He saved you from and where you could be right now if not for His intervention. Sometimes we get so caught up in things of this world that we forget where we came from and where we are going. We were slaves of sin, but thank God we have obeyed the doctrine of saving grace through faith in our Lord. (John 8:34-36) We are free indeed, but it should be noted and we must remember that we serve a king. While the gospel is good news and a free gift, it is also a command. The world is commanded to repent and believe in Jesus Christ for condemnation is already upon them. Obeying a king only appears optional.
- viii. (V18) Became slaves of righteousness - There are only two options, two families, two masters. The broad path or the narrow path. Jesus or satan, sin or righteousness. We will be slaves no matter what, your duty is to understand where you belong and conduct yourself accordingly. Remember, we were enemies of God at one time. And friends to the world or so we thought, and as such it makes sense that we rebelled against Him and made light of sin. But what we didn't realize is that we were actually held captive by sin. Held in bondage to the lust of the flesh, by the father of lies and master of deceit. But, a new master has purchased us at the cost of His blood. To which you acknowledged, agreed to and asked for. That His blood should be payment for your sins. And now we are slaves to righteousness, sanctified and on the narrow path to glory with Christ. (John 15:15-17) We have been appointed to bear fruit. All of this discussion is for the purpose of setting your mind in the proper place. To understand what you have become and what you are meant to do now that you are in Christ. The sooner we understand this, the sooner we can begin to participate in this process and hopefully bring others to the truth. (Deny yourself and take up the cross)
- ix. (V19) Human terms - With all that being said, there is somewhat of an explanation. Before we think we have somehow been tricked from one form of slavery into another, Paul let's us in on the teaching as a metaphor. That he is speaking in human terms because of the weakness of our flesh. We have never truly been held as prisoner by the devil. He does not have such authority over God's creation. However, as with Eve, the serpent is cunning and entices you with all the base lusts of your flesh. We are no more held captive to sin than our voluntary desires enslave us to sin. However, it is the truth of this world that those who do not know Christ, love their sins and will actively choose sin over righteousness to the point they may as well be prisoners. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."(John 3:19-20) Praise God that He has given us the light of the gospel and saved us from that old life of sin.

- x. Just as you were slaves before to lawlessness, be so now to righteousness for holiness- If we are in God, our deeds should be done in the light, that they may be clearly seen. If we are hiding our actions it should be a red flag that something is wrong. It doesn't matter who you are hiding them from or why you are hiding. Children of God are the salt and light of the world. We do not light candles to hide them, but to shine. As we keep this in mind Paul is giving an exhortation to live unto God the way we once did unto sin. We presented our members as slaves to uncleanness. Without consideration for the law and things of God. We were lawless and rebellious which lead to more lawlessness as we became calloused to the harmful effects. But now we have been saved, set apart, and regenerated with a new heart. Therefore let us present our members as slaves of righteousness for the purpose of holiness. Where we once were rebellious to God, let us wage war against sin. Cast it away from you as a detestable thing for it is detestable. Set your mind on the things of God and grow in holiness.
- g. 6:20-23 In these final verses there is a summation of verses 15-19, however it really pulls in the entire chapter. For we died to sin when we were baptized in Christ and thus we have been set free from the power of sin over us. But formerly we were free in regard to righteousness, that is we had no thought or obligation to it. But now blessed be God for His work in our life that we might produce fruit to holiness and everlasting life instead of sin and death.
- i. (V20) We were slaves of uncleanness and lawlessness, but now we are slaves to righteousness. When we were slaves of sin, we felt no obligation towards righteousness. We walked in filth, watched filth, spoke filth. We used our members for unholy purposes with reckless abandon and the only hesitation we might have considered was temporal ramifications if the wrong people found out. But we did not consider God as having the final judgment. We did not consider that righteousness was the proper way to live. And even if we did potentially consider that righteousness was desirable, and were aware that our conscience was revolted by our actions, we lied to ourselves and suppressed the truth, ignoring these things and rejecting righteousness. And what did we gain from this life of sin?
- ii. (V21) What fruit did you have in the things of which you are now ashamed? - Is there anything from your former life that could be considered fruit? The things which you are now ashamed of hold no value in eternity and we know this. At best there was temporal pleasure, but nothing worth the cost. If there was any fruit, it was a rotten maggot filled apple. And when we are tempted, we should meditate and consider these things. Better even to do so now, that we may set our firm determination against such ideas. Which is what this chapter is encouraging us towards. For the end of those things is death, as God said in the garden. "In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." But eat they did, and they were ashamed. Sin may seem enticing and the broad path might look fun, but the end of that road leads to destruction.
- iii. (V22) But now, having been set free from sin, from the controlling power of sin, from the penalty of sin and final end of sin, and having become slaves to God, the one who truly loves us, who is willing to sacrifice His Son to save us, we have real fruit to holiness, and the end of this path is everlasting life. And what is this fruit? Any hesitation we might

have when hearing that we are slaves to God should be dispelled rapidly. He gave us a new heart, made us a new creation and causes us to walk in His ways. He made us to love the things which are actually good for us and will end in everlasting life instead of the things which lead to death. And not only that, but we now produce fruit to holiness thanks to His Spirit. And "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Gal 5:22-23)

- iv. (V23) The wages of sin is death - It doesn't matter what you think about sin, what matters is what God says about sin. And according to Scripture, death is the rightfully owed payment for sin. As if you were going to work and earning money, your life and career of sins has earned you the death penalty. However, to be clear, one sin is enough to earn the death penalty. (James 2:10)
- v. The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord - Where death is the rightful payment, life is a gift, given by God according to His grace and mercy. There is nothing in this world we could do to earn this gift. (Eph 2:8) But through faith and our baptism in Jesus Christ, we are gifted eternal life all thanks to His work. He lived the righteous life we couldn't, He paid for our souls with His blood, His Spirit is sanctifying us and preparing us for glory, and He preserves us until that time. He has done it all and He is worthy of our thanks and praise.

### 31. Self test Chapter 6

- a. What is the difference between justification and sanctification?
  
- b. Name the 3 stages of sanctification
  
- c. True or false: Paul says we have died to sin, this means that true Christians no longer sin.
  
- d. True or false: Baptism into Christ happens the moment we are submerged under water.
  
- e. If we have been united with Christ in the likeness of His death, what else shall we be united in?
  
- f. Name 3 ways we can present our members as instruments of righteousness to God.
  
- g. Why should we reckon ourselves dead to sin?
  
- h. In our former life of sin, how were we free in regard to righteousness?
  
- i. For the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ is death, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of God is \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus our Lord.

32. Review of Chapter 6: The chapter starts by saying that we have died to sin and ends with the statement that the wages of sin is death. So we can either die because of sin or we can die to sin. In either case our mortal bodies will perish, but the end result, and what happens after the first death, is what we must consider. Chapter 6 begins the exhortations to righteous living demonstrating how we can know where we truly stand. For whom we obey, we are that one's slave, whether sin leading to death or obedience leading to righteousness. Our sanctification is an active growth that we can participate in. The more we submit ourselves obedient to Christ, the more we will grow in holiness. Therefore meditate on the fact that you have been baptized into Christ, into His death and have died to sin. And present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead.
33. Chapter 7 The law. Paul has done quite a job convincing us that we are no longer under law. We have been justified apart from the law through faith in Christ (3:21-22) And we have died to law when we were baptized in Christ. But you will recall there were those preemptive questions throughout the chapters. 3:31 "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not!" 6:15 "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!" The topic of the law is not new in the letter to the Romans, but it hasn't been thoroughly addressed until now. The word law is mentioned 23 times in this chapter. (NKJV) And the whole chapter is dedicated to explain our relation to it as well as what role it serves.
34. 7:1-6 The marriage analogy. Paul uses the illustration of a married couple to demonstrate our relation to the law. Further expressing our newness of life. When a woman becomes a widow, she is no longer held to the marriage vows she once made to her husband. In the same way, we who were once slaves to sin through the law, have died to the law and are now married to Christ, to bear fruit unto righteousness. There is now a new covenant; we are not under law but under grace. Where the law once elicited our base desires like children wanting things they cannot have, now we are free from the law in that regard and given the grace and strength to overcome such desires.
- i. (V1) Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law) - This is something we are all acquainted with. He is not necessarily speaking about the mosaic law, though many of the Christian were raised in the Jewish tradition, but everyone in Rome was personally knowledgeable regarding the law. As it still is today, almost every aspect of our lives has some form of law to govern it. From the world stage to our families or even the games we play. The law is there to set boundaries, prevent unjust action and punish those who step out of line. We are all familiar with the law.
  - ii. The law has dominion over a man as long as he lives - But in every case, these laws are only binding while we are alive to follow them. (Job 3:19) In death, the servant is free from his master. And this is an obvious statement, but that is the beauty of the argument. We all know it, and Paul is great at explaining how these things pertain to us in terms we are able to understand.
  - iii. (V2-3) For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives - Marriage is one of these such areas. A husband and wife are bound to each other by law. Certain rules apply to them that do not apply to their friends or acquaintances. A married woman cannot marry another man while her husband lives.

This is against the law in a general sense, (government) you can only be married to one person at a time. But marriage is a sacred covenant and God did not create us to jump from one person to another because we've decided we are no longer happy. You cannot marry someone else once you have been married, without committing adultery. (The only biblical exceptions to this outside of the death of your husband or wife are sexual immorality Mat 19:9 and desertion of your spouse 1 Cor 7. However, reconciliation and forgiveness are preferred and encouraged as God hates divorce (Mal 2:16).)

- iv. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law - death is the release from our obligations and responsibilities. A woman is not in violation of the law if her husband dies and she marries another man. But if she is with another man while her husband lives she will be called an adulteress. And while Paul uses the woman as the example, it of course applies both ways.
- v. (V4) Therefore (pulling together the truth of verse 1 and the illustration of verse 2-3, he is now giving us the application. And the bigger picture.)
- vi. You also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ- (6:2-3) He mentioned this in the previous chapter and is reinforcing the idea. We have died to the law. Jesus fulfilled the law in every way and His death satisfied the requirement of obligation. We violated the law and He received the wages we deserve. We were baptized into Christ, and now identify with Him in His death and resurrection. Having thus died, we are no longer bound to the law as a wife is no longer bound to her husband because of death.
- vii. That you may be married to another - And now that we have been released from the obligation, we are free to marry another, Him who was raised, which is Christ. Our redemption and salvation is a joining together with Christ. Baptized into Him, married to Him. We are now inseparably connected. ([Eph 5:22-31](#)) "two shall become one flesh" We are one with Jesus, members of His body and He has given Himself for our sake.
- viii. That we should bear fruit to God - One purpose of marriage is to produce godly offspring. (Mal 2:15) Our marriage to Christ is for that purpose as well, that we should bear fruit. ([John 15:1-5](#)) fruit bearing isn't an optional perk to this marriage. It is a fact surrounding those who have been saved. (Eze 36:26-27) We are given a new heart and a new spirit for a reason. The power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power that is now working in us. He will cause us to desire, and to walk in, His ways. This fruit is our personal holiness. As we produce fruit, we evidence our relationship to Christ. If we are not growing in holiness, we are not in Christ. It's not that we have to produce fruit to prove ourselves, but if we aren't producing fruit, we aren't in Christ.
- ix. (V5) Before we were saved- when we were in the flesh - we were slaves to sin, obeying our old master. The sinful passions we had were aroused by the law. We've all seen this, if you tell a child or even an adult not to do something, he wants to do it. (don't look over there, don't push the red button). But somehow the law aroused the sinfulness inside of us. When God commanded us to do something, we said "No, I don't feel like it" and when He commanded us not to do it, we said "I'll do what I want."
- x. At work in our members - No one is an exception to this, we were all slaves to our old man or woman and the sinful passion never slept. It was always at work, even when we were asleep, our dreams held unclean thoughts. We couldn't help ourselves, we were

enslaved, producing fruit to death.(spiritual death, the second death) Like an addict who knows the drugs will kill him, even if we understood stealing, cheating, lying, lusting was wrong, we still did it to one degree or another depending on the different influences and factors in our lives.

- xi. (V6) But now - after we have been saved - we have been delivered from the law - released from the obligation to obey it in order to be justified. (Mat 11:28-30) Before we were saved we were trying to save ourselves. We were chained to that heavy yoke and it was unbearable. But Christ released us from this burden, giving us the much needed rest. Taking it all upon Himself. The sinless life of obedience, the torturous death. Praise God and thank you Jesus. We have died with Jesus to that life, died to our old master and no longer need to carry that burden or pay that price.
- xii. So that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit - It was all for a purpose (v4, to bear fruit.). Having been justified by faith, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. We have been released from trying to save ourselves. But we are not released from the moral law itself. We have become slaves of obedience. Not because we have to keep the law. We are not required to keep the law for salvation, but it still applies and is still in effect. We need to consider these things and serve in the newness of the Spirit. Not in the oldness of the letter of the law. Not scraping by and doing the bare minimum. But to understand the life we have inside of and use it for the glory of God. Jesus took the yoke off your shoulders and did all the work Himself. Would you sit there and watch him do your work without helping? We don't have to do these things, but we should want to. And the Spirit of God will cause us to, through discipline if need be.
- b. 7:7-13 If the beginning of this chapter reinforces our freedom from the slavery and bondage to the law, this next section might be seen as the guardrails against going too far the other way. There are some professing Christians who declare the law void all together. But that is not true for as we will see, the law is holy and just and good. There is nothing in the law that should cause us to groan for we know the law is of God for our benefit.
  - i. (V7) Is the law sin? Certainly not! - At this point, there has been so much to say about the law with its influence and dominion over us, even the provocative nature of it that arouses sin, that someone might begin to think of it as an evil thing, perhaps law is the cause of sin. But Paul is wise to this and answers the question out front. Certainly not!
  - ii. On the contrary - The law cannot be sinful for multiple reasons. The primary reason is because God is holy and righteous and just and would not give us something outside those parameters. The law is not sin because it is what allows us to know sin. It is a light in the dark, a flashing neon sign pointing the way towards holiness. Those who love evil, hate the light and so hate the law because it tells them what they're doing is wrong. Which is what Paul is saying. The law cannot be sin when it is the very thing which tells us what sin is. God has given us a conscience to know right from wrong and therefore we have some understanding of sin, but the law highlights or magnifies sin to show us how evil it truly is. The law is not sin, it is the opposite of sin. (3:20, 4:15, 5:13, 5:20)
  - iii. (V8) But sin taking opportunity by the commandment - How does it take opportunity by the commandment? Multiple ways, One is that when we are without the Spirit and only have the letter of the law, we can only see what appears to be a thin and flexible



boundary. We can't understand the true meaning of the law because the law is spiritual and speaks to the heart. The serpent said "you will not surely die", The law says do not murder, and therefore, we were allowed, in our own minds, to push the limits and gleefully imagine the worst evil on others. So long as we were able to justify it in some way, we could brush it off and feel no guilt at all. Another way is what was just addressed in verse 5. The law arouses sin. As a chain wrapped around your arms will make you squirm and attempt to get free, so does the sin within us squirm when we are pressed against the law and makes us want to push back.

- iv. Produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin is dead - This doesn't mean there was no sin, (we are born in sin), only that sin was lying dormant until the law forbade us to do something. Before we are saved, being told not to do something was enough to make us want to do it. Being told not to covet was enough to make us jealous, to look at everything we didn't have and desire more. It caused a lack of contentment, leading to a host of other sinful thoughts.
- v. (V9) I was alive once without the law - (Phi 3:4-6) Before Christ, Paul had confidence in Himself. At one time, in our own eyes, we were not bad people. Much of the world outside of Christianity still believes this. Carefree because they don't understand how serious sin actually is and only compare themselves to the worst kinds of evil.
- vi. But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died - When knowledge of the sin came to fruition, knowledge of the seriousness, of the evilness of it, sin came alive, he became aware of divine judgment and he died inside. He wasn't yet saved, but he became aware that he was in serious danger. And this is what we all need in order to come to repentance. This is why it's so important to fully express the whole counsel of God, wrath and judgment included and not just the grace and mercy. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation. (2 Cor 7:10) We all need to understand the seriousness of sin in order to come to Christ.
- vii. (V10) The commandment which was to bring life, brought death - God intended the law for life, and it does point to holiness, but as we cannot keep the law it can only bring us knowledge of our sin. And true knowledge of our sin causes a life crushing blow. Like the floor dropping out from under your feet. You thought you were safe until you understood you are already sentenced to death. The conviction of sin hurts, and produces tears, but it is so vitally important to know the truth. You will not seek a cure if you don't know you have a disease. When we share the gospel or witness to others, we should be aware of this and perceptive to their understanding of sin. A light attitude towards sin is a red flag for those who say they are saved.
- viii. (V11) For sin taking occasion....., deceived me and... killed me - This is what sin does. It always seems appealing for one reason or another, but it never delivers what it promises. Whatever sin it is, it's like a carrot being dangled in front of a horse till it walks off the cliff. Adam and Eve thought they would be like God, and thought it appealing to have the wisdom of God, but knowing good and evil turned out to be the worst possible decision they could have made. Instead of trusting God, they gave in to sin and set in motion all the evil we have seen throughout human history.

- ix. (V12) Therefore the law is holy - 7:7 Wrapping it all up, The law is not sin, it's holy. We are sinful, and sin works inside of us, taking advantage any way it can and producing all sorts of evil, but the law is holy and just and good. It points to life and righteousness. It shows us with finer detail how evil sin is. Things we took for granted, being disobedient, lying, lusting, coveting. God wants us to become like his Son, holy; to walk worthy of our calling. And we cannot do that without understanding his law. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mat 6:33) we cannot know His righteousness without the law.
- x. (V13) Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! - The law does not cause death, it reveals the cause of death. Like an x-ray, it reveals our need for treatment, but is not the reason we need treatment. The law reveals our sin. But sin on the other hand is exceedingly sinful and produced death in me through the law.
- xi. But sin,.....was producing death in me through what is good - Sin, taking advantage of the law, as the serpent did with Adam and Eve, twisting and stretching the law to be something it is not, causing us to believe there is no harm which ultimately leads to death through that which is actually good.
- xii. But sin, that it might appear sin,- This is actually better explained through the second half of this verse. "so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." In other words sin appears all the more sinful because it corrupts the law itself. What was intended for good, has itself become used in the schemes of the devil. Which, when we understand the true perverted nature of sin, it becomes even more sinful to us and we see sin for the horrid thing it really is. Sin now appears to be sin because we know how low it can drag us. To such a degree that we brush off the law as if it were nothing to our detriment.
- c. 7:14-20 Here we have personal testimony of the chief of sinners. So far in this chapter, Paul has walked us through the Christian relationship towards the law. We have been freed from the tyranny and penalty of the law through the death of Christ, but on the other hand, we cannot discard the law because we know it is holy, good and just. In this next section Paul gives us insight to his personal struggles and shows us that the battle of our souls is not over when we are saved, but has really only just begun.
  - i. (V14) For we know that the law is spiritual - if we step back to the beginning of verse 13, he proposes the question. Has then what is good become death to me? Of course it hasn't. We know the law is good. He then went on to explain how the sin inside of us twists the law to become even more sinful. So here we have an explanation in defense of the law. We know the law is spiritual. It was given to us by God, who is a spirit. (John 4:24 And we are to worship God in spirit.) The law is for our benefit, but we fold under the law because we are carnal and the flesh is weak, easily tempted and distracted.
  - ii. but I am carnal, sold under sin. - We must remember that our bodies are mortal and have not yet been glorified. There will be a time when we have a glorified body, but for now, we remain in the flesh. Our soul has been redeemed, but our flesh is carnal. And because of this, there will be an ongoing struggle between our spirit and our flesh. We are sold under sin in the sense that we were conceived in sin and brought forth in

iniquity. (Ps 51:5) And though we have been freed from the force and pressure of the law, it remains for us as a guide to subdue our flesh and to worship God in spirit.

1. Ultimately, the law is excellent in every way, but we are sinners by nature and it is impossible to uphold the law on our own because of this.
  2. When we are born again, there begins a struggle within us. The Spirit which now dwells inside of us wants what is holy and just and good, but our flesh which is familiar with and fond of the sinful life pushes us in that direction.
  3. We don't have a problem with the law, we have a problem with the sin inside of us. And we must do everything in our power to fight this.
  4. But how do we do this? (Gal 5:16-17) We must walk in the Spirit, which is our daily habitual lives. Meditate on what is good and holy and make decisions to follow after that. This would include prayer, Scripture reading, Bible study, Church, and surrounding ourselves with other Christians. (Luke 14:26)
  5. True Christians, saved people will still sin because this is and will be an ongoing struggle. No one said this would be easy. Jesus told us the gate is narrow and the way which leads to life is difficult. (Mat 7:14) He also said "if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. (Luke 9:23)
  6. So we have decisions to make every day. Will we give into our flesh or will we deny our sinful temptations? This is a spiritual battle, but we are saints and have God on our side, so let us walk worthy of our calling.
- iii. (V15) For what I am doing, I do not understand - There is a confusion. He doesn't understand what he's doing or why he's doing it. He knows what is good and what he wants to do, but doesn't do it. And on the other hand he knows what is evil and what he hates, yet he does so anyway.
1. I think most of us are familiar with this thought or feeling. And new Christians especially will be prone to this. "If I am saved, why am I still sinning?" Or "I can't stop sinning, does this mean I'm not saved?" Thankfully Paul has revealed these personal details which let us know it is normal to go through this. But it must be noted and understood that this is not license to sin as he's mentioned numerous times.
  2. There is an internal mental struggle. He wants to do good, but does evil. And this is when he is a mature Christian well into his ministry. He isn't confused about his salvation, but is aware that something inside of him is contrary to the law of God, which is frustrating and perplexing. And this applies to all of us. Everyone who has the Spirit of God inside of them will have this struggle going on as well. A lack of struggle should be seen as a warning sign.
- iv. what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do - There is an antagonizing force at play. He wants holiness, but lacks the perfect completion of it and still sins despite being saved.
1. Christians are given a new heart which desires God's holiness. We know the law is good, we have given ourselves to Christ, we want to be like Him and be used for His purposes as tools or vessels for His glory. When we are doing these things it gives us joy and we are filled with happiness, but we don't always do them. And unfortunately we are still connected to the flesh, filled with evil desires.

2. He hates sin, but still does it. It is not a resignation, but an acknowledgement (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) for our sake. He isn't holding on to a few sins thinking it isn't a big deal. Every sin is a big deal and he hates every single one.
  3. We may not be able to perfectly fulfill the law, (We won't perfectly fulfill the law), but there should be a willingness inside of us to do so. True Christians love the law and hate sin and this is the cause of the struggle within us. If there is no struggle with these things, then there might be reason to question your salvation. Not because of your sin, but if there is no struggle against your sin.
- v. (V16) If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. - If (since) I do the things I don't want to do, then I agree that the law is good. What He is saying generally is that his actions prove the law is good. If he does the things he doesn't want to do, then the law is perfectly correct in forbidding them. And if He doesn't do the things he wants to do, the law is correct in commanding them.
1. The law is good. It reveals our sin. It is one of the purposes for the law and it is still in effect and still applies to New Testament saints. And thank God because we need to know when we have offended Him. 1 John 3:4 says sin is lawlessness. We can't be running around with the enemies of God. That's where we came from. What we were saved from. Before we were saved we lived in open rebellion and sin meant nothing to us. But now we know better thanks to His word and His law.
- vi. (V17) But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me - Sin is an indwelling presence in our lives. It is not something that goes away, but is instead removed from the throne of command in our hearts and minds. Christ now sits in that throne, however sin lurks in the shadows, waiting for the opportunity to strike.
1. Paul is not abrogating responsibility for his sins. He is acknowledging the reality of the situation. The moment we are saved, we are new creations in Christ. (2 Cor 5:17) The old self no longer exists, but there is a new man, a new nature that God is causing to walk in His ways incapable of sin.
  2. But there does remain the fallen nature in the flesh, indwelling him. And It will not be taken away from us until we are glorified and our bodies are redeemed. It comes with us everywhere and is always looking for opportunities to fulfill its evil desires.
- vii. (V18) 18For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; - The old man has no benefit whatsoever. Empty of goodness and at war with God. It is carnal and unrepentant, fulfilling its desires any way it can. And this nature is at war with our new nature. We want to do good, but can't always do so.
1. For to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find- He is willing to do good. As are we all (those who are saved). But it doesn't just happen on its own and we can not do it in our own power. As the old man and unregenerate flesh fight against our new nature, we need the power of God and the Holy Spirit within us to guide us into these good things.
- viii. (V19-20) We can see the ideas are repeating, slightly different. But we need to understand what is going on and why we, as true Christians are still sinning. The reality is that there are two competing natures within us.

1. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice - Somewhat repeating verse 15, sin still manages to mock us. We want to please God, but oftentimes we let Him down and we let ourselves down. We do those things we detest and sin gains a little victory. But we can't let this get us down, because Christ has overcome the world and we are in Christ.
  2. Sin is not the ruling tyrant it once was, but it is still there. It is a competing force in our lives. Though Christ is now the Lord of our lives, there will always be an evil that remains while we are still on this earth.
  3. 20 If I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. - In a sense he is doing it, but the real Paul is the new man in Christ. And it is the old nature, competing for attention that does the sinful things. The old nature is always present living inside of us. It is evil, and it is always up to no good, waiting for an opportunity when we are distracted or stressed or bored to show itself. We must be aware of this and keep watch for this is a permanent reality until we are united with Christ.
- d. 7:21-25 There is a war inside of us. Every Christian fights this battle, every Christian must take up their cross daily. The law of sin fights against the law of God. We can see it play out in the world, and we need to understand that it's inside of us as well. The inward man against the flesh, sin against holiness. Satan against Christ. (Gal 5:17)
- i. (21) I find then a law, that evil is present with me - Notice the strength of wording. It is a law. It's not a fleeting moment, but a consistent law. Satan is the prince of this world and His law is deceit, debauchery and depravity. In whichever way he can entice you he will.
    1. Evil is present within us. We are born into the kingdom of darkness and we are born with the stain of sin. Everyone is born with this nature, but we must overcome it. (Gen 4:7 "And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.") Sin is always ready and waiting to devour us like a lion.
    2. The one who wills to do good - The real Paul, the real Christian, is not the sinner, but the inner man who revels in Christ's triumph. He wants to do good, he is determined to do so. As we are baptized into Christ we become a new creation, with a new heart set towards the holiness of God. And though we dwell in the flesh and struggle with sin, it does not mean we are not saved. But the conflict does exist.
  - ii. (22-23) For I delight in the law.....But - He is giving us a clarification of what is going on. He wants to do good, but there is something that fights against his true desires. He delights in the law of God, but the law of sin is at war against his mind.
    1. Delight in the law of God according to the inward man- (Psa 1:1-3) Those who are saved delight in the law of God because he has written His law on our hearts. Before we were saved, we were aware to some degree in our conscience, but now we have it in our hearts and we can see it for the holiness it is. We need the law of God, the word of God, the Spirit of God as a safeguard against the world. If we are not in the word, if we do not meditate in His law, we will be more susceptible to the evil within us and the influence of the world around us. (1 Cor 15:33-34) if you are lacking knowledge, awaken to righteousness. There is no excuse. Paul said it was to their shame and that was well before we had access to Scripture.

2. But... I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind - There is another law in direct opposition to the law of God and It permeates every member of our bodies. Our thoughts, our eyes, our mouth, hands and feet. Sin can pop up anywhere. And it is waging war against the law of our minds - it is current, everyday. It hates the new man we have become and fights to gain control. (Rom 12:2)
  3. This is a war, and we cannot let our guard down. This battle happens inside of us as well as outside of us. We are no longer enemies with God but are fighting for Him and for the truth, for righteousness and holiness. There are so many exhortations to fight against the power of sin. Therefore let us "Fight the good fight of faith" with conviction. And walk in the Spirit, that we may not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (1Tim 6:12, Gal 5:16, Rom 12:2, Eph 6:10-13, 2 Tim 2:3-4)
- iii. (V24) O wretched man that I am - as if in resignation, he cries out through his words. Understanding the condition of his soul he is hopeless on his own. Who will save him? The question implies he cannot save himself. He is wretched and the sin inside of him is so filthy and vile. Who will deliver him from this body of death? Everything we do is potential for sin. Everywhere we look, everywhere we go, the enemies of God surround us and sin is within us wanting to join them. When will he be able to finally discard this instrument of evil?
1. Can you not sympathize? All the times we have sinned after having received Christ as our savior. After we asked Him to forgive us and to use His blood to cover our sins. How can we not feel this way knowing the cost of our forgiveness and salvation. His life, His body and His blood were poured out for our sins.
- iv. (V25) I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thank you Jesus and praise God for His love and mercy. This is our victory and triumph. Only Jesus could save us from this law of sin. For He is the only one who ever walked without sin. He fought temptation and won, He never gave in the noise of the devil. No matter what shape or form it took, whether in the wilderness when He was starving (Luke 4:4), or when His friends tried to stop Him from fulfilling His purpose (Mat 16:23). Or even when he was betrayed, beaten and killed for our sake. Christ is our savior and rightful king, without Him we are helpless and hopeless. But praise God for this miraculous gift. That he can save us even from ourselves and from these wretched bodies of death.
1. The chapter could have ended here. But it seems, he wanted to bring us back to reality, ..... there is and will be certain victory over this war against sin. But not in this lifetime. We will grow in holiness in proportion to the grace of God in our lives and the fight we put up against sin. The more we discipline ourselves and grow in the knowledge of God and walk in fellowship with Him, the more we will be sanctified. However, the day of perfected holiness, when our war against sin is over and behind us will not be on this earth.
  2. 25b So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin - For now, we fight the good fight. We serve God in heart, soul and mind. Praising Him, praying, evangelizing and every other way we can. But the flesh fights against us in every way, trying to bring us down when we least expect it. (1 Pet 5:8)

### 35. Self test Chapter 7

- a. In verse 1, Paul says the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. What relation does the Christian have to the law?
  
- b. What does Paul use to illustrate the concept of the Christian's death to the law?
  
- c. How and or why have we been delivered from the law?
  
- d. Name one purpose for the law?
  
- e. How might the law prompt us to sin?
  
- f. True or false? If someone is struggling with sin, this means they are not really saved.
  
- g. 6:15 Why would Paul do the very things he hates to do?
  
- h. Why does Paul say that nothing good dwells in the flesh?
  
- i. Who is Paul referring to in verse 21, "the one who wills to do good"?
  
- j. What 2 laws are at war within all saved Christians?

36. Review of Chapter 7 Like a widow, who is no longer bound by law to her dead husband, but is free to marry another man, so too are those who have been saved and redeemed by Christ. We have died with Christ and have risen with Christ. Therefore we have been set free, no longer bound to our old master, the tyrant prince of this world. And we have now been joined together with the rightful King of kings. This is great news for us, as we are no longer under the condemnation that came with violating the law, and have entered into the law of grace.

Does this mean the law has no place in our lives? Of course not. The law is holy, just and good. It highlights our sins which leads us to God. It points us to holiness. Therefore we revere the law. However, we should be well aware that the law cannot save us from our sin, because we are still attached to the body of death. And as such there is struggle within us all, our spirit at war against the flesh. When we are saved and born again, we are given the Spirit of God, who dwells within us, but our bodies are not yet redeemed. As a result there is and will be an ongoing war within us. A battle for the use of our members, our bodies. Therefore we must give ourselves wholly to God as only Jesus is capable of overcoming the body and will give us the strength we need to persevere. Praise God!

37. 8:1-8 Paul has done a great job explaining why we still sin and the struggle we still feel at times, but now we must understand the character of the saint. For there is no condemnation to those in Christ, a blessed relief and comfort for all Christians, but who are these people? How do we make an accurate determination of who is in Christ? Surely only God and the sinner know this, but Paul reveals this character and makes a clear distinction for us to determine within ourselves.
- a. 8:1 The blessed truth of amazing grace. Those who have put their faith in Jesus, have been united with Him. And whereas He lived a perfect sinless life free from all sin, so too are we seen as having lived such a life. Justified in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation for He has paid the penalty and given us His Spirit. Where once we had set down the path of death, now the Spirit guides us down the path of life. Though we are guilty, God has granted us this unmerited mercy through His Son.
    - i. There is *therefore* - What is he summarizing? He is generally taking in everything he has said thus far. That we have the righteousness of God in Christ apart from the law. Christ is our salvation. Christ is life perfected and it is through our faith in Him that we are baptized with the Spirit and have obtained His righteousness. We are justified in His name only. But thank God, He empowers us to follow after Him as well.
    - ii. There is no condemnation - According to Merriam Webster, to condemn is: to declare reprehensible, to pronounce guilty, unfit. Therefore those who are under condemnation have already been declared reprehensible, guilty and unfit. And what typically happens to these sorts of things? They are removed from service, discarded, thrown away, burned in fire. (Mat 3:10, 7:19, 13:30) Condemned criminals go to jail, removed from society. Condemned sinners get thrown into the lake of fire.
    - iii. Those who are in Christ Jesus - This is what we will be looking at over the next handful of verses. As only those in Christ Jesus receive the benefits of His Sacrifice. This is so vitally important to everyone and must be understood. Which is why he proceeds to explain what that means; We are in Christ who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
      - 1. What does it mean, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit? Well, for one, it means those who have been born again. Jesus clearly told Nicodemus, only those born again will see the kingdom of God. (John 3:3) But there are some, as we've mentioned in the past, who believe they can live as they please with no regard to righteousness so long as they just say the name of Jesus. But Paul has addressed this already with his pre-emptive



- questioning. However, the fact that it is repeated this often, should give us pause and consideration for he is writing to the saints in Rome.
2. What he is clarifying for us, is the same thing Jesus said in Mat 7:21 and James in chapter 2:14-17. A profession of faith, while important, does not guarantee anything. Our hearts are deceitful, we can easily trick ourselves. Therefore we must be vigilant and attentive to our hearts, thoughts and actions. Are we walking according to the flesh or according to the Spirit? In this more than anything, we must be honest with ourselves. How would it feel to hear Jesus say depart from me, I never knew you?
  3. He says those who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. This will be addressed a bit more in v5, but for the moment it is important to understand that walking is to be considered our primary mode of life. Is our life exemplified primarily with holiness or worldly affairs? Are we concerned with our spiritual growth? Our communion and fellowship with Christ? Are our minds attentive to the Spirit or occupied with the daily grind? Are we praying constantly with our thoughts on God and how we might glorify Him? Or are we considering weekend plans, investment opportunities, or material pursuits? Let us praise God for these constant reminders. We are saints and our lives should look different from the world. Which is not to say that appearance is enough, but you know your heart and your thoughts and if you are struggling in this area, prayer and scripture is often the best remedy.
- b. 8:2 He is explaining why there is no condemnation to those in Jesus. Drawing from the concept of competing laws in the previous chapter, we see once again that the law of the Spirit of life triumphs over the law of sin and death.
- i. He is not speaking about the law of Moses or the moral law in any sense, but about the governing principles regarding these things. The law of the Spirit of life is found only through faith in Jesus Christ. Only this life has the power to free us from the law of sin and death. For only Christ has walked a perfect sinless life. And now this life, which is His, is made available to us through the Spirit. And with His Spirit we are born again, freed from the blinding darkness that once covered our eyes.
  - ii. We are free from the law of sin and death - This is true in multiple ways. First, we are free because we are no longer running the endless treadmill trying to survive. When God declares us to be righteous, he removes any and all condemnation. All the weight of our sin was removed in that instant. We were free from the penalty of the law of sin and death, which allows us to walk with pep in our step, thankful, exuberant and joyful for such grace. And a second way we are now free is that God has removed us from the kingdom of darkness. This is the positional sanctification we spoke about in the beginning of chapter 6. We are no longer bound under the power of sin, but have been set free by the Spirit of life. Now we are governed by grace, love and mercy. Willfully submitting ourselves to a king such as He.
- c. 8:3 Once again, he is explaining what he just said. Through the Spirit of life we have been set free, but why did we need to be set free? Because the law was weak through the flesh. Therefore what the law couldn't do because of our weak flesh, God took it upon Himself to send his own Son in the likeness of our flesh in order to condemn the sin that has overtaken all flesh.
- i. What the law could not do - In this particular case, he is speaking about the moral law. The moral law, otherwise known as the ten commandments, is truly a gift from God. But he is saying there is a limit and certain things the law cannot do. What is the limiting

- factor of the law? It is certainly not the strength or power of its teaching, for the law is just, holy, right and good. It shows us our sins, lets us know when we veer off the road and points us to God. The law serves a mighty purpose, but it cannot produce righteousness or give life, only highlight where we went wrong. (Gal 3:21)
- ii. It was weak through the flesh - This is the real limiting factor. The law was weak through our flesh, because of our flesh, because we could not properly submit to it due to the corrupting power of sin in our life. The law is not weak, but we are. And therefore the only real issue with the law is that we did not have the power to adhere to it.
  - iii. What the law couldn't do... God did - Praise God! For He knew we were weak. He knew we needed His intervention and He promised this from the very beginning (Gen 3:15). What we could not receive from the law God made happen for us. The same way He covered Adam and Eve with animal skins, the same way He provided a ram in the thickets for Abraham to sacrifice. God is our salvation. The law could not redeem us or set us free from the power of sin, but God did so according to His love for us.
  - iv. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin - Jesus Christ who is God, (Tit 2:13) took on the flesh of man. He has two natures within Himself. (Phi 2:5-7) And was conceived by the Holy Spirit, in the virgin Mary. (Luke 1:35) He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but He never once sinned Himself. (Heb 4:15) He came to this world with the deliberate purpose of redemption. And He humbled Himself to the point of death. On account of sin, Christ laid down His life, as payment for our sins. One other thing to note is that God did this to His Son. Christ laid down His life, but God took our punishment and set it full force upon His own Son.
  - v. He condemned sin in the flesh - This was a necessary feature of Christ's sacrifice. We can recall from chapter 5 that sin had been propagated through Adam and Eve to every living person aside from Christ, who was born through a miraculous birth. But sin has become an irrevocable facet of human nature, embedded in our flesh. It is because of the sinful nature of our flesh that we will die. And even after we are saved, sin is so embedded that we are in perpetual war with sin. But by coming in the likeness of flesh, Christ was able to defeat sin and condemn sin in His flesh. He took the sins of the world to the cross and those sins were punished. And now those who have died with Christ have died to sin, which enables us to live a life to God.
  - vi. One final note about these last 3 verses - Notice how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all mentioned in the work of salvation. In verse 1 we see the Son, who has lifted the condemnation from us. In verse 2 we see the Spirit who has set us free from sin and death and in verse 3 we see God the Father, who gave us His Son and condemned sin through Him to fulfill that which the law could not. It's important to note because there are many people who deny the trinity, but as we can see, the trinity is clearly credited as distinct persons.
- d. 8:4 Why did God do all of this? Why did He send His Son to condemn sin in the flesh? He did so in order that we might fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. Not because He needed to fulfill the requirements of the law Himself, but for our sake he did so. For those who are saved in Christ. For those who live according to the Spirit within them.

- i. Notice that it doesn't say the law is no longer applicable to those who are saved. It says that sin was condemned in the flesh so that the law might be fulfilled in us. Something we have already addressed, but this particular detail is webbed throughout the new testament in such a way that it cannot be overlooked without a deliberate desire to do so. The law is to be fulfilled. (Rom 1:5, 16:26) Christ fulfilled the law. He died to release us from the power of sin that we might also fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. How? By the fact that we are now able to walk according to the Spirit.
  - ii. We now walk and live according to the power of the Holy Spirit. As such, the law is being fulfilled and realized in those who love God for we uphold the law and proclaim its goodness, willingly subservient with Christ as our example. But this only because we have been enabled to do so by the Spirit. For without God we could do nothing, but with God all things are possible.
- e. 8:5 He is beginning to clearly separate the two groups of people first mentioned in 8:1. Those who live according to the flesh or those who live according to the Spirit. Christians and unbelievers. But what he is saying is a contrast against the previous sentence. Those who walk and live according to the Spirit, will fulfill the righteous requirements of the law because their minds are set on spiritual things, of which the law is one. While those who live according to the flesh couldn't fulfill the law even if they wanted to because their thoughts are set on the flesh.
- i. There is no group of inbetweeners. Either you are saved or you are not. No one who has been justified will continue to walk the same life they have always lived without some form of noticeable change.
  - ii. For those who live according to the flesh - He is speaking about unsaved people. As we can see in the next verse, those who are in the flesh are spiritually dead. But what does it mean to live according to the flesh? It means their life is fully devoted to fulfilling their worldly passions in whichever area you can think. They are carnally minded and spiritually bankrupt, ungodly, they do not know, nor do they want to know God. They are governed by the flesh and spend their time in vain pursuits. They rely upon their own goodness or even lack concern for goodness at all. And it is important to note that even those who go to church or Bible study or even preach can still live according to the flesh and not truly be saved.
  - iii. Set their minds on things of the flesh - Of course, those who do not know God will set their minds on fleshly things. To set your mind on something is to be fully devoted, absorbed in thought. The flesh is that which characterizes our old life. (Rom 7:25 the flesh serves the law of sin.) The flesh is obsessed with ourselves, it loves sin and it chooses sin every day as an active decision.
  - iv. But those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit - But on the other hand we have those who are born again, who live according to the Spirit. We are able to live this way because the Holy Spirit lives inside of us. We are one with Christ who died and is risen. He lives and so we are able to live by the Spirit. This group of people will set their minds on the things of the Spirit. The word of God, the Son of God, the kingdom of God, the truth of God, the goodness of God etc... and it is important to remember that we all started in the flesh. At one time we all had our minds set on the flesh and how we

might please ourselves, but now the Spirit enables us to set our minds on God and how we might please Him.

- f. 8:6 The next distinction describes the reality of their spiritual life. Those in the flesh are dead already. They are absent from the fellowship of God and therefore have no life in them. While on the other hand, the Spirit is life itself. Those who are spiritually minded are also those who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection. They are at peace with God. No longer enemies.
  - i. One thing to point out is what this verse does not say. It does not say a carnal mind will lead to death or a spiritual mind will lead to life. And that is because the carnal mind is already dead. (Eph 2:1-3) There is the reality of the second death for those who do put their faith in Jesus. So it should be noted and remembered that those without Christ, no matter how seemingly pleasant they might be, are walking in a state of death and condemnation. They are dead bodies approaching closer to hell everyday, rightfully fearful of death. While those who have the life of Christ in them are able to experience peace because they are no longer enemies with God. They have been justified by the power of the Spirit, received Christ's righteousness and therefore death has lost its sting. (John 5:24) They already have life, they are new creations and are awaiting their creator and their glorified bodies.
- g. 8:7 Hell is the final destination for the carnally minded because the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is hostile and rebellious and is at war with God. The unbeliever doesn't want the chain of the law and will do everything they possibly can to escape the law, though of course it is impossible to do so. (Psalm 2)
  - i. The carnal mind is enmity against God - As we've already mentioned, to be carnally minded is to have your mind set on the flesh. Those who live this kind of life are at war with God. (Rom 5:1) They suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Rom 1:18) and do not want to be bound by God. Enmity against God means there is an active hatred or ill will towards Him. They hold hostility towards God and will often blame religion and or God for the troubles of the world.
  - ii. For it is not subject to the law of God - Those who are not subject to the law of God are subject to the law of sin. They believe they know better, and are critical of the Bible. Even those who profess to believe will often pick and choose which Scripture they decide to follow in as much as it goes along with their personal ideologies. (Psa 2:1-3) They rage against God and plot vain things. They don't want to be bound by the word of God. Marriage? Homosexuality? What is a man or woman? They will do what they want, and make up anything their depraved minds might find useful. They see the Bible as a suggestion, but under no circumstance do they submit to it.
  - iii. Nor indeed can be - The carnal mind cannot do anything but rebel against God. It has rejected God from the moment it was able to do so. (1 Cor 2:14) The things of the Spirit can only be understood with the help of the Spirit. But the natural man, the carnal mind, does not have the Spirit and is at war with God and views everything of the Spirit as a lie, yet ironically will still believe in the unproven theories and deliberate lies of the world. It is incapable of submission to God.

- h. 8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. - It is impossible to please God if you are in the flesh. If you are in the flesh, your desires and motives are wrong from the start and your foundation for truth is non-existent. Even those who would appear to be good on the outside have no ability to please God. No matter what anyone thinks of them, as we just saw in verse 7, they are enemies of God and have likely placed some form of idol in their life to take the place of God. (Rom 1:23) Heb 11:6 reads "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." But those in the flesh do not believe that He is nor they do not believe that Jesus has risen from the dead. And without this faith there is nothing you can do to please God for Jesus is the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the father but through Him. So If you are in the flesh, you are not in the Spirit, you do not believe in Christ, you are still under condemnation for your sins and you cannot please God.
38. 8:9-11 The sharp contrast to the carnal mind who walks and lives according to the flesh is the mind set on the Spirit who walks and lives according to the Spirit. For those who have been saved no longer belong to the world and instead belong to Christ. Through His Spirit we are enabled to live a life pleasing to God and though our bodies may be in the world decaying with the rest, yet we have His Spirit inside of us as our guarantee for an immortal body. (2 Cor 5:5)
- a. 8:9 BUT YOU, speaking directly to Christians, are no longer in the flesh. Why? Because we are in the Spirit. And if we are in the Spirit, then the Spirit of Christ lives inside of us. And not only does He live inside of us, but this fact marks us out as a possession. We belong to Christ. And conversely if we do not have His Spirit then we do not belong to Christ.
- i. First thing to notice is how interchangeably the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are used. They are one and the same Spirit. They are one God, three persons. We are in the Spirit, and through the Spirit we are in Christ who is in God. We are in the Spirit and the Spirit is inside of us. (John 17:20-23)
- ii. You are no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. - As we read in chapter 6, we have been baptized into Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Spirit we have been buried with Christ and enabled to live and walk in the newness of life. (John 14:16-17) The world cannot receive the Spirit because it does not know the Spirit. The world dwells in the flesh and loves the flesh though it is also blinded by its base desires. We too loved it at one point until we heard and understood the gospel of Christ, "the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes." (Rom 1:16)
- iii. If indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. - We can take this in two ways. The first would be taken at face value as a probing thought and nudge to contemplate such matters. Is the Spirit of God in you? For If not, then you do not belong to Christ, as the Spirit is proof and receipt of such things.
1. The other way we can understand this, because he is writing to believers and is now directly addressing them, is to see the "if" as "since". You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. For such is matter of fact. Those who have received the Spirit are the same ones who have been justified and given the righteousness of Christ. They have been regenerated, born again, given a new heart

and a new spirit. When we are saved, the Spirit of God dwells inside of us and our bodies are now a temple for the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor 6:19-20)

- iv. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His - Our sins are not forgiven if we have not been baptized into His death. We are still in the flesh if we have not been born again. This might seem self evident to us, but does the charismatic church-goer understand this? Or the lifelong holiday christian? It is worth noting and keeping it in mind as there are many who do not understand this truth and we might be able to help them by pointing this out.
  - 1. He is not His - (Rom 6:16-18) First, we serve a new **master** and a king. We are no longer slaves of sin, but we are slaves nonetheless. The primary difference is that our new master is the most loving, caring, merciful person to ever have walked this earth. He is the Good Shepherd willing to give His life for His sheep and there is none other who would govern our lives better than He. Not even ourselves. Therefore it is a privelege to serve Him and I am thankful to be His slave. Especially when you consider the alternative. A depraved life of deceptive freedom, in bondage to sin. Yet Jesus is so loving that he doesnt even consider us slaves, but friends and siblings. (John 15:5, Rom 8:16)
  - 2. (Rom 6:22-23, 1 Cor 6:20) Second, some translations say the "free gift of God is eternal life..." And this is certainly true from our perspective. We are wretched sinners and God has offered us salvation free of charge if only we place our faith and trust in His Son. But the gift was not void of cost and He has paid the price. We "were bought at a price" Christ laid down His life, suffered a brutal and tortuous death. We are healed by His stripes. (Isa 53:5, 1 Pet 2:24) Our sins didn't just disappear, He took them to the grave. He bore our sins. (John 17:9-11) If we didn't belong to Him, we wouldn't be saved as His prayer only extended to those who were given to Him by the Father.
- b. 8:10 Looking back at Rom 7:15-25 we can see that there are two warring factions now present within every saved Christian. The body of sin against the Spirit of life. We do not always do the things we want to do and will sometimes do the very things we do not want to do, but that is because of the sin that remains in our unredeemed mortal bodies.
  - i. The body is dead because of sin - (Rom 6:23) The wages of sin is death. This is the cold hard fact of this world. Thanks to our great great great all the way back grandparents, sin entered the world and death as a result. The earth was cursed and everything in it and so from dust we came and to dust we shall return. God forewarned Adam and Eve of death and they sinned against Him anyway. (Gen 2:17) Though we cannot blame them as we would have done the same thing and still do the same thing despite the fact that we now have His Spirit. So now we all bear the burden. Everyone, despite being saved or not, will go through the process of death unless Christ returns beforehand.
  - ii. But the Spirit is life because of righteousness - Through the power of the Spirit, Christ's very righteousness is imputed to us. Certainly not something we deserve, but praise God for such a gift. And knowing that the body of sin is the cause of our wretched behaviors Paul says (Phi 1:21) "To live is Christ, and to die is gain." confident of the fact of resurrection. He knew and understood that we have the life of Christ inside of us.

- c. 8:11 If indeed you have the Spirit of God within you, then just as Christ was raised from the dead, so too will God raise you. Or else He will transform your body if Christ comes before you should die. (1 Cor 15)
- i. What was alluded to in chapter 6:5 is now explicitly declared. Those who have been united in the likeness of Christ's death, shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. For God sees us with the righteousness of His Son and will not allow us to receive the penalty for sins that have already been forgiven. This is the end goal for Christians, to be made like Christ in every way. In perfected righteousness and eternal life. (Phi 3:20-21)
1. 1 Cor 15:20-22 Christ has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Christ's mortal body was killed, but God made Him rise from the dead. He is the first amongst many, all who have died and have His Spirit will also rise at His second coming. "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."
  2. 1 Cor 15:23 There is an order to the resurrection. Christ first, then those who are Christ's at His coming. (1 Thess 4:15-17) Those who are dead will rise first, then those of us who remain will meet the Lord with them in the air.
  3. As for those who are currently dead, their Spirit is with God, awaiting the unification with their glorified bodies. (Ecc 12:7, Phi 1:23, 2 Cor 5:6-8) It would seem unbelievers also share this fate to the degree that they are awaiting final judgment. Luke 16:22-24 Jesus describes the fate of a rich man in torment immediately after death. While Rev 20:11-15 describes the dead standing before the great white throne and being judged. "The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them." And all whose name was not written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire which is the second death.
  4. 1 Cor 15:42-46 describes the transformation. V42 The body is sown in corruption, raised in incorruption. V43 Sown in dishonor, raised in glory. Sown in weakness, raised in power. V44 Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. V45 "And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. V46 "However the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual."
  5. 1 Cor 15:47-49 We will be made like Christ. Just as we have borne the image of Adam, the man of dust, so too will we bear the image of Christ, the heavenly man.
  6. 1 Cor 15:50-54 Our final victory over death comes when we put on immortality. He says V50 "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption." Our flesh is tainted with sin and therefore cannot enter heaven. We do not know exactly what our immortal bodies will be like, V51 but we do know they will be changed and made incorruptible and immortal V53.
- d. Extra note regarding 8:1-11 This section and the remainder of the chapter, speak heavily about the work of the Holy Spirit within us. Therefore In order to keep this in mind, I want to highlight some of this work and the work to be mentioned.
- i. V1 The Spirit allows us to walk in a godly manner, no longer according to flesh.
  - ii. V2 The Spirit has made us free from the law of sin and death.
  - iii. V4 Has enabled us to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law.

- iv. V6 Given us peace with God.
  - v. V10&11 Given life to our mortal bodies through the imputed righteousness of Christ.
  - vi. V13 Gives us the power to put to death the sinful deeds of the body.
  - vii. V14&15 Leads us on the path to be children of God.
  - viii. V16 Bears witness with our own spirit and confirms that we are children of God.
  - ix. V26 The Spirit helps us in our weaknesses, praying for things we do not know we need.
  - x. V27 The Spirit makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
  - xi. V38-39 Finally, while it is not directly attributed in writing, it is said “nothing can separate us from the love of God” and this is all made possible to us through His Spirit, who lives within us. We are justified, sanctified and made new by His Spirit.
39. 8:12-17 Here we see more work of the Spirit. Having been made new and enabled to walk in the newness of life, in the power of the Spirit, we must realize that we are in debt. For all the gifts we have already been given and the promises that are yet to come, we are in debt to God. We are not in debt to the flesh to live the same corrupt and tainted life we used to live, but we are in debt to God who has given us His Spirit to overcome such things, allowing us the privilege to be considered children of God and therefore heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ and to receive all the blessings that come along with such things.
- a. 8:12-13 This is an exhortation to understand the reality of our present circumstance. For God has been so exceedingly gracious and merciful towards us that it is beyond a total comprehension. So much so that His love could never be measured, though we can see a glimpse in Rom 5:8. “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Dead in our trespasses and enemies against God, openly rebellious, He gave His perfect, sinless and Son to die for us in order “that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Cor 5:21) And so we must understand the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice and understand our purpose and place. We are no longer enslaved to the flesh and have been given His Spirit in order that we would put to death the wicked deeds of our bodies.
    - i. Therefore brethren, we are debtors - The implication is that we are debtors to Christ for His sacrifice and His teachings and to the Spirit for His guidance and the fruit He produces in us and to God for His love and grace and patience and willingness to forgive us. Everything we have is from God. The breath in our lungs, the love in our hearts, the material comforts in our lives. We owe God everything and yet all He asks from us is faith in His Son and even this is a gift. And through this faith we are baptized into Christ and He grants life and that undeserved mercy and gives us His Spirit which empowers us to overcome the sin in our lives.
    - ii. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. - That is the way of things. That’s what we were saved from. We all lived according to the flesh (and If you haven’t been born again, you are still living according to flesh). We were walking down the path of depravity and were gladly chasing death in our flesh. The flesh is referring to that tainted bag of bones that serves no good purpose outside of hosting the Spirit of God. And thanks be to God, the same Spirit who has the power to raise us from the dead, is the very Spirit within us now. He is not intending to follow the corrupt flesh for He is actively hostile towards the flesh and contrary to it. (Gal 5:17) And It is the sinful deeds of the



flesh that Christ died for. If we are living according to the flesh, we also will die. But if we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. (Gal 5:16)

- iii. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live - For if we live by the Spirit we are enabled to an extent to put to death the deeds of the body. The power of God within us grants us this privilege and grace that we might become like Christ in holiness and in life. Also, it should be understood that there is a personal component to our sanctification and it is possible to resist the will of the Spirit which is why we see so many exhortations to godly living. "reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." "present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness." (Rom 6:11,19, 13:12-14)
- iv. Something to keep in mind - We notice that this is an active command or rather an exhortation to act which refutes the teaching that we will be made holy in an instant by some sort of crisis. Or the idea that we must let God "take over"... "let go and let God" is not biblical and it is contrary to the many other exhortations to godly living.
- b. 8:14-17 To have the Spirit of God within you means that you are a true Christian, you are a saint, and you are set apart for God's holy purpose. Knowing this, we can comfortably rely on the Spirit to help us from falling victim to the traps of the devil as God our Father will not leave us defenseless. He has given us His Spirit to live inside of us and guide us into holiness, and away from that life of bondage to sin, that we may be his children, brothers and sisters to Christ with all the glory and inheritance that comes with such a blessing.
  - i. 8:14 This is another angle to what we have been discussing throughout this chapter, but now there is acknowledgement of a more intimate connection. In the earlier verses there is a comparison of those who walk and live according to the Spirit and set their minds on the Spirit against those who walk and live according to the flesh and set their minds on the flesh. Then in verse 9 the focus shifts to the saints with a more direct application of the meaning behind it all. But it was all leading up to this and what it actually means to be children of God.
    1. Perhaps the first thing to note is that this applies in the opposite direction as well. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Which is to say that only those led by the Spirit of God are His children. And if you are not being led by the Spirit you are not His child, as we will see in the next few verse, He not only leads us, but gives the assurance of this. But it should be an observable feature in our lives that we are being led by the Spirit. Not only to us but others as well.
    2. For as many as are led by the Spirit - One thing the Holy Spirit does for us is lead us. But that means we need to follow and trust in Him. (v28) He is not forcing us to do anything contrary to our will, but illuminating the path of righteousness. As believers in Christ, we are those that love Him as mentioned in John 14:15-16\*. In this passage Jesus is speaking to His disciples, but the application is made to all believers for we know the Spirit is within us as well (v9). He gives us His Spirit, the Spirit of truth as a helper to guide us and to keep us from going astray. For He says that those who love Him keep His commandments. If we love Jesus, we should be striving to keep His commandments, putting to death the deeds of the body (v13).

- And His Spirit is helping us to do this, by guiding us into the truth and convicting us of our sins.
3. Another thing to note, this does not mean the Spirit is leading us in every decision of our lives. We are not being called by the Spirit to buy a black car instead of a red one. But it is something to keep in mind as there are many charismatic preachers who will take advantage of this and use emotional manipulation to deceive people. The only things the Spirit will be leading us into is into obedience of the word of God and Christ's commandments. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." (John 15:10) It is the Spirit of Christ within us leading us in this endeavor. And it is only because we have His Spirit that it is possible in any sense.
  4. These are sons of God - (John 14:18-20) At the moment of our salvation, we are born again and become children of God. (2 Cor 6:17-18) No longer part of the world, we have been separated and removed from the kingdom of darkness for the purpose of holiness and the glory of God. The end goal of our sanctification is to be made like Christ. And this is what the Holy Spirit is working to accomplish within us. He is leading us into Christ-likeness. So how do we assist in this process? Jesus prays to the father in John 17:17 to "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." The more we understand and abide in the truth, the more we are able to obey and the more we are sanctified, which means the more God is glorified.
- ii. 8:15 In a general sense, what is being said is that when we are justified we move out of the category "slave to sin" always fearful of death and become "children of God" with all the privileges and benefits that such a move entails. (Heb 2:14-15) And while we are now considered children of God it is through an adoptive process. For Jesus is the only natural born Son of God. And though we may be adopted, it doesn't mean we are any less His children. In fact there is such a close relationship to God that we might even call Him "Abba", which is an intimate form of Father, of the same sort as "Daddy" or "Papa." Because of this, as we've pointed out in the past, only those who have this spirit of adoption are children of God. (1 John 4:17-19) As His children, "we may have boldness in the day of judgment" trusting Him with all our hearts.
  - iii. 8:16 One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to give us assurance of our salvation. (Gal 4:5-6) "because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts" This is as a witness. The moment we are saved He comes to reside in our hearts and His Spirit speaks to our spirit relieving us of fear and worry about our sins and state of salvation. God doesn't want us to be anxious in this regard. Instead we are able to enjoy the peace and comfort of knowing that no matter what the circumstance, we still have the love of our Father.
1. This is a subjective feeling that each of us should feel inside of us. There is no true objective determiner, however the external evidence is the fruit of Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23) This is why it is impossible for anyone to tell you with certainty whether or not you are truly saved as only God knows your heart, but there is a degree of evidence they can look towards.

- iv. 8:17 If this then that... Continuing from the previous verse and what would follow as the natural conclusion to this spiritual doctrine is that we are children of God and if we are children then we will partake in all the rights of children including the inheritance. Though it isn't just the fun stuff we share in. For the children of God are hated by the world and should expect suffering.
1. If children, then heirs - An heir is someone who is entitled to receive property from a parent or ancestor; one who is entitled to inherit property or something other than property such as a title. ("royal bloodlines"). In the Jewish tradition, the firstborn son would receive a double portion of the inheritance. (Deut 21:17, Num 27:1-11) But in Roman law the inheritance was divided equally (unless a will was created to specify otherwise.) In the case of Christians, we are explicitly named as joint-heirs with Christ and therefore will share in the entire inheritance.
  2. Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ - This sounds wonderful, but what does it mean to be an heir of God and what exactly do we inherit? Does this mean we will be equal with Christ?
    - a. Heirs of God - On this earth we might inherit our family possessions when our parents die, however God does not cease to live. So the first thing we inherit is eternal life. ( John 5:24, 6:47,51,58, Tit 3:4-7) All believers are heirs of God. And if we consider what an inheritance is, we realize it is the passing of belongings from one to another. Therefore what belongs to God will belong to us. And what is it that belongs to God? Absolutely everything.
      - i. We inherit God Himself. Lam 3:24 says : "The Lord *is* my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!". When the Israelites took possession of the promised land, the land was divided and each tribe was given a portion except the Levites. Instead of land the Levites inherited the LORD. (Deut 18:1-2) The world does not know God in that intimate and familiar way that Christians are so privileged to know Him. They have their gods and idols that they look up to all the while rejecting the one true God who has given them life. But the LORD is our inheritance. Through His grace and mercy He has taken it upon Himself to call us out of the world. To make us know Him and give us His Spirit. We are not promised wealth and riches on this earth, but we are promised salvation and the incomparable love of the LORD. (Psalm 16:5, 73:25-26, 142:5, 2 Cor 6:16-18, Rev 21:3)
    - b. Joint heirs with Christ - (John 20:17) As children of God, we are brothers and sisters to Christ and thanks to Christ, who gave His life for us. We were "buried with Him in baptism... raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." (Col 2:12) If Christ was raised from the dead, so too will we be raised from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3, Rev 1:5) He is the firstborn of many to come.
      - i. However, it must be noted that we could never be truly equal with Christ as He is the creator and we are the creation. He is our king, our shepherd and our Lord. In Rev 5:6-14 Jesus is described as the lamb who is worthy to open the scrolls, the one we are to worship. And though He is our brother

- and joint heir, all honor and glory and power belong to Him. For it is the Father's will that His Son should be glorified. Jesus is the primary recipient of the inheritance of His father, but He shares these things with us because He loves us. We did nothing to deserve this, but His love and grace is that amazing. (Mat 28:18, John 5:22, Eph 1:22, Heb 1:2)
- ii. There are some things we have been granted to enjoy in this world before our death. When we are justified, we enjoy peace with God. We are given the status of righteous and God begins the process of sanctifying us with the righteousness of Christ. We also receive His peace and joy (John 14:27, 15:11). His strength has become our strength (2 Cor 12:9-10). Everything that belongs to Christ now belongs to us because we are in Him.
  - c. If indeed we suffer with Him - This portion of scripture refutes all prosperity teaching. "A servant is not greater than His master. If they persecuted Me, **they will persecute you.**" (John 15:20) What is being highlighted is the connection between true Christians and suffering. We are heirs...if indeed we suffer with Him. Jesus warned us about the cost of discipleship. It will cost us everything, and we must be willing to give everything. (Luke 9:24 "whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.") What is gained is far greater than what is lost, but the reality remains unchanged. Children of God will experience suffering with Christ.
    - i. This is not suffering the consequences of our poor choices. There will be discipline and correction, but this is something different. This is suffering with and for Christ as His representatives for the furtherance of His name and church. Because we speak for the gospel and truth and bear witness to the kingdom of God and salvation. Remember the Flesh is enmity with God. The world hates God, people love the darkness because their deeds are evil. As we shine the light of the gospel there will be a negative reaction. Sometimes violent and sometimes lethal, as history will attest. (Reference 8:35-36)
    - ii. This suffering is not always in the form of violence. It could manifest in a variety of ways, such as ridicule, mockery, alienation, poverty, sickness and disease. It takes different shapes depending on many factors and may ultimately lead to our death, but Christ is our strength and if we trust God, we know that He is working all things for our good. His ways are greater than our own. (Phi 1:29) Suffering with Christ is a gift and privilege the same way our saving faith is a gift and privilege.
    - iii. It is through our suffering that we are conformed to His death and come to know Him in such a way that is not possible otherwise. We not only identify with Him in this manner, but we are growing in His likeness through these trials as God tests our hearts. (Roman 5:3-4, Phi 3:10, 1 Thess 2:4, 3:3, 2 Tim 3:12) This is a matter of fact, appointed for those who are in Christ. Therefore (James 1:2-4) "count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience

have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

- d. That we may also be glorified together - (John 17:22) As joint heirs with Christ, we partake in His inheritance. He inherited suffering, we inherit suffering, He inherited glory, we will inherit glory. All that the Father has given to Him, will be ours to experience to some degree. And the more we serve Him and suffer for Him in this world, the greater our glory will be in the world to come. (Mat 5:11-12, 1 Cor 3:11-15, 2 Cor 5:10) Jesus, and scripture are clear that there will be rewards for our service. Though the specific details of how this plays out is not as clear.
- e. In a general sense, we do know some details of this glory. For instance, we know there are many mansions reserved for us in the Father’s house (John 14:2-3). We know that our bodies will be transformed to be like Jesus’ (Phi 3:20-21). We know that our sanctification and perfected holiness will be complete (1 Cor 15:54). We know there will be no more sorrow, no tears or pain (Rev 21:4) and we know that God will dwell among us (Rev 21:3) and that we will see the face of God (Rev 22:4).

40. 8:18-25 Now that we understand suffering is to be expected, the very next idea is to consider it as nothing, For the eternal glory to come far outweighs any temporary distress we might find ourselves in. And furthermore the expectation of this glory exists not only in ourselves, but in all of creation. As the world was subjected in futility because of the sins of man, when these sins are removed, so too will the world be renewed. Therefore our hope is the hope of all creation, our final redemption and for this we eagerly await and groan within ourselves anticipating that glorious day.

- a. 8:18 Continuing the line of thought from the previous verse, “if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” He compares one against the other, but can anything truly be compared to the eternal glory of God? What would you be willing to give up for this glory? Would you be willing to suffer? Is there anything you would not be willing to give up? This last question is only to make you think and reflect. For what Paul is saying, is that no matter how much suffering we might endure, it doesn’t matter, even if it’s death, it is not worthy to be compared to the future glory that will be revealed in us.
  - i. Sufferings of this present time - He makes a point to say that it is in the “present”. The indication is that whatever suffering we might come against, it is only temporal and will come to an abrupt end. What is 80 years out of eternity? There is no amount of suffering that could outweigh the vastness of an eternal future filled with glory. Like plucking out one strand of hair in exchange for \$10 billion. It would be absurd to concern ourselves with such a trivial thing compared to the reward we are promised.
    - 1. Suffering does not mean you have done something wrong. The gate is narrow and the way is difficult (Mat 7:14). But it is designed for our benefit. In suffering we are humbled and can truly identify with Christ. It would be hard to understand His sacrifice if our lives were filled with comfort and ease. Not only this, but through suffering we are drawn away from this world and our focus is directed above and towards the things to come. It has a way of putting things in proper perspective making us realize what is and is not important. It also helps us to more fully realize

- just how much we need God, encouraging our prayer life and walk with Him. It also allows us to comfort and minister to others who might be going through the same things we have gone through. And so when it comes down to it, even though we must suffer, we know it is for our benefit and for the benefit of God's kingdom.
- ii. The glory which shall be revealed in us - (1 John 3:2) We do not know the full extent of this glory, only that it will be mighty and so vastly superior to anything on this earth. As God Himself is the guarantor and it is His inheritance we are to receive. We have already gone through some of this glory in the previous verse (page 85 subsection e). So let us consider these things wholeheartedly. Weigh them in our minds and settle the matter, whether it is worth it or not to endure such things in this life. And let us consider those who came before us, leaning into Christ for strength, (Heb 12:2) "the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross". (Rev 21:1-7)
- b. 8:19-20 There is nothing that can compare to the glory we will inherit. Though there is suffering, we can take comfort knowing what awaits and that it will come to an end. And to further explain why we should utilize patience in our suffering, Paul here personifies all of creation as eagerly awaiting our redemption as humans weren't the only thing affected by our fall and so the final outcome is even greater than we may have thought and everything in this world is waiting for that glorious day.
- i. The earnest expectation of creation - The idea here is that all of creation....the earth, the trees, the mountains, the animals etc. are intensely anticipating the day of Christ's second coming when the sons of God will be fully revealed as we are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess 4:16-17). Because when that happens, our suffering will come to an end. And as creation has been subjected to this suffering as well, it is longing for this moment right along with us. To some degree we have already been revealed through the fruit of the Spirit, obedience, love, patience etc. But in that moment we will be fully revealed and changed (1 Cor 15:51).
  - ii. The creation was subjected to futility - Futility is pointlessness, uselessness. Creation was not designed for its current purpose. But it was subjected, forced to undergo a change for the worse by God, "Him who subjected it". We can see this subjection in Gen 3:14-19
    - 1. This curse is still in effect to this day. Mankind received death for sin and the world received the curse of decay and corruption. All the animals were cursed, though the serpent more so than the rest (3:14). They were not supposed to die or to eat each other. (Isa 11:6) "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them." This is, in all likelihood, the way it was before the fall, the animals existing in peace.
    - 2. Enmity between the serpent and the woman and between their seed. (3:15) Conflict and enmity between believers and unbelievers. (2 Cor 6:14-15) "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?" Mankind is now

- split in two distinct groups of people always at conflict. Spiritual warfare between children of God and children of the devil, but Christ has overcome (Rom 5:1, 8:7)
3. (3:16) Women have been burdened in child bearing, even from conception. Greatly multiplied sorrow and pain. Morning sickness, fatigue, immense pain in delivery, children dying in the womb. This is the reality and a constant reminder of sin until the end comes and we are fully redeemed. But in addition to this, women are now at odds with men. "Your desire *shall be* for your husband," This is a desire for the authority of the relationship. To rule over the husband, not to be in submission as scripture tells us (Eph 5:22-24) but to dominate. (Gen 4:7 gives us an immediate example of this language.) "But he shall rule over you." The fallen husband abuses this authority in a controlling and abusive manner also against God's designed order. (Eph 5:25-33).
  4. (3:17) The ground is cursed and man is now made to toil over it for his provisions. It wasn't the curse of work, as he was already tending to the garden prior to this (Gen 2:15). It was the curse of exhausting physical labor, in blood sweat and tears tending to a cursed earth which will produce thorns and thistles, hurricanes and floods and droughts and earthquakes. Before this, all of their needs were met. The trees gave them food, and they didn't even need clothing. It was paradise, but now they shall live in futility, toiling unnecessarily until they return to dust.
- iii. Subjected it in hope - This is in reference to Gen 3:15, the seed of the woman who would bruise the head of the serpent. Creation was subjected to futility because of "Him who subjected it in hope." God did not leave us in conflict or in pain, or to toil incessantly without end, but gave us a promise of hope for future redemption. Gen 3:15 is consider the "proto-evangelium" or the first gospel. It is the first promise of redemption through the seed of the woman, whom we now know to be Jesus Christ. So we can make a note that such futility was not without purpose. Throughout the old testament we can see there is hope of a redeemer. There was anticipation and expectation of deliverance. In God's wisdom He designed this plan to turn our thoughts and hearts back to Him.
- c. 8:21 Creation is waiting right along with us in hope for that future glorious day when it will be set free from the curse along with the children of God. Scripture promises there will be a new heaven and a new earth "and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind." (Isa 65:17, 66:22, 2 Pet 3:13). It will be a paradise once more as God originally intended for us. No more tears, no more pain, no more death or mourning. (Rev 21:3-4) Only glory and joy for God will dwell among us. Yet that is a future day yet to come. In the meantime creation is in bondage to corruption and decay and disease and death and pain. But when the children of God are revealed, then creation also will be renewed.
  - d. 8:22 All of creation is suffering, but there is an expected delivery. There is nothing that is not subject to this curse and all of creation is groaning in pain and suffering like the woman in childbirth mentioned in Gen 3. And just like a pregnant woman will suffer with increasing pain the closer she gets to delivery, so too should we expect that the closer we get to the moment of Christ's return, the more intense the pain and suffering becomes. Though we should be careful not to get caught up in specific prophecies of His return as when Jesus

told us of the end times, He said “of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” (Mat 24:4-43, 1 Thess 5:1-5, 2 Thess 2:1-4)

- e. 8:23 All of the cursed creation groans for renewal, but it isn't limited to just that portion of the unredeemed. It is even those of us who have been born again as well. Those of us who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, which is the downpayment of our salvation.
  - i. Not only that, but we also - It is understandable that creation groans under the weight of the curse awaiting relief. But even born again Christians partake in this groaning as well. For we still suffer on this earth right along with everyone else and perhaps even more so at times due to persecution. We may have the blessing of Christ's joy and peace which is a priceless gift, but until that glorious time when there is no more tears or pain and suffering, we anxiously wait for the return of our savior.
    - 1. In addition to this “normal” pain and suffering , as Christians we face another form of pain in that we are sensitive to sin and are at war with ourselves over it. (Rom 7:24)  
“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”
  - ii. Firstfruits of the Spirit - In Lev 23:9-14 the feast of firstfruits was instituted. Firstfruits was just as it sounds, the first fruit of the seasonal crops. The Israelites were to bring a sheaf of their first crops to the priests as an offering to God in expectation that God would provide the remaining harvest for them. And so the firstfruit of the Spirit is the same concept. We who have the firstfruit of the Spirit have only a partial payment of the fullness that is to come. (2 Cor 5:4-5, 1:22) The Holy Spirit within us is a guarantee of our future home in heaven, the firstfruit of our salvation.
  - iii. Eagerly waiting for the adoption - He just told us in verse 15 that we have received the Spirit of adoption, so why are we still waiting for it? Well, he is actually speaking of two similar, but different things. In verse 8:15 we receive the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit, the guarantee of our salvation. Through whom we are able to understand we are children of God. But in 8:23 we are waiting for the remaining harvest, the redemption of our bodies.
- f. 8:24-25 We groan with anticipation because we were saved with the hope of the redemption of our bodies. Though we suffer now in this temporal world, we trust in the promises of God and therefore our hope is a confident expectation. We accept as fact that our sins are forgiven, cleansed and washed by the blood of Christ in preparation to receive an immortal body, but we have not yet seen this last promise fulfilled or else we would no longer groan for it, but it sits in front of us like the finish line of a long race. And thanks to this hope we are able to push on despite the suffering with patient endurance waiting for that glorious day which makes everything in this world look dull by comparison.
  - i. We were saved in this hope - Just a quick observation to note that this verse does not say that we were saved by this hope. Scripture is clear that faith is the means by which we are saved. However the two words are so closely related that in many cases they could be used interchangeably. Biblical hope is different from our modern usage of the word. Today we might hope for good weather, but the Bible uses the term hope as a product of our faith. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for” (Heb 11:1). We hope for things we expect to happen based on the word of God, which has proven itself true over and over again. Therefore we are saved in the hope of our future immortal bodies which allows us to persevere.



- ii. Hope that is seen is not hope.....But if we hope for what we do not see - There is no need to hope for what is already observable. The Israelites didn't need hope in the power of God to save them after they witnessed the plagues and He parted the red sea for them during the exodus. They knew what He was capable of. What they needed was loyalty, devotion and patience. If they had set their minds on the promised land, they would have been able to endure the wilderness. Instead they lacked faith and trust in God, grumbling and complaining and quickly setting up idols to replace Him. As Christians we face a similar dilemma. If we are not familiar with scripture and the promises of God it will be hard to persevere through the suffering. It will be hard to even entertain the idea of suffering, which leaves us vulnerable to the sin of neglect and complacency. However, the more we know God and trust in His word, the more faith and hope we have in His promises. Which allows us to eagerly wait for it with perseverance.
41. 8:26-27 Creation groans, believers groan, likewise the Holy Spirit within us groans and helps us to pray for things we do not even know that we need to pray for. And whether or not these groanings are discernable words is irrelevant because God knows the mind of the Spirit and the two are in constant communion with one another. And The Spirit cannot pray for things contrary to the Father's will.
- a. The Spirit helps in our weaknesses - (John 14:16-17) Before Jesus was arrested and crucified, He promised His disciples that the Spirit of Truth would abide with them forever and would be in them. We know that when we are born again, we are given a new heart and the Holy Spirit makes a home within us. One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to help us in our weaknesses that we may further endure the suffering and tribulations. But this does not mean we are to sit back and watch and wait for the Holy Spirit to do all the necessary work. It is our duty and responsibility to learn and pray and love as we ought. However, as children of God, He has graciously given us His Spirit to help in many ways. To encourage us in times of difficulty, to comfort us when we are fearful, to help us understand the truth and will of God and even to offer prayer on our behalf.
  - b. For we do not know what we should pray for - Just because we are saved does not mean we thoroughly understand the will of God. In fact we are like children with an inclination and bias towards the flesh. (James 4:3) "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss" This particular reference has in mind material pleasures, but the principle extends to all areas of life. If we are in the midst of suffering, how can we ask for relief when we don't know what true relief is? We might ask for peace and quiet, but that may not be God's will for us and what we ought to be praying for is strength and endurance. We will never understand the will of God without His help, but thankfully He knows the mind of His Spirit, and the Spirit knows His will. He also left us His word that we may do our part to learn.
  - c. The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us - (Rom 8:34) Christ makes intercession for us from the right hand of God. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us from within our very own bodies with groans that cannot be uttered. We do not need words to commune with God for He knows our hearts. And neither does the Holy Spirit within us need words for the Father knows His mind. The parallel is obvious and highlights that the Father, Son and Spirit are always working in perfect unison. And since the Spirit is always praying for those things that align with the will of God, we can be confident to receive these blessings.

42. 8:28-30 This next portion of scripture is one of great importance to Christianity. Starting with a supreme promise of comfort followed by what is commonly known as the golden chain of salvation. We can see the power, wisdom and sovereignty of God displayed and working for the ultimate benefit of His saints. And not only this, but we can also see that it is God who has done it all. We play no part in our salvation and owe Him everything. "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Rom 11:36)
- a. 8:28 One of the greatest promises of comfort in the entire Bible is Romans 8:28. That the LORD God "Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it:" (Isa 42:5) It is He Who works constantly for our benefit. For the benefit of those who love Him and were called by Him. Everything that has happened, everything that is happening and everything that will happen in this world are under the direct and immediate supervision of God Almighty. Nothing is outside of His control.
    - i. And we know - Bringing together everything in this chapter. We are no longer held captive to sin and to the flesh for we are children of God. And as children, we have been given His Spirit; To walk by, to live by and to be led by His Spirit. But the reality is that the world hates God and hates His children and therefore we will suffer just as Jesus suffered. And so we groan with all of creation with eager anticipation waiting for the return of Christ and our ultimate redemption. But we know why we suffer and we know God's plan and purpose as revealed through Scripture. Therefore we also know that all things are working together for our good because we are His children and He has given us His Spirit to comfort us and to continually intercede on our behalf, praying for those things we ought to pray for.
      1. There always comes a time to remind us the importance of reading scripture and to sit under sound preaching and teaching. *If we do not know* Scripture truth, we will not know God's plan and purpose for our lives and might very well be influenced by the prosperity gospel, falsely believing that the life of a christian should be filled with health and wealth. God may be gracious to us and give us such things, but there is absolutely no entitlement to them. Christians should be well aware that "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (2 Tim 3:12)
      2. It is also important to note that this has nothing to do with our feelings. Knowing that all things work together for good doesn't mean it always feels good. The death of our loved ones, the pain of crisis, being fired from a job or overlooked for a promotion doesn't feel good. When trials and tribulation comes our way, it may and will, likely hurt for a time, but this is when we lean into God and His promises, knowing and trusting that it is for our good. To humble us, to bring us closer to Him, to help us grow in some way. We don't always understand the immediate reason for our suffering, but we can be certain that God is using it for our benefit.
    - ii. All things - There is nothing outside the influence and sovereignty of God. He is all powerful and all knowing, and everything that has ever happened or will happen has been commanded or permitted by God. The Bible doesn't mention anything in regards to luck or karma or happenstance or anything contrary to God's absolute authority over all

things. If something happened in your life, God was involved. He either allowed it to happen or demanded that it happen. And this includes tragic misfortune as well as joyous events. The cross is a clear example of this. Jesus was not killed without God's permission, but it was part of His plan all along. Job is another example. Thus when Paul says all things work together, he really means all things. Every aspect of this universe is under the sovereign providence of God. The good and the evil, joy and pain are all used by God according to His plan.

- iii. Work together for good - There is a reason we find this verse where we do. Because God decided that is where it needs to be. Recall that the surrounding context is in regards to suffering. It would be difficult to endure such things if we didn't know there was a purpose for it. But we know that everything in this world is working together for the good of the saints by the one and only God of creation. If you are uncertain why you should trust Him, here are four reasons we know we can.
1. God is love. (1 John 4:16) He is able to love us perfectly in a way that is not possible for us to love. He adopted us into His family, offered eternal life and the forgiveness of sins without any meritorious effort on our behalf. Only the acknowledgement of His truthfulness (which would include our sinfulness and need for repentance) and faith in His Son. He will care for us because He loves us.
  2. God alone is wise. (Rom 16:27) Human wisdom is foolishness in the eyes of God. But God truly is wise. He not only loves us, but knows exactly what we need and how best to apply His love in our life. He knows that some of us need to be brought low in order to teach humility, and others need tragedy to teach reliance on Him. But in His wisdom He is able to personalize our lives and give us exactly what we need.
  3. God is all knowing. "He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great *is* our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding *is* infinite." (Psa 147:4-5) There is nothing hidden from the eyes of God. There is nothing that comes as a surprise and He doesn't learn anything new. For he knows and declares the end from the beginning. (Isa 46:10) He even knows the exact number of the hairs on your head. (Mat 10:30) Therefore knowing everything that will happen, He uses this knowledge to our benefit.
  4. God is all powerful - (Luke 1:37) "Nothing will be impossible with God." He not only loves us, and is wise enough to know exactly what we need and when, but he is capable of making it happen. Nothing can stand in the way of God (Job 42:2) And He isn't just standing by watching things unfold, but is active and making things happen all time. (John 5:17) God's plan is unfolding as we speak and it will come to fruition in the right moment, with the right people. None will be left behind that have been appointed to heaven.
  5. Something we might want to contemplate is, what is good? Is it wealth and prosperity? Fame or social status? We should consider these things and remove any false notions of what "good" is. But if we look to the next verse we can see what good actually is, being conformed to the image of His Son. And everything in our life is working towards this end. God is working towards this end for you personally.

6. One final note on this aspect of things working together for good. This does not mean that all things are good or that God condones sin or evil. For He is “angry with the wicked every day” (Psa 7:11) and His wrath “is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,” (Rom 1:18) But He does use the sinfulness of men and the evil machinations of their thoughts for His purposes. We can see this exemplified with the words of Joseph, speaking to his brothers who had sold him into slavery (Gen 50:20) “you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive.” Our peace will only extend so far as we trust in God and His plan. But knowing that it is all for our good is why we can count it all joy when we fall into various trials. (Jam 1:2)
- iv. To those who love God- This promise only extends to those who have been born again. Those who love God are the saints; believers in Christ. And it is only those who have the Spirit of God within them that can ever love God. This does not mean that God ignores everyone else. For He is actively involved in all of creation, but it is only for the good of those who love Him.
  1. There is no degree of love that needs to be met before this promise takes effect. All believers are included in this promise. The more we come to know Him, the deeper our love will be for Him. Before we were saved, we rejected God, we ignored Him and wanted nothing to do with Him. (Rom 3:11) But when we are regenerated our hearts begin to love God and we have a deep desire to know Him intimately and be closer to Him. To such a degree that Jesus said “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:26)
  2. Just a note here to point out the shift of focus. Where Paul had been speaking of the Spirit up until verse 27, He now begins to speak exclusively about God the Father.
- v. To those who are the called according to His purpose - We will see more of this in verse 29, but for the time being “the called” are a specific and exclusive group of people. They are the same ones who love God. And this is not possible to do on our own. No one can decide to come to God or to repent or believe in Jesus without being called by God. Saving grace is an undeserved gift and it is not given to everyone. It is a sovereign decision made by God for His own purposes and overcomes our sinful desires. His call reaches those who are meant to hear it and it does not reach those who were not meant to hear it. (John 10:24-27)
- b. 8:29-30 “The golden chain of salvation” Building off the last statement of those who are called according to His purpose, Paul now expands this idea. Those who are “the called” have truly been so for all of eternity. What God is doing in the lives of every true Christian was part of His plan before the world was created. The golden chain consists of 5 points or chain links that reach back from eternity past and extend forward to eternity future. These 5 points are inseparable and they are describing the process of our salvation. Well before the foundation of the world and the fall of man, God foreknew us and predestined us for this purpose, to be conformed to the image of His Son. And when our time came and the moment was right He called us, and we heard His voice and responded we were justified. Having been justified, we will one day be eternally glorified.

- i. There is no alternative route to salvation. There is only God's predetermined plan which follows in this order. (John 6:37-39) Jesus said "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me". We must be given by the Father to His Son in order to be saved. And if we are given, He will not lose us. This only happens with those whom God foreknew. If you are not one of the people He foreknew, you will not be one of the people that are saved. And if you are one of the people He foreknew, you will be saved no matter how much you attempt to resist because you are a gift to Jesus.
- ii. There is an idea that exists which would treat this God glorifying doctrine as something less than it is. That would ultimately divide the glory that only God deserves with sinful mankind. This view of foreknowledge and predestination says that the foreknowledge of God is nothing more than His awareness of who would choose to believe in Him. He sees these people from outside of time and chooses to save them based on their choice. But this is not what Paul is teaching and it would ultimately take away the glory that belongs to God alone.
- iii. For whom HE foreknew - He is explaining what he just said at the end of verse 28 in reference to those who are called according to His purpose. "He" is God the Father. God the Father is the one who devised this plan and set everything up according to His pleasure and for His own purposes.
  1. Foreknew - This does not say "what" God foreknew, but "whom" He foreknew. It does not speak of any events, choices or circumstances of man. To foreknow does not mean that God was ignorant at one time and became aware of our choices and acted accordingly. God has never learned anything, He is all knowing and He knew the end from the beginning. There is no knowledge that exists outside of God.
    - a. The doctrine of total depravity teaches that mankind is sinful by nature and cannot subject itself to the law of God. (Rom 8:7) And Scripture is clear that there is a moral inability to respond to the gospel in the appropriate manner (1 Cor 2:14) "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." The gospel is one of those things we cannot we cannot receive. If God would look down the tunnel of time, all He would see are sinners who reject Him. For there are none who understand, there are none who seek after God, but all have turned away and become unprofitable. (Rom 3:11)
    - b. If foreknowing doesn't mean that God saw the future and knew who would choose Him, what does it mean? Well to foreknow simply means to know in advance, to know beforehand, but the Bible uses the word "know" in a sense outside of intellectual knowledge. The word know is used in many places to describe a personal and or intimate type of relationship.
      - i. Gen 4:1, in this sense it mean a sexual relationship.
      - ii. Exodus 33:17 Moses found favor with God.
      - iii. 1 Sam 2:12 The sons of Eli did not have a relationship with God, they did not love Him or serve Him.
      - iv. Psalms 1:6 God has nothing to do with the way of the wicked, but personally knows the way of the righteous. The narrow path is God's handiwork.

- v. Hos 13:4-5 God is the only savior, He personally cared for the Israelites in the wilderness. As such they are not to know any other god beside Him. It is obvious the Israelites were aware of other gods having come from Egypt and being surrounded by other nations, but they were not to know them in the same way they knew God. By means of a personal worshipping relationship.
- vi. Amos 3:1-2 This is clearly speaking to the special relationship that existed between God and the Israelites.
- vii. Mat 1:24-25 Again to mean an intimate sexual relationship.
- viii. Mat 7:21-23 Jesus is aware of all things, but light has nothing to do with darkness and He does not have a relationship with those who practice lawlessness.
- ix. John 10:14 This obviously speaks of that personal relationship.
- x. 1 Cor 8:3 Bringing it back to Rom 8:28 - to love God is to be known by God.
- c. So as we can see, to know does not simply mean having knowledge, but in many cases it means having some form of deeper relationship. As such "For whom He foreknew" certainly does not mean to speak of the people God was simply aware of ahead of time as He is aware of all people throughout time. And nowhere does it say that He made any decision based on our future actions. So it cannot mean that God saw who would or would not choose Him.
- d. Therefore the meaning of "those whom He foreknew" must be that He had a previous relationship with them. Or else He determined in advance who He would or would not have a relationship with. And this latter seems to be the most obvious understanding. The only speed bump in the idea is our preconceived notions of freewill and choice. But Rom 9:11-13 clears this up. God makes an active decision well in advance of our personal choices to love or to hate us according to His own purpose. If that sounds harsh, we should recall that everyone hates God and it is only through His mercy that any are saved at all.
- iv. He also predestined - The next link in the chain is predestination. Predestined means exactly what it sounds like. Determined in advance, appointed or settled beforehand, foreordained. (Jer 1:5) "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." God has determined the outcome of our life before we were ever born. If He foreknew you, He also predestined you to His purpose, but this doesn't mean we are not responsible for our actions. (Acts 2:23) Though God foreknew and determined exactly what should happen, the men who crucified Jesus were still held to account and told to repent. There is a dual truth of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.
  - 1. In Acts 2:22-23 we can see that God not only predestined the end, but also the means by which we come to the end. In this context we are speaking of Jesus being nailed to the cross to bear our sins. But it applies to all necessary actions for our salvation. The hearing of the gospel, the reading of the Bible, whatever it took to bring you to Him. (1 Cor 2:6-8) God ordained all of this from the very beginning, even the mystery of His wisdom that only His elect would hear the truth.