

# Romans

Message Notes  
2015

# 1. The Excellence of His Righteousness

“Time and again in the course of Christian history the book of Romans has liberated the minds of men, brought them back to an understanding of the essential gospel of Christ, and started spiritual revolutions.” F.F. Bruce

- A people who identify with Christ but without the life of Christ cannot possibly know Christ!

*“...If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31,32*

- Paul’s Purpose is to present the revelation of the righteousness of God toward the establishment of your faith

- Paul aims through sound doctrine to challenge your thinking, expose your sin, your inconsistency and bring you through repentance to new life in Christ.

- Paul’s letter to the Romans was written in about 58 A.D. from Corinth and probably carried to Rome by Prisca and Aquila during Paul’s third journey.

- The book of Romans is designed around five basic areas with each case featuring the righteousness of God as the overriding theme.

## I. Sin – Why are we the people we are? - Romans 1-3:20

*“...For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,” Romans 3:9b*

## II. Salvation – How is a man made right with God? Romans 3:21-5:21

- *“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”” Romans 1:17*

- How well we understand and are rooted in our faith will determine our understanding of how to walk in this new life or for some how to discover it!

### **III. Sanctification – How can you being a sinner live in Christ’s righteousness? - Romans 6-8**

- “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Romans 8:37

### **IV. Sovereignty – How does God use sin and rebellion to work out His plans? Romans 9-11**

- “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” Romans 11:33

### **V. Service – As you recognize the gracious manner in which you have been saved you are then compelled by that same grace to serve Him.**

“...by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Romans 12:1

- "Romans will delight the greatest logician and captivate the mind of the consummate genius, yet it will bring tears to the humblest soul and refreshment to the simplest mind."

Paul’s Credentials: Romans 1:1-7

- “A servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.” vs 1

- Paul writes to those called into salvation through faith to be made obedient in your faith!

- 1. *You are called of Jesus Christ.*

- 2. *You are beloved of God.*

- 3. *You are called “saints”.*

## Conclusion:

***“The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” 1 Tim 1:5***

“This book written by the Paul has been the beginning point of nearly every revival in history. From Luther to Wesley it has penetrated confused and often stony hearts held captive in their own dark prisons of guilt and fear, and liberating unto true freedom and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Frederick Godet

“There is no telling what may happen when people begin to study the epistle to the Romans.” F.F. Bruce

## **2. “Paul’s Heart and the Heart of our Faith”**

*“Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:20–25*

The central point of Paul’s heart and letter is, “How can a man be right with God”.

Romans puts us on the same page with all mankind by defining the truth about our world, our God and ourselves.

Romans come to you like the road signs that tell you where you are; “You are here”.

If something is absolutely true then it is true for all, it is true in all circumstances and it’s always true!

## **I. The Genuine Affection of the Apostle – vs 8-10**

- Genuine affection opens the doors to engaging ministry.

## **- II. The Sincere work of the Apostle – vs 13**

⇒ When you proclaim the truth of the gospel you match the message with your enthusiastic commitment to it and thereby testify to the validity of it.

⇒

## **III. The Power of the Gospel – vs 16,17**

- You must accept the fact that the gospel is considered as “foolishness” to an unbelieving world.

- *“It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*

- The gospel is the power to change the human heart. It has the power to bring sweet reason with mercy to the imprisoned soul.

- The gospel is the power to save a soul from a fatal condition and its eternal destruction.

- Although you might chose to deny your guilt or seek to justify your guilt, you simply cannot make yourself right within yourself.

- The justification to which all are seeking is in the gospel for it is the “righteousness of God” provided for your need.

- Righteousness is not a standard that you or anyone else determines but is the perfect standard reflective of God’s own character.

- The opposite of trusting faith is one who is proud or “puffed up”. His or her soul has swollen out of proportion....

## **Conclusion:**

- The gospel contains the authority to justify us and the power to

change us.

- If we are ashamed of Him it is because from Paul's point of view we do not yet understand what righteousness is all about.

*“Oh that my ways may be established to keep thy statutes! Then I shall not be ashamed when I look upon all thy commandments.”*

*Psalms 119:5,6*

### **3. “Children of Wrath”**

- The first couple having sinned, preferred to hide in the bushes and when discovered they did not answer truthfully preferring excuses to simple honesty.

- Until we learn to answer truthfully as to, “where are we” and “who are we”, life will be like being in tall weeds with nothing making a lot of sense...

#### **I. We Suppress Truth – vs 18**

- The expression, “wrath of God is revealed”, does not just refer to a future event but a present experience.

- The problem is not that God is hard to find but that He is all too obvious and that by nature we don't want to find Him at all!

*“I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, “Here I am, here I am,” to a nation that was not called by my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;”* Isaiah 65:1,2

#### **II. We Reject God – vs 21,22**

- They did not honor Him as God

- They did not give thanks to God

- Because they became futile in their imaginations

- They professed wisdom while God declared them fools.
- *"The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God". Ps 14:1*
- The fool might have his gods but has rejected the true God by refusing to honor and thank Him thereby refusing to acknowledge His authority, presence and His person.
- Pride is not the only sin, but it is the essence of sin!
- Pride is the engine of idolatry and the very essence of it.
- People do not come to believe in nothing but will always believe in something.

### III. We Substitute – vs 23-27

A. Exchange the glory of the image from the incorruptible for the corruptible.

- Man himself when filled with himself begins to glorify himself along with other things.

B. Exchange the truth for a lie

- The life that say's, "We hold the power in our hands to control our destiny and provide the good life for ourselves.

- *"When we dismiss what is good, we only sell ourselves to what is bad.*

*When the mind "turns from the one," it of necessity becomes addicted to the other." Thus is the worship of God overtaken by the worship of the self."*

*Martin Luther*

C. God gives them over

- When you persist in seeking your own desires God will give you what you want and the inevitable consequences that follow

- If it is a terrible thing to be in the hands of God so much more to be abandoned by Him!

- When you abandon God to do what you will, physical experi-

ences will supersede spiritual ones.

#### **IV. Man Indulges**

- It is not just the absence of repentances that troubled the apostle it is the celebration that so often accompanies evil.

- With the true God gone there is no rule by which to measure the horror and dreadfulness of sin.

#### **Conclusion:**

- *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,”*

Ephesians 2:4-6

- *“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”*

Isaiah 55:6–7

## **4. The Good Man’s Dilemma**

- The opening words in chapter two are directed toward the good man whose deceitful heart sympathizes with Paul’s accusations.

**I. You condemn yourselves** - *“Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.”*

Romans 2:1

- Whatever you notice as a moral defect in others only bears witness to your own moral defect.

#### **II. You are oblivious to a fault**

- *“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and pa-*

*tience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?"*  
Romans 2:4

-To think lightly of His kindness and patience is to simultaneously choose to be insensible to your own sin before God.

- When you restrict or compartmentalize the Word there will be nothing left but your idols

### **III. You will reap what you sow.**

*"He will render to each one according to his works:"* Romans 2:6

-Reaping and sowing is not a plan of earning salvation but faith presented in terms of its activity....

- When truth is ignored or disobeyed, human misery begins

### **IV. God's judgment is absolutely impartial**

*"For God shows no partiality."* Romans 2:11

- God will use the same absolute standard of judgment for all, the Law.

### **Conclusion:**

-Relying on your goodness will in time render you oblivious to our own sinful condition and tragically to the kindness of God that leads to repentance.

-Noah was safe in the ark not because he lived better and tried harder, and not because he was a good man but because He believed God.

*"By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."* Hebrews 11:7

-“...on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.” Romans 2:16

-“Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.” Luke 12:2–3

- The failure of your goodness and moral living is actually the key to preparing the soil of your hearts for amazing grace!  
For what the law could not do God did...! Romans 8:3

## 5. The Danger of Religion

- Over the last decades the human condition has been re-framed in terms of a therapeutic model rather than the Biblical one.

- The unfortunate mixing of faith and therapy has removed or at least deadened our consciousness of sin leaving man as a victim rather than a culprit.

-The transition away from the “classic view” of faith, which centered the human condition in sin and guilt with the primary need for forgiveness and restoration, has left religious seekers confused as to who they are.

- “*always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.*” 2

Timothy 3:7

- In this text, Paul is addressing some of us who might know our Bibles, take responsibility to teach others and even witness yet without the righteousness of Christ.

### I. Born and Raised Religious – vs 17-20

- “*For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—*” Philippians 3:3

- When your religious creed becomes the ultimate distinction in your life then unity becomes impossible and “sectarianism” begins!

- When you begin to trust in your system of beliefs rather than a genuine trust in Christ your religion begins to take on dangerous proportions.

## **II. The Religious Hypocrite vs 21-23**

- You who teach do you teach yourself

- You who preach “thou shalt not steal”, do you?

- You who say “Do not commit adultery”, do you?

- You who abhor idols do you take advantage of the ungodly?

- You who boast in the Law – do you break it?

## **III. Authentic Religion vs 25-29**

- For the Jew, circumcision was an “outward sign” of a special privileged relationship with God.

- Authentic Faith for all is made possible from being circumcised in the heart....

- *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

Jeremiah 31:33

- Authentic faith comes from being changed miraculously from within from being surgically “cut” by the Spirit of God.

- The true distinction of genuine faith is such that the mark of authenticity does not come from others but from God alone!

- The mark of authentic faith is the presence of the Spirit witnessing to your relationship with God.
- Here then is the religious man's dilemma...
- You must be distinguished among your peers and especially among your antagonists..
- You must be better and you must be more righteous than others.
- Your conflicts and issues find temporary relief only by reaffirming before others that you are in fact righteous by your religious distinctions..

### **Conclusion:**

- You find God when you no longer trust in your resources, assumed goodness, religious training and vain assumptions about God and humbly cry out to Him who reveals Himself only through Jesus Christ.
- *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”* Eph 2:8,9

## **6. Bad to the Bone**

- Our need to protect our innermost being lies in the fact that our basic issue is our sinfulness before a Holy God and its reminder, legal guilt...
- Religious beliefs can give false righteousness its own credibility.
- Self-righteousness resists exposure at all costs because it knows it is not righteous.

### **I. Reasoning's of the righteous**

A. What advantage did the Jews have?

- They possessed truths given to no other.

B. Does Our Unbelief undo God's Word and His faithfulness?

- *"For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened."* Hebrews 4:2

- God cannot be charged with neglect or failure because of the failure of those whom He gave special privileges.

- *"If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself."* 2 Timothy 2:13

- *"God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?"* Numbers 23:19

- When you experience the effects of sinful thoughts and actions they cannot be attributed to a failure on God's part!

C. If God's truth is exalted through my lie why am I still being judged a sinner?

- The statement reveals that behind it all is the presumption that righteousness starts with you.

- We might ask the questions and make the arguments but in reality they are silenced by the very nature of His righteousness and of our own utter failure to do what we know is right!

D. If God's righteousness is demonstrated because of our unrighteousness how does He in fact inflict wrath on us in return?

- God doesn't answer to any man but judges righteously!

*“For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”* Galatians 6:8

## **II. All Condemned**

- In its utter sweeping condemnation, God desires to put to rest any last words and any last glimmer of hope on the part of man.

## **III. All Accountable**

- “Through the law comes the knowledge of sin”.

- The more we know the more we fail to do what we know; mankind is bad to the bone!

## **Conclusion:**

- *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”* John 3:16

- The only way we can truly consider this wonderful statements is to find ourselves absolutely condemned and at ground zero.

Consider again what the law does:

1. It stops our mouths
2. It holds us accountable
3. It teaches us what sin is

*“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* 1 John 4:10

# 7. Good News At Last!

## I. God Provides His Righteousness

### A. Righteousness apart from the law

1. The law reveals a perfect standard of righteousness
2. The law restrains evil
3. The law shows your sinfulness

- The law was never intended to make you righteous. to make you rith5o make you righteous

### B. Witnessed by the law and the prophets

- Negatively – The law witnessed to the failure of man to keep it.
- Positively – The law and prophets spoke of Christ and a righteousness that would be provided through Him.

### C. Righteousness is provided without distinction.

- “Christianity is the faith that believes God’s Word about the work that is fully done, completely done..”

D.G. Barnhouse

## II. Righteousness is of Grace

- Justification is the judicial act of God, by which he pardons all the sins of those who believe in Christ, and accounts, accepts, and treats them as righteous in the eye of the law.

- Grace is God’s total provision in light of man’s total need.

*“For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”* John 1:16

## III. A Righteousness based on Christ’s Work

### A. It required a Redeemer

- The term “Redeem” has three aspects

1. To buy back from the market place of sin – “Agorazo”
2. To buy out from – “Exagorazo”
3. To free a slave by loosening Him. “Lytrosis”

B. It necessitated the propitiation of God’s Wrath

- To propitiate is to appease the deity in order to take away wrath.

- Because God is satisfied, He is now free to bestow acts of kindness.....

C. God is just and Justifier

- “I Jesus will take your punishment and My Father will give you His righteousness. “

#### **IV. A Righteousness Applied by Simple Faith**

Spurgeon - “Faith is believing that Christ is what He is said to be and that He will do what He has promised to do, and then to expect this of Him.”

- Hebrews chapter 11:13 gives us an anatomy of faith...

1. Knowing the truth
2. Embracing the truth - With one’s mind, will, emotion
3. Confessing the truth - *“I believed therefore I spoke”*

#### **Conclusion:**

- Jew or Gentile, Good man, pagan man, religious man or sinner man, it is God who justifies all through simple faith.

*“For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from His works, as God did from His.” Heb 4:10*

# 8. Father Abraham and His Kin

## I. Father Abraham's Faith

Two errors to avoid:

1. Abraham proved his goodness resulting in believing.
2. Abraham's faith was considered good faith.

*"Even so Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Genesis 15:6*

*Abraham believed that God was Who He said He was and that He would do what He said He would do.*

## II. Faith is not of works

A. The absurdity of works –

*"How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" John 5:44*

The logic of works reveals itself in taking personal credit.

B. Illustration of David

There are three things to note as David turns to God:

1. His sin was forgiven.

*"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed." 1 Peter 2:24*

2. His sin was covered.
3. His sin was not accounted to him.

### **III. Righteousness is not of circumcision or law**

A. Circumcision: Circumcision was a physical mark of living proof of one's identity with God.

B. The Law

Three consequences to law:

1. Faith has no value
2. The promise becomes worthless
3. Law brings wrath

#### **Conclusion:**

Faith is not merely incidental but is that which engages your mind, will and emotions.

Faith is never conditional to your level of maturity or performance.

Faith can never be re-affirmed or re-ignited by looking inward but only by looking outward.

## **9. Faith that Defeats the Impossible**

*“And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”* Luke 17:6

The most remarkable feature of Biblical faith is that it can believe the impossible!

### **I. What is faith?**

*“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* Hebrews 11:1

*Faith apprehends as a real fact what is not revealed to the senses. It rests on*

*“that” fact, acts upon it, and is upheld by it in the face of all that seems to contradict it. Faith is real seeing.”* K. Wuest

*“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”*  
Romans 10:17

If your justification is to any degree earned than it is to that degree owed...

## **II. The Challenge of Faith**

A. The object of your faith is He, *“Who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist!”*

It is not how strong your faith is so much as the quality of the object of your faith.

B. Obstacles to faith - Abraham’s faith was nurtured by the imposing impossibilities rather than being discouraged by them.

## **III. The Activity of Faith**

A. Growing strong in faith begins with reckoning the object of your faith and the reality of yourself.

The more you act in faith so as to “prove”, the more you invest in reality the more you grow.

Obedience is the only logical result of real faith in a God who brings something out of nothing.

B. Giving glory to God

Real faith always recognizes that God has done it so God gets the glory!

Abraham’s steps of faith – He left all for God, left all with God, yielded all to God and found all in God.

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Hebrews 12:1–2

## **10. Reasons to Rejoice**

**I. Rejoicing in Hope** - Hope is the first thing that human desperation needs..

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy,... he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”* 1 Peter 1:3

*“He made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”* 2 Corinthians 5:21

1 – You have found peace with God

You the believer are not responsible for making the peace but your responsibility is to enjoy the peace

2 – You have been introduction to Grace of God

Because you are permanently anchored into His favor you are no long under any threat of judgment.

## **II. Rejoicing in your present troubles**

If you have peace with the God of the universe, the God of all creatures than we have

a radical relationship to creation....

*“So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?””* Hebrews 13:6

1 - When you are in trouble you are brought to a place of being needy...

Trouble removes the rose colored glasses driving us to our knees.

2 – As we learn to keep on keeping on we “prove” or demonstrate in practical terms what God spoke in truth.

3 – This proven character only enforces the certainty of hope that you were introduced to.

Paul reminds you that God’s love is not only poured into your hearts at conversion but its present activity serves to secure you.

The cross of Christ is the great proof of God’s great love.

### **III. Rejoicing in your future benefits**

A. We shall be saved from the wrath of God

For the child of God here is the joy of knowing that any evil that befalls cannot you cannot break you so as to destroy you but in fact aids you...

*“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”* (Romans 8:28, ESV)

B. We are presently being saved by Christ’s life

Our focus is not merely on the past but on the present reality of the living Son who feeds us from heaven!

### **Conclusion:**

You have the basis for real peace with God Himself!

You have the assurance that your troubles are God’s plan for you

You have the blessed and best certainty of a future with God!

# 11. Our Remarkable Position in Christ

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”* 2 Corinthians 5:17

In this portion of Scripture, Paul gives us the basis for the blessed life and victory we have in Christ as expressed in the contrast between Adam and Christ in chapters 6-8.

## I. Solidarity with Adam

What we do come to know is that all die because all have sinned and that because “one” man had sinned.

God holds all of you accountable because of the headship of Adam.

*“Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.”* 1 Corinthians 15:45–47

## II. Adam vs Christ

To the extent that you were totally a product of your old family, environment etc. you are now and “much more” an organic part of a new family.

A. Difference in Effect vs 15 Death vs Life

B. Difference in Nature vs 16 Condemnation vs Justification

Adam gave us condemnation and death but the free gift of the second Adam provided justification and life..

C. Differences in Dominion vs. 17,18 The reigning of death vs. the reigning of grace.

Through our new Head of family, Christ’s righteousness rules!

## D. Differences in Number vs 19 One vs. Many

As far as your sins are removed from the east to the west so is your present condition removed from your old one if you are in Christ!

### III. The Superiority of Christ's Reign

#### A. Grace arising out of sin

To let the revelation of sin discourage your walk is to mistakenly think that you are a part of that old family again.

Grace abounds through our new head of family Who gives us daily grace to live by in the midst of our sin and failure....

#### B. The reigning of grace through Christ

Every command we are confronted with in our Bibles is to be implemented by the resources of grace.

It is in the reigning of grace through faith that attributes all glory to Christ and the glory that we do share will be returned to Him in pure worship!

#### Conclusion:

He condemned all of you as sinners in Adam so to adopt you as saints in Christ!

There is no reason to wander the world as if an orphan when you have been made a part of the family of God.

*“so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:21*

## 12. Dead and Alive

**Moralism** – Moral standards raised as the essence of spiritual living based on the moral values of the Bible.

**Legalism** – The development of do's and don'ts that become viewed as standards of righteousness.

- When the gospel is but the first step of obedience in your sanctification then your motivation for living the Christian life can only be the law.

**License** - The opposite and erroneous conclusion that grace grants you independence to do whatever!

### I. The Problem Expressed

- If righteousness is provided through simple faith and grace abounds through transgression, then why bother living righteously?

- You need to learn how to “walk” in this world in such a way that registers the new life you have been given into your daily life.

- The secret of incorporating the spiritual life into your daily life is to learn how to live Christ!

- In fact, God calls each one of you to live Christ and anything short is to live in sin.

### II. The Solution Addressed

A. Know that you were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit.

- First, consider that it is the Spirit who does the baptizing: *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”* 1 Cor 12:13

- Secondly Scripture clearly teaches water baptism... Water baptism is the outward symbol of an inward reality.

- Both spirit and water baptism taken together provide a holistic expression of your position in Christ.

B. Know that you are no longer slaves to sin.

- The moment you trusted Christ's death to cover your sin, your

position was changed from what you were as a condemned sinner to being sinless in God's sight.

- While the "the old self" (vs 6) has been crucified as far as its ability to cause you to sin it retains the ability to influence your choices due to its presence.
- C. Know that you are alive to God in Christ Jesus
- You are to keep on affirming the truths of which God has declared.

### **III. A Victory Possessed**

- To consider yourself dead is to refuse to let sin reign.
- Don't use your eyes, ears, arms etc. to do what your "sinful nature" compels you to do! **YOU DON'T HAVE TO OBEY IT!**
- You say no to sin as you recognize God's authority and power in your life.
- You need to possess your victory!

#### **Conclusion:**

- When it comes to experiencing life as God has intended us you come to the inevitable challenge of presenting your members to God for righteousness sake.....
- How about your mind?
- How about your eyes and ears?
- How about your tongues?
- How about your hands?
- How about your feet?
- Merging the world of faith into your physical selves is always a battle with your old nature...

*"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified."* 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, ESV

- ◆ Do not offer up your body for sin, offer it up to God. As far as sin and rebellion is concerned you are a dead person if you have been crucified with Christ and if so you also have been made ALIVE! So you have a choice!

## 13. Who's Servant Are You? Rom 6:15-23

Review: Why not sin since grace increases my benefit?

The Question Re-visited: If you are under the law then are you above the law, free to do whatever you please?

- "Love God, do what you want" - St. Augustine

- Doing what you want when you love God is doing what pleases God and fulfills the desires He has placed in your heart.

### I. The Principle of Two Masters

- "Mankind was made to be mastered", who is your master?

- You only have two choices in life, the mastery of sin or the mastery of righteousness.

- *"Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?"* (Romans 6:16, ESV)

### II. The Nature of the Choice

- Free will is often "freedom" that must be qualified to those thoughts and acts that are yet confined by the mastery of the flesh.

- When you choose sin it leads to further bondage to sin..

- God by His grace sets you free from the bondage and power of sin but that freedom is subject to what master you serve.

- If you fail to present yourselves toward righteousness then conversely you will be resolved toward choosing unrighteousness.

### III. The Consequences of Choice

#### 1. The consequences of sin

- *“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”* Galatians 6:7–8

#### 2 – Sanctification which leads to eternal life

♦ *“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:22–23

Eternal life begins at the

- Sin is shown to be sin through the law of God so that sin becomes what it actually is utterly sinful!

- The law of God doesn't make you do it.. It is sin that makes you do it and do it with gusto through the knowledge of the law!

#### **Conclusion:**

- In spite of the righteous character of God's law it's effects upon us is always to arouse sin in our old natures to bring us to the experience of defeat.

- It reminds us that the law of God is not our problem it is sin.

- God has declared you righteous, you who have believed on Him. Now through the understanding of this struggle He must teach you how to live righteous...

### 14.

### 15. The War Within – Romans 7:14-8:4

*“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,”*  
*“training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-*

*controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,” Titus 2:11,12, ESV*

- While the law is righteous and good it does not give us the power to overcome sin.

### **1. The old nature**

- The old nature interprets data through the physical body and processes it “without” the knowledge of God into various lusts.

### **2. The new nature**

- The new nature refers to a regenerated heart that now possesses and values God’s law. Jer 31:31-33/ Ezek 11:19

- *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”* 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV)

### **I. A Struggle to Admit – vs 14-16**

- The conflicts that you experience confirms the righteousness of the law & the weakness of your flesh.

- It is sin that takes advantage of your resolve to obey.

- The more you try to succeed merely through the “flesh” the deeper you experience failure!

- The failures of your best efforts lead you to admit that you are simply unable to master the will of God.

### **II. A Principle to Reckon – Vs 21-23**

- In the conflict between the two natures, the old nature always wears down the new nature, ALWAYS!

- Not only is it wrong to sin but it is also sinful to do what is right merely through your own efforts.

- *“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed*

*is willing, but the flesh is weak.*” Mark 14:38 ESV

### **III. Truth to hold on to – vs 24-25**

#### **A. No more condemnation or hopelessness.**

- Feelings of condemnation do not come from your loving Lord but from a failure to realize your blessed position in Christ!

#### **B. No more bondage to the law of sin.**

- The efforts of the flesh will eventually leave you feeling trapped and suffocated in regards to life and living.

#### **C. No more powerlessness to do right**

- Since the power of Christ who broke the power of sin has been revealed, sin now is it's own undoing in the believer...

- You cannot incur legal condemnation ever again for sin!

- He gives the Spirit to be our power whereby we learn to walk in Christ's pattern.

#### **Applications:**

1. If God has condemned sin in the flesh then recognize this week that God also uses sin to bring victory through grace.

2. If struggle and sin are a part of God's plan for your life then please give yourself some slack....

3. Recognize during the sobering times of failure that it is the Spirit that God has provided to give you the victory you desire.

*“For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”* Romans 8:6, ESV

### **16. Life in the Spirit” - Rom 8:1-17**

A real relationship with the God of Scriptures ought to make a man or a woman into something almost extraterrestrial!

The difference between one's potential and reality could be expressed in terms of flying about like butterflies or crawling about as larvae.

## **I. It is a work of the Spirit** - vs 1-4

- If in this life you only had the assurance of sins forgiven you would have a sufficient and compelling reason to fall on your faces in gratitude.

- A. The Spirit has freed you from the law of sin and death.

- *“For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.”* Romans 7:11, ESV

B. The Holy Spirit empowers you to live a kingdom quality life which is a life of righteousness.

God does not do away with His law but He changes the way you fulfill it.

1 - You have fulfilled it legally through your faith in Christ

2 - You fulfill it practically through the enablement of the Spirit.

*“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* Galatians 2:20, ESV

## **II. The contrast between two lifestyles** – vs 5-11

The nature of the mind set on the flesh:

A. A fleshly mindset

B. A deathlike experience

C. A hostile attitude to God

D. A rebellious lifestyle

E. An inability to please God.

### **The mind set on the Spirit**

A. A spiritual occupation

B. The experience of life and peace

C. An awareness of the “indwelling” of the Spirit

D. Being made alive in your spirit

E. The confidence of resurrected life

### **III. Your Responsibility – vs 12-15**

A. No obligation to the flesh – vs 12

- Every time you yield to sin you do so thinking that you have no choice but to do so.

B. You are compelled by grace to “put to death the deeds of the body” vs 13

- You do not merely put away sinful choices and actions but you must replace them with godly ones. Col 3:8-10

Conclusion:

- Many believers live defeated lives because they do not move full circle from a mind set on the Spirit to a set of actions that fulfill the act of faith.

- It takes faith to say no to sin’s obligational cries and yes to pleasing your heavenly father.

- I find that with real faith one must move through their faith into action or the reality of such faith becomes a serious question. . . .

## **Application:**

1. Where is your mind set today?
  2. Are you following through while putting to death the old deeds replacing them with the new?
- \* Are you as free as a butterfly?

“True religion is essentially an inward, free, self-moving principle of divine life, not merely a system of thought or behavior constrained by external considerations. It is the life of God within the human soul enlivening and motivating; it is not "driven merely by threatening's, nor bribed by promises, nor constrained by laws.

“The life of God in the soul of man”  
Henry Scougal

## **17. The Groaning and Glory** Romans 8:16-28

*“For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”*

1 Peter 4:17–19

- For the adopted child of God, the cry, “Abba Father” immediately precedes the word, suffer.
- The word “suffer” precedes the experience of being glorified.

### **I. The Call to Glory**

- The believer who by seeking to live the life of Christ by the Spirit will undergo suffering in order to be glorified with Christ.
- Being granted to suffer is to endure the removal of sinful habits and the establishing of righteous ones.

- Realize that the moment that you put your faith in Christ, God turned you upside up in an upside down world.

## **II. The Creation Groans**

- Paul by personifying nature speaks of it as anticipating its own freedom by means of your redemption.....

*“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;”* Isaiah 35:1

*“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.”*

Isaiah 11:6

## **III. We Groan Within Ourselves**

- But we groan in hope!

- True groaning is the enduring of suffering in hope!

- The Spirit by nature sets itself against the flesh and sin! As a result, He makes us sensitive to evil.

*“For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.”* Galatians 5:17

## **IV. The Spirit Groans With Your Spirit**

## **V. All Circumstances Work Together for Good**

- All things both good and evil are the tools whereby He fulfills His plans for your life and the lives of others.

- Only the believer in Christ who is truly seeking Christ has the unique privilege of seeing hardship and failure converted into blessing.

## **Conclusion:**

- The Spirit of God not only witnesses to your spirit that you are God's adopted child but intensified your experiences in this evil world.

- The experiences or groaning's are actually indicators of the hope that is set before you.

- It is the result of these experiences that we naturally are led to look eagerly forward to the redemption of our bodies.

## **Application**

1. The greater the groan the greater the glory

2. The weaker your spirit the greater the strength.

3. Much of life is simply futility, confusion and a good dose of mystery. Don't interpret it!

## **18. The Song of the Secure** *Romans 8:23-39*

*"The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."* Psalm 16:6–11, ESV

### **I. More than Confident**

A. You were foreknown

- For God to have 'foreknown' you is for Him to have established an intimate relationship to you.

B. You were predestined

- God has pre-determined from eternity past all that will be necessary for your full and complete salvation.

C. You were called

- This calling refers to God's "effectual" calling meaning that it is inevitably accompanied with salvation.

D. You were justified

- As a result of His justifying you, God sees you as without legal guilt or obligation.

*"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

E. You were glorified

- Because of His sovereignty He sees both the past, present and future and its guarantee!

*"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."* Philippians 1:6, ESV

- This golden chain is the only basis for confidence for it tells you that God holds on to you and not the erroneous idea that you hold on to God...

## **II. More than Conquerors**

A. No one can be against you!

- If evil and calamity work for you in God's economy who or what can be against you in the final outcome?

B. No one can bring a charge against you! Col 2:13,14

C. No one can condemn!

- Because God is greater than your hearts and knows all things you can make your appeal to Him.... I Jn 3:20

D. No one can separate you from God's love!

- Paul reminds us that all of us are subject to all evil but with the assurance that they cannot separate you from His love.

### III. More than Convinced!

- The fact is that 'no created thing can separate you as a child of God from your father's love!

#### Conclusion:

- God's love is a driving force that not only bought the price of salvation and brought us to salvation but it also binds us to salvation forever and ever.

- That all might be to His praise and not a stitch for ourselves!

- There is no security outside of a saving God like this.

- There is no security in a salvation that is a cooperative.

- It is all of grace or it is not all of God!

*"Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit? to be out of your sight? If I climb to the sky, you're there! If I go underground, you're there! If I flew on morning's wings to the far western horizon, You'd find me in a minute—you're already there waiting!"* Psalm 139:7–10, The Message

#### Applications:

1. God works to strip away the things that are precious to you...

- When you lose through circumstances what you demand you find what you really desire.

2. When God does remove things in your lives, He replaces them with greater value...

3. It is neither out of fear nor anxiety that would compel you to follow Christ but it His compelling love whereby He both secures you and thereby compels your love in return.

4. We can face all uncertainties and obstacles having confidence

in the outcome.

## 19. God's Sovereign Mercy Romans 9

*“At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’”* Daniel 4:34–35, ESV

- Self is lodged securely from where it seeks to establish its self-determination and reign over all else
- The un-regenerate man must love himself, must esteem himself, must exalt himself and must seek his own good for there is no other than himself.
- To the degree that you experience outrage you may be exposed to your own sense of self exaltation and pride.
- The truth of God's sovereignty is a challenge that which stands eventually in front of any growing believer.

### I. God's choice is sovereign

- If God's choice is a sovereign one then there is no desire on our part that is integral to His choosing.

*“So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.”* Romans 9:16

### I. God exercises compassion not fairness

*“I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”* Ex 33:19

- God exercises “compassion/mercy” on whom He will.
- God is not bound to offer anything to you! He owes you nothing.. He gave you justice and that ultimately in Christ!
- If we have any of you desire to do anything that is righteous it is God who has first worked that into you!
- All the reasoning in the world with someone will not soften their hearts unless God does it.

### **III. God exercises His own prerogatives not ours!**

- To take any sovereignty away from God is to remove His divinity!
- No one even has the right to find fault with God.

### **IV. God’s choice is purely gracious**

- If God had not acted toward you in mercy to open your eyes and heart you would never have believed!

### **Conclusion:**

- God is a sovereign God Who does as He pleases. If He didn't He wouldn't be God!
- Because we His objects of mercy we find our greatest joy and peace when we surrender to that reality!
- A God and Father who does as He pleases brings us to quiet resolution...

### **Final Considerations:**

- Sovereignty prepares us for faithful and fruitful service...by properly orienting ourselves to the grace of God
- "The divine prerogative provides the basis to really rejoice!

- God's sovereignty spares you from endless and torturous inner turmoil as you might wrestle with the why not's and the what if's of life.

- God's sovereignty means that He is not at your disposal but if you are disturbed by this then you can pursue it!

## **20. Faith Righteousness** - *Romans 10*

The specific subject in Romans chapter ten is Israel, who's failing God's righteousness is the subject of explanation.

Paul explains why God is just in what He does by holding man accountable for his rejection of faith righteousness.

Truth tensions are two truths that seem in opposition to one-another yet are both true.

Recognizing these "tensions" keeps us at a humble distance and allow us to accurately apprehend truth.

### **I. Wrong Righteousness to avoid**

- "People that are starved for truth and objectivity will set their zeal on anyone that points the way" Oz Guinness.

- When you affirm your own goodness you simultaneously reject God's righteousness.

- Wrong righteousness is any thought and consequent behavior that serves to support or act as being foundational to one's own standing before God and others.

- Wrong righteousness can feel right but it cannot obey from the heart.

Applications

## II. Righteousness to apply

- Christ has already come to earth and been resurrected from the dead therefore you have sufficient revelation from the Word!
- Genuine faith righteousness is that which proceeds from the heart and is expressed outwardly in confession.
- It is out of genuine faith righteousness that we can speak out of a clear affirmation of our conscience.
- God grants His righteousness by faith to all who believe, who come in response to the message of faith.

## III. Rejected Righteousness

- The price of rejecting the Savior is a fatal hardening of the heart.

Conclusion:

- While it is God who ultimately draws to Himself those who would be saved it is equally true that it is hardness of heart that prevents one from salvation.
- No one who ever responds with genuine faith will ever be denied salvation from sin, judgment and hell. No never!

## Applications

1. Get serious with God and confess Him as Savior.
2. Remember that it is God alone who bestows His righteousness.
3. Reckon our great privilege to present the good news to others.

## 21. God is Inconsistently Consistent! — *Romans 11:1-14*

- Is there a point of no return where God will dispense His wrath without mercy?

*“My spirit shall not abide in man forever” Gen 6:3; Rev 14:17-20*

*“But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.”* Romans 2:5, ESV

*“No one can separate us from the love of God.”* Romans 8:39

*“We have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place...”* 2 Peter 1:19

- The identity of “His people” in Romans 11:1 is the whole of the nation of Israel.
- The term rejection best refers to God’s temporary setting aside the nation of Israel whom He foreknew for His own purposes.
- God’s faithfulness to Israel gives us insight into the depths of God’s faithfulness to us.

Four Proof’s that substantiate God’s faithfulness

### **I. God’s faithfulness Is expressed through Paul himself.** Vs 1

- If God has permanently cast of Israel, then Paul could not have been saved.
- Paul’s conversion is first proof that God continues to be faithful to His promises.

### **II. God’s Faithfulness is expressed through His plan**

*“As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”* Romans 11:28,29 ESV

- Since God’s calling cannot be denied, He will fulfill His promises by which He swore by Himself to Abraham.
- *“so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in*

*the thing for which I sent it.”* Isaiah 55:11, ESV

### **III. God’s Faithfulness is expressed through a chosen remnant.**

- Paul is saying through the illustration of Elijah that there are Jews that God is yet keeping unto Himself.
- The principle is don't look through a keyhole when it comes to God's faithfulness....
- God has chosen a remnant in Israel whom will someday respond to Him and worship Him as the Messiah.

### **IV. God’s Faithfulness is expressed in the nature of God’s discipline.**

*“For the Lord has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers). And the vision of all this has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed. When men give it to one who can read, saying, “Read this,” he says, “I cannot, for it is sealed.””* (Isaiah 29:10–11)

Why has God set aside Israel?

A. So that we the Gentiles can benefit.

*“I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,”* Matthew 8:11, ESV

B. To make Israel jealous so as to move them toward salvation.  
Vs 14

### **Conclusion:**

- God may seem inconsistent to whom He has declared His love but He is absolutely consistent!
- What God is to the nation of Israel in faithfulness, He is toward you.

“If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.” 2 Timothy 2:13, ESV

- The grace and calling of God is *non-refundable* but it may include some really tough love!

## **Applications**

1. God always chooses to work with a remnant.

God often uses seemingly small portions of the faith community to get the job done!

2. Long periods of dryness, trials, failure, and rebellion could be God’s corrective hand.

“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24, ESV

## **22. Our Privilege and His Praise!** *Romans 11:15-35*

“Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds, for riches do not last forever; and does a crown endure to all generations?” Proverbs 27:23–24, ESV

“Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor 10:12, ESV

- We naturally think that it is God’s job to keep good experiences coming our way.

- Salvation is a special privilege, graciously bestowed on us to the praise of God’s glory!

### **I. Our Gracious Position**

- Beginning with Abraham, Israel has been separated out or made

holy for God's special blessings.

- We as gentiles who had no compelling special function or entitled privileges have been grafted into the "cultivated" olive tree.

## II. A Warning to Heed

- It was through and is through the Jews that you receive blessing.

*"Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* Ephesians 2:12, ESV

- Just as the world throughout history has been anti-Semitic so also the church must not follow in the same conceit.

## III. A Mystery Explained

- The mystery of Israel's being set aside will be removed when God is finished building His church.

- In God's plan both Israel and the church has benefited from the disobedience of the other!

- God has so worked so as to confine you to disobedience because it is only in the state of disobedience that you can be shown mercy so as to be saved!

- God confines all to disobedience that He might be a God of mercy to all.

## Conclusion:

What does God's sovereignty mean to you and I?

- God's sovereignty provides you a foundation whereby you are secured and your attention is drawn away from the subtle dangers of self righteousness and the most basic pride that says, I am entitled and I am worthy.

- God's sovereignty keeps you from stuffing God into small box that you can manage and thereby imprison you into the same

small space.

- God's sovereignty keeps you from the painful duty of micromanaging your world by opening the windows of the heavens to see a God who by wisdom, power and majesty causes all things to come to pass both good and evil for your good and His glory!

- If there is a challenge to modern day man it is precisely this. God has conceived us, we do not conceive of Him...

- How blessed are you who have yielded up your puny knowledge and your demands upon Him and who have recognized that His ways are beyond your comprehension.

*"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."* Romans 11:36, ESV)

God conceives, God establishes and God receives all glory forever!

## **23. Fit For Service** *Romans 12:1-2*

8/9/15

### **"Our Response to Grace"**

"The purpose of Grace Community Church is to cultivate excellence in the worship of the true God."

*"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."* (John 4:23, ESV)

- Chapters 1-11 set forth the conditions whereby you may have a proper response to His grace.

- Unless one is rooted in your understanding of God's gracious provision you simply cannot properly present yourselves for service.

- If you are what God wants you to be you **WILL BE DOING** what He wants you to do.

## **I. Present Yourself**

- In Scripture it is clear that worship is the only response that God intends from His people.

- God wants your body to participate with your mind in acts of worship which please God and bring delight to you.

- Without the engagement of the body there is no “credible” Christianity.

## **II. Renew your Mind**

- The secret of a renewed mind is transformation not conformation.

- Do not let your mind be shaped to the pattern of this age, the spirit of the age, or the philosophies of thought and of life that surrounds you on every side."

- To be transformed is to undergo change from within.

- To renew your mind is to learn to look at life that way God sees it and that through God's Word.

## **III. Prove God's Will**

- Proving the will of God is more than right thinking it is right valuing!

- You prove the will of God by getting involved in God's thoughts through meditation, prayer and embracing them fully through faithful obedience.

*“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!” (Psalm 34:8, ESV)*

## **Conclusion:**

The true and practical worship of God leads us to confess, “O God there is nothing in the world I desire but you, I treasure nothing but You and there is nothing that stands beside You in value and beauty!”

## **24.Fit for Service-part #2** Romans 12:1-8 8/23/15

- The church, the body of Christ is God’s instrument to provide spiritual benefits to its own and because of that it must be in the process of renewal...
- The renewal of your minds is an act of worship, which by engaging your minds to the revealed mind of Christ, transforms your minds like His and thereby pulls you from the worlds way of thinking.
- Renewal involves putting the right things in your brain that your mind can feed off God’s revelation to you through His Word.

### **I. A Proper View**

- A proper view of yourselves demands an honest appraisal concerning yourselves.
- A proper view demands that you don’t think too highly of yourselves by thinking too lowly.
- When you have the mind of Christ you are in your right mind!

### **II. A Proper Place**

- We are many members yet we are one body.
- God looks at you as a part of one body..
- Your place in the body of Christ is a prescribed and necessary position that carries with it certain functions that are critical to the health of the whole.

- Conformity leads to independence but transformation leads to inter-dependence.

### III. A Proper Ministry

- The grace that comes to us in salvation as Divine enablement is the grace that gives us special abilities.

- The needs that you have daily are to a great extent provided through the local church.

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

(Hebrews 10:24–25, ESV)

### Conclusion: Are you fit for service?

- When a church is in the process of transformation the life of Christ is being circulated throughout its parts.

1. Before we can give of ourselves we must be able to accept ourselves for “what and who” we are.

2. Be willing to get involved and even ask for assistance to do so if necessary.

## 25. Overcoming Evil Part I Romans 12:9-13

- Faith is the key working through love that guarantees your experience of peace and victory and keeps you on track with God’s work of establishing godly maturity in your life.

- The only way in which you will truly enjoy the pleasures and benefits of salvation is to make sure you enjoy the benefits and pleasures of salvation...”

### I. The safest way to avoid evil is to enjoy being loved!

1. Only when you love God is love at your disposal.
2. Only as you evaluate yourselves honestly can you be truly positive and helpful to others.

## II. Genuine Love

Real love must possess the following two qualities:

1. Love is to be genuine in nature – *“Let love be without hypocrisy”*
2. Love must distinguish good from evil – *“Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.”*

A. Love devotes itself to others *“Love one another with brotherly affection”*

B. Love esteems others – *“Out do one another in showing honor.”*

C. Love is enthusiasm – *“do not be slothful but in zeal”*

D. Love is always hopeful – *“rejoice in hope”*

E. Love is consistent – *“be patient in tribulation”*

F. Love is Prayerfulness – *“be constant in prayer”*

G. Love is giving – *“contributing to the needs of the saints”*

H. Love is hospitality – *“seek to show hospitality”*

## III. What hinders you from loving others?

A. You are fearful – *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.”*

-Fear which results in hunkering down is nothing but cowardice.

B. You take a passive posture

C. You become too pre-occupied

**Conclusion:**

- Loving others is common to those who have within themselves the certainty of the love of God.
- If you have a problem loving it is NOT firstly because you need to love more but that you need to recognize God's love for you!

**26. Overcoming Enemies Part 2**

*Romans 12:14-21*

There is a love that can hang tough and extend itself to one's enemies.

There will be inevitable heart failure unless you allow God's love into your own lives.

Conflict is God's means to develop your love for Him and others.

**I. Putting things in Perspective**

- Enemies may be any person who either opposes you or who acts in a hostile fashion toward you.

The ability to love enemies is a practical reality.

- Overcoming evil and our enemies with love becomes a key in demonstrating a supernatural life to others.

**II. Putting Love to Work**

A. Cultivate a new response. Vs 14

- Real love has no defenses only an offense.

- B. Put yourself in their shoes. Vs 15, 16

- Being of the same mind involves sharing life's experiences with others in a supportive way.

1. Weep with those who weep.

- To truly empathize with someone in sorrow is loving them.

2. Rejoice with those who rejoice.

- When you can genuinely empathize with another's losses you can genuinely rejoice over their good fortunes!

C. Learn to respond honorably rather than to react. Vs 17, 18

- Responding honorably means to take initiative in responding in a moral and disciplined manner for the purpose of establishing peace.

D. Stop short of taking revenge. Vs 19

E. Meet your enemy's needs. Vs 20

- Think first, calm down, consider their good and meet their needs in some practical way.

- Without enemies you have few opportunities!

### **III. The Dynamic of Genuine Love**

- Love will always involve a risk but it is always victorious!

- *"I will not allow any man to make me lower myself by hating him, the only way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend."* Booker Washington

- Do not allow yourself to become a victim of evil.

- Overcome your enemies with determined love!

### **Conclusion:**

- Because of God's love you can enjoy peace and joy in the midst of those who would destroy you!

- Ultimately remember that this love only comes as we recognize that we have died in Christ and now live unto Him.

- *“always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.”* 2 Corinthians 4:10, ESV

## **27. Good Citizens** Romans 13:1-7

How can you live as good citizens of Heaven and be a good citizen of your country?

God has given you a strong basis to demonstrate practical Christian love toward your government.

### **I. Government is God’s Idea**

The state is an instrument ordained to save the world from utter chaos.

All governments are ordained not designed, not always the best, but ordained of God.

Whether governments be primarily good or evil, whether they bless or punish, they are all granted authority and are responsible for the exercise of it.

### **II. Christians Need to Have A Positive View of Government**

You are to obey for the following reasons:

1. It is of God
2. It does you good
3. For the sake of your conscience

Therefore this honor and obedience includes both:

1. Substantive issues (practical)
2. Non-substantive attitudes

### **III. When God and Government are Two Choices**

Two Extremes in response to government

1. Tribal independence
2. Passivity

## **Called to be good citizens**

1. If you have civil liberties, use them to serve and also to warn if necessary.
2. If you have convictions make sure they are before God and not merely preferences, biases or prejudices before others.
3. If you have convictions before God understand that you may suffer consequences for those convictions and accept them joyfully.

## **Conclusion:**

As citizens of a perfect government we have the privilege and the freedom from fear to live as responsible citizens....

## **Applications**

1. Obey God always
2. Obey the Government Usually unless in an extraordinary circumstance the act of obedience is disobedience to God.
3. The only way you will have wisdom to know the difference is if you are respecting and honoring those whom God has left in charge.

## **28. The Expedience of Love** Romans 13:8-14

Your journey through this life is an event that you must take seriously to live it carefully and wisely.

You are to strip off the complexities of mere self-interests and travel with two trusted companions; truth and love.

### **I. The Principle of Love and Law vs 8-10**

As you have been put into Christ you have once and for all fulfilled the law legally and stand without fear of punishment, consequently when you respond in faith obedience to Christ you fulfill the law of love in every practical way!

Unless love is given definition by way of command we have a tendency to redefine love by any world standard.

Real love is the fulfillment of the law as it seeks to obey the commands of Scripture.

If love is hypocritical only pretending to look and feel like love then it draws back and re-evaluates according to what's in it for me.

Love does not do what is wrong to another but more than that it does what is good.

## **II. The Practice of Love vs 11,12**

Because love lives its life in freedom and truth it is readily adaptable to all situations and is ready and eager to obey commands..

A. Love is wise about time vs 12

It is living outside of love and love for others that bring dullness and sleep to our spiritual eyes...

B. Love behaves properly. Vs 13

C. Love makes careful provision for life. Vs 14

### **Conclusion:**

When you faithfully seek to discharge your debt of love you automatically fulfill practically the commandments of God.

God is never in a hurry and the child of god who trusts and who lives in love is also at ease

Love is dynamic in that it gives us the knowingness of what to do, it opens up channels to wisdom but it fore mostly

insures that we live by grace!

## **29. Matters of Conscience**     *Romans 14:1-8*

*“You were called to freedom brothers, but do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but through love serve one-another”. Galatians 5:13*

### **I. Taboo or not Taboo?**

Scruple - Literally a sharp stone or an ethical discomfort. A reluctance due to ethical considerations....

Conviction – An affirmation of that which is true to the point of commitment.

A. The ones with few scruples –

These are those who have a strong Biblically trained conscience.

B. The ones with scruples –

These are many who “feel uncomfortable” in certain places, with certain people, or participating in certain events, or doing certain things etc.

### **II. Attitudes that Differ**

A. Those who do whatever!

They turn an asset of a strong conscience into a personal right.

B. Those that refrain from doing whatever!

⇒ They turn their restricted conscience into a pretext to judge others.

⇒ The libertarian mistakes their freedom for license.

⇒ The Scrupulous mistakes their scruples for Biblical conviction.

⇒ The Libertarian needs to learn to love and thereby reflect real liberty.

⇒ The ones with scruples need to grow in grace.

### **III. Principles of Conscience**

A. The obligation is on the libertine Christian

B. Recognize that both are fully justified.

C. You both have the same Lord.

D. Make sure you live with a clear conscience.

E. Remember that all face the same judge.

When you lose sight of the big issues in life you will take up the small and insignificant ones!

### **Conclusion:**

⇒ You can do nothing about where you came from, your past, or your backgrounds but you can determine by God's grace to love others as Christ would love them..

⇒ For the strong in faith, it means to refrain from passing contempt on the weaker.

⇒ For the weaker it is to refrain from passing judgment on the stronger.

⇒ The only thing that God will recognize is the faith you exercised. That is the measure that God will judge you by and none other!

⇒ When conniptions become marks of maturity Christ will become obscurity!

## **30. Freedom and Balance** Romans 14:13-23

*“Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.”* Luke 12:48, ESV

Your freedom is preserved by your limiting it.

## **I. The Balance Point of Liberty**

*“For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”* 2 Corinthians 5:14–15, ESV

- You are balanced when your love directs you to either grant freedom or limit your freedom for someone’s sake.

When you are filled with God’s love you have a capacity to see things from a wisdom point of view.

You are you out of balance when you operate from self.

You are out of balance when you lose your trust in anyone but yourself.

You are out of balance when you become entangled again with legalism.

You are out of balance when you mistake the pursuit of freedom as the pursuit of God.

Pursuing freedom for freedom’s sake leads you out of a clear conscience, thus eroding faith and subsequently a holy life.

## **II. Principles of Balance**

A. Nothing in itself is sinful.

B. The essence of new life is not in externals.

*“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”* Romans 14:17, ESV

C. Freedom is always dynamic in that it can flex with others.

### III. Maintaining A Balance

A. Don't make an issue out of an issue.

B. Keep love as a guiding motive.

C. Enjoy and appreciate your freedom as God given.

Conclusion:

To whom much is given much is expected.

When you limit your freedom to genuinely love the weaker brother you are insuring your freedom for yourself as well.

*“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”*  
Philippians 2:5–8, ESV

### **31. Unity or Not**    *Romans 15:1-13*

*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”* John 13:34

If you are tied to Christ you are tied to each other!

*“That they may all be one, just as you Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*  
John 17:21

#### **I. Bear up with One-Another**

As believers you are to shoulder the weaknesses of those who are weaker in faith and in conscience.

#### **II. Please One-Another**

When the ‘stronger’ believers fails to yield to the weaker believer, he or she in fact acting immaturely.

To please one-another is to act in such a way as to promote their spiritual growth.

If the choice is between pleasing yourselves or others choose others, if between pleasing others or God choose God.

The Scriptures are sufficient to give you the encouragement and hope to support those who are yet immature in faith.

### **III. Be of One Mind Toward One-Another**

To be of one mind is for the corporate whole to be of a single mind and purpose toward Jesus Christ.

Being of one mind does not mean to obtain unity at any price.

That which provides you with one mind and voice is the unity of truth in the bonds of love.

### **IV. Accept One-Another**

To accept one-another is to receive others so as to embrace them wholeheartedly...

As for you who are strong, serve them, guide them, instruct them, and if need be, endure them and always praise God for them!

### **Conclusion:**

It is imperative that you not only congregate together but truly love each other in spirit and truth.

Looking at Christ will level the field as truth, love and the resultant freedom harmonize together.

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”* Romans 15:13,

## **32. A Holy Ambition**

*Romans 15:14-21*

While we might measure spiritual success in many ways God measures it by character.

The apostle reminds us that your calling is not just to do a job but is to be your holy ambition!

### **I. A Ministry of Grace**

A. It was positive

#### 1. Goodness

When striving for goodness by the Holy Spirit you are consciously yielding away from self.

#### 2. Knowledge

While goodness refrains from ruining the weak, knowledge is critical to build strong faith.

#### 3. Able to admonish

The ministry of grace produced a positive quality which is characterized by deep caring.

B. It's bold!

### **II. Focused on the Gospel**

Your ministry as focused on the gospel requires a priestly dignity in order to give credibility to the gospel ministry.

### **III. Sold out for the Glory of God**

To be wholly enthusiastic, God must be the object of your enthusiasm...

### **IV. Energized by the Holy Spirit**

It's not in producing signs and wonders but you can through dependence on the Holy Spirit produce word and deed!

## V. Single Minded

A. Preached fully

B. According to God's plan

### Conclusion:

What you focus on today is where your enthusiasm lies.

It is present day indulgence in a world of the material that has stripped the reality and enthusiasm away from far too many saints!

Is your major objective in life to share the good news or keep to yourself?

Does your commitment to the gospel encourage others to flesh out their Christianity with your attitudes?

Without an understanding and application of grace we will find ministry impossible to achieve.

*"The best argument for Christianity is Christians; their joy, their certainty, their completeness. But the strongest argument against Christianity is also Christians - when they are somber and joyless, when they are self-righteousness and smug in complacent consecration, when they are narrow and repressive, then Christianity dies a thousand deaths." Sheldon Vanauken*

Great men and women are ordinary men and women who are fed up with being nominal men and women. STATUS QOE!

## 33. Keep On Keeping On! Romans 15:17-29

### I. Paul's Philosophy of Ministry

From Paul we learn that it is absolutely critical to have a Biblical world view if you are to be able to keep on keeping on.

1. A satisfaction with the things of God

You are most effective when you teach and communicate through a life contented in God.

2. A deep awareness of the Christ that works within  
*“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit ; for apart from Me you can do nothing.”* Jn 15:55

3. A consistency between what is said in word and what is done in practice.

A genuine ministry changes lives for the better.

A. Servanthood

Paul reinforced the principle of servanthood as a measure of success.

B. A Trail Blazer

Paul demonstrated a spirit of adventure and a courage to take the risks rather than prefer the safety of the shire.

## II. Paul's Itinerary

A. To Jerusalem

~ Your first concern ought to be toward reaching those who you know best.

~ Providing for those who have helped you spiritually in your walk in turn provides personal blessings.

~ If you have grown in grace through someone's ministry than be sensitive to the needs of that someone...

B. To Rome

~ To impart some spiritual gift to them

~ Simply to enjoy their fellowship

~ To take up a collection from them.

~ It is good for those to whom you minister to, to depend on them for certain needs.

~

C. To Spain ?

### **Conclusion:**

A. A ministry is a joint adventure

B. Any worthy goal will have it's big obstacles

C. You will overcome by keeping your eyes on the prize!

*“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:14, ESV)

## **34. The Urgency of Prayer** Romans 15:30-33

Prayer is neither sentimental nor an exercise in ignorance but an intelligent articulation of our praise and our needs to a real Father revealed in Scripture who delights in meeting those needs.

*“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”*

John 14:13–14

Prayer is your response to your heavenly Father framed in praise and thankfulness that demonstrates your absolute trust and dependency upon His every provision in harmony with His desires.

### **I. The Urgency to Pray Together**

The church coming together models the community of the redeemed most like unto the Godhead itself.

When the church assembles together it expresses in a practical sense its unique one minded purpose together.

“...On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. 2 Cor 1:10–11

## II. Incentives to Pray Together

1. God desires to motivate us to pray and to obey by putting truth in your minds. Scripture teaches you that to pray effectively is to pray in the authority of Jesus Christ.
2. Because the Spirit of God is the Spirit of love you have this great love filling your hearts when you pray!

## III. The Requests

You can't change people but through prayer God can and will. "As God must be sought unto for the restraining of the ill will of our enemies, so also for the preserving and increasing of the good will of our friends; for God has the hearts both of the one and the other in his hands." Matthew Henry

God changes the will of people so as to restrain enemies and to prepare the saints.

## Conclusions

When we pray together as one heart and mind we by our faith bring glory to Him to whom all glory is due!

When your heart is moved to pray it may well indicate a mountain that God wants to move, you being the privileged agency through whom He desires to accomplish his will.

## Applications:

1. Stand in awe of the authority you have been granted in Christ to intercede on behalf of others.
2. Rejoice and be glad that the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of love.

3. Be sure that you have the urgent privilege to bring the power of God to bear on a world to change it for His glory.

## 35. Final Words      Romans 16

- ⇒ Paul's purpose in writing was to confirm the message of the gospel and to secure them against the ill winds of evil that would certainly blow.
- ⇒ The truth is that by means of the gospel, God desires to give you the best and that "best" is ultimately Himself!
- ⇒ Paul's conclusion teaches us that when all is gone the one thing that will remain will be relationships...

### I. Words of Affection

This all-inclusive record of people and his thoughts concerning them demonstrate how people were very important to Paul.

- A. Ministry involves a wide variety of people
- B. Ministry involves obscure people
- C. Ministry involves those with humble renown

### II. Words of Concern

- A. Counterfeits cause dissensions and hindrances
  - B. Counterfeits speak fair and flattering words
  - C. Counterfeits serve from their own appetites
- Eventually counterfeits show that their motivation is merely self motivation.

### III. God is able to strengthen you...

- A. According to the true gospel
- B. According to the mystery now revealed
- C. According to God's command to bring about the obedience of the faith..

*"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."*      Philippians 1:6

### Conclusion:

- ⇒ The gospel begins and ends with God's glory!

⇒ When we grasp that God is the originator and sustainer and the consummator of all things and that you do not exist for yourselves but for Him, then you worship God!

*“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” Jude 24–25*