

Bible Study: Romans

(Part 3-Chapter 12)

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So far in our study in Romans we have seen the "need of salvation" for the entire world. Then we learned that Jesus is the only "way of salvation," and that way of salvation is "by grace through faith." Salvation is a free gift of God ready for the asking, but we must repent of our sin, and ask Christ to save us.

Once we are saved we are to live a "sanctified" life. Sanctification comes in three different ways: One, we are sanctified when we were saved. Second, we are being sanctified. Third, we will one day be fully sanctified, when we are with the LORD.

Then we looked at the "scope of salvation," finding it is found in Israel's past, and even before Israel, back to Adam. Then we looked at how salvation relates to the Israel's present, and as it relates to its future.

Now in part three, of this study on Romans, we come to the area of service for the Lord, and then greetings by Paul and others to those in Rome. This section is taken from chapters 12-16.

Let's review the outline we started with.

- I. The Need for Salvation 1:18-3:23
 - A. Gentile Sin 1:18-2:16
 - B. Jewish Sin 2:17-3:8
 - C. Universal Sin 3:9-3-23
- II. The Way of Salvation 3:24-5:21
- III. Sanctification 6-8
- IV. Scope of Salvation, Jew and Gentile 9-11
 - A. Israel's Past 9
 - B. Israel's Present 10
 - C. Israel's Future 11
- V. Service and Salutations (Greetings) 12-16

Chapter 12

This gives you a little review as we look at the outline. Seeing where we have been; now we want to look at where we are going. It is in this section on "Service and Greetings" chapters 12-16.

1. Service for the Lord follows naturally our salvation. It should come as a byproduct of our salvation. We are not saved by our good works, but we are saved unto good works. The natural desire after a person is saved, (and knows they are saved) is to tell others. When we truly know we are saved, we want to serve God with all our hearts.

Since God loved us so much, that He went to great lengths to save us, let us go to great lengths to show our love back to Him. Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40). Let's live for Him as He wants us to! This is only logical and reasonable, and it is our spiritual service of worship to the LORD.

We attended one church which had as its motto at the front of the church, "Enter to Worship, leave to serve." Maybe it should have read, "Enter to Worship, leave to Worship." So we can worship by living our lives as a living sacrifice to God. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Sometimes people say, "I would gladly die for the LORD," but when it comes to them living for the LORD day-by-day, this is another story.

Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). In this section I would highly recommend that people read, *Born Crucified*, by L.E. Maxwell from Moody Press, Chicago. When I was a child, Mr. Maxwell was the principal of the Prairie Bible Institute in Three Hills, Alberta, Canada. He would speak with great eloquence on the subject of the need for Christians to follow Paul's injunction as he urged us to live a crucified life.

Paul says in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Also another good book on this subject is, *Battle for the Mind*, by Tim LaHaye, Baker Book House.

2. The world here is as scripture teaches us, "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" (1 John 2:16). You and I have to check our lives with the rest of scripture and conscience before God, to see what is, or what is not of the world, in me. We are to be in the world, but not of the world!

Then our light will shine for all to see, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). As we live this way, in the light of God's Word we will know that we are living pleasing to God.

3. Paul was given grace, or the ability, to tell others what God wanted them to know. To paraphrase, "Don't think you are something you are not." Don't think you are nothing, you are something, but only what God has helped you to become. To each one of us He has given faith after we are saved, (of course He gives us enough faith to be saved to start with) to do what He has given for us to do in life. We are to use this faith to its fullest extent. Some will have more faith than others.
4. Look at yourself Paul says, you have different parts of your body for different uses, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, etc.

5. Even though all the Christians in the Church from its conception on the Day of Pentecost to its end at the Rapture are many, we are still just ONE body. This body is made up of both Jews and Gentiles, every "born again" believer, no matter what church they attend, no matter what color skin they have, no matter what culture they are from, they are in the body of Christ, the [Holy Catholic Church](#). We may not like all the other members in the body, we may not understand why God allowed us all to be so different, but we still have to accept one another, because we are the Church!
6. Also there are different gifts God has given to each one of us. "Grace," as used here as in other places, is something we didn't deserve or merit. In the Greek it is "charis," and it is the same root as "chara," "joy," and "chairō," "to rejoice," unmerited favor, undeserved blessing, or a gift. God has given each and every one of us, as believers, special abilities that are above and beyond our normal abilities.

In Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4, the gifts are taught. We are given these gifts when we are saved, but these gifts may not become evident in our lives right away. At first, as so often is the case, we have to be taught about gifts, and find out what our gifts are. This is the case for children and other new converts.

Sometimes Christians that are not taught about the gifts, fail to use what has been given to them. Other times, Christians are taught against the gifts and their use. My mother-in-law was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues, I'm told, but she gave up speaking in tongues because she was told that it was wrong. Never-the-less, every Christian has a gift or gifts to be used in the body of Christ. Paul says put these into use!

If your gift is "prophecy," which mainly means preaching and teaching the Word of God, but it can also mean, "Speaking something that God has spontaneously brought to mind." The prophecy of Scripture is finished, but sometimes like in the case of John Huss or the two prophets of the book of Revelation, God does say something to the church or the world that is not meant to be part of Scripture.

For example, John Huss lived in a time when people were not allowed to teach and preach the truth. "Born again" Christians were often persecuted, or even worse put to death by burning. This happened to John Huss, but before he was put to death at the stake he prophesied: "You are now going to burn a goose, (Huss signifying goose in the Bohemian language), but in a century you will have a swan which you can neither roast nor boil."

This quote is taken from the Fox's Book of Martyrs, and it also has this comment about John Huss, "If he were prophetic, he must have meant Martin Luther, who shone about a hundred years after, and who had a swan for his arms." The Roman Catholic Church tried to kill him but couldn't.

Some teachers teach that these verses (1 Corinthians 13:8-10) are saying that the gift of prophecy is done away with. The only problem with this theory is that, "that which is perfect has come," is not talking about when the Word of God was complete, or when Revelation, the last book was written. The context is very clearly speaking of when we are in heaven with the Lord.

If this theory is correct, how is it that the gift is done away with, and then there are two

prophets in Revelation 11 prophesying? No, all the gifts that were given to the church are still needed! **WARNING:** that is not to say that prophecy that is used in the church today or in the future is to be added to "Scripture," there is no more Scripture being written today nor will there be, "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18, 19). Some people say, "Oh that is just talking about the book of Revelation." And my response to that would be, "Do you want to take the chance that you will not be in heaven?!"

That being said there is also seen in Scripture a gift of revelation that is not part of Scripture, but has a temporary use for people in different situations. Take for example Revelation 11 and the prophecy of the two witnesses. Also look at the example of Agabus in Acts 21:10-14, etc.

Another question comes up here: "Can women be prophets?" Yes. Look at Acts 21:8-9, as well as Deborah in the Old Testament.

Let's get back to this gift of prophecy, and how it is used in the church.

"In proportion to our faith," or in accordance with the biblical maturity God has granted the speaker, humbly realizing God is the One who gave us the gift. Do your preaching to the best of your ability as God helps you! So prophecy can be used by preachers preaching the Word of God under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Prophets are those who forth tell Scripture, or speak out against sin as prophets of old did. Prophecy is for edification, exhortation, and comfort. "But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men" (1 Corinthians 14:3). (see also 1 Timothy 2:7; 4:13-14)

7. "or ministry, let us use it in our ministering" Some Christians will find that they are gifted in the area of helping in serving such as leading worship or singing. It could be in cleaning the church building or helping with the nursery. It could be in preparing food for others. It could be you give clothes to those in need like missions do. It could be you make things for people my mother-in-law would do this. There is an example of this type of ministry gift in action in Acts 9:36-41.

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them.

When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said,

'Tabitha, arise.' And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord."

There are many, many, ways we can serve, or minister, and you don't have to be a minister of a church to have this gift, of course they must have this gift as they do there ministering as well. Jesus said if we even give a cup of cold water in His name we are serving. "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward" (Mark 9:41). As Matthew 25:31-46 says, "...inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to me."

"he who teaches, in teaching;" Where do I start? First, "teaching" here is not just a natural talent that the world has. Of course, I believe all talent is from the Lord, but the, "gift of teaching," is one given at the time of salvation. It is energized by the filling of the Holy Spirit when used as God intended. One definition is: "teaching is the ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God."

These gifts are given to people in the church and they in turn are given to the Church (Ephesians 4:11). "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,." We are to use our gifts to "edify (build up) the body of Christ." So this gift, as well as the others is given by Christ for the Church. Also, 1 Corinthians 12:28, "And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers."

Teachers are instructors, and counselors. We are all to be teachers, as Paul says in another place, "by now you ought to be teachers," but this does not mean that all are gifted as teachers. Notice, too, that these gifts are for all the Church, not just for the local church. So we can learn from others outside our local body of believers. Then there is always a need in the local church for Sunday school teachers and those that would teach the congregation the Word correctly, "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

This is so needed in churches today, there is such a lack of good sound teaching. I once heard about a church that grew very quickly, but there was not enough teaching of the Word of God, and the church just fell apart almost as fast as it had grown through evangelism. All the gifts have to work together, we need all of them in the local church as well as the Universal Church.

Let's go back to the reason for these gifts, look again at Ephesians 4:13-16, "till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, (This is the first goal that we agree on the basics of the Word of God.) to a perfect man, (The second goal is to become mature spiritually as we are taught.) to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (That we will be like Christ, is the third goal of the gifts being used in the Church.)

It goes on to say, "that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-Christ-from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." Is there a reason for the gifts in the Church, most definitely!

8. "he who exhorts, in exhortation;" This may seem redundant to say, "he who exhorts, in exhortation;" but the point is, use your gift as it was intended. Maybe we all want to be pastors, or evangelists, and we are in one sense, but in another sense we are designed by God in a special way to do the job in the Church that He intended for us to do. Then a Christian finds great joy in doing what God has called them to do no matter what the gift.

By the way, this is one way we know we are using the gift or gifts God has given us, is when we find real "joy" in what we are doing. I find great joy in teaching, and I believe it is because God has gifted me in this area. Oh, yes, I like doing other things in the Church, but I find the greatest joy in teaching, so I know this is one of my gifts.

What is exhortation? It could be defined as one who stands alongside to encourage or admonish. The ability to help another by motivating him or her into action, for example: urge or admonish, encourage, comfort. Barnabas in the early Church had this gift didn't he?

Look at how Barnabas helped Paul get started when the other apostles didn't want to have anything to do with him at first. "And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." (Acts 9:26-27)

When no one else would help Paul, Barnabas came alongside to help. This sounds a lot like the work of the Holy Spirit, but in a human body. We had some missionary friends that had this gift when we were missionaries in Trinidad and Tobago. Whenever we needed cheering up, we went to this couple, and they never failed us. Freddy could joke around and have us laughing in no time, and it was like our problems were gone.

God bless you people that have this gift, and use it for the Lord. You may not think you are making a difference in people's lives but you are! You may be the one that discovers a "Paul" that no one else will have anything to do with! Thus you can change the world!

"he who gives, with liberality;" (Sharing material resources, the ability to make and use money to further the cause of Christ.) All of us are to give, but not all of us are gifted in this area. I believe my Dad has this gift, "he would give you the shirt off of his back," and enjoy doing it.

The Bible says, the Lord loves a cheerful giver. Usually these people are given money because they can be trusted with it to disperse it to the places it needs to go. When we were first starting out as missionaries, we had to do some training in Michigan, a long ways away from Washington State where we lived.

To make a long story short, we ran out of money, and were quite upset with each other. You know how husbands and wives can blame each other when things go wrong. At any rate we had nothing to do but to go out to our car and load up for the next location, thinking maybe we could ask a pastor at our next stop for some money.

This of course, was not what I really thought God wanted us to do, since we were living by faith. As we got into the car, still upset with each other, there on the dash of the car was an envelope

with a note in it that said, "Isn't God good," and along with this card was some money, enough to get us to where we needed to go next. Thank God for the gift of giving, if you have it use it well, and by faith God will give you more.

Once, while pastoring a church in southern Oregon, we invited a destitute family to stay with us as they were traveling. We had very little money, but we feed them with what money we had left. Then after they had left, I reached into the pocket of my coat, and there was money that I didn't know was even in there. I believe God put it there because we helped someone in need, Marlene and I always knew where our little bit of money was, so it had to be God!

"he who leads, with diligence;" (Ability to preside, direct, and challenge a group, manage details of service functions within the church.) Those with the public function of administration (1 Corinthians 12:28) or to deacon (Philippians 1:1) "Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:"

You could have the gift of pastor, and not be the main leader of the church. This gift is for the direction of the church, much like a rudder is for a ship. James the half brother of our Lord Jesus Christ had this gift. Look what happened when the early Church was not sure what to do with all the new Gentile believers coming into the Church. What should the Church do with them? Should they keep all the laws, like Jewish believers did at that time?

Then God sent a leader to the Church that guided them through that dark storm. Look at Acts 15:1 ff., "And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

verse 13 ff., "And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, 'Men and brethren, listen to me:.' (18) "Known to God from eternity are all His works. 'Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, 'but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.'" This was a person with a gift of God to lead others. Of course, Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and the other apostles had this gift as well.

"he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." This is a Spirit guided ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering people, especially members of the body of Christ, but not limited to the church. The first names that come to mind as examples of this are Mother Teresa of India, and Clara Barton who was instrumental in starting nursing and the Red Cross.

My wife, I believe, has this gift. I have seen her in action taking care of my mother-in-law who was dying from cancer, and in her teaching of the mentally or physically disabled. My two sisters, I believe have this gift. They showed it by taking care of my mother when she was gravely ill before she passed away. My one sister is a nurse, and has been one for a long time.

A Chaplain in the military or in a hospital must have this gift. Those helping the elderly or infirmed may have this gift. They are to do it with cheerfulness! No doubt wounds or diseases must get these people down, but God wants to keep them up, so they can help those they work

with. The Bible says, "A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

This comment about "cheerfulness" comes out of the New Spirit Filled Life Bible and it says, "hilarotes" Compare "hilarious" and "hilarity." Graciousness, joyfulness, gladness, benevolence, amiability, cheerfulness, gaiety, affability. In primitive lands Bible translators define *hilarotesas*, "The heart is laughing and the eyes are dancing." The word was often used for the cheerful demeanor of those visiting the sick and infirm and of those giving alms. The person who exhibits *hilarotes* is a sunbeam lighting up a sickroom with warmth and love.

9. More than any of these gifts is love, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13: 13).

Don't be a hypocrite and pretend love for one another, but really truly love each other. Abhor or stay away from what is evil, and do only good. This is really serving the Lord.

10. Think about other Christians as your brothers and sisters, because they are in the Lord. Put others before yourself.
11. Don't forget to be active in what the Lord has given you to do, have a real zeal for the things of the Lord; this is the only way to serve God.
12. Be glad in knowing what God has in store for you, this should help you when you face trials, so you can face them with patience and endurance.
13. When you see someone in need give to them as the Lord instructs you to do. This is talking about helping other Christians here. To practice hospitality is a very wonderful service, which we need to see more of in our day. Christians love to have others in their homes. Christians want to help others, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others (Philippians 2: 4). Leaders in the church are also to be "hospitable," "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach." (1 Timothy 3:2).
14. As to respect to the way we should react when someone persecutes us, we are to show them good. Someone has said the way we react to hostility shown us shows whether or not we are acting like a Christian. Christians have to be willing to suffer for the Lord and for the cause of Christ. Christians that think otherwise don't know the Word of God or the real world of Christianity.

For some time now, in the United States, there has been less persecution than in most parts of the world, but this is starting to change. The Bible is very clear, "For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. 'Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth' who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Peter 2:20-24).

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ" (2 Corinthians 1:5). "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:12-13).

15. If a person is happy let's be happy with them. If they are sad we need to mourn with them. We need to be sensitive to other's needs; maybe they have lost a loved one, etc. We need to show our sympathy in tangible ways.
16. Think of yourself as on the same level as the rest of the Christians, as joint heirs in Christ. Maybe you have a flashy gift like preaching, but remember the person who has been given the gift of service and is cleaning toilets in the church is just as important as you in God's sight. So don't go around and only greet or visit with those well known Christians, but look up the other not so well known Christians and greet them too. Churches that are friendly will be growing churches! Be careful about thinking "I am" somebody. Don't think you are God's gift to humanity as they say.
17. When someone mistreats you, pray for them, then ignore what they have done to you, and think of something good to do back to them. Think about being ethical in every situation.
18. If at all possible just don't go out of your way to make trouble, but you want to create an atmosphere around you of peace.
19. In every area of life one is suppose to let God revenge him or her. Suppose someone does slander you falsely. What should you do? First, make it clear you are not at fault, and then leave it with the Lord to vindicate you. What if someone comes to my home to do me harm, can't I shoot them? Not according to Scripture. You can try to get away, as Paul was let down over a wall in a basket, but he didn't fight back. Now I'm not talking about being in the military here, which study comes next in Chapter 13. We are talking about a Christian not trying to take his own revenge.
20. Do just the opposite that they do, treat people good when they treat you badly.
21. Turn the other cheek as Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'? But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy'? But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:38-48).

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