

Bible Study: Romans

(Part 1- Chapters 1-8)

by Gary T. Panell

Paul had written to Christians in Rome, and at the end of Acts we see how Paul arrives in Rome. But who are the Romans, and how was the Church of Rome started? "Unfortunately there are no documents from the first century that provide the answer. A number of suggestions have been made. It has been asserted that the "strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes," who witnessed the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:10) may have returned to the city and established a nucleus of believers there. However, the Christians after Pentecost did not immediately feel themselves distinct from Judaism nor begin to start local churches in distinction from the synagogues.

Hence, the beginning of a Christian church in Rome right after Pentecost is unlikely. Others believe that the church in Rome was founded by missionaries from Antioch (cf. Hans Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf, pp. 111, 133, 199). Since Antioch was a missionary center, this is certainly plausible. But the best suggestion seems to be that the church was founded and enlarged by converts of Paul, Stephen, and the other apostles who traveled to the imperial city either on business or to live there.

When did Peter and Paul arrive at Rome? If one compares the statements of the early Church Fathers with the New Testament evidence, it seem unlikely that either apostle reached Rome before A.D. 60, several years after Romans was written. If Peter had been at Rome when Paul wrote this epistle, Paul certainly would have sent him greetings. Paul's longstanding desire to preach in Rome (Romans 1:11-13 and his policy of not building upon another man's foundation 15:20) make it seem unlikely that Peter was even in Rome before the time of the writing of Romans."

Paul may have sent this letter by the hand of Sister Phoebe (Romans 16:1, 2). This would make sense, because she herself was from a suburb of Corinth, Cenchrea. Therefore, this book of Romans seems to have been written shortly before Paul left Corinth, probably about 58 A.D.

Romans is without a doubt the most important book of the entire Bible, if it is proper to call one book of the Bible more important than another. Here we see the importance of the Gospel Paul preached.

A suggested outline might be:

Introduction 1:1-1:17

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 12-16

The key verse for the book is, Romans 1:16.

The Roman church seems to be mainly Gentile, looking at the names in chapter 16, but there must have been some Jewish believers as well, because of Romans 7:1; 11:13. Remember Paul had never visited Rome, but he hoped to some day. As Paul writes this letter he wanted more than anything else to prevent the Romans from believing false doctrines. He wanted to make sure that they were not deceived by "Judaizers" (those who insisted on keeping the "law" after Christ had come), as was the case in Galatia, and earlier in Antioch.

So with this in mind he shows in this letter, Salvation is by "faith" in Christ alone. This was the "inoculation" Paul wanted to give the Christians before false doctrines on this subject became popular. Since Rome was in a strategic location it would help the whole Church and the world to get very clear, once and for all, that "all" have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), but the "gift" of God is eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone (Romans 6:23). He wanted people to know this concept, that salvation is a "gift," and by the "grace" of God that we can be saved at all.

Look at where Rome is on the map.

These first 17 verses are really an introduction to the whole letter.

(1) Paul was a servant, yet an Apostle (missionary to the Gentiles) of the Gospel. Tying verse one and verse seven together we see the "called" Apostle writing to the "called" saints. Paul wrote thirteen New Testament letters and each of these bears his name in the first verse. One letter, Hebrews, bears no name, but we think Paul wrote it also (see Hebrews 13:22-25). (2) The Gospel of God was promised in the Old Testament, can you think of where? How about Genesis 3:15, to begin with, and right on through the Old Testament? (3, 4) These prophecies mainly center on Christ's birth, death, and resurrection to power and glory. (5) Paul was given his salvation and authority to preach, from this risen Christ. He was to bring this message of the Gospel to "all" the Gentiles, because God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). We should be concerned that all hear the Gospel because of (Romans 10:17) which says "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (6, 7) Aren't you

glad we have been given the privilege to hear the Gospel, and the grace and faith to receive it? Aren't you glad you are numbered with the saints?!

(8-10) In these verses Paul basically tells the Romans he has heard of their faith, and is praying for them, and hopes to come and see them soon. Do you and I pray for Christians we don't know personally? My mother-in-law was in a church where she requested prayer for some missionaries who were in a different denomination, and they wouldn't pray for them.

Remember Paul had never seen these people. It is hard isn't it to pray for people we don't know, but I feel Paul's example would be a good one to follow in this matter. (11) The spiritual gift that Paul had to offer these folks was that they may be established through his teaching and preaching of the Word of God, as an Apostle of God. (13-15) Paul expected that some of the Gentiles in Rome would be saved, as a result of sowing the seed (Word of God). Paul felt an obligation to the lost, do we?! (16) Now for the KEY verse of the entire book. Paul said, he knew God would use the Gospel (of which he was not ashamed, and neither should we be) to save both Jews and Gentiles. It is God's "force" or "miracle working ability" which is what the word "power" here means.

Since this Gospel is so important and so powerful we better make sure we know what it is, and how we can use it. For a definition of what the Gospel is, let's look at Paul's explanation in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. Christ is THE answer to men and women's problems! (17) Paul wants to show by this letter or book of the Bible, "faith in Christ alone will save us." It was the same in the Old Testament times (Habakkuk 2:4), and it is the same today (Ephesians 2:8, 9). We will see this in more detail in Chapter 3.

Now we move into a presentation of the Gospel that Paul has talked about. First we see Gentiles have sinned (Romans 1:18-2:16). This is all part of the outline Roman numeral "I." The Need of Salvation (1:18-3:23). In verse 18 we see God's wrath will fall on all men the world over who will not believe what God has made so obvious to the world. Mankind can look at creation, the trees, the stars the birds, etc. (Psalm 19:1-6), and tell that there is a God who is perfect, (18-20). We can tell as we look at creation that it took someone who is "all powerful" (omnipotent), someone who is "all wise" (omniscient), and someone who is "everywhere at once" (omnipresent) in order to create everything. (A message on Creation in [wma](#). or [mp3](#).)

"Are the heathen accountable to God?" someone asks, "yes," comes the answer from Scripture, "they are." (20). Even though they have never heard the spoken Word of God, they have seen with their eyes God's writing in the heavens and on the earth. Does that mean we have no need to go to them with the Gospel? No, indeed it does not give us an excuse not to go to them with the Gospel! Very, very few will turn to God without hearing from another human being God's Word as we know it in Christ. Human nature being what it is seems to demand many witnesses usually before we will believe.

God is also a God of justice and He knows how hard it is for the heathen to believe unless the Word is preached to them. That is why He has sent us. If we are concerned about them we will go to them as we have been sent (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15).

We also know that men will be judged according to their works, and that there will be degrees of punishment in hell, as we find in Revelation 20:13, and Luke 12:47-48. Does this give us any real consolation to know that the heathen will have less torment in hell than someone who has heard the Gospel? They still will be separated from God forever, which is enough in itself to shake us out of our

callousness and coldness toward them. We need to go to them with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consider where would you be today if someone had not shared the Gospel with you. Let us not stray from the text though, and consider the main thrust of these verses in the rest of the chapter.

(21) Here we notice that these verses are mainly about those who at one time or other, HAVE heard the Gospel or have heard how man must fear God, as was preached in the Old Testament. "For even though they knew God," these were people who did know the way to God. Even though they "knew God," or about Him, they rejected Him. They mocked Him (used His name in vain), and did not give Him thanks. They never even thought that their very food and very breath were from Him!

They began to rationalize their responsibility to God, and they became ignorant and unable to see the light. They rejected the truth that God had given them. (22) All along they thought they were getting wiser, but in reality they had become insane. Now they didn't believe sin was sin, but in God's sight they are fools. (23) They went from bad to worse by even setting up their own gods made in the image of men and animals. (24) So now God says in effect, "if you want your own way-have it, and they did by becoming (step one down) very immoral.

(25) The heavens and the earth were put here to show us there is a God. God made the heavens and the earth, and God's creation points to Him, but they said the creation was "god." Some today think that matter creates itself; they are in effect saying, "We will worship the things in the world (or the process, that brought it about without God)." Some worship themselves. They say, "If it feels good do it." So an idol is anything that means more to us than God. Could a Christian worship television, a car, a house, etc.?

(26, 27) Now they have not only rejected God, they have spit in His face "so to speak." So now God says, in so many words, if immorality in itself is not enough then you can have (step two down) which is perverted immorality, or [homosexuality](#), of [both sexes](#). We see this being legalized and protected in England, Canada, and sadly in the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world. The Bible says it will get worse and worse in the last days. (28-32) Since they did not even want to think about God, He let them have (the third step down) a perverted way of living in every area of their life. From here they go from bad to worse in committing every conceivable sin even to the point of inventing evil, and encouraging others to do the same as they have done. They are out preaching the "gospel" of "hell."

Romans Chapter 2

This chapter still belongs to '**I. A. Gentile Sin**' on the outline of Romans. It runs through Chapter 2:16. Even though in the above passage (1:29-32) Paul has been mainly talking about Gentile sin, he makes it very clear to the Jews that they do the same things. In verses 1-3, "Everyone" is guilty of many of these same things, not that everyone does all the things mentioned, but this is a picture of all mankind as a whole (Matthew 5:21-28). If we have condemned anyone for any of these things, no doubt it is because this same thing is in our life or has been, so now we admit there is such a thing as sin and just what is wrong when we condemn others for doing them.

(4) Repentance is what we need, not more finding fault in others or thinking we are OK or better than someone else. We need not compare ourselves with each other, but with Jesus. What we say about someone else's sin is really what we are saying about ourselves as well! (5) Judgment Day is coming, that is for sure. Many people are stockpiling their sin instead of repenting of it. God is not indifferent to sin,

but He "is longsuffering toward us not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). (6) Again we have this idea, and teaching of God's Word that if a man will not let go of his sins he will be judged for each one of them. Even though Christ has died for those sins, a person still has to turn to God in repentance in order for the sins to be forgiven. If a person will not let go of his/her sins, then that sin will drag that person down to hell (Revelation 22:14,15).

(7) This verse is not saying we are saved by "good works," but we can tell what a man's heart condition is like very often by his/her deeds over a period of time (Matthew 7:16-20). The book of Romans itself makes it very clear no one is going to be saved by keeping the Law, because no one can keep the law perfectly (Romans 3:19-20). The Law was given to show us our need of salvation! The teaching of the book of James is sometimes misunderstood. Even Martin Luther called it a "right strawy book." The reason he didn't like the book was because he was trying to pull away from the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church in the area of works salvation. But if the book of James is understood in the correct way there is no contradiction between James and Romans. We are not saved by works, but our works show whether or not we are saved. Martin Luther taught that the just were saved by faith, he would often say "the just shall live by faith." So both James and Romans are inspired by God. Romans teaches that we are made right in God's sight by faith in Christ, and His work on the Cross. James shows us how a person can show another person he/she has faith in God, and that is by our "good works." So we are saved by "faith" in God's eyes, but we show our salvation by "our good works" in men's eyes.

(9-13) It's not really just the knowledge a person has between right from wrong (even though there will be some difference in judgment for those who know more), but that even though we know the difference between right and wrong, we still do what is wrong, this is true of both Jews and Gentiles. This leads us into our next point. Even though Gentiles don't know the Law, and weren't every given the Ten Commandments, they still have a conscience. We see how God will judge man's individual deeds by their motives, and what they did wrong (Revelation 20:13).

(14-16) Even though Gentiles were not given the Law in a formal way, God had already written His Law in their hearts. How many of us have heard someone judge another person? This shows we have a conscience, and we will be judged by God through our words and conscience!

Now Paul zeros in on Jewish sin (II. B.) in this passage (2:17-30). He has shown the Gentile he is a sinner and in need of salvation, now it's the Jew's turn. The Jew says the law (we will talk about the law in more detail later) is our standard, we go by it. Paul says all right do you really keep it? (17-22) *(Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 5:5; 36:23). The Jew has been given to be a light to the world. They are to show that God exists. The Jewish Nation was given to the world to show what God expects (Leviticus 20:23, 26), this was even seen in their tabernacle. They were to be like the light above the tabernacle shining for the world to see God's glory. They knew they were to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 42:6; 60:3), but their light had gone out for all practical purposes. Therefore the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles rather than praised as it had been before David's time.

(24) Could this happen today in the Church age to a person who 'claims' to be a Christian but practices sin? Could this happen to the Church as a whole? As people look at you and I do they say that we practice what we preach? Someone has said, "I would rather see a sermon any day as to hear one." Oh, Christian let us bring people to Christ by our lives rather than cause them to blaspheme God.

(25-27) We are struck once again by the fact that a person can be circumcised in the flesh, but not in the heart. A person can be baptized in the water, and not have ever been baptized into the body of Christ. A

person may become a member of a local church and never have become a member of the body of Christ. A person may take the Lord's Supper and never have truly received Christ. It is one thing to eat the bread and drink the juice, but another thing to truly have Christ as a part of you.

(28-29) Works cannot save the Jew because he/she truly does not keep the law. Of course, Jew or Gentile cannot be saved by works because no one is perfect except Christ. Therefore the Jew is a sinner, and in need of salvation. This is the thing many Jews had not understood, and that is: "works cannot save anyone." It could have been then, just as it is today, sometimes people don't check into salvation enough, that's why they don't understand that the Bible teaches that we are saved by "grace," not by "works" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

A true Jew is one who is saved by "grace" through "faith" in Christ's blood alone! Some Jews thought that since they were born into a Jewish family, they were saved. How many people today think they are saved because their parents or grandparents are saved, they are saved too? Someone has said, just because you are born in a garage it doesn't make you a car. Then someone else has said, "God doesn't have any grandchildren, just children." We are saved by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-7), not by keeping the law or trusting in our Church membership, baptism, etc. As you are reading this you may be wondering whether or not you have been trusting in your good works, baptism, church membership to save you up to now. Now you realize you are not truly saved, you can ask God to forgive you of your sin, and invite Jesus to come into your heart and life right now as you read. Just pray to God, and He will hear, and answer your prayer.

Romans Chapter 3

We are still in this area of Jewish sin up until verse 8 of chapter 3. (1) If Jews are as sinful as the Gentiles and in the same "boat"-so-to-speak as the rest of the nations, why should God have even created a Jewish Nation? It is a good question. (2) Paul answers this question by saying that the Jews have been entrusted with the Word of God. God brought about the Hebrew nation for a special purpose, and that was for the purpose of sending the redeemer through them, but that doesn't make them any better than the other nations. God also, in His wisdom, entrusted to them, to give to the whole world His Word, and the Savior. God has promises for them in the future as well as Gentiles.

(3, 4) Someone might ask, "Then will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness." By no way, Paul says these promises of God will yet be fulfilled. There is a future still for the nation based on the Old Testament promises. (5, 6) If sin is the means of God bringing glory to Himself, is it right for Him to punish the sinner? "For then how will God judge the world?" The world is unrighteous, so God must judge sin. However in order to be able to show his love, He has provided a way of Redemption from sin. (7, 8) Even though God brings glory to Himself when He judges sin, it does not make sin right. He didn't create sin, and it is contrary to His nature. He must judge sin and it brings glory to Himself in that we see the attributes of God, such as justice, love, mercy, forgiveness, etc. But it is foolishness to say, "Let's keep sinning so we will bring lots of glory to God when he forgives us!" The individual sinner who says this brings more judgment of God on himself or herself.

Now let us move on in our outline to '**II. C., Universal Sin 3:9-20**'. Both Jew and Gentiles are found to be sinners, in God's sight. Everyone in the whole world has done and said things that are wrong, so, with or without the law, we are all sinners. Someone has said, "all means all, and that's all that all means." (20) The law has been given to show us that we are all sinners. It is God's measuring rod, or ruler to show all

of mankind that we are all sinners. So there is no man or woman on this planet that can keep the law or standards of God perfectly. If we break even one law of God, we are sinners.

God gave the law to the Jews, not as a means of salvation, as many believe, but as a means of showing Jews and the rest of the people in the world their need of salvation! For as it says here "by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Let's move on to '**III. The Way of Salvation 3:21-5:21**'. If salvation is not by works or keeping the law, which is also works, how then can we be saved? We find that God has revealed to us His righteousness not by our good works, but that it comes to us by means of His grace through faith. Many of us have seen the "Four Spiritual Laws" by Campus Crusade for Christ. It shows us by way of diagrams that man is trying to reach God by "good works", baptism, etc., but the only way we can reach God is through the cross of Christ. So salvation is not as a result of man's reaching for God, but because God reached down to us through His grace (Ephesians 2:8,9). Salvation was witnessed by the Law and the Prophets in that from Genesis to Malachi the grace of Christ is prefigured by symbol, sacrifice, promise and prophecy (3:21-3:31).

So we all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, but by grace (which means unmerited favor, or God's goodness we don't deserve) is ours for the asking. ALL the righteousness of Christ is ours by faith, or by believing in Christ, and trusting in Christ alone to save us. We need to trust in Christ's BLOOD alone to save us from our sin. It cost God too much for us to work for it. If you say you will keep the law to be saved you are working, so God says to you, 'you can't have it, it is free', you have to receive the gift. It is sort of like a doctor doing an operation for cancer on a patient. You have to sign on the dotted line if you want him to do the operation. You can say, 'YES, I know Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world', but the question is what are you going to do about it? Today, He wants to cut the cancer of SIN out of your life, but you have to decide to let Him do the operation. You do that by saying to God, 'God I am a sinner in need of salvation. I have sinned, and I need your forgiveness, grace, and salvation right now! I am trusting in Christ alone to save me, since He is the only One who died and rose again to purchase my salvation'. If you pray this right now, He will save you right now!

Romans Chapter 4

We are talking about "The Way of Salvation" as Paul describes it: Paul has said that God saves by grace through faith and not as a result of works. Now he is going to illustrate this from the Old Testament. As an example, Paul calls Abraham to the witness stand, so-to-speak. (1, 2) He was justified by God for his faith (Genesis 15:6). (3) Now the last part of verse says, "...but not before God," speaking about works and being justified by them. This is interesting that Paul would say this because James 2:23-24 says, "And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.'

You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." Now is there a contradiction between Paul and James? Martin Luther thought that it might be, therefore he questioned the inspiration of the book of James. People, there are hard things to understand in Scripture, but there are no contradictions. Let's look at James 2:14-18 a little closer. This is important to understand or else we will always wonder about it, and maybe even go so far as to doubt the perfection of Scripture.

James says, "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

In the above verses we see how James is looking at things. He is looking at "justification" (being made right with God) from man's standpoint. There are two sides of justification. One side is to be justified in God's sight. The other side of the coin is to be justified in man's sight. We are justified, beloved, in God's sight by "our faith."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." Only God can see "our faith" though, in man's sight we are justified by "our works." In other words, how are we going to know what you say is true when you say "I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" Then as James says, someone comes along who you know is in desperate need of food and or clothes. You say, "the Lord bless you brother," and do nothing. Then you claim to be a Christian. Really now, are you even saved, if you act like that. If one is truly born again his works will also show it. "By their fruits you will know them."

GOD'S SIGHT----FAITH----RESULTS IN-----WORKS-----MAN'S SIGHT

So Paul stresses faith, and James stresses works, but not as a means of salvation, that would be a contradiction in Scripture. Works are a by-product of our faith. So faith and works go hand in hand. (4, 5) Again this passage is hard to understand, but let's press on. Here Paul is saying if you are going to work for your salvation, God will not give it to you because it is free! It would be like saying you earned it. But we didn't earn it, Christ earned it for us, and gave it to us, we merely receive it! So if you think your baptism, church membership, communion, or good works can save you, forget it.

Now Paul uses David's word in Psalm 32:10, "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him." (6-8) Here, what the person is doing is trusting in the LORD, not doing good deeds, yet David says his sin is forgiven, why, because of his faith in God!

(9-12) Paul wants us to discuss whether or not this faith is available only to the Jews or is for Gentiles also. Faith was found in Abraham when he was not a Jew. Now how could you call Abraham a Jew, because he hadn't been circumcised (which is the sign or seal of those who are of the Jewish nation) at that time. Notice Abraham was counted righteous by God before he ever was circumcised. So if you want to be a child of Abraham, you need to believe as he did. Then your faith in Christ will save you.

This is like circumcision of the heart. As God cuts off the sin, and forgives the sinner. The circumcision of the flesh was only an outward sign of an inward faith. Just as baptism is an outward sign of an inward faith. You would go to heaven even if you were never baptized, just as the thief on the cross. However, it would be wrong not to be baptized if you are really saved. It is good to be obedient and show our faith to men.

(13-25) In this section we have a key verse and that is verse 16. "Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all..." He believed all that

God asked him to believe; maybe not right away every time, because both he and Sarah laughed at first when they were told they would have a child in their old age. Hebrews 11 makes it abundantly clear that Abraham was a man of faith.

Hebrews 11 is a kind of "Hall of Fame" for believers with extraordinary faith. Look at Hebrews 11: 17-19 "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense." But, you say how can I show my faith today?

Verses 23-25 give us the answer, how we can show our faith today to God, and the world. "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification."

Promises to Abraham, remember, were made not as a result of keeping the law, because the law was not given as yet. If we could be saved by keeping the law then why would we need faith? So again what you need is faith like Abraham had in order to be saved, then Abraham is your spiritual father, for both Jews and Gentiles who believe. Do you believe God can raise the dead? Do you believe Jesus rose from the dead? If you answered, yes, you have faith like Abraham, if you have trouble believing this say, God I believe, help my unbelief.

Chapter 5

(1)As we continue to look at this section in Romans on the "Way of Salvation," let's remember that we are saved, or made right in God's sight (just-as-if-I-had-never-sinned + the righteousness of Christ). How? By faith alone, Faith + NOTHING! (2) How did it come to us, or should I say, how did we get right with God? It was through our Lord Jesus Christ-not Mary, not Buddha, etc. but through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

He alone is the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5; Acts 4:12). He alone is *THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE*. (John 14:6). He alone is the one who can bring salvation (Acts 16:31). (3) We have a wonderful hope, not in the sense of wishful thinking, but something sure that gives us joy. Then also, we can glory not only in this hope of eternal life to come, but in our tribulations. "How is this? Well, look at it like this: tribulations-perseverance-proven character-hope-God's love poured into our hearts (Romans 5:3-5)."

God has designed the universe and us in such a way that we need variety and order to enjoy God's plans. Read this poem by Frances R. Havergal.

Right was the pathway leading to this!
Light after darkness, gain after loss;
Strength after suffering, crown after cross.
Sweet after bitter, song after sigh;
Home after wandering; praise after cry.
Sheaves after sowing; sun after rain;
Sight after mystery, peace after pain.

Joy after sorrow, calm after blast;
Rest after weariness, sweet rest at last.
Love after loneliness, life after tomb.
After long agony, rapture of bliss;
Right was the pathway leading to this!

-by Frances R. Havergal

(5) For the Christian, we know things will get better. The evolutionist thinks things for him will get better, but he will find they are getting worse for him. Someone has said, "If we are wrong about life after death, what do we have to lose, but if the evolutionist is wrong, he/she has a lot to worry about." Well, we are right, and the evolutionist is wrong, and five seconds after death he/she will know his/her horrible mistake. The Bible says, "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

(6) There was nothing we could have done to save ourselves, if Christ had not died for us. We were lost in the river of sin, about ready to go under when Christ came along to save us. (7) Some people might die for a good friend or a good person, but for a rotten no good sinner, how many would die for this type of person? Only the love of Christ would do this.

In Tri-cities in Washington State there is a bridge between Pasco and Kennewick. This bridge is high enough that several people have used it to commit suicide. One dark rainy night a young girl was fed up with what life had to offer, so she climbed over the railing on the bridge and plunged to the murky depths of the Columbia River. As she jumped a passer-by saw her. Now the bridge is not as high as some, where you would even die from the fall, but usually the person would drowned after entering the water.

The passer-by was an experienced swimmer (by the way, he was also a Christian), and when he saw what the girl had done, he decided to save her. So over the side he went, plunging into the murky depths below. He was able to find the girl, which was a miracle in itself, since it was night. Then he held her afloat until some others had time to get a boat to them. As the girl was being lifted into the boat her savior, exhausted from the time spent in the water slipped out of the reach of the people in the boat, and to his death. He had died to save a girl whom he didn't even know.

As I thought about this, as my father-in-law related it to me, how this is what Christ did for us on the cross. (8) Oh, beloved if only we could demonstrate this type of love to others. Oh no, they are not drowning in water, and we cannot see the smoke of the fire of hell, but never-the-less, eternal judgment is real. Their black is as real as night, and Satan has blinded their eyes with sin.

"When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1:7b-9. (9) Let us tell others how they too can be justified, and give our life to save them. In this way we can demonstrate this same love of Christ that dwells in us, to others.

(10 Remember the story about the girl that jumped into the Columbia River to kill herself? She didn't deserve to be rescued. However, whether she deserved to be saved or not was never in question. The point is, she needed to be saved, whether she knew it or not, or whether she wanted to be saved or not.

We were "reconciled" (this word means much the same as "atonement," our sins are covered by the blood, we are made right with God, we are in His good graces again!)

(12) Notice there was sin in the world before the law was given. (13) However, man did not know how sinful he was then. Since the law was given for this purpose, but the result of sin still ended in death. Everyone died from Adam to Moses (with the exception of Enoch). They didn't sin the same way Adam sinned, but they sinned none the less. (14, 15) Not that they were without any knowledge of sin, but that they didn't have the details of the law and what was sin exactly. Also they were responsible for what light they did have. They were to worship the God of the universe and sacrifice to Him.

Adam was the firstborn of the first creation. Adam's sin resulted in the death of the whole human race. But Christ's gift to men will result in eternal life for all who will receive it. (16) Adam committed one sin, which plunged the whole human race into many sins. He opened the gate to all sorts of sins.

Christ opened the gate to heaven, and eternal life for all who would enter into this gate, which is Christ. Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6). (17) Death reigned as a result of Adam's sin. Grace, righteousness, and life resulted from God's gift to man through Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

(18, 19) Have you ever thought about the impact of even one act we do? It is like dropping a rock on a still lake, ripples go out all around for a long distance. Many people are affected by every word we utter, or every act we do, either for good or for evil. We can lead many to Christ by our actions and words, or many may not receive Christ as a result of our bad example.

Someone has said, "You may be the only Bible some people will ever read!" (20, 21) The law was given to show us that we are sinners. We knew, as Gentiles, that we were sinners before we ever knew there was a law, but then when our sin was delineated by the "law" we really knew that we were bad sinners. Praise God for His grace, which means we can be saved in spite of the fact we don't deserve it. It is free for the asking, through Jesus Christ, it is a "free gift," you just receive it. Are you saved?!

(Chapter 6) So far in Romans we have seen the "need for salvation" in chapters 1-3, then in 3-5 we saw the "way of salvation," and now in chapters 6-8 we talk about "sanctification." The dictionary definition of this word is: 1. To set apart for sacred use; consecrate. 2. To make holy; purify. So all mankind is in need of salvation. Also, the way of salvation is a gift, by grace, through faith, and not of works, or of the law. Now we want to talk about "sanctification" in chapters 6-8.

As we saw in the dictionary definition of sanctification mainly means to "set apart." In this case we are set apart for God. We find in Ephesians 1:3; 2:6 that we are seated in "heavenly places" (literally the "heavenlies"). Here we see how we are made right with God because Jesus took our place (2 Corinthians 5:21), and in 2 Peter 3:18, we need to grow in grace each day.

So (1) we are saved from the penalty of sin now, (2) we are being saved from the power of sin each day as we grow in grace, and (3) one day we will be even saved from the presence of sin. So there are three aspects to sanctification. Jesus is our sanctification, and in one sense we are sanctified right now as "born again" believers (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30). In experience we still do sin 1 John 1: 8, but we are children (John 1:12) still only in need of confession of sin (1 John 1:9).

(1) Since we are born again now, are we to continue sinning so that God can keep forgiving us? (2) If we have died to sin, which we did when we received Christ. We were going away from God and when we were converted, we turned around away from sin and toward God, in faith, we were saved. So now we are not to go on living in sin as if nothing happened to us.

(3) This baptism here seems to be spiritual baptism as in 1 Corinthians 12:13. However this is what water baptism pictures. (4, 5) Just as Christ died and rose again, water baptism pictures this same thing. In Christ we have died to sin, been buried with Christ (our life is no longer our own) (2 Corinthians 5:21). Just as Christ rose again we are still alive, but it is not really us who is now alive but Christ. (6) We "have been crucified with Christ," our self was crucified with Him. (7) So we do not have to try and crucify our old nature. It has been crucified when we received Christ. We do need to recognize this "fact" of the death of our old self, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

This does not mean we will never sin again, it does mean that we will not practice sin. This is what the book of 1 John is all about, Christians love God and do not want to sin. We keep the Ten Commandments and other commandments of Christ, not because we are under the law, but because we love Jesus and want to obey everything He said to do. Doing God's will is a "byproduct" of our love for God. Jesus told us that if we love Him we will keep His commandments.

(8) The death of our old nature is not all we have now, we also have a new nature. In other words, when Christ rose again or as Christ rose again, we have a new self. This means eternal life which begins now (John 3:16). This eternal life begins actually when we are saved. What more assurance of salvation do we need than this?! (9) Death is nothing more than closing our eyes here and opening them in the arms of Jesus. Our spirit does not die, but our body goes to sleep. Jesus did not teach soul sleep, but He did teach body sleep (Matthew 27:52; Luke 8:52; 2 Corinthians 5:8).

So we too as he died once, we are saved once in God's sight. Our sin is forgiven and placed in the sea of God's forgetfulness (see Micah 7:19). (see the discussion question on [sea of forgetfulness](#).) They are removed as far as the East is from the West, never to be remembered again! Now we are free to live for God since our sin past, present, and future is paid for. We are not worrying about the penalty of sin, at least as far as eternal separation from God is concerned. (11) We need to (reckon) realize this is so or true.

(12) If all that has been said before about sin being forgiven in our lives, why do we still have sin bothering us in this life? God did not choose to make us perfect after we were saved (this will happen when we meet Jesus in the air). We have to live in the presence of sin here, and have to contend with it. But it doesn't have to master us, we have to master it with God's power (Genesis 4:7).

(13) Even though our old nature is dead, our new nature still has a will, and we can present our bodies to Satan to use after we are saved or we can present them to Christ. The choice is ours. The reasonable (logical) thing to do is to present (yield) them to Christ to use as He wills, (Romans 12:1, 2; I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20).

It is like a person who has taken off an old, dirty, rotten, wholly, ragged shirt and thrown it into the garbage can, where it belongs, and then goes and picks it up out of the trash, and puts it back on again. When we sin after we are saved this is exactly what we are doing!

(14) Paul talked about the law before showing us our need of salvation, but now he tells us that we are not under law as we are in the Church Age. What does that mean? Why did he say this? Does this mean we are suppose to not do good things? No, we keep the Ten Commandments and Christ's Commandments by way of a byproduct of our love for Christ. We do things that please God now because we want to, not because a law says we have to.

We have a free will to choose, when we get to heaven we will not make moral choices, and to that extent we will no longer be able to show our love for Christ by the choices we make. There will be other ways to show God our love then, because 1 Corinthians 13:13 says love will remain (abide).

(15) Again let's make the right choices even though we are under Grace. A Native American once was asked how is it going since you received the Lord? He commented, "It is like there are two dogs inside me now, one good, and one bad." The person asked, well which one is winning, the Indian said, "The one I feed the most."

That is true of our new, and old nature, the one we feed the most will win. If we fill our lives with television, ungodly videos, ungodly books, and magazines the old nature will win, but if we fill our lives with the Word of God, and good Christian literature, the new nature will win.

(16-19) The Israelites chose to follow the same gods they had served in Egypt. They did not as a nation cease being God's chosen people, but they were taken slaves by the people who worshipped the gods the Israelites chose to worship. So it can be in a Christian's life, he/she can go back to Satan so to speak and serve him even after salvation. He or she will be the most miserable person on earth, though.

I know what that is like personally. When I was in Vietnam, at first I lived for the Lord, but then I began to compromise my stand and got into things I had no business getting into. God in His love corrected me in His own way, and brought me back to Him. Did I stop being a child of God, no, but I knew if I went to heaven that way I would be ashamed as I met the Lord. I do not want to meet the Lord with my head held down, but held high.

It is like when our children do something wrong, we do not kick them out of the family, but we do correct them because we love them. We do expect they will admit they were wrong, and do the right thing again. We want to be slaves of righteousness now, and not slaves of unrighteousness or Satan. Further dedication of ourselves to God means more righteous deeds being done, it means we are "being sanctified" or set apart more for God.

We are to be in the world to be witnesses but the world is not to be in us. The chimney on a kerosene lamp can become dirty and no one will see the light. That is what it is like when we let sin come into our lives and dirty them up. Lest anyone become confused and think sanctification is only what happens after salvation, and not something that happens during salvation we have these next three verses.

(20-23) These two benefits, mentioned here, come from salvation; one is sanctification, and it is the normal result of being freed from sin. If this is not your experience you are not living a normal Christian life, but a subnormal experience. Second, being freed from our sins will result not only in salvation from sin, but eternal life. To set the record straight, Paul concludes this chapter by reminding us, that what we deserve is eternal death or separation from God. But since we receive Christ, we have eternal life coming, not as a result of sanctification, but as a result of our salvation. In other words we do not save

ourselves by our doing righteous deeds, but He saves us by His blood, which is received as a free gift, to anyone who will receive it that way!

Chapter 7, and we are still on this subject of "Sanctification." We have learned that we are set apart from the punishment of sin, and the power of sin to serve Christ. (1) There are so many Christians today who think they are still under the law as given in the Old Testament. Christians need not be confused about the role of the law in the Church age.

(2, 3) Scripture is so clear that the law is like a woman's husband. When her husband dies, she is no longer married to him. If she thinks she is, she should be instructed differently. In 1 Corinthians 7:39 it says, "A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord."

Christians today need to be reminded that they are not now under the law. I am not speaking here of the "ten commandments," but of all the regulations the Jews had to keep. You see there were many Jews who turned to Christ after the resurrection, but were still zealous for the "law" (regulations besides the Ten Commandments and there were many).

Paul was informed in Acts 21:20b "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law;" so there were a lot of new converts in the Church who thought they were still to keep the "law." There were 615 commandments given for the Jews, and then the scribes and Pharisees added a lot of their own as well.

What do we do with all of the "law" now? Do we still have to keep the regulations of the Old Testament? Should we keep the Feast Days? We could go on and on with should we do this or not do that, but we are not under these regulations in the Church.

It is like what happened in the Civil War, if you could pay someone to take your place, and they were killed you still did not have to go to war because it was as if you had already died. They could not call you up for duty because you had someone who had died in your place, that had fulfilled all the requirements of the law. Jesus has fulfilled all the requirements of the law for us, we are no longer under the law but under "grace."

Now our old self was married to the law, but it died. Now we live not under the law, but in the Spirit. (4-6) If a person tries to keep the law to get saved they will just feel worse, because the more you find out about what sin is, the more you know you cannot ever be perfect in yourself. The law in itself has no power to keep one from sinning. It just points out sin. Take for example the speeding laws in our land. Do they keep people from breaking these laws? No, they can warn people, but the law or sign itself has no power to help people do the right thing. Police officers can stop us if we do not obey the law, but the laws themselves have no power.

(7-9) Someone might say well then, is it wrong to have a stop sign, because it really cannot help you. No, Paul talks about the purpose of the law in the "Church Age" (1 Timothy 1:8-11), the law is good if used right. It does have a purpose today, not all those regulations, but the Ten Commandments. They show people what is wrong, and what is right to do. They show us our need of salvation. Some might think that they keep the Ten Commandments perfectly, but when you look at how Jesus explains their meaning in Matthew 5:19-28, they take on a whole other meaning.

For one thing, if I didn't know the law, my conscience wouldn't bother me when I did things wrong. When I know the law, it really bothers me when I do the wrong thing. (10,11) In the Living Bible it says, "So as far as I was concerned, the good law which was supposed to show me the way of life resulted instead in my being given the death penalty. Sin fooled me by taking the good laws of God and using them to make me guilty of death."

God gave the laws to the Jews as a means to point out their need of Him since they could not keep the law. However, many Jews thought just the fact that they had been given the law and knew it, meant that they were saved. They would rationalize their sin away. Paul thought he was keeping the law until he heard how Christ interpreted it.

Take for example a brick wall that is being built, it may look good until you put a plumb line beside it. (11) Paul said sin joined up with the law and he ended up the loser every time, because it killed him. He went through experiences like this after he was saved as well. (12) Mind you there is nothing wrong with the law. (13) The problem is really with me or sin in me. You might ask, "What does this have to do with sanctification?" If we understand what the law was given for then we will understand what relationship or what role it is to play in our lives after we are saved. So far we have seen that the law was given for the unsaved to show "all have sinned".

(14) The reason an unsaved person cannot keep the law is because the law is spiritual, but the unsaved are in the flesh. The person who is not a Christian has no spiritual nature, they are spiritually dead. They are in bondage to only sin. (15) So no matter how hard they try to be good they end up doing just the opposite. (16) Thus they prove they are bad, and the law is good. (17) So their nature has no power because sin has control of their life. (18) All our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).

(19-20) You may want to act like a Christian, but if you haven't been born again, my friend, it is impossible. You still have only an old nature. (20-25) Here is where sanctification comes in, even though we may truly be born again there are still those old evil desires with us. Didn't my old nature die with Christ? That's very true, but remember we still have an old nature, even though in God's sight it is dead, but it is still very much with us, and will be until we die or meet Christ in the air at the Rapture.

So this passage is mainly talking about the unsaved and how they try to keep the law and find they cannot. However, some Christians try the same thing in the flesh and find the same result as the unsaved, and their lives resemble the person's life that has not been saved (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). Living in the flesh is not a life of victory. Paul does not give the answer to victory in this chapter, but he hints at it in verse 25a. This chapter ends in defeat. So will we end in defeat if we try to keep the law in our flesh after we are saved. The answer to "victory" comes in chapter 8.

Chapter 8

Even though we are still calling this chapter "Sanctification" on the outline, it really could be called "Security of the Believer." So far Paul has shown us in this section that we need to be set apart for God because we in ourselves, in the old nature before our salvation, were against God and righteousness. It even was shown to us that sometimes we as Christians find ourselves going back and picking up our "rags" and living as if we were never born again. In other words, we can be "carnal Christians" if we are not careful.

We want to be victorious Christians, so now let us see how we can be victorious! Paul hinted at this earlier in Chapter 7, but now in this chapter he spells it out! (8:1) If we are in Christ there is now no condemnation. (2) Since Christ is living within us, God has set us free from the law and its showing us that we are sinners. We no longer need to fear death. We are free from that old way of life now.

(3) How did God do this? By sending His Son to fulfill the demands of the law in our behalf. He took the punishment we so justly deserved. Notice it says in this verse, "in the likeness of sinful flesh," notice it does not say He had sinful flesh. This is very important because if He was sinful, then He could not save us. The Old Testament picture of Christ, you will remember, was always that of a perfect animal, without defect (1 Corinthians 5:21; John 1:29). (4) The law demanded blood that is what Jesus gave (Hebrews 9:22).

Now we do not try to keep the law (which is impossible anyway), but we walk (or live) in the Spirit. (5) If we were still in the flesh, then we would be interested only in pleasure, like eating, drinking, things to please ourselves. We are not like that anymore; we now love the things of the Spirit. We feed this spiritual appetite by church attendance, Bible reading, praying, witnessing, etc.

(6) The things we do in the flesh will end, the things we think about in the Spirit lead to abundant life and peace. Little kids say, "that is mine," the next one says, "no give it to me, it is mine." That is the way unsaved adults live, but on a higher level of greed and craftiness. They may even put a knife in each other's back to obtain what they want. This way of life leads only to death.

The Christian on the other hand puts others before themselves, or at least they are supposed to do this. There is a song that goes: Jesus and others and you what a wonderful way to spell joy. "J" is for Jesus for He has first place, "O" is for others you meet face to face, "Y" is for you, in whatever you do, put yourself third and spell JOY.

This leads to abundant life-as it is better to give than to receive. It is a real joy to be living an abundant Christian life, there is only peace as a result of this type of life. This does not mean there will not be problems, but "joy" comes from the Lord.

(7) Remember the unsaved person is only thinking about the flesh and is against God. He could not keep God's law even if he wanted to, it is impossible. (8) No way can the unsaved please God (Isaiah 64:6). You say, "Can an unsaved person do any good deeds?" Yes, he can, but as far as God is concerned these are "filthy rags" and will not get Him into heaven.

God knows that they are like Cain, walking in disobedience, trying to establish their own righteousness. It will not work just like Cain's offering did not work. (9) Paul indicated that we do not have to walk in the flesh now because we have a new nature. That is if you have received Christ as your Savior from sin, you have invited Him into your heart (John 1:12).

When you received Christ's Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Christ came into you. Notice we see the Holy Spirit coming from both God the Father and Jesus the Son. So really the trinity is dwelling in us. If the Holy Spirit is not in you, then you are not a born again Christian. It is impossible to be half saved, either you are, or you are not saved.

(10) Now if Christ's Spirit is living in you, even though your body is as good as dead or it dies, do not worry that the real you will still go on living. (11) Christ is risen from the dead never to die again. You invited Him into your spirit. He will keep it alive because of His righteousness (I Corinthians 5:21).

(12) Now our job or responsibility belongs to living in the Spirit, walking by faith not after the flesh. (13) Listen, if you as a Christian have given your old nature "mouth to mouth resuscitation," so to speak, you are living as though you never were saved. You need to take the oxygen tent off that old flesh and pull the plug on it again. Do not keep feeding it intravenously.

If you are watching things you should not see. If you are hearing things you should not hear. If you are saying or even thinking or reading things you should not read, you are feeding the old sinful nature. It is like putting the captain in chains in the hold of the ship.

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