

Romans

Benjamin W. Brodie
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Translation

Rom. 1:1 Paul, a bonds slave of Christ Jesus, called [to the spiritual office of] an apostle, having been appointed [divine summons] because of the good news from God,

Rom. 1:2 Which He Himself [God the Father] had previously promised [salvation in the OT was also through faith in Jesus Christ] through His prophets in the Holy Writings,

Rom. 1:3 Concerning His Son [deity of Christ] Who was born out from the seed of David [physical descent] according to the flesh [humanity of Christ],

Rom. 1:4 Who was marked out by divine decree the Son of God [the declaration of His deity in time was planned in eternity past], by means of miraculous power [omnipotence], according to the spirit of holiness [divine essence], by means of resurrection from deaths [first spiritually, then physically],

Rom. 1:5 Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship [the apparatus and means of instruction] for the purpose of obedience to doctrine [occupation with Christ through His Word] among all nations [not just Israel], for the sake of His Name,

Rom. 1:6 Among whom you [Romans] also are called [elected by the Father] to Jesus Christ.

Rom. 1:7 To all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, called saints: Grace and prosperity from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. 1:8 First of all, I am continually thanking my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith [positive volition towards the Word of God] is being constantly proclaimed with commendation and celebration [their spiritual progress is widely known] throughout the entire world.

Rom. 1:9 For God is my witness [at the Supreme Court in heaven], Whom I continually serve with my spirit [new nature] by means of the gospel of His Son [Paul served by studying and teaching doctrine], how without ceasing, I am continually making mention of you always in my prayers,

Rom. 1:10 When offering a petition, that if somehow at last [Paul was looking forward to this visit], I might have a successful journey by the will of God [as opposed to Paul's will] to come unto you.

Rom. 1:11 For I am longing to see you, in order that I may impart to you some spiritual [communication] gift, so that you might begin to be stabilized [strengthened by doctrine],

Rom. 1:12 For this [communication gift] must be added, so that I may receive encouragement together with you [Paul is encouraged when a congregation is growing in grace and knowledge] through doctrine [communication of Bible doctrine is the glue that holds them together] in each other [mutual benefit], both yours [doctrine in their souls] and mine [doctrine in Paul's soul].

Rom. 1:13 Moreover, I do not wish you to be ignorant [they need to progress from the basics to advanced doctrine], beloved, since frequently I myself intended [planned] to come face-to-face to you, but was forbidden until now, that I also might begin to bear some fruit [divine production] among you [Romans], (just as among the rest of the Gentiles).

Rom. 1:14 I am under obligation [sense of honor toward God, duty toward man] to the Greeks [civilized] and to the barbarians [uncivilized], both to the wise [maturing believers] and the unwise [reversionistic believers],

Rom. 1:15 But in this situation [waiting for God's permission], on my part [personal preference], I am eager to proclaim the good news [teach Bible doctrine] even to you who are in Rome.

Rom. 1:16 For I myself am not ashamed [not wimpy or cowardly] of the good news [Bible doctrine in general], for it [Bible doctrine] is the power [sanctifying daily process] of God with reference to salvation [experiential sanctification] to each person who continues to believe [living the life of faith], to the Jew first [in priority], and then to the Greek;

Rom. 1:17 For by this [daily believing in Bible doctrine], the righteousness of God is revealed [presented in Scriptures, but revealed when a believer lives it] from faith [justification] to faith [glorification], just as it stands written [in Habakkuk 2:4]: But, the righteous one [mature believer] shall continually live [experiential walk] by means of faith [sanctification].

Rom. 1:18 For the just anger [divine wrath] of God is being revealed from heaven against all categories of heathenism [ungodliness] and unrighteousness of mankind, of those who make it a habit to reject the Truth [Gospel] for unrighteousness,

Rom. 1:19 Because what is known about God [that He is the Creator] is manifest inside of them [in their consciences], for God has revealed Himself [by faith, rationalism and empiricism] to them [the entire human race],

Rom. 1:20 For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes [the divine essence of God] have been and are still being clearly seen [general revelation], perceived [comprehended by the intellect] through the things created, namely, both His eternal omnipotence [divine creative power] and divinity [divine nature and personality], so that they [the entire human race] are without excuse [no defense against the justice of God].

Rom. 1:21 Because when they knew God [by observing His creation], they did not honor Him as God [worship Him as Creator], nor did they feel obligated to thank Him [ungrateful for His blessings]; in fact, they became vain [empty] in their rationalizations [ridiculous notions] and their ignorant minds [having rejected divine truth] received darkness [blackout of the soul].

Rom. 1:22 Although they claimed to be wise [false profession], they became fools [deluded morons].

Rom. 1:23 In fact, they exchanged [decision made from arrogance] the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the likeness of corruptible man [self-worship] and birds and quadrupeds and reptiles [especially snakes].

Rom. 1:24 Therefore, God turned them over [gave them up to their own preferences] to the lusts [degenerate cravings] of their hearts to immorality of which [type or category] their bodies might be disgraced [degraded] among themselves [they dishonored one another through perverted sex].

Rom. 1:25 Who were of such a character [apostate heathens] that they exchanged the Truth of God for a lie, and worshipped [inward reverence] and served [outward rituals] the creation [radical environmentalists] rather than the Creator, Who will be praised unto the ages [forever].
Acknowledge it.

Rom. 1:26 Because of this [heathenistic worship of the creation], God turned them over to disgraceful passion [sexual immorality and perversion], for not only have their females exchanged their natural sexual function [heterosexuality] for something contrary to their natural disposition [lesbianism],

Rom. 1:27 But also in the same [sexually perverted] manner, even the males after they have abandoned [an act of deliberate volition, not something they were born with] their natural [instinctive] sexual function for females [heterosexuality], burned with sexual desire in their lust one for another, males with males [homosexuals], carrying the shameless deed to its ultimate conclusion in themselves [homosexuality leads to blackout of the soul] and receiving in return the penalty [payback, retribution, sexually transmitted diseases] which was fitting to the circumstances [inevitable, ordained by divine law], due to their wandering [being led astray] among themselves.

Rom. 1:28 Even after examining and putting God to the test [they listened to the Truth, thought about its implications, but rejected it anyway], for the purpose of retaining Him in full practical knowledge [epignosis: a thorough investigation], God turned them over to a reprobate mind [gnosis: nothing of true value was retained], so that they might continue to practice those things [sexual perversions] which are not fitting and proper [contrary to God's will and creative intention].

Rom. 1:29 Being filled to the point of overflowing [satiated] with every category of unrighteousness: depravity [wickedness], inordinate desire [greed], the function of evil [inflicting misery on others], full of jealousy [envy], full of murder [homicidal], full of strife [quarrelsome], full of deceit [treachery], full of spite [malicious], gossips [talking behind people's backs],

Rom. 1:30 Slanderers [defamation of character], God-haters, arrogant [treats others with contempt], proud [haughty], braggarts [boasters], evil schemers [fabricators], disobedient to parents [authority arrogance],

Rom. 1:31 Foolish [senseless, ignorant], contract-breakers [no honor, integrity, or sense of responsibility], devoid of the instincts of love [no sense of justice], merciless [unforgiving and implacable],

Rom. 1:32 Such are those who, though fully knowing [total cognizance] the legal requirement of the justice of God, (that those who continually practice such things [categories of evil] are deserving of death), not only are they continually doing these same things [function of evil], but they also give hearty approval to those [degenerates] who continually practice them [public opinion is utterly worthless].

Rom. 2:1 Therefore, you [self-righteous unbeliever who claims he hasn't done any of the terrible things listed] are without excuse [no defense before the Supreme Court of heaven], O man, every one of you when you judge [judging others draws attention to yourself], because whenever you pass judgment upon another of a different kind [one of the obvious sinners from the previous verses], you are actually condemning yourself, because you who keep judging practice the same things.

Rom. 2:2 But we [mature believers] have come to know beyond any shadow of a doubt [optimistically] that the judicial verdict from God according to the Truth [Bible doctrine] is against those who practice similar things [self-righteous arrogant people also commit mental, verbal and overt sins].

Rom. 2:3 And do you presume [calculate] this, O man, who condemns those who practice similar things [different category, still sin] when you also [behaving like self-righteous hypocrites] commit the same category of things [hiding behind a façade of legalism], that you will escape the judicial verdict from God?

Rom. 2:4 Or do you continue to treat with contempt [despise] the wealth of His kindness [based on His integrity] and forbearance [clemency] and longsuffering [restraint], being ignorant of the fact that the benevolence of God is trying to lead you to repentance [change your mind about living a life of sin]?

Rom. 2:5 But according to your stubborn and unrepentant heart [hardening of the spiritual arteries due to scar tissue of the soul], you are storing up [accumulating] wrath for yourself on the day of wrath [Great White Throne judgment], even revelation [disclosure] of the righteous judgment from God [shock of the unbeliever when he sees his human righteousness discarded from the proceedings],

Rom. 2:6 Who will render judgment [reimburse] to each person [believer and unbeliever] according to his works [rewards and torment are levied by degrees].

Rom. 2:7 On the one hand, to those [believers with positive volition towards Bible doctrine] who on the basis of spiritual fortitude [perseverance] characterized by good of intrinsic value production [meets divine standards] are continually striving for glory [sharing His attributes] and honor [obtaining rewards] and incorruptibility [resurrection body]: a spiritually rich life;

Rom. 2:8 On the other hand, to those [extremely sinful unbelievers] who out of contentiousness [virulent antagonism] are both disobedient to the truth [reject the gospel] and are constantly being misled by unrighteousness [slaves to Satan's cosmic system]: anger [divine judgment in time] and indignation [divine judgment in eternity].

Rom. 2:9 There is personal stress [pressure and anguish from the inside] and historical trouble [difficulties and calamities from the outside] for every soul of mankind [primarily unbelievers] who continues to produce evil [rotten fruit from Satan's cosmic system], first to the Jew [race is not an issue] and then the Greek [culture is not an issue].

Rom. 2:10 But there is glory and honor and prosperity for each one [positive believers] who continues to produce good [according to divine norms and standards], first to the Jew and then to the Greek.

Rom. 2:11 For there is no partiality [preferential treatment] with God [He never makes exceptions for anyone].

Rom. 2:12 For as many as sin without the law [Gentiles], shall also perish without the law; and as many as sin under the law [Jews only], shall be judged by the law.

Rom. 2:13 For those hearers of the law [students who never apply what they learn] are not just before God; however, those doers of the law [who continually apply what they learn] will be declared righteous.

Rom. 2:14 For every time that Gentiles, who do not have the law, instinctively practice doing those things characterized by the law, those ones not having the law, are a law unto themselves,

Rom. 2:15 The very ones [Gentiles] who continually demonstrate that the accomplishment characterized by the law is written upon their hearts [mentality], their conscience [norms & standards] bearing witness to the testimony [confirming the law without having the law]; in fact, their thoughts [reasonings] alternately accuse [prosecute] and excuse [defend] one another,

Rom. 2:16 In the day [Great White Throne judgment] when God will judge the secret thoughts [hidden plans] of men according to my gospel [as opposed to the false teachings which were rampant in Rome] through Jesus Christ.

Rom. 2:17 Now assume you classify yourself as a Jew [an illusory superiority], and your peace rests [blind, mechanical reliance] in the law [distorted into salvation by works], but you make it a practice to boast in God [brag about your assumed relationship to Him because of the law],

Rom. 2:18 And you have an intimate knowledge of His will [misplaced confidence], and you have examined and approved the teachings that are superior [the self-righteous, arrogant person thinks his brand of legalism is equivalent to the holiness of God], since you have been instructed [sarcastic statement] by the law [in the synagogue],

Rom. 2:19 And have convinced yourself [to the point of inflexibility] that you are a guide of the blind [actually the blind leading the blind], a light to those in darkness [though you yourself are walking in darkness],

Rom. 2:20 A corrector [disciplinarian, trainer] of the foolish [immature], a teacher of novices, having a superficial framework [outline] of the knowledge [rudimentary principles] and the truth [doctrine] in the law.

Rom. 2:21 According to these assumptions, when you are continually teaching another, are you not teaching yourself [Do you practice what you preach]? When you continually preach in a loud voice against stealing, do you steal?

Rom. 2:22 While you [the self-righteous, legalistic Jew] are speaking against adultery, are you committing adultery? While you are expressing disgust at idolatry, are you robbing temples [stealing from heathen banks & treasuries]?

Rom. 2:23 You [Judaizers] who are constantly boasting in the law [promoting themselves], do you dishonor God by breaking [violating] the law?

Rom. 2:24 Consequently, because of you [Jewish hypocrisy], the reputation of God is being blasphemed among the Gentiles, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:5].

Rom. 2:25 So, on the one hand, circumcision is beneficial if you accomplish [keep] the law [hypothetical impossibility]; but on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision [without spiritual circumcision, physical circumcision is useless].

Rom. 2:26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision [Gentile] continues to observe [keep] the righteous requirements of the law, shall his uncircumcision [physical] not be counted as circumcision [spiritual]?

Rom. 2:27 Furthermore, shall the uncircumcision [Gentiles], by instinctively keeping the law, judge you [Jews], a transgressor of the law, with the advantage of the letter [books of Moses] and the circumcision?

Rom. 2:28 Consequently, a person is not a Jew outwardly [receiving the surgical procedure does not make you a proselyte Jew], neither is the circumcision [spiritual] outwardly in the flesh [not due to a surgical procedure].

Rom. 2:29 Instead, a person is a Jew inwardly [by instinctively keeping the law]; furthermore, circumcision [spiritual] is in the frontal lobe of the soul, in the spirit [as opposed to flesh], not by the letter [books of Moses], whose recognition is not from men, but out from God.

Rom. 3:1 What, therefore, is the advantage of being a Jew? Or what profit is circumcision?

Rom. 3:2 Much, in every way! Most important, to be sure, is that they [Israel] were entrusted with the oracles [Old Testament canon] of God.

Rom. 3:3 For what if some people will not believe [reject the gospel]? Will not their unbelief cancel [nullify] the faithfulness of God?

Rom. 3:4 May it never happen! Rather, let God continue to be proved true [reliable], though every man is a liar [basically dishonest], just as it stands written: So that You might be demonstrated righteous by Your doctrines and so You will prevail [win the lawsuit] when You are being judged by it [the law & promises].

Rom. 3:5 But if our unrighteousness [wrongdoing] promotes the righteousness [divine integrity] of God, what shall we say [to what conclusion are we forced]? Is the God Who inflicts judgment unrighteous? I am speaking as [according to the standards of] a man [debater's technique: as a self-righteous straw man].

Rom. 3:6 May it never happen [God forbid]! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?

Rom. 3:7 For if the Truth of God has greatly abounded [become more prominent] unto His glory by means of my lying, why am I in particular still being judged as a sinner?

Rom. 3:8 In fact, not true, as we have been slandered and as some [self-righteous, arrogant legalists] continually insist that we are saying: Let us do evil things, so that good things may come [accused Paul of teaching "the ends justify the means"]. Their condemnation is deserved.

Rom. 3:9 What then? Are we better [superior]? Not by any means! For we have already proved all Jews and Greeks to be under sin [both have sin natures and are spiritually dead],

Rom. 3:10 Just as it stands written [in Psalm 14:3]: There is none righteous, not even one.

Rom. 3:11 There is none [unbelievers] who understands [comprehends the essence of Bible doctrine]; there is not one who seeks after the God [unbelievers have no spiritual momentum in the right direction].

Rom. 3:12 Everyone [unbelievers] has turned aside [avoided the truth]. At the same time, they have become depraved. There is none [unbelievers] who attains integrity [according to divine standards], not even one.

Rom. 3:13 Their [unbelievers] vocal chords [words] are a tomb which has been opened [verbal sins]. They repeatedly practice deceit with their tongues [maligning, slandering]. The venom of cobras [deadly verbal toxin] is upon their lips,

Rom. 3:14 Whose mouth is full of cursing [hatred and revenge motivation] and bitter words [verbal animosity and harshness].

Rom. 3:15 Their feet are swift to shed blood [commit murder].

Rom. 3:16 Historical disaster [ruin] and personal suffering [misery & distress] are in their paths [their journey in life].

Rom. 3:17 In fact, they have not understood the way of prosperity [peace, intimate relationship with God].

Rom. 3:18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Rom. 3:19 Now we understand that what the [Mosaic] law says, it communicates to those under the jurisdiction of the law [Jews], so that every mouth [including Gentile legalists] might be stopped, and all the world might become accountable to God.

Rom. 3:20 Therefore, by the works [deeds] of the law, no flesh [person] shall be justified at His presence [at the Great White Throne], for the full knowledge of sin is through the law.

Rom. 3:21 Now, as a matter of fact [real, not hypothetical], the righteousness of God [justification as the free gift of eternal life] apart from the law has been revealed, having been witnessed by the law and the prophets [OT canon],

Rom. 3:22 That is, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ [Who voluntarily submitted to the humiliation of the cross] to all those who believe (for there is no distinction [between Jew and Gentile],

Rom. 3:23 Because everyone has sinned and continues to come short of [fails to pass the divine standards of] the glory of God),

Rom. 3:24 Being justified [judicial, forensic] without payment [received as a gift] by His grace through redemption [bought from the slave market of sin by paying a ransom], the one in Christ Jesus [the only qualified kinsmen-redeemer],

Rom. 3:25 Whom God [the Father] appointed by His blood [representative analogy for Christ's spiritual death on the cross] a mercy seat [a gift to procure expiation or propitiation] through faith [reconciliation for those who believe: the elect, His sheep], for a demonstration of His righteousness [God the Father demanded the atonement and then provided it] for the remission of sins [imputation of our sins to Jesus Christ] which were committed in former times [before the cross of Christ] under His clemency [delay of judgment],

Rom. 3:26 For the demonstration of His righteousness at this present time [during the Church Age], so that He might be just [displaying perfect integrity] even when He justifies someone [emphasis on the sovereignty of God in justification] by means of the faithfulness of Jesus [emphasis on Christ's voluntary acceptance of the cross].

Rom. 3:27 Consequently, where is boasting [self-righteousness]? It has been eliminated. By what kind of principle? Of works? No, rather by the principle of faith.

Rom. 3:28 Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from [without the assistance of] the works of the law.

Rom. 3:29 Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, even of the Gentiles.

Rom. 3:30 Since it is one and the same God, Who shall justify the circumcision [Jews] by faith [source] and the uncircumcision [Gentiles] through this same faith [intermediary instrument],

Rom. 3:31 Do we then make the law invalid [nullified] through faith? On the contrary! Rather, we confirm the law [it fulfills its intended purpose: to make sin exceedingly sinful].

Rom. 4:1 Therefore, to what conclusion are we forced? That Abraham, our forefather, obtained [justification] on the basis of the flesh [by human means only]?

Rom. 4:2 For if [assume it's true] Abraham had been justified by means of works [although works have never entered into the principle of salvation in any dispensation], then he would have reason to boast [before men], but not before God [God is not impressed with human works, human personality or human good].

Rom. 4:3 For what does the Scripture [Genesis 15:6] say? Abraham believed God and it was credited to him [put on his ledger account] because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

Rom. 4:4 Now to the one who works [for justification]: a reward not credited according to grace [God's gift], but according to debt [obligation].

Rom. 4:5 But, to the one who does not continually work [relinquishes all human effort in obtaining justification-salvation], but who believes [an instantaneous activity] on Him [Jesus Christ] Who justifies the ungodly: his faith is credited because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

Rom. 4:6 As it were [for example], even David [in Psalm 32] confirmed the divine blessing [happiness] upon the man to whom God credited [imputed] righteousness apart from works:

Rom. 4:7 Happinesses [divine favor] to those [all believers] whose iniquities have been forgiven [imputation of the sins of the elect to Jesus Christ on the cross] and to those whose sins have been covered [reference to the blood covering the mercy seat].

Rom. 4:8 Happiness [divine favor] to the man to whom the Lord will never, ever reckon sin [the sins of the believing sinner were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross].

Rom. 4:9 Therefore, is this happiness [divine favor] for the circumcision and the uncircumcision as well? For we quote: Faith was credited to Abraham because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

Rom. 4:10 How then was it [God's righteousness] credited? When he was in the status of circumcision [Jewish status] or in the status of uncircumcision [Gentile status]? Not in the status of circumcision [he was 99 years old when he was circumcised], but rather in the status of uncircumcision [he believed God and was justified when he was 75 years old].

Rom. 4:11 In fact, he received the physical sign [distinguishing ritual mark] of circumcision, a confirming seal of righteousness by faith, while in uncircumcision [Gentile status], so that this same one [Abraham] might be the pattern [father] of all those who believe while in the status of uncircumcision [Gentiles], so that righteousness is imputed to them [Gentiles] as well,

Rom. 4:12 And the pattern [father] of circumcision [spiritual: by faith] not only to those from circumcision [physical: by race], but also to those advancing in rank [following his footsteps] according to faith, like our ancestor Abraham in the state of uncircumcision [while in Gentile status].

Rom. 4:13 For the promise to Abraham concerning his seed [Jewish believers only], to be heir of the world [blessings from the Abrahamic covenant], was not through the law [Abraham lived 430 years before the law was given], but through the [imputed] righteousness of faith [unconditional covenant].

Rom. 4:14 For if they [Abraham's seed] are heirs through the law, that faith has been voided with the result that it is permanently invalidated [justification by faith is destroyed] and that promise [unconditional elements of the Abrahamic covenant] is cancelled.

Rom. 4:15 For the law brings about wrath [divine punishment]; but where there is no law [among Gentiles], there is no distortion of the law [transformation of law into a system of self-righteousness].

Rom. 4:16 For this reason, it [the promise] is out of faith [as opposed to the law], so that it [the promise] is according to grace [as opposed to works], so that in the end the promise might be secure [permanent & reliable] to all [both Jew & Gentile] the seed, not only to those from the law [Jews], but also to those [Gentiles] from the faith of Abraham, who is the pattern [father] of us all,

Rom. 4:17 Just as it stands written [in Genesis 17:5]: "I have appointed you a father of many nations," (in the midst of which [nations] he [Abraham] came to believe the God Who brings life [regenerated sexual apparatus] to the dead ones [dead phallus of Abraham and dead womb of Sarah], and Who designated [called] the things [sexual apparatus] which did not exist [inability to function properly] as though they existed [their sexual capabilities came back to life again during old age]),

Rom. 4:18 Who [Abraham] beyond hope [unable to impregnate Sarah], believed in hope [trust in God's promise], in order that he might become father [the pattern] of many nations, according to that which was spoken [in Genesis 15:5]: "So shall your sperm [offspring] exist."

Rom. 4:19 And so without becoming weak [fainthearted] in faith, he considered his own body [sexual apparatus] which was already as good as dead [unable to properly function], (now that he

was approximately a hundred years old), and also the deadness of Sarah's womb [unable to bear children].

Rom. 4:20 Moreover, he [Abraham] did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief, but became strong through faith, giving glory to God,

Rom. 4:21 While being fully convinced that what He [God] had promised, He was also able [and willing] to accomplish.

Rom. 4:22 For this reason, therefore, it [faith] was credited to him [Abraham] because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

Rom. 4:23 Now it was not written [by Moses] for him [Abraham] only: "It was imputed to him,"

Rom. 4:24 But also for us [believers only], to whom it was destined [by divine decree] to be imputed when we believe on Him [God the Father] Who raised up Jesus [humanity of Christ] our Lord [deity of Christ] from death [Jesus died twice: first spiritually, then physically],

Rom. 4:25 Who was delivered over to judgment because of our transgressions [justification was accomplished by His death on the cross] and was raised because of our justification [salvation was accomplished by His resurrection life].

Rom. 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith [positional truth], may we [let us] keep on having spiritual prosperity [experiential truth] face-to-face with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom. 5:2 Through Whom we should also continue to obtain access [approach] by faith into this grace in which we stand [we should be attempting to bring our experiential state up to our positional standing], and so let us boast [esprit de corps] in the confidence of the glory of God [His purposes will stand].

Rom. 5:3 And not only this [boasting in the confidence of the glory of God], but also let us boast in pressures [esprit de corps during adversity], knowing that pressure [adversity testing] may bring about fortitude [spiritual self-esteem],

Rom. 5:4 And fortitude [spiritual self-esteem] may bring about character [spiritual autonomy], and character may bring about confidence [spiritual maturity],

Rom. 5:5 And the confidence [spiritual maturity] never disappoints [is not illusory] as long as the love [mental process] for God is continually being poured out [consistent daily fellowship] in our hearts [mentality of the soul] by means of the Holy Spirit [Who converts application of doctrine to wisdom] Who was given to us.

Rom. 5:6 Yet [even though I'm now emphasizing spiritual growth], in fact, while we were spiritually disabled [depraved & spiritually impotent], Christ still died at the appointed time as a substitute for the ungodly [He died for us even if we never grow spiritually].

Rom. 5:7 For only rarely will a person die [perhaps on impulse] on behalf of a righteous man [scrupulously just]; indeed, perhaps someone might even have the courage to die on behalf of a good man [beneficent & kind],

Rom. 5:8 But God demonstrated His own love [distinguishing & redemptive] toward us [the elect], in that while we were yet sinners [rebels], Christ died as a substitute for us [His sheep].

Rom. 5:9 Much more [it follows a fortiori], therefore, being now justified [forensic] by means of His blood [representative analogy for the spiritual death of Christ on the cross], we shall be saved from the wrath [last judgment & the Lake of Fire] through Him.

Rom. 5:10 For if while we were enemies [sinners estranged from God], we were reconciled to God by means of the death of His Son, much more [a fortiori], having been reconciled [now saints], we shall be saved [ultimate sanctification] by His life [resurrection].

Rom. 5:11 And not only this [being reconciled by His death and saved by His life], but we are also constantly boasting [esprit de corps] in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the reconciliation [as a gift from God].

Rom. 5:12 For this reason, just as the [original] sin [of Adam] entered into the world [invaded humanity] through one man [1st Adam], and so the [spiritual] death by means of the sin nature, indeed, in this manner, the [spiritual] death spread to all mankind, because all have sinned [by genetic propagation] against Him,

Rom. 5:13 For until the law was given, [personal] sin was in the world, but [personal] sin was not imputed while there was no law.

Rom. 5:14 Nevertheless, the [spiritual] death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of Adam's transgression [federal headship is the issue, not personal sin], who was a type of the One [Jesus Christ] Who was to come [at the 1st advent].

Rom. 5:15 Not like the [Adam's original] transgression is also the gracious gift [redemption]; for if by the sin of one man [Adam] many [the entire human race] have died, much more [to a greater degree] shall the grace of God, even the gift by grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abundantly flow out upon many [the elect].

Rom. 5:16 In fact, the gift [justification] is not like [the type is not perfect] through the one [Adam] who sinned. On the one hand, the judicial verdict after one transgression [Adam's original sin] resulted in condemnation; but on the other hand, the gracious gift [saving work of Christ on the cross] because of many transgressions [personal sins] resulted in justification.

Rom. 5:17 For if by one man's transgression [Adam's original sin] the [spiritual] death ruled through the one [Adam], much more [to a greater degree] may those [supergrace believers] who

receive in life the surplus from grace [abundant blessings] and the gift of righteousness [special award in eternity], rule [only mature believers will reign] through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:18 So therefore, as through one transgression Adam's sin was imputed to all men whom he represented [representative union: the entire human race] resulting in condemnation, in this manner also, through one sentence of condemnation [righteous act: imputation of our sins to Christ on the cross] God's righteousness was imputed to all men whom he represented [representative union: God's elect] resulting in justification to life.

Rom. 5:19 For just as through the disobedient act of one man [Adam] many [those whom he represented: the entire human race] were appointed sinners, in the same manner also [by judicial imputation], through the obedient act of One [Jesus Christ] many [those whom He represented: the elect] will be appointed righteous ones.

Rom. 5:20 Moreover, the law came in as a side issue [it was never the center of God's plan or purpose], so that the transgression [Adam's original sin] might abound [become exceedingly sinful]. But where personal sin has abounded [on top of Adam's original sin], grace has superabounded [exists in greater abundance].

Rom. 5:21 So that just as the old sin nature has ruled unto [spiritual] death, in the same manner also, grace might rule [potential] through righteousness because of eternal life [we have the option of bringing our experience of life in time up to our position of life in eternity] through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 6:1 What then, shall we conclude? Shall we continue having cordial relations with sin [like we were still unbelievers], so that grace may abound?

Rom. 6:2 Definitely not! Since we have died to the sin nature [positionally], how can we still keep on living in it [experientially]?

Rom. 6:3 Don't you understand that as many as were placed into vital union with Christ Jesus [elect in Him in eternity past] were placed into vital union with His spiritual death [His sheep were united with Him on the cross]?

Rom. 6:4 Therefore, we [the elect] have been buried with Him [intimately united] through the vital union [baptism of the Spirit] into His physical death, so that just as Christ was raised [resurrection] from deaths [both spiritual & physical] by the glory [integrity & omnipotence] of the Father, in the same manner also [by the integrity & delegated omnipotence of God], we might walk [conduct ourselves] in newness of life [believers have the option of living a supernatural life here and now].

Rom. 6:5 For if we have become intimately united [retroactive positional truth] to the likeness of His spiritual death, then we shall also be intimately united to the likeness of His resurrection [as we walk with Him in time and receive our resurrection body in the future].

Rom. 6:6 Be knowing this [by comprehension of doctrine]: Our old man [sin nature] has been crucified together with Him, so that the human body of sin [the sin nature dwelling in every cell of the physical body] might be rendered powerless, so that we might stop serving our sin nature like a slave.

Rom. 6:7 Consequently, the one who has died to the old man [retroactive positional truth] has been set free [positional sanctification] from the power of the sin nature.

Rom. 6:8 Now since we have died together with Christ [retroactive positional truth], we should also understand that we will live in association with [derive our spiritual life from] Him [current positional truth],

Rom. 6:9 Knowing that Christ, having been raised from deaths [both spiritual & physical deaths], can never die again, death no longer ruling [having dominion over] Him.

Rom. 6:10 For the [spiritual] death He died [retroactive positional truth], He died for sin once and for all [one time only, never again]; but the [resurrection] life He lives [in hypostatic union], He lives [current positional truth] for God.

Rom. 6:11 Likewise, you also consider yourselves on the one hand to be dead to the sin nature [mortification], but on the other hand, continually living for God [vivification] in the Person of Christ Jesus.

Rom. 6:12 Therefore, stop allowing [emphasis on your volition] the sin nature to rule in your mortal body [old sin nature in the cell structure of your body], so that as a result you obey it [the sin nature in the cell structure of your body] with its trends [lust patterns].

Rom. 6:13 Stop placing your members [faculties of the body & soul] as weapons of wickedness [good & evil] under the orders of [yielding to] the sin nature, but place yourself completely under orders [yielding] to God as those who are alive [retroactive positional truth] from deaths [identified with Christ in His spiritual & physical deaths], and your members [faculties of the body & soul] as weapons of righteousness to God [our positional victory gives us the potential for experiential victory],

Rom. 6:14 For the sin nature must not be allowed to rule over you, because you are not under the authority of the precepts of the law [pertinent to Israel only], but under the authority of the principles of grace [plan of God for the Church Age].

Rom. 6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the authority of the precepts of the law, but under the authority of the principles of grace? May it never happen!

Rom. 6:16 Don't you know that to whom [sin nature or God] you place yourselves under orders to as slaves by way of obedience, you are slaves to the one whom you habitually obey: either to the sin nature resulting in [spiritual] death or obedience [to God] resulting in righteousness?

Rom. 6:17 Now thanks [gratitude] belongs to God, that you used to be habitual slaves to the sin nature, but you have begun to obey from the mentality of your soul the system of doctrine into which you were handed over.

Rom. 6:18 And after being freed [liberated] from the sin nature [positional sanctification], you have begun to become slaves to righteousness [experiential sanctification].

Rom. 6:19 I am speaking with a human illustration [slavery] because of the weakness of your flesh [the sin nature still has a firm grip on them]: for just as you put your members [faculties of the body & soul] under orders as slaves to impurity [trend towards sin] and to transgressions [trend towards human good] resulting in lawlessness [trend towards evil], in the same manner, now begin putting your members [faculties of the body & soul] under orders as slaves to the righteousness [by metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine] resulting in sanctification [execution of the spiritual life].

Rom. 6:20 For as long as you were slaves to the sin nature, you were free from righteousness [no potential for spiritual growth].

Rom. 6:21 What benefit, therefore, did you have at that time [when you were a slave to the sin nature] over which you are now ashamed [ashes in your teeth]? For the end of those things [benefits from the lust pattern of the sin nature] is spiritual death.

Rom. 6:22 But now, having been freed from the sovereignty of the sin nature and having become slaves to God, you have the opportunity to produce your fruit with respect to [experiential] sanctification, and toward the goal of eternal life [supergrace life here on earth].

Rom. 6:23 Certainly the subsistence allowance [base pay] from the sin nature is spiritual death, but the grace benefit from God is [positional & future] eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. 7:1 Or are you ignorant [yes, they are], brethren, (for I am communicating to those [legalists] who know [are misapplying] the law), that the law lords it over mankind [rules as an additional, illegitimate authority] for as long a time as he lives?

Rom. 7:2 For a wife under the authority of her husband [old sin nature] stands permanently bound by the law [as marriage counselor] to her husband as long as he is living. But if the husband [old sin nature] should die [by divorce or physical death], she is released by the law [marriage counselor] from the husband.

Rom. 7:3 Consequently, therefore, while her husband [old sin nature] is living, she will be classified as an adulteress [out from her proper authority and underneath somebody else], if she has become [intimate with] another of a different kind of man [illegitimacy]; but if her husband [old sin nature] has died [through divorce or physical death], she is free from the law [as marriage counselor], so that that same one is not an adulteress, even though she has become [married to] another husband [Jesus Christ as her 2nd husband] of a different kind [spiritual as opposed to carnal].

Rom. 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die [through the baptism of the Spirit] to the law [as the marriage counselor] through the person of Christ [2nd husband], so that you might belong [at the point of salvation] to another of a different kind [spiritual as opposed to carnal husband], to Him [Jesus Christ] Who was raised up [resurrected] from deaths [both spiritual & physical], so that we might bear fruit [spiritual production from the 2nd marriage] unto God.

Rom. 7:5 For while we [as believers] were in the flesh, the passions [impulses, trends] of sin, which were through the law [as marriage counselor], operated in our members [both internal & external parts of the body] so that we produced fruit associated with spiritual death [carnal production from our 1st marriage].

Rom. 7:6 But now we have been released [by divorce or physical death] from the law, having died to that [1st marriage] by which we were bound [under the authority of the old sin nature], so that we might serve Him [Jesus Christ as our 2nd husband] as slaves with a new Spirit [the Holy Spirit as our new marriage counselor] and not with the old letter [the law as our old marriage counselor].

Rom. 7:7 What, then, shall we say? Is the law sin? May it not be so [definitely not]! On the contrary, I was not cognizant of the sin nature except through the law [the law as our marriage counselor demonstrated the failure of our 1st marriage to the old sin nature]. For instance, I would not have recognized the lust pattern [trend of the old sin nature] except the law kept on saying, “You shall not lust.”

Rom. 7:8 But the sin nature, by holding a base of operations [seizing the opportunity] through the [10th] commandment, produced every category of lust in me, because without the law, the sin nature was dead.

Rom. 7:9 Now at one time I lived without the law [totally ignorant about the old sin nature and its marriage counselor], but when the commandment appeared [entered the conscience for the 1st time], the sin nature became invigorated, and I died [spiritually],

Rom. 7:10 Because that commandment which was being examined for life [the law promises an elusive form of abundant life], the same resulted in [spiritual] death for me.

Rom. 7:11 For the sin nature [1st husband], having seized the opportunity through the commandment [marriage counselor quoting the 10th commandment], deceived me [used the old sin nature to arouse corruption], and through the same [10th commandment: You shall not lust] killed me [spiritual death in the soul].

Rom. 7:12 As a matter of fact, therefore, the law [as marriage counselor] is holy [perfect integrity]; also the [10th] commandment is holy and righteous [just] and absolute good.

Rom. 7:13 Therefore, did the absolute good [10th commandment] become [spiritual] death to me? May it not come to pass! But the sin nature [the 1st husband is the real culprit], in order that sin might be revealed through the absolute good [10th commandment], made [spiritual] death a reality

to me, so that through the [10th] commandment the sin nature might become utterly [beyond measure] sinful.

Rom. 7:14 Certainly we know that the law is spiritual [according to divine norms & standards], but I am carnal [controlled by the sin nature], when I have been led astray [sold into slavery] under the authority of the sin nature [when we go chasing after our 1st husband].

Rom. 7:15 For what I accomplish [under the control of the old sin nature], I do not understand [my spiritual perception is dulled by sin], because I am not practicing the things [mechanics of the spiritual life] which I desire, but I keep doing the very things [pattern of sinning] which I utterly detest.

Rom. 7:16 Now if I keep on doing this thing [continual pattern of sinning] which I do not desire to do [against my better judgment], I agree with the law [its divine norms & standards] that it is good.

Rom. 7:17 But as the case stands, I [using better judgment in the filling of the Spirit] am no longer performing the same, but the sin nature [following the bad judgment of the 1st husband] which keeps on dwelling in me.

Rom. 7:18 In fact, I know that nothing of intrinsic value [meeting divine norms & standards] resides in me, that is, in my flesh [home of the sin nature], for to will [desire] is present in me, but to perform the noble [divine production] is not present.

Rom. 7:19 For I do not consistently perform the intrinsic good which I desire, but I keep practicing the evil which I do not desire.

Rom. 7:20 Now if I am habitually practicing what I do not desire [pattern of the reversionist], I am no longer the one performing it [my primary personality is out of control], but the sin nature [1st husband] which continues to reside inside of me [my secondary personality is in control].

Rom. 7:21 Consequently, I discovered this principle: that when I desire to do the honorable thing [from the filling of the Spirit], the principle of evil [old sin nature] resides in me.

Rom. 7:22 By all means, I joyfully concur with the law of God [Bible doctrine] with reference to the inner man [my primary, spiritual personality],

Rom. 7:23 But [after studying the matter] I see another principle of a different kind [carnal as opposed to spiritual] in my members [the sin nature in the cell structure of the body], constantly fighting [carrying on an aggressive campaign] against the principle of my mind [the old sin nature wages war against Bible doctrine in the soul], and so constantly making me a prisoner [POW] to the principle of the sin nature which is in [takes captive of] my members.

Rom. 7:24 I am a stressed-out [tormented, anguished] person! Who will rescue me from the body of this death [old sin nature control]?

Rom. 7:25 Thanks be to God [Who delivers me] through Jesus Christ our Lord. Consequently, therefore, on the one hand, I myself serve the law [principles & objectives] of God with my mind, but on the other hand, with my flesh the law [dictates] of the sin nature.

Rom. 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation [penal servitude to sin] to those in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 8:2 For the principle of the Spirit [the new marriage counselor] Who is the source of eternal life [by imputation] has set you free in Christ Jesus [the 2nd husband] from the law [the old marriage counselor] of the sin nature [the 1st husband] and the spiritual death.

Rom. 8:3 For what was impossible from the law [the 1st marriage counselor was not an instrument of salvation or spiritual growth], in that it was weak [disabled] through the flesh [due to the indwelling sin nature], God, when He sent His Own Son [deity of Christ] in the likeness [in the form of flesh, but not sinful flesh] of sinful flesh [humanity of Christ], for the purpose of taking away sin, judged the sin nature [1st husband] in the flesh,

Rom. 8:4 So that the legal requirement of the law might be filled up [completed] in us, who keep walking [experiential sanctification] not according to the flesh [old sin nature], but according to the Spirit.

Rom. 8:5 For those who are dominated by the flesh [old sin nature] keep thinking about the things [sin, human good, evil] of the flesh [human viewpoint], but those dominated by the Spirit the things [Bible doctrines] of the Spirit [divine viewpoint].

Rom. 8:6 Consequently, the carnal thought pattern [sin nature way of thinking] leads to spiritual death [through progressive stages of divine discipline], but the spiritual thought pattern [doctrinal way of thinking] leads to capacity for life [supergrace quality] and prosperity [blessings from God].

Rom. 8:7 Because the carnal thought pattern [sin nature way of thinking] is hostile towards God, for it is not subordinate to the divine policy of God [Bible doctrine as our way of life], because it is not able [doesn't have the capacity to do so].

Rom. 8:8 Moreover, those [carnal & reversionistic believers] who are continually in the flesh [under the sin nature's control] are not able to please God.

Rom. 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh [divorced from the old sin nature, positionally], but in the Spirit [baptism of the Spirit, positionally], assuming that the Spirit of God dwells in you. In fact, if a person does not possess the Spirit [indwelling] from Christ, this one does not belong to Him [is an unbeliever].

Rom. 8:10 In fact, if Christ is in you [indwelling of Christ], on the one hand, the body is [spiritually] dead because of sin [carnality or reversionism], but on the other hand, the [human] spirit is alive [energized by the Holy Spirit] because of [His imputed] righteousness.

Rom. 8:11 Now if the Spirit [God the Holy Spirit] from Him [God the Father] Who raised up [resurrected] the Jesus [God the Son] from deaths [both physical and spiritual] indwells you, He [God the Father] Who raised up Christ from deaths shall also quicken your mortal bodies [future resurrection] by means of His Spirit Who indwells you.

Rom. 8:12 Consequently, therefore, brethren, we are debtors [under obligation] not to the flesh so that we habitually live according to the standards of the flesh [follow the lust pattern of our old sin nature].

Rom. 8:13 Indeed, if you continually live according to the standards of the flesh [dictates of the old sin nature], you will inevitably die [self-destruction and maximum divine discipline leading to the sin unto death]; but if by means of the Spirit you make it a practice to recognize as dead [condemn] the functions from the body [any system of human good or self-righteousness], you will live [abundant life].

Rom. 8:14 For as many as are continually led by the Spirit of God [divine guidance], these are the mature [high quality] sons of God.

Rom. 8:15 For, you have not received a spirit [disposition] of slavery resulting in a state of fear, but rather you have received the Spirit of adult sonship [spiritual toga virilis], by Whom we may shout: Father, Father!

Rom. 8:16 The [Holy] Spirit Himself testifies with our [human] spirit that we are children [students] of God,

Rom. 8:17 Now if we are children [born of God], then we [believers] are heirs [our spiritual heritage depends on Whom we are related to]: on the one hand we are heirs of God [by the 1st birth]; on the other hand we are joint-heirs with Christ, if after this [becoming heirs of God], we [undeservedly] suffer together; then we will also be glorified together [rewards & blessings for winner believers].

Rom. 8:18 For I conclude that the sufferings of this present period of time [the Church Age] are not comparable to the glory [eternal honor, rewards & blessings] which is intended to be revealed to us.

Rom. 8:19 Moreover, the confident expectation of the creation [material universe] waits eagerly for the manifestation [at the 2nd advent] of the adult sons [winner believers] of God,

Rom. 8:20 For the creation [material universe] became subject to the vacuum [shared in Adam's sin, futility, and emptiness], not voluntarily, but because of Him [God the Father] Who subordinated it [the material universe] in the time of hope [at the Fall],

Rom. 8:21 Therefore, the creation itself [material universe] shall also be delivered [set free at the 2nd advent] from the bondage of corruption [ruin & destruction] into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Rom. 8:22 Moreover, we know that the entire creation [material universe] has been groaning together [shares in the condemnation of mankind] and suffering agony together [travailing in childbirth] until now,

Rom. 8:23 And not only nature [the material creation], but also ourselves [mature believers], although we possess the firstfruits from the Spirit [blessings imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation]; even we ourselves groan from time to time [complain] within ourselves, waiting expectantly for the adoption [ultimate sanctification], i.e., the redemption of our body [resurrection].

Rom. 8:24 So then, we [mature believers] are delivered with reference to that future expectation [we were saved for a future purpose]. However, when a hope is seen, it is not a hope, for who hopes for what he sees?

Rom. 8:25 Now if we continue to hope for what we do not see [modus vivendi of the mature believer], we stand with eager anticipation [confident in the promises of God].

Rom. 8:26 And in the same manner, the Spirit also helps us [positive believers only] through our spiritual weakness [during periods of undeserved suffering], for we do not know, as is our duty, what we should be praying for [lack of advanced doctrine hinders our prayers during times of adversity]. But the Spirit Himself intercedes on our behalf [during periods of undeserved suffering] from time to time with inexpressible groanings [which are accepted at the Supreme Court of heaven].

Rom. 8:27 Furthermore, He [God the Father] Who continually scrutinizes our mentality [right lobe of the soul] knows what the thinking of the Spirit is, because He [the Holy Spirit] intercedes according to God's policy on behalf of the saints.

Rom. 8:28 In fact, we know with an absolute knowledge that for those who love God [limited to mature believers], He [the Father] works all things [including undeserved suffering] together for good, to those who are the elect [called-out ones] according to a predetermined plan [divine decree].

Rom. 8:29 Moreover, those He [God the Father] loved before time [in eternity past], He also predestined [determined in advance] to a form [ultimate resurrection body] similar to that of the image of His Son, so that He [Jesus Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren [the royal family of God shares in His birthright].

Rom. 8:30 Moreover, those He [God the Father] has predestined [determined beforehand in eternity past], these same ones He also elected [effectually called in time], and those He has elected, these He also justified [at the moment of conversion], and those He justified, these same ones He also glorified [positionally in the heavens].

Rom. 8:31 What, therefore, shall we conclude about these things [doctrines concerning suffering and the divine decrees]? If God is for us [acting on our behalf], who can be against us?

Rom. 8:32 Indeed, He Himself [God the Father] did not spare His Own Son, but delivered Him up on behalf of [substitutionary atonement] all [believers outside of Rome] of us [those who meet the

qualification in the previous verse]. So how is it possible that He [God the Father] together with Him [God the Son] will not also graciously provide for us [the beneficiaries] the all things [positionally: the benefits of the divine decrees; experientially: prosperity from undeserved suffering]?

Rom. 8:33 Who shall bring charges [accusations] against God's elect? God, the One Who justifies?

Rom. 8:34 Who is attempting to condemn us? Christ Jesus, Who died [as our Substitute], even greater, Who was resurrected [ascension], Who is both at the right hand of God [session], and Who continues to intercede [as defense attorney] on our behalf?

Rom. 8:35 Who [what: momentum and disaster tests] shall separate us from the love of Christ [His love for us, not our love for Him]? Outside pressure [affliction], or difficulty [mental anguish], or legitimate persecution [anti-Christian endeavors], or economic depression [due to liberalism or socialistic policies], or deprivation [lack of clothing], or lurking danger [historical catastrophe], or two-edged sword [military defeat and rampant crime]?

Rom. 8:36 Just as it stands written [in Psalm 44:22]: For Your sake [Jesus Christ] we are being murdered throughout the entire day [continuous martyrdom in Rome during the reign of Nero Claudius Caesar]; we have been evaluated [looked upon] as sheep for the slaughter [doomed to become martyrs].

Rom. 8:37 Nevertheless, in spite of all these things [suffering and adversities], we are winning the supreme victory [glorifying Christ by suffering] as conquerors through Him [God the Father] Who loves us.

Rom. 8:38 Indeed, I am fully persuaded that neither death nor life, nor fallen angels nor demon generals, nor things which are imminent [during this present age] nor things which are destined to come [in future dispensations], nor powers [human conspiracies, bad government],

Rom. 8:39 Nor height [nothing in heaven] nor depth [nothing in hell], nor any creature of a different kind [non-human], shall have the power to separate us from the love of God [the Father] which is in Christ Jesus our Lord [doctrine of eternal security].

Rom. 9:1 I am communicating doctrine in Christ (I am not lying) [intellectual honesty], my conscience [norms & standards] bearing joint-testimony with me in the Holy Spirit [divine inspiration],

Rom. 9:2 That great personal sorrow [legitimate burden], even constant grief, is in my soul's mentality.

Rom. 9:3 Moreover, I could almost wish that I myself would be accursed [separated] from Christ on behalf of my brethren [courageous but impossible supposition], my kinsmen [blood relation] according to the flesh [Jewish race],

Rom. 9:4 Who are Israelites [from the Jewish client nation], to whom: the adoption [spiritual heritage of Israel], and the glory [Shekinah glory of Jesus Christ], and the unconditional covenants [Abrahamic and Palestinian], and the lawgiving [Mosaic law], and the ritual service [Levitical priesthood], and the promises [Abrahamic and Davidic],

Rom. 9:5 From whom are the fathers [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as our regenerate ancestors]. In fact, from whom [genetically] according to the flesh [humanity] Christ came [1st advent], the One Who is over all [divine sovereignty], the blessed God [deity of Christ] unto the ages [all dispensations]. So be it.

Rom. 9:6 However, the Word of God [Old Testament] has not run aground [drifted off course] because of this [setting aside of Israel and inserting the Church Age], for not all who have descended from Israel [by physical birth] are really Israel [not racial, but born-again Jews].

Rom. 9:7 Neither because they are the seed [descendants] from Abraham are they all [racial Jews] children [Abraham had 8 sons], but rather in Isaac [one son only] shall your seed be elected.

Rom. 9:8 That is, those who are children of the flesh [racial Jews], these are not the children of God [true Jews]: but the children [heirs] of the promise [regenerate Jews] are imputed for the seed [spiritual seed of Abraham].

Rom. 9:9 For this is the word of promise [Genesis 18:10]: Immediately after this time [the exact prophetic moment in God's plan], I [Jesus Christ] will return and a son will be provided for Sarah [spiritual blessing].

Rom. 9:10 And not only her [Sarah], but also Rebecca when she had sexual intercourse [conceived a child] with one man, i.e. [namely], our father, Isaac,

Rom. 9:11 For the twins, not yet having been born, neither having committed anything good or evil, so that the sovereign purpose of God according to election would stand [no changes to the divine plan], not by works [human will or effort], but by Him Who elects [the source of selection is God Himself].

Rom. 9:12 It was spoken to her [in Genesis 25:23]: The elder [Esau] shall serve the younger [Jacob],

Rom. 9:13 Just as it stands written [in Malachi 1:2-3]: I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau.

Rom. 9:14 What, then, shall we say? There is no injustice [unrighteous prejudice] with God, is there? Let it not be so!

Rom. 9:15 For He said to Moses [in Exodus 33:19]: I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion [God reserves the right to exercise divine sovereignty in both election and reprobation].

Rom. 9:16 So then, it [election to salvation] is not by means of him [man] who wills [not by positive volition], nor by means of him [man] who exerts himself to the limits of his power in an attempt to move forward [strives to advance], but by means of God Who shows mercy.

Rom. 9:17 For the Scripture spoke to Pharaoh [in Exodus 9:16], that: For this very purpose I have raised you up, so that I might demonstrate [put on public display] My power through you, and so My Name might be proclaimed far and wide throughout all the land.

Rom. 9:18 Consequently, therefore, on whom [the elect] He wills: He has mercy on; in fact, on whom [the non-elect] He wills: He hardens.

Rom. 9:19 Therefore, will you ask me: Why then does He continue to find fault? For who can resist His sovereign will?

Rom. 9:20 On the contrary, oh man [derogatory insult], who are you who argues against [impugns the integrity of] the God? Shall the thing formed [creature] reply against Him Who did the creative forming [Creator]: Why have you made me this way?

Rom. 9:21 Or doesn't the potter possess authority over the clay to make, on the one hand, out of the same lump of clay [body of believers], a vessel unto honor [supergrace believers], but on the other hand, a vessel unto dishonor [reversionistic believers]?

Rom. 9:22 Now suppose God, Who is willing to demonstrate wrath [divine judgment] and to reveal His power [omnipotence], endures with great patience [postpones judgment on] the vessels of wrath [unbelievers] who are fitted for destruction [eternal judgment],

Rom. 9:23 Also suppose that He desires to reveal the riches of His glory [grace blessings] upon the vessels of mercy [the elect] whom He has prepared beforehand for glory:

Rom. 9:24 Namely us, whom He has elected, not only out from the Jews, but also out from the Gentiles.

Rom. 9:25 Likewise, He also communicated in Hosea [2:23]: I will call [elect] them [illegitimate Gentile children of Hosea's wife] who were not My people, My people [saved Gentiles during the dispensation of Israel], and she [Hosea's unfaithful wife] who was not beloved [physical Israel during the "times of the Gentiles"], beloved [restored, spiritual Israel during the millennium],

Rom. 9:26 And it shall come to pass [at the 2nd advent of Christ when Israel is restored] in the place [land of Israel] where it was said [Hosea 1:10] to them [Jews of the Northern Kingdom]: "You are not My people – in this same place [land of Israel], they [all Jewish believers in the future] shall be called the adult sons [unique quality] of the living God."

Rom. 9:27 In fact, Isaiah cried out in a loud voice [10:22] concerning Israel: "If the number of the sons of Israel [Jewish race] is as the sand of the sea [a vast earthly multitude that cannot be numbered], a remnant [of believing Jews] shall be saved [delivered through the tribulation],"

Rom. 9:28 For “the Lord [Jesus Christ] will execute His Word [at the 2nd advent] by completing [the remaining 7 years of the 490 years of Jewish discipline] and shortening [bringing the Church Age to a close and ushering in the 1,000 year millennium] the time on the earth.”

Rom. 9:29 And so, just as Isaiah [1:9] has prophesied: “If the Lord of the Armies had not left us [Israel] a seed [remnant], we would have become like Sodom [completely destroyed, 3 survivors] and we would have been made like Gomorrah [completely destroyed, no survivors].”

Rom. 9:30 To what conclusion, therefore, are we forced? That the Gentiles, who did not seek after righteousness, ended up attaining without effort [grace mechanics] the righteousness [of God], that is the righteousness by means of faith [as opposed to works].

Rom. 9:31 But Israel, who repeatedly pursued after the law for righteousness [incorrect protocol], did not overtake the law for righteousness [failed efforts].

Rom. 9:32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by means of faith [correct protocol], but rather by means of works [incorrect protocol]. They stumbled over [rejected] the Stone of stumbling [Jesus Christ],

Rom. 9:33 Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 8:14, 28:16]: “Behold, I have laid a foundation in Zion, the Stone [Jesus Christ] of stumbling [cross before the crown], even the Rock [Jesus Christ] of offense [Jews ignore the 1st advent]; nevertheless, he who believes on Him shall not be disappointed [put to shame at the Last Judgment].”

Rom. 10:1 Brethren [fellow Christians], on the one hand, the desire of my mentality [of the soul] and my [intercessory] prayer face-to-face to God on their behalf [Israel in the flesh] is for their salvation [deliverance from hell & restoration to Palestine],

Rom. 10:2 But on the other hand, I must testify against them [Israel in the flesh], for they have a zeal [arrogant motivation to keep the law] for God, but not according to a full and complete knowledge [salvation by grace through faith is missing],

Rom. 10:3 For by being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and by striving to establish their own [outside of God’s plan] righteousness [glory to themselves instead of God], they have not been obedient to the righteousness of God;

Rom. 10:4 For Christ is the end [termination] of the law with reference to [experiential] righteousness to each person who believes [Christians only].

Rom. 10:5 Even Moses described the righteousness [morality] which comes by means of the law, that [in Leviticus 18:5]: “The man who attempts to perform these things shall live by them [in the sphere of their operation]. “

Rom. 10:6 However, the righteousness by faith [from Codex II] communicates in this manner [from Deut. 30:12]: “Do not think in your mentality: Who shall ascend into heaven [to obtain salvation]? That is, to bring Christ [as the Jewish Messiah] down to earth [to provide salvation],”

Rom. 10:7 Or [from Deut. 30:13]: Who shall descend into the underworld [you don’t have to die to find Christ and obtain salvation]? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead [rejection of His resurrection].

Rom. 10:8 By contrast, what does it say [in Deut. 30:14]? “The message [salvation by grace through faith] is near you [not in heaven or hell], in your mouth [body] and in your mentality [soul],” that is, the message of faith [gospel] which we are proclaiming,

Rom. 10:9 Namely, if you acknowledge with your mouth [experiential activity] Jesus as Lord [deity of Christ], and of course [as a positional prerequisite] believe in your mentality [faith] that God raised Him from among the dead [resurrection], you will be continually saved [temporal & eternal].

Rom. 10:10 For you see, by means of the mentality it [the resurrection] is believed resulting in imputed righteousness [positional, justification], and by means of the mouth it [deity of Christ] is acknowledged resulting in salvation [experiential, sanctification].

Rom. 10:11 Therefore, the Scripture says [in Isaiah 28:16]: “Any person [Jew or Gentile] who believes on Him [Jesus Christ] shall not be ashamed [defeated or disappointed in life],”

Rom. 10:12 For there is no difference between a Jew and a Greek, for He Himself [Jesus Christ] is Lord [deity] over all [distinctions are meaningless], Who is generous [forgiving sins and delivering from enemies] to all those [Jew or Gentile believers] who make it a practice to call upon Him [confession of sin and prayer for deliverance],

Rom. 10:13 For each person [Jew or Gentile believer], when he calls upon the Name [Person] of the Lord [both confession of sin and prayer for deliverance], will be repeatedly saved [continual, daily deliverance from internal and external enemies].

Rom. 10:14 How, then, can they call upon [confess sin or pray for deliverance] the One [Jesus Christ] they have not believed [unbelievers cannot confess sin or pray for deliverance]? Furthermore, how can they believe on the One [Jesus Christ] they have not heard [faith comes by hearing]? Furthermore, how can they hear without a person who provides information [gospel truth needs a communicator]?

Rom. 10:15 Furthermore, how can they provide information if they are not sent out [missionary & evangelistic ministries]? Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:7]: “How timely is the arrival [communicators of the gospel in action] of those who proclaim the good news!”

Rom. 10:16 Nevertheless, they will not all obey [embrace] the Gospel, for Isaiah said: “Lord, who has believed our report [content of our preaching]?”

Rom. 10:17 For you see, this faith [saving faith] comes from hearing [understanding], and this hearing [saving hearing] by means of a word [quicken word which determines who will “hear” and who will “not hear”] from Christ [emphasizes the role of sovereign grace in salvation].

Rom. 10:18 But I ask: Have they never heard [had the opportunity to hear]? On the contrary [from Psalm 19:4]: “Their voice [evangelists, missionaries, ambassadors] was broadcasted unto all the earth, indeed, their words of life unto the limits of human habitation [the extent of the known world at that time].“

Rom. 10:19 Yet, I must ask: Didn’t Israel comprehend [understand the setting aside of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles]? First Moses said [in Deut. 21:21]: “I will provoke you [Israel] to jealousy by a non people [racially inferior]; by a foolish people [Gentile dogs] I will anger you.”

Rom. 10:20 Next, Isaiah was so bold as to say [in Isaiah 65:1]: “I was discovered by those [Gentiles] who were not looking for Me [Jesus Christ speaking]; I became manifest to those who did not inquire about Me.”

Rom. 10:21 And face-to-face with Israel He [God the Father] said [in Isaiah 65:2]: “All day long I have stretched forth My hands [imploring gesture] face-to-face to a people who are disobedient [non-persuadible] and who are obstinate [a bundle of contradictions].”

Rom. 11:1 Therefore, I ask: Has not God rejected His people [natural Israel]? May it never happen [Absolutely not]! For I also am an Israelite, out from the seed of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

Rom. 11:2 God has not rejected His people [natural Israel] whom He has foreloved. Don’t you remember what the Scripture said [I Kings 19:10, 14] about Elijah? How he appealed to God against Israel?

Rom. 11:3 ”Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have torn down your altars; in fact, I am the only one [prophet] left behind, and they are seeking my life.”

Rom. 11:4 But what divine answer [in I Kings 19:18] did He respond to him with? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand full-grown [spiritually mature] men [no one knew who they were], ones that are of such a high quality of character [due to spiritual maturity] as to have not bowed the knee before Baal.”

Rom. 11:5 Likewise, therefore, in the same manner [both Israel & the Church share salvation by grace through faith], at this present time [Church Age], a remnant [believers within natural Israel] according the the election of sovereign grace [Jesus Christ controls history, not man] has come into existence;

Rom. 11:6 Now if [salvation is] by means of grace [producing humility in the recipient], then not by means of works [producing arrogant self-righteousness], otherwise grace itself [as a sovereign gift of God] nolonger exists as grace [loses its character and meaning].

Rom. 11:7 What then? Israel continued to seek for [pursued salvation by works] that which she did not obtain [self-effort didn't work]; meanwhile, the election [chosen ones] obtained it [salvation by grace as opposed to works] and the others [the non-elect] were judicially hardened,

Rom. 11:8 Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 6:9-10]: “God [Jesus Christ] has given to them [non-elect Jews] a stupefied state of mind [massive scar tissue of the soul], eyes so that they would not see and ears so that they would not hear [inability to understand the gospel], up to and including this very day.”

Rom. 11:9 Even David said [in Psalm 69:22-23]: “Let their table [false system of spirituality] become a snare [camouflaged noose], even a net [hidden trap], and a stumblingblock [hindrance to understanding], even a punishment [divine retribution] to them;”

Rom. 11:10 Let their eyes become darkened [organs of spiritual perception malfunction] so that they cannot see [blackout of the soul]; in the same manner, may You [the Father] constantly bend their backs [enforced humility].”

Rom. 11:11 I say then: They did not stumble with the result that they have fallen into ruin, did they? May it not be so! Rather, by their defection [unbelief], salvation belongs to the Gentiles [Israel's loss of client nation status opens the door to Gentiles], for the purpose of provoking them [Israel] to emulation [antagonize them to believe in Jesus Christ].

Rom. 11:12 Now if their defection [sin of unbelief] has provided a magnificent spiritual benefit [gift of salvation] for the world and their failure [loss of client nation status] a magnificent package of spiritual benefits for the Gentiles, how much greater will be their [Israel's] superabundance of spiritual benefits?

Rom. 11:13 (I am speaking to you as Gentiles [turns his attention to Gentile believers], inasmuch as, to be sure, indeed, I am the apostle to the Gentiles [in contrast to Peter being the apostle to the Jews]; I am magnifying my ministry [rather than his person],

Rom. 11:14 If in some way I might stimulate to emulation [by evangelism] those who are my flesh [racial Jews] and save certain ones [the elect] out from them [the mass of unregenerate Jews]).

Rom. 11:15 For if their rejection has become the reconciliation of the world [end of the Jewish dispensation and beginning of the Church Age], what shall their acceptance be [God's grace and mercy towards Israel during the Millennium] if not life out from death?

Rom. 11:16 Moreover, if the firstfruit [the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac & Jacob] are holy [saved], then also the lump [believing Jews during the Age of Israel]; and if the root [Jesus Christ] is holy, then also the branches [believing Jews during the Church Age].

Rom. 11:17 Moreover, if some of the branches [unbelieving Jews] were broken off [by the sovereignty of God], and you [as a Gentile believer], being a wild olive tree [outside the covenant of

God], were grafted in among them [Jewish believers] and have become fellow-partakers of the Root [Jesus Christ] and the prosperity of the olive tree [blessings reserved for Church Age believers],

Rom. 11:18 Stop assuming arrogant superiority [boasting and gloating] over the branches [warning against anti-Semitism]. For when you are assuming arrogant superiority [boasting and bragging] over them, you are not supporting the Root [Jesus Christ]; actually, the Root [Jesus Christ is supporting] you.

Rom. 11:19 You may then reply: The branches [unbelieving Israel] were broken off so that I might be grafted in [a position of arrogance, not genuine humility].

Rom. 11:20 Correct [true]. They [unbelieving Israel] were broken off due to unbelief, while you [as a Gentile believer] stand due to belief. Stop thinking from arrogance [superiority complex], but rather keep having respect.

Rom. 11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches [divine discipline on Israel], neither will He spare you [divine discipline on Gentiles].

Rom. 11:22 Therefore, observe the benevolent kindness [blessings] and severity [discipline] of God: on the one hand, upon those [Jewish unbelievers] who fell, severity [discipline]; on the other hand, upon you [Gentile believers], the benevolent kindness [blessings] of God, if [on the condition that] you persist in the sphere of divine integrity [Bible doctrine in the filling of the Spirit]; otherwise, you [Gentile believers] may also be cut off [negative aspect of experiential sanctification: divine discipline].

Rom. 11:23 And they also, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able [divine omnipotence controls history] to graft them in again [the believing Jew is returned to his spiritual heritage, but now finds himself part of the royal family of God during the Church Age].

Rom. 11:24 For since you [Gentile believers] were cut off a wild by nature olive tree, and were grafted [baptism of the Holy Spirit into the Church] contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these [Jewish believers], who are according to the natural order, be grafted into their own olive tree [returned to the forefront of God's plan during the Tribulation]?

Rom. 11:25 By all means, brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant [lack of Bible doctrine produces ignorance] of this mystery [the Church Age], with the unfortunate result that you might become wise in yourself [thinking you are better than the Jews]: that spiritual blindness [scar tissue of the soul] in part [except for a remnant] has happened to Israel until which time the full measure [from Pentecost to the rapture] of the Gentiles has come in [when the last believer terminates the Church Age],

Rom. 11:26 And as follows, all Israel [true Israel, not national or racial Israel] shall be delivered, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 59:20]: He Who delivers [Jesus Christ] will come from Zion [at the 2nd advent], removing [slaughtering] the impious ones [unbelievers at the baptism of fire] from Jacob [future restoration of Israel].

Rom. 11:27 Also, this is the [new] covenant from Me to them [Israel], at a time [2nd advent] when I have taken away their punishment for sin [removal of the 5th cycle of discipline during the Millennium].

Rom. 11:28 On the one hand, with reference to the gospel, they [Jewish unbelievers] are hostile towards you [Gentile believers]; but on the other hand, with reference to the election, they [believing Jews] are beloved [members of the royal family of God] because of the fathers [Jewish believers during the dispensation of Israel],

Rom. 11:29 For the grace benefits [blessings] and the election from God are irrevocable.

Rom. 11:30 For just as you [Gentiles] did not believe God in times past, but now you have obtained mercy because of their [unbelieving Israel's] unbelief,

Rom. 11:31 In a similar manner, also, these [unbelieving Jews] have not believed in your time [during the Church Age] of received mercy, so that they also may yet [during the tribulation] receive mercy,

Rom. 11:32 For God has locked them all up [both Jew and Gentile] in unbelief [total inability], so that He might have mercy [by the exercise of His sovereign will] on them all [both Jew and Gentile].

Rom. 11:33 Oh the inexhaustibility of the wealth of both the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable [beyond our comprehension] His decrees and untrackable [can't always follow them] His policies!

Rom. 11:34 For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor?

Rom. 11:35 Or who has given in advance to Him [giving as a form of worship], and it shall not be repaid to him?

Rom. 11:36 Because the all things [spiritual blessings] are from Him [the source] and through Him [the mechanics] and for Him [the ultimate end], to Whom [Jesus Christ] is the glory unto the ages. Acknowledge it.

Rom. 12:1 I urge you, therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], by the rational mercies [unemotional compassion] from God, to place your bodies [persons] under orders [filling of the Spirit] as a living [as opposed to animal] sacrifice, holy [spiritual], acceptable [well-pleasing] to God: your rational and spiritual [mental] worship;

Rom. 12:2 Also, stop being conformed [you do it to yourself] to this age [practices and thinking of Satan's cosmos diabolicos], but be continually transformed [allow the intake and metabolization of Bible doctrine to change your thoughts] by the renewal of the mind [divine guidance through daily Bible study], for the purpose of proving what the will of God is: intrinsically good [divine attributes] and acceptable [well pleasing] and complete [nothing is missing from His plan].

Rom. 12:3 For I say to everyone who is among you [members of the royal family], through the grace which has been given to me: Stop thinking of self in terms of arrogance, beyond what he ought to think, but make it a practice to think in terms of sanity for the purpose of being rational without illusion [spiritual common sense], because God has assigned [allocated] to each person a standard of doctrinal thinking.

Rom. 12:4 For just as we [members of the royal family] have many members in one body [due to the baptism of the Spirit], and all members do not have the same function [activities and responsibilities],

Rom. 12:5 So we [believers in Jesus Christ], the many, are one body in Christ [the Church operating in organic harmony], and individually, parts [members], one belonging to others of the same kind [fellow believers].

Rom. 12:6 Therefore, we have different spiritual gifts [God-given talents or ability] according to the grace which has been given [sovereignly bestowed] to us. If public communication, then communicate publicly according to the appropriate word of doctrine;

Rom. 12:7 If service [most common spiritual gift], then serve by means of service [attendant, deacon]; If teaching [variations within the gift], then teach by means of accurate doctrine.

Rom. 12:8 If counseling [call to one's side for the purpose of comfort], then counsel by means of encouragement [belongs to a limited group of individuals]; he who gives [pays tribute], let him give with a generous attitude [simplicity]; he who manages administration, let him manage with diligence; he who performs acts of mercy [sympathy], let him perform acts of mercy with graciousness [cheerfulness].

Rom. 12:9 Let your virtue love be without hypocrisy [not phony]. Detest evil [Satan's policy for this world]; adhere to the good [advance to maturity, live the royal family honor code].

Rom. 12:10 With brotherly love [relaxed mental attitude] be devoted one to another [fellow believers], with honor [integrity from the royal family honor code] esteeming others of the same kind [fellow believers] more highly than yourself,

Rom. 12:11 With reference to application [of doctrine], do not be negligent [fulfill your priestly function]; with reference to the Spirit, be eager [make the most of every opportunity]; when serving the Lord [as an ambassador of Christ],

Rom. 12:12 Maintain inner happiness associated with confidence; stand fast [faith rest drill] during pressure [undeserved suffering or divine discipline]; persevere in prayer;

Rom. 12:13 Take an interest [participate] in the things that are lacking [spiritual needs] with reference to the saints; be pursuing hospitality [refreshment].

Rom. 12:14 Speak well [maintain objectivity] of those who persecute [press on] you; keep on speaking well and stop cursing [sins of the tongue].

Rom. 12:15 Be happy with those who are happy; weep [have sympathy] with those who are weeping [hurting or suffering].

Rom. 12:16 Be of the same mind [similar opinions] one to another [fellow Christians], not setting your mind upon ambitious things, but become accustomed to [accommodate] inconsequential people. Stop being wise in your own estimation [arrogance].

Rom. 12:17 Render [pay back] to no one evil [malice] in exchange for evil. Respect honorable things [laws of divine establishment] in the presence of all men.

Rom. 12:18 If it is possible [if you have the capacity], that is, from within you [from the doctrinal resources in your soul], be at peace with all men.

Rom. 12:19 Stop avenging yourselves [seeking justice against an opponent], brethren, but give place [an opportunity] for His wrath, for it stands written: Punishment [justice] is Mine, I will repay [retribution], says the Lord.

Rom. 12:20 Nevertheless, if your enemy [hostile person] hungers [for spiritual food], then feed him; if he thirsts [for the Word of God], then give him a drink, for by doing this you will heap [pile up] coals of fire [burning embers] upon his head [causing him to have remorse and shame].

Rom. 12:21 Stop being conquered [overcome] by evil [Satan's cosmic system], but conquer [be victorious over] evil by means of good [application of Bible doctrine].

Rom. 13:1 Let every soul [Christian in Rome] be under the authority of the governing authorities which are higher [ranking], for there is no authority that is not from God, and those which exist have been ordained [determined] by God.

Rom. 13:2 Therefore, he [reversionist Christian] who resists [Roman] authority opposes the ordinance [divine edict] of God; in fact, those who resist [oppose legitimate Roman authority] shall receive discipline [Roman judicial punishment] upon themselves;

Rom. 13:3 Certainly, the governing authorities [legitimate Roman officials] should never [according to the true intent of their office] be a threat to good production [free enterprise capitalism], but to evil production [socialism & the welfare state]. Therefore, you should not feel threatened by governing authorities: keep on producing good [adhering to laws of the land] and you should receive recognition from it [if the government is functioning according to divine principles],

Rom. 13:4 For he [the governing Roman official] is a civil servant from God to you for your benefit [protects your personal freedom]. But if you are continually producing evil, be afraid, for it [the judicial branch of government] does not wield a two-edged sword [the death penalty] to no purpose, because he is a civil servant from God, an avenger of discipline [legitimate instrument for

administering punishment] upon the one [criminal] who produces evil [violates the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens].

Rom. 13:5 Therefore, you should by necessity [to avoid distress and calamity] be subordinate to the governing authorities [in Rome], not only because of the punishment [fear of reprisal], but also because of the conscience [it's the common sense thing to do].

Rom. 13:6 For this reason, you should also keep paying taxes, because they are God's delegated representatives [civil servants] who continually attend [full-time career] upon this thing [public service].

Rom. 13:7 Render to everyone their dues [pay your bills]: taxes to whom taxes are due; import duties to whom import duties are due; respect to whom respect is due; honor to whom honor is due.

Rom. 13:8 Owe no man anything [don't be in debt to anyone], if not [except] to love one another of the same kind [friends]; moreover, he who loves another of a different kind [strangers] has fulfilled the law.

Rom. 13:9 For example [short list of criminal acts against freedom]: You shall not commit adultery, You shall not commit murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet, and if there is another of a different kind of mandate [Church Age mandate as opposed to Mosaic commandment], it is summed up in this principle: You shall love [tolerance and relaxed mental attitude] your neighbor [fellow man] as yourself [according to high standards].

Rom. 13:10 Virtue love does not produce evil towards his fellow man, therefore, the fulfillment of the law is virtue love.

Rom. 13:11 Also, you must have a systematic understanding of this dispensation [the Church Age], that the hour has arrived for you to be roused [reversion recovery] out of thoughtless indolence [spiritual lethargy], for at this present time [during the Church Age], salvation [glorification salvation] is nearer for us than when we came to believe [justification salvation].

Rom. 13:12 The night [spiritual darkness; life on earth] has advanced, furthermore, the day [spiritual light; death or the rapture] is approaching. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness [production from the cosmic system], then clothe ourselves with the armor [Bible doctrine] of light [production from the filling of the Spirit].

Rom. 13:13 Let us walk honorably [according to the royal family honor code] in the light of eternity, not in wild behavior [emotional revolt] or unrestrained revelry [drinking bouts], nor in illicit sexual activity or licentiousness [unacceptable flirtation], nor in quarreling or envy,

Rom. 13:14 But instead, clothe [empower] yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop making provision for the flesh [old sin nature] because of lust.

Rom. 14:1 Moreover, accept [in one's circle of acquaintances] the person [ignorant reversionist] who is weak in doctrine [deficient due to arrogance and lack of motivation] without the intent of quarreling about opinions [avoid theological debates].

Rom. 14:2 On the one hand, the person [mature believer] who has doctrine [is strong in the faith] may as a result eat all things [absence of legalism], but on the other hand, the person [immature believer] because of weakness [lacks doctrine in the soul] makes it a practice to eat vegetables [presence of legalism].

Rom. 14:3 The person [mature believer] who eats everything must not treat with contempt the person [immature believer] who does not eat [vegetarian]; furthermore, the person who does not eat [vegetarian] must not judge the person [mature believer] who eats everything, for God accepts him [receives the meat-eater in fellowship].

Rom. 14:4 Who are you [weak believer] who keeps on judging another member of the same household [fellow believer]? He stands firm [advances in the spiritual life] or falls down [becomes a spiritual casualty] by means of his own Lord [Jesus Christ]. Yes, he shall be supported, for the Lord has the power to cause him to stand [He doesn't need help from a legalist].

Rom. 14:5 On the one hand, a person [weak believer] may distinguish a day [designates Sunday as the "Lord's Day"] over a day [every other day of the week]. On the other hand, a person [strong believer] may prefer all days [every day is a day for doctrine, not just Sunday]. Let each person be fully assured in his own thinking [flexibility according to one's level of spiritual growth].

Rom. 14:6 The person [strong believer] who observes the day [any day] regards it unto the Lord. Moreover, the person [strong believer] who eats [all categories of meat], eats unto the Lord, for he gives thanks to God. Moreover, the person [weak believer] who does not eat [vegetarian], does not eat [all categories of meat] unto the Lord, but gives thanks unto God [for his vegetables].

Rom. 14:7 For none of us [believers] should live for himself [blessing by association is our goal]; moreover, none [believers] should die for himself [dying grace is our goal].

Rom. 14:8 For when we are living [the spiritual life] we should be living [providing blessings by association to others] unto the Lord, and when we are dying [approaching physical death], we should be dying [providing dying grace benefits to others] unto the Lord. Therefore, whether we are living or whether we are dying, we should be the Lord's.

Rom. 14:9 For Christ died [spiritual death on the cross] and lived [resurrection life] towards this purpose, so that He might become Lord [the ruling power] over both the dying ones [those in dying grace status] and the ones who are living [imparting blessings by association due to momentum in their spiritual life].

Rom. 14:10 But you [the self-righteous, immature believer], why do you judge your brother [the strong believer]? Or you [the strong, mature believer], again, why do you treat your brother [the

weak believer] with contempt? For we shall all [both weak and strong, immature and mature] stand before the judgment seat of God [for rewards].

Rom. 14:11 For it stands written [in Isaiah 45:23]: “As I live,” says the Lord, “every knee shall bow to Me [worship Jesus Christ], also every tongue shall confess [their sins] to God [the Father].”

Rom. 14:12 Consequently, therefore, each one of us shall give an account concerning himself [for the purpose of receiving rewards] to God [the Father].

Rom. 14:13 Therefore, let us not judge one another of the same kind [fellow believers], but instead let us consider this: Let no one put an obstacle or a distraction in front of a brother [a weak believer].

Rom. 14:14 I know for certain and have received confidence in the Lord Jesus that nothing [category of food] is unclean by itself, except to him [the weak believer] who presumes something to be unclean – to him it is unclean.

Rom. 14:15 For if your brother is distracted because of food [dietary taboos], then you are no longer walking [conducting your Christian way of life] according to the standard of virtue love. Do not contribute to the ruin [destroyed spiritual life] of a person [weak believer] on behalf of whom Christ died.

Rom. 14:16 Therefore, do not allow your privilege [of grace-oriented eating & drinking] to be maligned,

Rom. 14:17 For the royal power [essence of the Christian way of life] of God does not consist of eating and drinking [external rituals], but righteousness [imputed at salvation] and prosperity [imputed at maturity] and inner happiness [imputed upon the attainment of supergrace status] by means of the Holy Spirit,

Rom. 14:18 Because the person who serves Christ in this manner [spiritual rather than material] is well thought of by God [as a result of a successful priesthood] and respected by men [as a result of a successful ambassadorship].

Rom. 14:19 Consequently, then, let us continue to pursue prosperous things [those that provide spiritual momentum], especially those related to the edification complex [doctrinal structure in the soul] from which comes blessing to each other of the same kind [encourage fellow believers to pursue spiritual protocol].

Rom. 14:20 Stop interfering with the plan of God [replacing the principles of grace mechanics with legalism] for the sake of food [unimportant external precepts]. On the one hand, all things [categories of food] are clean [sanctified by God through prayer], but on the other hand, evil for the man [strong believer] who eats with offense [flaunting his spiritual freedom in front of a weak believer].

Rom. 14:21 It is good protocol [beneficial to the weak believer] to abstain from eating meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything else [within context] by means of which your brother [weak believer] might stumble.

Rom. 14:22 With reference to the doctrine which you [the mature believer] possess: Keep holding it within yourself before God. The person [mature believer] who does not place a guilt complex on himself by the things he previously approved [accepts after testing] is happy [free from religious scruples],

Rom. 14:23 But the person [weak believer] who puts a guilt complex upon himself [over some taboo] is condemned [guilty by his own conscience] if he eats [meat], because it [eating meat] is not out from doctrine as the source [of his norms & standards] and everything [categories of food & drink] which is not eaten out from doctrine as the source [of his norms & standards] is sin [guilt as a mental attitude sin].

Rom. 15:1 Now, we [believers with doctrinal norms & standards], the strong ones [mature believers], are obligated [spiritual responsibility] to keep on bearing the weaknesses [immaturity] of the spiritually impotent ones [weak believers], not making it a practice to accommodate ourselves [we should forgo some elements of our spiritual freedom when around weak believers].

Rom. 15:2 Let each one of us [mature believers] accommodate his fellow man [courtesy & good manners toward those in your periphery] for the purpose of the good [divine protocol plan] towards an edification complex [helping them build a spiritual structure in their souls],

Rom. 15:3 For even Christ did not accommodate Himself, but as it stands written [in Psalm 69:9]: The insults of those [unbelievers] who reviled You [God the Father] came to fall upon Me [Jesus Christ].

Rom. 15:4 Moreover, everything [in the Old Testament] written in earlier times [during the Age of Israel] was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and through encouragement from the Scriptures, we might repeatedly obtain confidence.

Rom. 15:5 Now, may the God of perseverance and encouragement reward you [members of the royal family] with the same thinking [establishment principles & doctrinal rationales] one with another [function of impersonal love] according to the standards of Christ Jesus [divine viewpoint],
Rom. 15:6 So that with one motivation [unanimous accord] by one message [Bible doctrine from one's pastor-teacher] you might honor God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. 15:7 Therefore, keep on receiving one another of the same kind [fellow believers], just as Christ also received us: for the glory of God [the Father].

Rom. 15:8 For I report: Christ was made a minister to the circumcision [Israel] on behalf of the Truth [doctrine] of God, so that He might confirm [guarantee] the promises [the unfulfilled, unconditional covenants] unto the fathers [the O.T. writers],

Rom. 15:9 And so that on behalf of mercy, the Gentiles might praise the reputation of God [Jesus Christ], just as it stands written [in Psalm 18:49]: Because of this [deliverance from enemies], I [David] will praise You [the Father] among the Gentiles, and I will sing hymns to Your Name [the Lord Jesus Christ].

Rom. 15:10 And again [in Deut. 32:43] he [Moses] said: Be of good cheer, Gentiles, with His people [the Jews of Israel].

Rom. 15:11 And again [in Psalm 117:1]: Keep on praising the Lord, all you Gentiles; in fact, let all the people applaud [with maximum doctrine in the soul] Him [Jesus Christ].

Rom. 15:12 And again [in Isaiah 11:10], Isaiah said: There shall be a Rootsprout [Jesus Christ in hypostatic union] of Jesse [emphasizes His humanity], even He [Jesus Christ] Who will arise [bodily resurrection] to rule over the Gentiles [from the 2nd advent through the millennium]; upon Him the Gentiles [mature ones] will have confidence.

Rom. 15:13 Now, may the God [Jesus Christ] of absolute confidence [justification salvation] fill you [transfer doctrine from the left to the right lobe of the soul] to the point of overflowing [sanctification salvation] with every category of inner happiness and prosperity [as a result of spiritual advance] by means of what [Bible doctrine] we believe, so that it [every category of inner happiness & prosperity] may continue to abound to you in absolute confidence [supergrace status] by means of the power of the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 15:14 In fact, even I myself am convinced concerning you [mature believers in Rome], my brethren, that you [positive believers] are full of goodness [fruits of the Spirit], having been filled to the point of overflowing [abundantly instructed in doctrine] with all categories of knowledge [systematic theology], also having the ability to have a corrective influence over one another of the same kind [assisting fellow believers without invading their privacy].

Rom. 15:15 Consequently [because of your mature spiritual status], I write to you rather boldly on certain points, as one who is continually stirring up your minds to remembrance [repetition] because of that grace [communication gift] which was given to me by God,

Rom. 15:16 So that I might be a minister [spiritual communicator] of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles [primary emphasis], ministering the good news [preaching the gospel & teaching doctrine] about God, so that as a result, the offering, the Gentiles, might become acceptable, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 15:17 Therefore, I continually hold my esprit de corps [reason for boasting] in Christ Jesus upon the things [doctrines] pertaining to God.

Rom. 15:18 For I will not presume to speak about anything [my various missionary activities] which Christ has not accomplished through me, with a view to promoting obedience [authority orientation from Bible doctrine] to the Gentiles, by word [doctrinal communication] and occupation [professionalism in the ministry],

Rom. 15:19 By the power of signs [remarkable events directed towards the Jews] and wonders [terrifying portents caused by God to impress the Gentiles] in the power of the Spirit, so that I have traveled from Jerusalem on a circuitous route, even as far as Illyricum [east of Italy], in order to bring to completion [proclaim to the remotest areas of the Roman Empire] the gospel of Christ.

Rom. 15:20 In fact, in this way [operating as an itinerant preacher], I consider it an honor to proclaim the gospel, not where Christ has already been mentioned [evangelical function], so that I might not build upon the foundation belonging to another man of the same kind [policy of non-interference with other missionaries].

Rom. 15:21 Moreover, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:15]: They [people in remote geographical locations] shall see Him [Jesus Christ], with reference to Whom an announcement had never been made [no prior gospel preaching], and whoever has not heard [those in remote locations], will understand [comprehend the gospel and believe in Christ].

Rom. 15:22 Also, as a matter of fact, I was detained [sidetracked] many times from coming to you.
Rom. 15:23 But now [his ministry having reached the eastern edge of the Empire], having no more place [converts] in these regions, and having a desire to come to you [for some rest & relaxation] for many years,

Rom. 15:24 As soon as I depart for Spain, for I expect to see you when I pass through [only a short visit in Rome] and to be escorted to that place by you [accompanied and partially supported financially], if first [prior to his departure to Spain] I become sufficiently satisfied with you [happy with their spiritual progress],

Rom. 15:25 But now [in emotional reversionism], I am going to travel to Jerusalem for the purpose of ministering to the saints [Jewish believers].

Rom. 15:26 For [according to Paul's rationalization] the Macedonians and Achaians were pleased to make a considerable contribution [charity] for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

Rom. 15:27 Indeed [Paul's administrative distraction], they were very pleased, in so far as they [the Macedonians and Achaians] are debtors [obligated] to them [the Jews], for since the Gentiles are partakers of their spiritual blessings [from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church], they are obligated [by the royal family honor code] also to minister to them [the Jews] with material blessings.

Rom. 15:28 Therefore, after I have accomplished this [charitable business transaction], and have placed in their hands [safely delivered] this sum of money [charitable fruit], I will come to [depart for] Spain for your benefit.

Rom. 15:29 Then [after going to Jerusalem] I know that when I come to you, I will be coming with a full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Rom. 15:30 Now I implore you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the virtue love from the Spirit: Strive together [fight alongside] with me in your prayers to God [the Father] on my behalf.

Rom. 15:31 So that I may be delivered [rescued] from those [who remember his previous persecution of their friends and family when he was Saul the Pharisee] who are disobedient in Judea [hypocrisy: Paul himself is being disobedient], and that my contribution for Jerusalem may be welcome to the saints [Jewish believers].

Rom. 15:32 So that by coming to you with inner happiness [presumably due to his getting his way] through the will of God [arrogant presumption], I might find rest [relaxation] together with you.

Rom. 15:33 Now, may the God of prosperity be with you all. Acknowledge it.

Rom. 16:1 Now, I introduce to you [vouch for] Phoebe, our sister, who is an agent [courier: she carried this epistle from Corinth to Rome] of the assembly at Kengchrea [eastern harbor of Corinth]:

Rom. 16:2 Welcome her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints [according to the royal family honor code], and please assist her in whatever matter [business transaction] she might need of you, for she has also been an administrative assistant [patron] for many, even on behalf of myself.

Rom. 16:3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers [traveling husband & wife tent-makers] in Christ Jesus,

Rom. 16:4 Who on behalf of my life, risked their own necks, concerning whom not only I give thanks, but also all manner of Gentile assemblies.

Rom. 16:5 Also salute their local assembly [home church]. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the first-fruit [Paul's first convert in that region] from Asia [western Turkey] for Christ.

Rom. 16:6 Salute Mary, who has labored greatly [to the point of exhaustion] for you.

Rom. 16:7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my cousins, even my fellow-prisoners, who are honored among the missionaries and who became Christians [were converted] before me.

Rom. 16:8 Salute Ampliatus, my beloved [one of Paul's converts] in the Lord.

Rom. 16:9 Salute Urbanus [city-bred, freed slave], our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachus, my beloved.

Rom. 16:10 Salute Apelles [a Jew named after the famous tragic actor], approved in Christ. Salute those [slaves] belonging to Aristobulus [grandson of Herod].

Rom. 16:11 Salute Herodion [Jewish believer named after his master Herod], my fellow countryman. Salute those [slaves] belonging to Narcissus [who was put to death by Agrippa].

Rom. 16:12 Salute [twin sisters] Tryphena [dainty] and Tryphosa [delicate], who labor continuously to the point of exhaustion in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who has labored to the point of exhaustion with reference to many things [multi-talented] in the Lord.

Rom. 16:13 Salute Rufus [son of Simon, the man who carried the Lord's cross], chosen by the Lord, also his mother and mine [praising her maternal care].

Rom. 16:14 Salute Asyncritus [freedman of Augustus], Philegon [burning with energy], Hermes, Patrobas [former slave of Nero], Hermas, and the brethren with them.

Rom. 16:15 Salute Philologus [former slave to the aunt of Julius Caesar] and Julia [his wife], Nereus [their teenage daughter] and his [Philologus'] sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them.

Rom. 16:16 Salute one another of the same kind [believers] with a holy kiss [handshake and the exercise of impersonal love]. All the assemblies of Christ salute you.

Rom. 16:17 Now, I urge you, brethren [mature believers], to mark [keep your eyes on] those who cause dissensions [encourage divisions] and arouse opposition [create theological problems] contrary to the doctrine which you have learned for the purpose of practicing. In fact, keep on separating from them [keep them at a distance],

Rom. 16:18 For they [reversionistic false teachers] are of such a category of individuals who do not serve our Lord Christ, but rather their own emotions [base interests]; furthermore, by a smooth sales job [plausible speech] and flattery [false eloquence], they repeatedly deceive the minds of the unsuspecting [those without doctrine: the clueless].

Rom. 16:19 Of course, your authority orientation [obedience] has been reported to everyone [wide distribution], therefore, I am very happy [inspired] with you; however [obedience is not enough], I want you to become wise [you must have maximum Bible doctrine in the soul] with respect to good [divine protocol], and unravaged [untouched] with respect to evil [Satan's cosmic system].

Rom. 16:20 In fact, the God of prosperity will crush Satan under your feet shortly [at the 2nd advent]. May the [victorious] grace from our Lord Jesus be with you.

Rom. 16:21 Timothy, my fellow-worker, salutes you, as well as Lucius [the Cyrene from Acts 31:1], Jason [a successful businessman], and Sosipater [who accompanied Paul on his ill-designed trip to Jerusalem], my fellow countrymen [Jewish relative].

Rom. 16:22 I, Tertius, who have written this epistle [as Paul's amanuensis], salute you in the Lord.

Rom. 16:23 Gaius, my host and of the entire assembly [his house was their church], salutes you.

Erastus, the treasurer of the city, salutes you, as well as Quartus his brother.

Rom. 16:25 Now, to Him [God the Father] Who is able to strengthen you [logistical grace support] in accordance with my gospel [Paul's divinely commissioned message], the proclamation pertaining

to Jesus Christ, in accordance with the revelation [disclosure] of the mystery [of the Church Age] which has been concealed through times eternal [past dispensations],

Rom. 16:26 But now [during the Church Age] has been revealed, through the prophetic writings [the canon at the time of Paul], in accordance with the decree of the eternal God, having been revealed to all Gentiles [in the new dispensation] for the purpose of obedience [to the plan of God] from doctrine [obedience to the Christian faith as a system of Truth].

Rom. 16:27 To God, alone wise [omniscient] through Jesus Christ [the revelation of the wisdom of God], to Whom is glory unto the ages [forever]. Acknowledge it.

Introductory Remarks

Christianity has been the most powerful, transforming force in human history – and the book of Romans is the most basic, most comprehensive statement of true Christianity. (J. Boice) Romans was written from Corinth, in the spring of A.D. 58, when Paul was about to leave that place to take the alms he had collected to Jerusalem for the relief of the poor Christians there, as related in Acts 20:3. Its tone is not polemical, but is rather a carefully reasoned theological treatise, drawn up with the view of setting forth the writer's views of the meaning of the gospel in its relation to the Law, to prophecy, and to the needs of mankind. This epistle having been a battleground of the predestinarian controversy, and often regarded as a stronghold of Calvinism, special attention may be directed to the sections that bear upon this subject, i.e., chapters 8-11. (J. Barmby) Paul desired to deposit a compendium of theological truth, and the capital city of the empire was the natural place for him to do so. (W. Kroll)

Romans is a tractate letter and has at its heart a general theological argument, or series of arguments. Features of the diatribe include “fictional” conversations and debates, rhetorical questions, and the use of “may it never be!” to reject a line of argument. But however general and systematic its presentation may be, Romans is a letter. The Reformers and their followers, following the lead of Luther, almost universally gave pride of place to chapters 1-5, with their theme, justification by faith, as the center of the letter. For others, the real center of Paul's thinking is to be found in chapters 5-8, in his doctrine of union with Christ and the work of God's Spirit. How can Gentiles be incorporated with Jews into God's people without jeopardizing the continuity of salvation history? For these scholars, Romans 9-11, far from being a detour from the real theme of the letter, was the heart of the letter. Recent efforts approach Paul's exhortation to unity in chapters 14-15 as the major purpose of the letter. We must be careful not to impose on Romans a single theme when Paul may never have thought in those terms. It may have several themes without having any single, unifying topic. (D. Moo)

Romans is dominated by three great doctrines: justification, conciliation and sovereignty. God's own righteousness, which He shares with the sinner, His own peace, which He imparts to the believer, and His own indomitable will, which forms the immovable basis of all blessing, are the

bulk and burden of this epistle. Every doctrine is discussed twice: first from the viewpoint of the individual, and again from the larger, national standpoint. It is exceedingly important to recognize the *national* scope of the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters. (A.E. Knoch)

Why is Paul coming to preach to the Romans if they are already a body of believers (1:8) whose faith is announced in all the world? It is because he wants to go beyond or to expand what they have already received. The gospel begins with justification through faith, but the end of the gospel is the salvation of God. The Roman believers had not yet experienced the salvation of God because this salvation is predicated on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul's gospel is based upon the power of the resurrection. Jesus is raised from the dead "because of our justification" (Rom. 4:25). Once we were justified by His blood, Christ was raised from the dead and was seated at the right hand of the Father in glory. Then, He sent forth the Holy Spirit. This progression brings us from justification by faith into the salvation of God. The OT saints knew what it was to be justified by faith. They knew what it was like to be established in righteousness, but we know what it is like to be established in the power of God, which is the salvation of God. (K. Lamb)

When Paul seeks to present a systematic argument for the gospel to the Romans, he does not begin with "Jesus loves you" or "God has a wonderful plan for your life." Showing that he would fail almost every evangelism class currently offered in seminaries in our land, Paul begins with a dreadfully long discussion of the universal sinfulness of man. Without a single poem, no funny illustrations or multimedia aids, the inspired Apostle drags on about the sinfulness of men, Jew and Gentile alike. It is no wonder this section is so little preached in our day. But might it just be that the *good news* cannot be properly understood unless the *bad news* is fully realized? Such would seem to be the case. A biblical view of man must find a large portion of its substance in the words of Paul in Romans 1-3. (J. White) You'll remember that no one could enter the Tabernacle until having passed the brazen altar. Likewise, no one can enter the great doctrinal epistles of the NT without first passing Romans, for it is the gateway to NT truth. (W. Kroll)

The bulk of Romans focuses on how God has acted in Christ to bring the *individual* sinner into a new relationship with Himself (1-4), to provide for that *individual's* eternal life in glory (5-8), and to transform that *individual's* life on earth now (12-15). Since it is essential to Paul's message that God acts, in a way that He has not previously, to include on an equal basis both Jew and Gentile in this transforming operation, Paul must pay constant attention to the implications of this new equality of treatment. He must explain how his message of individual transformation relates to God's focus on Israel in the OT. This explanation thus becomes a constant motif in the letter and occupies an important section of the letter (9-11) in its own right. But it remains the background, as Paul presents in the foreground the way in which God has acted to transform rebellious sinners into obedient saints. (D. Moo)

Paul's preaching to the Romans was to help 'complete' their salvation in God - experiential, not positional. They were already 'justified', but most of them were not 'saved'. They already knew about their position in the Father, but the Gospel they had not heard was the salvation of God. A lot of people are going to heaven who are not 'saved'. Justification is positional (right standing

with God) and is accomplished by believing in Christ at a single moment in time. Salvation is related to victory in this life and is dependent on continuous human volition. Justification is dependent on God's eternal purpose; salvation is dependent on man's volition. God's success in redemption is not dependent upon my obedience. He is in a bad way if it is! What He intends to accomplish will certainly come to pass; it is the route, either easy or difficult, that is undetermined. (K. Lamb)

Arminianism is as destructive as atheism. What is the difference between the atheist who denies the first cause and the Arminian who relegates God to the position of second cause? Assigning God to the second cause is a denial of the sovereignty of God, and the one who does not believe in the sovereignty of God does not know God. God Who created all things either directs all things or He has assigned them over to chance. Chance is a denial of providence, and the denial of providence is a denial of God. (W. Best) I will go one step further: Arminianism is idolatry. Man's alleged "free will" is the idol that is being worshipped. Man's arrogant demand to have the final say in his own destiny is a stench in God's nostrils. It is the height of human depravity to claim our place in heaven was obtained by our own will, with God's help. None of us sent a "positive blip" (from our volition) into heaven until *the Holy Spirit first enabled us* to have that "blip" of faith. Our volition did not save us; God saved us. To assert otherwise is to rob God of His glory in our salvation, and to worship our fickle, capricious, powerless will as an idol. (LWB) There is no such thing as freedom of the will in the Arminian sense of a will that ultimately determines itself. (J. Piper) It is a case of God bringing to spiritual life those who without that call would remain spiritually dead forever. (J. Boice)

We will see that Paul's overriding concern to ascribe sovereign glory to God forever by depending upon all things from Him, apprehending all things through Him, and attributing all things to Him comes to consistent expression throughout the epistle to the Romans as he offers an extended defense of his joyous lack of shame in the gospel (1:16). In most of his other letters the same perspective on election is more presupposed than brought into the foreground; but one letter, the circular letter addressed in most manuscripts to the Ephesians, may rival Romans for a forthright and elevated statement of God's sovereignty over the destiny of His creatures. Paul also diagnoses the human condition apart from God in Romans. Without God we are dead. Sin, marching to orders from "the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience," has killed the human capacity for passion toward anything but the flesh, those desires of body and mind. Moral corpses that we are, the only hope we have for a will that turns its passion toward God lies in the call of God, sounding effectually into the grave where we lie helpless. By that merciful call God "makes us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved!)." It is not our doing, Paul declares. (Schreiner, Ware)

CHAPTER 1

LWB Rom. 1:1 Paul, a bondservant of Christ Jesus, called [to the spiritual office of] an apostle, having been appointed [divine summons] because of the good news from God,

κω **Rom. 1:1** Paul, a bonds slave by nature belonging to Christ Jesus, an ambassador by divine summons, permanently separated to God's good news,

κβ **Rom. 1:1** Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul was a bonds slave belonging to Christ Jesus. He was called to the spiritual office of an apostle, the highest ranked leader of the church. This calling was a divine commission in which he represented the Lord Jesus Christ. He was separated by God and appointed (Intensive Perfect tense) for this spiritual office before he was born, and he was fulfilling his responsibility even while writing this epistle. This divine commission was both evangelistic and pastoral; he began many churches for the Lord and taught them varying levels of doctrine as needed.

Paul was a special object of God's love just like the Romans. He was outwardly called by the Lord Himself on the road, and inwardly called by the Holy Spirit into the Church of Jesus Christ. I have heard the following truth preached quite well on numerous occasions, "At no time did God ever ask Paul his opinion!" He was chosen by God and like the nation Israel, there was nothing he could ultimately do about it. Nor do I hear Paul wanting to change his mind about Christ. Three Greek words, *doulos* (bonds slave), *kletos* (called or elected), *aphorismenos* (divinely appointed), give the distinct impression that God did all the work and Paul was merely a recipient.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A bonds slave is one who is bound to his master in chords so strong that only death could break them, one who served his master to the disregard of his own interests, one whose will was swallowed up in the will of his Master. (K. Wuest) The idea of *κλητος* is not only called, but chosen, appointed. Paul means to assert in the use of the word *κλητος* that he was neither self-appointed nor chosen by men to that sacred office. (C. Hodge) Paul was not chosen by lot, but was appointed by God as an apostle. And to be an apostle, it was necessary to have seen Christ after His resurrection; Acts 1:22, 26:16; I Cor. 9:1 (C. Hodge) Human ministers, even apostles, are but instruments in the hand of God, with no initiative or merit of their own. (Sanday & Headlam) To the calling of God I owe my office, to the same calling you owe your place within the Christian fold. (J.B. Lightfoot)

Romans 1:1 is properly part of the epistolary subject, which is resumed in verse 7 and continued to verse 15. Romans 1:2-6 is a *parecbasis*, and is thus made to correspond with the closing chapter 16:25-27; while verse 7 is the continuation of verse 1, and not of verse 6. Such digressions, temporary turning aside from one subject to another, are different than a mere *parenthesis*, which is a digression that is really part of the same subject. (E.W. Bullinger) Like every Jew, Paul knew that God had chosen men and women in the history of Israel to do His particular will. "Set apart" expressed Paul's personal destiny; he was gripped by the conviction

that he was chosen for a unique vocation, for “God set me apart from birth and called me by His grace.” (J. Edwards) Paul’s apostolic task is not a career of his own choosing, but his response to the summons of God, Who has singled him out like Jeremiah to be His herald. (L. Allen)

Paul does not waste a moment before making it plain to these believers in the great city he had never seen, that the message he set forth was one grounded in the Bible. The gospel he proclaimed was no personal invention, but that “promised afore by his prophets.” He saw the great central acts of the passion as foretold in the same holy writings. (L. Morris) Paul introduces himself to the Roman church with three parallel designations that, respectively, identify his Master, his office, and his purpose. He claims that his life is totally dedicated to God’s act of salvation in Christ – a dedication that involves both his own belief in, and obedience to, that message as well as his apostolic proclamation of it ... Romans is ultimately a book about God: how He acted to bring salvation, how His justice is preserved, how His purposes are worked out in history, how He can be served by His people. (D. Moo)

With Paul’s pedigree (Phil. 3:5-6), he would have made an excellent servant of God to his own people, the Jews. But in the providence of the Almighty, Paul was set apart to the gospel of God as an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). Thus, a disastrous schism between the Jewish and Gentile segments of the early church was avoided through the unique ministry of Paul. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:1 Paul (Subj. Nom.; means "little"), a bonds slave (Nom. Appos.) of (belonging to) Christ Jesus (Gen. Rel.), called (Adv. Acc.; to the spiritual office of, devote to a special purpose) an apostle (Nom. Appos.; the highest ranking leader, sent on a commission to represent another Person), having been appointed (ἀφορίζω, Perf.PPtc.NSM, Intensive, Attributive; divine separation) because of the good news (Causal Acc.; not unto Phariseeism; not restricted to the gospel message only) from God (Abl. Source),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:1** Παῦλος δοῦλος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:1** Paulus servus Christi Iesu vocatus apostolus segregatus in evangelium Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:2** Which He Himself [God the Father] had previously promised [salvation in the OT was also through faith in Jesus Christ] through His prophets in the Holy Writings,

^{KW} **Rom. 1:2** Which He promised aforetime through the intermediate agency of His prophets in holy writings,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:2** (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God the Father previously promised (Constative Aorist tense) salvation in the OT through faith in Jesus Christ. This promise was enunciated by His prophets throughout the OT Scriptures. There has always been one way of salvation, regardless of which dispensation man has lived in, i.e., through Jesus Christ. Where was Christ preached in the OT, you might ask? He was taught in typology, in the sacrifices, in the furniture and vessels of the temple, in prophecy, even in the stars. Luke 24:27, “Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

His intention rather is to assert his exclusive allegiance to God’s absolute sovereignty. As a slave, Paul belongs to God. It is not Paul who determines what he will say and do; God’s sovereign decision determines who he is and what he must do. (J. Edwards) In the revelation already made through Christ, and the redemption accomplished by Him, we are taught to cling to our faith in a Divine purpose throughout the world’s perplexing history. This grand view of a providential order leading to a final consummation pervades Paul’s writings, and should be kept in mind for a proper understanding of the epistle. (J. Barmby) The gospel was not an innovation of the messianic Jews or the newly formed band of Christians. It had been preannounced by the OT prophets from Genesis 3:15 to Malachi 4:2. By quoting 61 times from the OT, Paul indicated to the Jews that their scriptures were, in reality, speaking of Jesus Christ just as much as the followers of the Nazarene were. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:2 which (relative pronoun; gospel) He Himself had previously promised (προεπαγγέλλομαι, AMI3S, Constative, Deponent; salvation in the O.T. through faith in Jesus Christ) through His (Poss. Gen.) prophets (Gen. Agency) in the Holy (Dat. Ref.) Writings (Loc. Place; O.T. Scriptures),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:2** ὁ προεπηγγείλατο διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις

^{VUL} **Romans 1:2** quod ante promiserat per prophetas suos in scripturis sanctis

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:3** Concerning His Son [deity of Christ] Who was born out from the seed of David [physical descent] according to the flesh [humanity of Christ],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:3** Concerning His Son, who came from the ancestral line of David so far as His humanity is concerned,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:3** Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was, is, and will be deity and humanity forever, i.e., the hypostatic union. In His deity, He is the eternal Son of God. In His humanity, He was born (Constativ Aorist tense) out from the seed or ancestral lineage of David.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Being "born out from the seed of David" is a *synecdoche* of the Species, when the Species is put for the Genus, or when particulars are put for universals. Jesus has the primary relationship, but it also includes us in a more universal manner. (E.W. Bullinger) As a man, Jesus became *Jewish royalty* at the virgin birth. As God, He has always been *divine royalty*. When He won the victory over Satan at the cross, He received His *battlefield royalty*. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) As to His flesh He was a descendant of David, but as to His Spirit, He was from God. (A.E. Knoch)

"Hypostatic union" is the theological term for the incarnate person of Christ, the union of God and man. At the virgin birth, God the Son took upon Himself true humanity and became a new person, the God-Man, the unique person of the universe. Christ unites in Himself the essence of God and the essence of man, forming a new *hupostasis*, a new united essence, called the hypostatic union. In the person of the incarnate Christ, two natures are inseparably united but without loss or mixture of separate identities, without loss or transfer of properties or attributes. The union is both personal - the God-man is one person, and eternal - He will be the God-Man forever. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Son of God, so far as His human ancestry is concerned, comes from the line of David. This individual, comprising within His Person two natures, that of Deity and that of humanity, is "declared to be the Son of God." As respecting Christ's earthly descent, He was born like other men. As respecting His divine essence, He was *declared*. It was in the sphere of power that this declaration was made, the power of God that raised our Lord from the dead. This power operated "according to the spirit of holiness." (K. Wuest)

Hence, the promise becomes a Person; the prophecy became a Personality. Christianity, therefore, is not a system of theology, but a Person. Two natures in one Person made Jesus Christ a unique Person. The seed of David and the Son of God must be compared. The first reveals the Lord Jesus Christ as a member of the human race. The latter proves He has a Divine nature which is superior to His human nature. Because of His human nature He can reach the elect, and because of His Divine nature He has the ability to help them. (W. Best)

"According to the flesh" denotes the merely human descent of Jesus in distinction from His Divine Being. His having come humanly "of the seed of David" is suitably noted here, where "the Son" is being set forth as fulfilling the OT promises; for they uniformly represent the Messiah as thus descended, and it was essential to the Jewish conception of Him that He should be so, and for the stress laid by the writers of the NT on the fact that Jesus was so – of which fact no doubt was entertained. (J. Barmby)

The whole gospel is included in Christ, so that if any removes one step from Christ, he withdraws himself from the gospel. For since He is the living and express image of the Father, it is no wonder, that He alone is set before us as one to Whom our whole faith is to be directed and in Whom it is to center. We hence learn, that he who made a due proficiency in the knowledge of Christ, has acquired every thing which can be learned from the gospel; and, on the other hand, that they who seek to be wise without Christ, are not only foolish, but even completely insane. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 1:3 concerning His (Gen. Rel.) Son (Obj. Gen.; deity of Christ) Who was born (γίνομαι, AMPtc.GSM, Constativ, Substantival, Articular, Deponent) out from the seed (σπέρμα, Abl. Source) of David (Gen. Rel.) according to the flesh (Adv. Acc. with a Prep.; His descent from David was limited to His human nature),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:3** περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα

^{VUL} **Romans 1:3** de Filio suo qui factus est ex semine David secundum carnem

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:4** Who was marked out by divine decree the Son of God [the declaration of His deity in time was planned in eternity past], by means of miraculous power [omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit], according to the spirit of holiness [divine essence], by means of resurrection from deaths [first spiritually, then physically],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:4** Who was demonstrated in the sphere of power as Son of God so far as His divine essence was concerned by the resurrection of the dead,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:4** And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ was marked out by the divine decrees (Dramatic Aorist tense) as the Son of God by means of His resurrection from deaths. “Deaths” is in the plural because Jesus died twice – first spiritually - when He became sin for us, and then physically - on the cross. He was God in eternity past, outside the framework of time. How was He declared as God in time? He was demonstrated to be God in time by His resurrection. The divine decrees did not appoint (Latin: predestine) Him to be God in eternity past, because He was already in that capacity, *ipso facto*. The divine decrees merely demonstrated to mankind His divine essence in time by means of the miraculous power of His resurrection.

God alone has the attribute of omnipotence, and resurrection can only be accomplished by omnipotence. What we have then, is a *declaration* of His deity in *eternity past* because of His divine attributes; then we have a subsequent *demonstration* of His deity in *time* by means of His resurrection. In eternity past His deity was an *ipso facto* declaration of reality. In time, this

declaration of deity was *demonstrated* to mankind by His resurrection from deaths, as a result of the outworking of the divine decrees made in eternity past. Here's how I picture the contrast:

Eternity past	Decrees planned	Deity declared	Ipsa facto
Time	Decrees executed	Deity demonstrated	Resurrection

This miraculous power was an attestation of His divine essence, a display of His divine attributes on earth. The phrase “spirit of holiness” is a reference not to the Holy Spirit, but to the divine essence of Jesus Christ. “Pneuma” in the Greek can also be translated as “essence,” and combined with “holiness” or divinity, we get divine essence. Was the Holy Spirit present with Christ during the first advent? Of course, but that is not the emphasis in this phrase. His divine essence in time was attested in the OT, attested when He walked on earth, attested at His resurrection from deaths, and will be further attested when He is declared the Victor over Satan in the angelic conflict. His divine essence will become *ipsa facto* again in eternity future.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christ's resurrection was the proof of the Father's acceptance of His atoning work at Calvary. The death of Jesus Christ atoned for the elect. (W. Best) Jesus then, as a man was a descendant of David, but in the sphere of the Holy Spirit he was appointed Son of God. (C.K. Barrett) According to the Father's plan, Christ did not use the omnipotence of His own deity to support His humanity (Phil. 2:7-8). Instead, God the Holy Spirit constantly empowered and sustained the humanity of Christ amid the hostility of the devil's world. Christ now holds three titles of royalty, each with a royal family. As God, He has always been divine royalty. His first royal title is Son of God, and His royal family includes the other two members of the Trinity – God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. As a man, Jesus became Jewish royalty at the virgin birth. His Jewish royal title is Son of David and His royal family is the Davidic dynasty. As the God-Man, he won the victory over Satan at the cross and was granted a new royal title that may be considered His battlefield royalty. This third royal title is King of kings and Lord of lords, the Bright Morning Star. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The term “Son of God” describes the Savior's relationship to God the Father. His relationship to God is eternal and was not affected by the incarnation. “Son of God” is not less, but far more than a name or title. It is another way of setting Christ forth as the only begotten. The second member of the Godhead did become the Son of man, the son of David, and the son of Mary when He became incarnate, but He was the Son of God from all eternity. His eternal Sonship became apparent to us in the incarnation. (R.P. Lightner) His human birth was not in order to become a Son of God, but because He was the Son of God. (J. Walvoord) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit restored Christ's soul from Hades to His body in the grave. Hence, the Holy Spirit also became an agent of Christ's resurrection. The same infinite power of God that designed and energized the sphere of divine power demolished all satanic and human opposition by raising Christ from the dead and seating Him at the right hand of God. Both the omnipotence of God the Father and the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit were agents of Christ's resurrection. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

By His resurrection and ascension the Son of God incarnate entered upon a new phase of sovereignty and was endowed with new power correspondent with and unto the exercise of the mediatorial lordship which He executes as head over all things to His body, the church. The lordship in which He was instated by the resurrection is one all-pervasively conditioned by pneumatic powers. The relative weakness of His pre-resurrection state, reflected on in verse 3, is contrasted with the triumphant power exhibited in His post-resurrection lordship. What is contrasted is not a phase in which Jesus is not the Son of God and another in which He is. He is the incarnate Son of God in both states, humiliation and exaltation, and to regard Him as the Son of God in both states belongs to the essence of Paul's gospel as the gospel of God. (J. Murray)

Treating this phrase as the "Holy Spirit" not only destroys the antithesis to the flesh in v.3, but also makes light of the unusual usage of *αγιος*. (C. Hodge) The expression is made to mean that "the same who according to the flesh was known only as the descendant of David, is now declared to be the Son of God" ... Christ's eternal Sonship. (J. Barnby) The truth of man's resurrection stands or falls with the truth of Christ's resurrection. (J.B. Lightfoot) The emphasis is upon "with power." The Son of God had lived on earth in weakness and humiliation; since the resurrection He had been manifested in power. (C.A. Scott) In His deity, Christ possessed all the attributes of divine essence, coequal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Our Lord is Omniscient; He never needs to learn anything because He has always known all things. Bible doctrine is His mind revealed to man. But in His humanity, Jesus was born as a helpless infant, Who needed to learn doctrine under authority just as we do. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The reference is not to the Holy Spirit, Who is nowhere designated by this phrase, but to the spirit of Christ as the seat of the divine nature belonging to His Person. As God is spirit, the divine nature of Christ is spirit, and its characteristic quality is holiness. (M. Vincent) These two verses sum up the twin truths that He Who was from all eternity Son of God became Son of Man by a human birth and that He was designated as God's Son by His resurrection from the dead. The purpose of the latter was that mankind might know beyond dispute that He was divine. (R. Earle)

Rom. 1:4 Who was marked out by divine decree (*ὁρίζω*, APPTc.GSM, Dramatic, Substantival, Articular; appointed in eternity past, predestined to occur in time, decreed) the Son (Obj. Gen.) of God (Gen. Rel.; Christ was not predestined to be the Son of God - He was such from eternity), by means of miraculous power (Instr. Means; omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit; His first attestation), according to the spirit (Adv. Acc. with Prep.; essence) of holiness (Descr. Gen.; divine attributes; His second attestation), by means of resurrection (Abl. Means) from deaths (Abl. Separation; His third attestation; Christ died twice - first spiritually, then physically),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:4** τοῦ ὁρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:4** qui praedestinatus est Filius Dei in virtute secundum Spiritum sanctificationis ex resurrectione mortuorum Iesu Christi Domini nostri

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:5** **Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship [the apparatus and means of instruction] for the purpose of obedience to doctrine [occupation with Christ through His Word] among all nations [not just Israel], for the sake of His Name,**

^{KW} **Rom. 1:5** Through whom we received grace and apostleship in order that there may be obedience to the Faith among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:5** By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We have received (Culminative Aorist tense) grace and apostleship through the Lord Jesus Christ. God had a purpose in mind when he gave us these two gifts: to grow to maturity in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. Both grace and apostleship are combined as a *hendiadys* as one idea, to provide us with the ability to grow by our obedience to Bible doctrine. Grace provides the doctrine and apostleship provides the teaching through the building of a local church. The only way to be occupied with Christ is to have His mind, Bible doctrine, in your soul. The intake and metabolization of doctrine requires a qualified instructor and a reasonably comfortable place to learn. Grace and apostleship provide these necessities.

Grace is intensified, enhanced by the office of apostle, and Paul was given this office. The gift of doctrine and apostleship is not limited to the nation Israel, nor to the geographical location Paul was living in when he wrote the Epistle to the Romans. For the sake of Christ's name, honor and reputation, grace and apostleship were extended to the known world. Apostles started Christian churches all over the Roman Empire; soon the Gospel (and Bible doctrine in general) was spread to the four corners of the earth. Paul became the chief of these apostles.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The "we" is not an editorial "we" of the apostle, but includes all those who have been truly saved. (D.G. Barnhouse) The editorial "we" is a wide-spread tendency among Greek writers to speak of themselves in the plural instead of the singular. (Blass) But this is not always true, because Paul associates others with him in some cases, such as Romans 1:5. (A.T. Robertson)

If "faith" were understood in the objective sense of the object of content of faith, the truth believed, this would provide an admirably suitable interpretation and would be equivalent to saying "obedience to the Word." (J. Murray) "Faith" IS understood in the objective sense as the Word of God, the Truth believed, and it IS saying "obedience to the Word!" (LWB)

Paul uses the singular or plural according to the humor of the moment. Surely he is using the Literary Plural and is talking of no one else but himself when he mentions “apostolen”. Blass overlooks this word and calls attention to “charin” as applicable to all. Paul is here defending his own apostolic authority. His use of the Literary Plural does not mean that he uses it when he has a plural. Each case rests on its own merit. (A.T. Robertson)

Two counterfeits of the obedience to doctrine are (a) those who want doctrine without obedience, and (b) those who want obedience without doctrine. The first become fundamentalist charlatans, the second become modernistic seducers. Do not seek a spiritual life without doctrine, and be careful to surrender yourself to their truths. (D.G. Barnhouse) By failing to present the gospel as a command to be obeyed we minimize sin, rob God of His glory, and delude some into thinking that all is well with their souls when actually they are without Christ and are perishing. (J. Boice)

Paul is briefly explaining to the Romans why we have apostles and what their purpose is. It is also a mild defense for his calling himself an apostle, (M. Luther) and that his authority extends to Rome. (H.A. Ironside) Grace is not a vague force of benevolence in the universe, nor merely the good intentions of the Almighty. Grace is absolutely personal, for it is focused in and channeled through the person of Christ Jesus. Grace is an act, not a feeling or disposition. It is something which God did at a particular point in space and time. It is the master plan of God’s love, the wonderful and awesome surprise that where the world deserved *nothing* from God, it could hope for *everything* from God. Grace was the origin of Paul’s apostleship. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 1:5 through Whom (Abl. Source, Relative Pronoun) we (I, Paul; *heterosis*: uses the plural for the singular) have received (λαμβάνω, AAI1P, Culminative) grace and apostleship (Acc. Double Dir. Obj.; *hendiadys*-two words are employed, but only one thing or idea is intended; the second thing intensifies the first, a form of emphatic superlative), for the purpose of obedience (Acc. Purpose; God had a distinct purpose in mind when he gave us these two gifts) to doctrine (Obj. Gen.; occupation with Christ; GAP as the system for growing to spiritual maturity) among all (Acc. Spec.) nations (Acc. Gen. Ref.; not limited to Israel or Paul's current geographical location), for the sake of His (Poss. Gen.) Name (Acc. Rel.; in honor of all that He is, His glorious Person, Reputation),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:5** δι οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:5** per quem accepimus gratiam et apostolatum ad oboediendum fidei in omnibus gentibus pro nomine eius

LWB **Rom. 1:6** Among whom you [Romans] also are called [elected by the Father] to Jesus Christ.

KW **Rom. 1:6** Among whom you also are divinely summoned ones belonging to Jesus Christ,

KJV **Romans 1:6** Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There are elect believers all over the world and the Romans were part of them. Paul tells them they were (Descriptive Present tense) called by the Father to Jesus Christ Himself. "Called" in this context refers to divine election, positional truth. The Roman believers were elect in eternity past; their eternal destiny is secure. They were definitely part of that number of believers for whom the gospel was intended. They were not only invited to believe in Jesus Christ by an evangelical message, i.e., outward call. They were also going to eventually respond to this external call according to God's sovereign grace, i.e., the effectual call. In the same manner, Paul was not "separated" by his own talents or prospects, but by God's grace and election.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word "kletos" is never in the epistles applied to one who is merely invited by the external call of the gospel. It means the effectually called, those who are so called by God as to be made obedient to the call. Hence the "kletoi" are opposed to those who receive and disregard the outward call. We accordingly find "kletoi" used as a familiar designation of believers. (C. Hodge) Those who have been chosen by God and brought to faith in Christ by the power of this summons are those "called to belong to Jesus Christ." They are called to be saints (1:7), that is, to be set apart to God by His call. (J. Boice)

"Called" refers to those summoned by an effectual call in which the one called is rendered in sovereign grace willing to appropriate salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (K. Wuest) Those who have slighted the invitation are not reckoned among the called. (D.G. Barnhouse) The salutation which commenced in verse 1 is now resumed in verse 7, which is an *anachoresis*, a regression, or a return to the original subject after a digression. (E.W. Bullinger) The called ones of Jesus Christ stand in this relationship not because they have chosen it, but because they have been called to it by God Himself, just as Paul, against his own inclination and will, was called to be an apostle. (C.K. Barrett)

The new birth, contrary to what is commonly taught, is something done not merely "for" but "in" man, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, therefore, must quicken the passive spirit of the sinner making him sensitive to the call of the gospel. Sensitivity to the gospel is the fruit of regeneration. Scriptures classify this as conversion. Regeneration is not a product of the depraved human will, plus the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the creative act of God, sovereignly wrought, in a heart that is depraved and

unwilling by nature. The new birth makes the unwilling, willing; and the “whosoever won’t” becomes the “whosoever will.” (W.E. Best)

It should be translated: Called to be Jesus Christ’s, not called by Jesus Christ, for the call is always ascribed to God the Father. (J.B. Lightfoot) The emphasis upon “calling” is to be observed. In all cases it is “effectual calling,” not merely an invitation, but one which has taken effect. Paul uses the word here, as almost always, in the same sense which it has in the O.T., where it means “set apart for” or “belonging to God,” “having this seal, for the Lord knows those that are His.” (C.A. Scott)

There is such a thing as a general or universal call and there are examples of it in the Bible. But in the NT the terms for calling, when used with reference to salvation, are almost uniformly applied, not to the universal call of the gospel, but to the call that ushers men into a state of salvation and is therefore effectual. There is scarcely an instance where the terms are used to designate the indiscriminate overture of grace in the gospel of Jesus Christ. (J. Murray) “Called” means “called ones,” those called, summoned by an effectual call in which the one called is rendered in sovereign grace willing to appropriate salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus. (K. Wuest)

When Paul names those he is addressing “the called of Jesus Christ,” he means “those who by virtue of having been effectively called belong to Jesus Christ, are His people.” They are even now His every own, having been given to Him by the Father. (J. Murray) Paul began his letter by identifying himself as a servant of Christ Jesus who had been “called to be an apostle.” Then he told the believers in Rome that they too had been called. They were “called to belong to Jesus Christ.” God’s call is not an invitation, but a powerful and effective reaching out to claim individuals for Himself. (R. Mounce)

Rom 1:6 among whom (Prep. Loc.) you (personal pronoun referring to the Romans) also (adjunctive) are (είμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) called (Nom. Appos., Verbal Adj.; elected by the Father, positional truth) to Jesus Christ (Gen. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:6** ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:6** in quibus estis et vos vocati Iesu Christi

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:7** **To all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, called saints: Grace and prosperity from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

^{KW} **Rom. 1:7** To all who are in Rome, God’s loved ones, divinely summoned saints. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:7** To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Continuing his introduction, Paul addresses all those who are (Historical Present tense) in Rome, that is, those who are beloved by God and therefore called saints. To be beloved by God and called saints is to be set apart from the world. This love did not materialize over night; He loved them from eternity past, He loves them now, and He will keep on loving them in eternity future. Paul is writing to Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome, not unbelievers. He addresses them with his standard greeting: Grace and prosperity from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace refers to undeserved kindness and favor from God; peace refers to prosperity, tranquility and blessing.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some manuscripts omit “in Rome” probably to show that the letter is of general, not local, application. (B. Metzger) Those who have been the object of God's eternal love and choice will be brought effectively to know Him and should realize the high position for which God has destined them. Unsaved men are never called the *beloved* of God. (D.G. Barnhouse) God's love precedes His call. (M. Luther) A saint is a saint not because of any personal merit, but because of God's love and call. (J. Edwards)

“Called to be saints” or “called as saints” places the emphasis upon the effectual character of the divine action by which believers became saints – it was by divine summons. They were effectively ushered into the status of saints. “Called” describes them in terms of the determinate action of God by which His distinguishing love comes to effect. (J. Murray) Sainthood is not to be identified with the practice of canonization that later arose in the Roman church. A saint is one called of God and “holy,” that is, set apart to God for specific service. The saints of Rome were beloved of God, which marks them out as the undeserving yet grateful recipients of God's love. Yet they were set apart from the world by God to engage in specific forms of service to Him. (W. Kroll)

The electing love of God is placed first in order. This love is unvarying from eternity through eternity, although God's dealings towards His people may vary. The first outward effect of election, or of the love of God to His people, is His calling them, not merely by the word, which is common to *many*, but by the Holy Spirit, which is limited to *few*. “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee,” (Jer. 31:3). The election, then, of believers is to be traced through their calling (2 Peter 1:10), and their calling to the everlasting love of God. (R. Haldane)

We generally speak of this calling as effectual because with scarcely an exception the N.T. meaning of the words “called” and “calling” is nothing less than the call which is efficacious unto salvation. The sovereignty and efficacy of the call do not relax human responsibility, but rather ground and confirm that responsibility. (J. Murray) Lazarus was dead before Christ called him from the tomb. He was impervious to any call. If you or I were present, we could have called loudly, persuasively and eloquently, but Lazarus would still not have responded. When Jesus called, it was different. His call had power to bring the dead to life. In the same way His call quickens those who have been chosen by

God to be His people. And none fail to be quickened! As Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” (J. Boice)

They were constituted saints by the effectual call of God into salvation. (K. Wuest) They were not called "to be" saints; our holiness is not intrinsic in ourselves but is found in Christ. (D.G. Barnhouse) God the Father appoints to each creature its own manner, character and sphere of being. (W.R. Newell) We do not become saints by acting in a "saintly" manner, (H.A. Ironside) nor does saint refer to any ascetic *modus operandi*. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul's theology is *theocentric* in that God is the source of salvation and thus of the Gospel, and of the theology that rests upon the Gospel; *christocentric* in that the historical manifestation of the truth of God lies in the deeds of Jesus Christ. (C.K. Barrett)

From this verse we learn that divine love precedes the calling, just as the calling precedes their sanctification. Paul's hearers were to realize that they were saints, not because of any merit on their part, but because of God's love and call, so that he ascribes all things (their whole salvation) to God. (M. Luther) The optative of “eimi” frequently drops out in wishes. (A.T. Robertson) We have not received an invitation, we have been effectually called. (J. Knox) This love is an electing, saving love. Believers do not become so by their own unaided choice. How can a dead man decide anything? We are Christians for one reason only and that is that God has set His love upon us. That is the thing that brings us out of the world and out of the dominion of Satan. (D.M.L. Jones)

Human beings do not obey God if left to themselves. No one responds to God's offer. None want to. So, that some might be saved, God adds to the general call, a specific call by which God's chosen ones inwardly hear and respond, becoming Christians. Like Lazarus, left to ourselves, we are all spiritual corpses. We cannot do anything. But when God calls savingly, some of these spiritual corpses come to spiritual life and do God's bidding. Anyone who has been saved by God has heard this call in some way and has responded to it. (J. Boice)

Some translators continue to offer: “called to be saints.” But that is not what Paul says. He is telling the Roman Christians what, by grace, they *are* even now. He is stating that something happened to them: they have been effectively called. By this inner effective call is meant the operation of the Holy Spirit whereby He so applies the gospel to the minds and hearts of sinners that they become aware of their guilt, understand their need of Jesus Christ, and embrace Him as their Lord and Savior. Thus these people become *saints*, that is, people who have been “set apart” in order to live lives to the glory of the Triune God as revealed in Christ Jesus. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 1:7 to all (Acc. Spec.) those (Dat. Ind. Obj., Demonstrative pronoun) who are (εἰμί, PAPtc.DPM, Historical, Substantival) in Rome (Loc. Place), beloved (Dat. Ind. Obj., Verbal Adj.) by God (Abl. Agency or Gen. Rel. - "of"), called (Dat. Ind. Obj., Verbal Adj.) saints (Dat. Adv.; set apart as different; double emphatic). Grace (Subj. Nom.;

undeserved kindness, favor of God) to you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective conj.) prosperity (Subj. Nom.; peace, tranquillity, blessings) from God (Abl. Source) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Nom. Appos.) and (connective conj.) the Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Source).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:7** πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἁγίοις χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:7** omnibus qui sunt Romae dilectis Dei vocatis sanctis gratia vobis et pax a Deo Patre nostro et Domino Iesu Christo

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:8** **First of all, I am continually thanking my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith [positive volition towards the Word of God] is being constantly proclaimed with commendation and celebration [their spiritual progress is widely known] throughout the entire world.**

^{KW} **Rom. 1:8** First, I am constantly thanking my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you because your faith is constantly being spread abroad in the whole world;

^{KJV} **Romans 1:8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts the next pericope with “first of all,” but he ends up taking a different path and does not return with a “second of all.” He does tell the Romans that he thanks God through Jesus Christ in his prayers for all of them. He offers his thanks continually (Iterative Present tense) because he hears such a marvelous report on them everywhere he goes. Their positive volition towards the Word of God is commended and celebrated (Iterative Present tense) throughout the known world (*hyperbole* for the extent of the Roman Empire). Every time Paul hears a good word about them, he thanks the Lord for their spiritual progress.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This form of expression supposes the mediation of Christ, by Whom alone we have access to the Father, and for Whose sake alone either our prayers or praises are accepted. (C. Hodge) To attempt to pray to God without coming through Jesus Christ is as false a method as it would be to approach a business man with a request for a loan and begin by telling him that his son was illegitimate. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Paul celebrates that the flag of the gospel has been planted in the capital of the ancient world. Although we are not told who planted it or how it came about, it is clear that Paul takes no credit for establishing the beachhead. The church in Rome existed before the

apostle ever reached the imperial city, and long before he penned this epistle. (J. Edwards)

The "world" means "in all parts of the world", a *synecdoche* of the Whole where a place is put for a part of it. (E.W. Bullinger) The whole world is not, of course, to be taken literally, but as a phrase denoting general notoriety. Any considerable number of converts in so important a place as Rome would be likely to become notorious in all Christian circles, and even outside them might have already begun to attract attention. (J. Barmby)

The opening word "first" implies a series, but Paul never comes to a second or next. (D. Moo) The bond of Christian fellowship is not limited to the circle described by personal acquaintance. Fellowship existed between the various churches throughout the world and of the faithful witness borne by the Roman believers to the faith of the gospel. (J. Murray)

Rom. 1:8 First of all (Adv. Acc.; an enumeration that Paul does not carry out), I am continually thanking (εὐχαριστέω, PA11S, Iterative) my (Poss. Gen.) God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) through Jesus Christ (Gen. Agency) for all (Adv. Gen. of Measure) of you (Adv. Gen. Ref.), because (causal conj.) your (Poss. Gen.) faith (Subj. Nom.; positive volition towards Bible doctrine) is being constantly proclaimed with commendation and celebration (καταγγέλλω, PPI3S, Iterative; their spiritual progress is renown far & wide) throughout the entire (Dat. Measure) world (Loc. Place).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:8** Πρῶτον μὲν εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν ὅτι ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καταγγέλλεται ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:8** primum quidem gratias ago Deo meo per Iesum Christum pro omnibus vobis quia fides vestra adnuntiatur in universo mundo

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:9** For God is my witness [at the Supreme Court in heaven], Whom I continually serve with my spirit [new nature] by means of the gospel of His Son [Paul served by studying and teaching doctrine], how without ceasing, I am continually making mention of you always in my prayers,

^{KW} **Rom. 1:9** For my witness is God, to whom I render sacred service in my spirit in the good news concerning His Son, how unceasingly I am making mention of you always at my prayers,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:9** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God is Paul's witness, as He sits on His throne at the Supreme Court in heaven. Paul continually serves Him (Iterative Present tense) with his spirit, an idiom for the New Nature in all its manifestations. His human spirit was transformed by the Holy Spirit into a new spirit, which then enabled him to live a spiritual life. He did this as an apostle by both studying and teaching Bible doctrine, as pastors and teachers do today. You continually serve the Lord with your new spirit by growing in grace and knowledge and exercising your spiritual gift(s), whatever that may be.

Paul also remembers the Roman believers in his intercessory prayers, which he makes (Iterative Present tense) every time the occasion arises. "Without ceasing" does not mean he repeats the same prayer over-and-over again all day long like a liturgical formula. It means every time Paul hears a good report about the Romans, which is quite frequently, he prays for their spiritual success in all endeavors. Although he has not met them personally, they are on his daily prayer list.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The human spirit which was given to Paul at birth (being "born from above") was transformed by the Holy Spirit into a new spirit (being "born again") during regeneration. Our new spirit enables us to comprehend spiritual things (the Spirit witnesses to our spirit), while the unregenerate man lives his entire life in a soulish, carnal manner. (D.G. Barnhouse) It makes a great difference in our feelings toward a stranger if before we meet him we have prayed for Him. (Gordon) And we may say with equal truth that it makes a great difference in the feelings of others towards us if they have reason to believe that we have prayed for them. (C. Gore) He didn't pray for all the Christians in the world, or even for all the churches in his sphere of influence; rather, he prayed for the Roman, Ephesian, and Philippian Christians ... Paul's prayers were not filled with platitudes, clichés or well-worn phrases. (W. Kroll)

It profoundly affects our reaction to a stranger if we have prayed for him before our meeting, and is equally likely to affect his response to us if he knows we have been praying for him. A reconciling and unifying factor of incalculable power has been introduced as soon as the two parties know that they are bound together thus by intercessory prayers – and even if they don't know. (J. Knox) Prayer also changes the one praying so that he or she increasingly becomes the kind of person through whom God can accomplish His purpose. I am convinced that far more frequently God uses prayer to change us. Because by it He brings us into His presence, opens our eyes to spiritual realities, and makes His perspectives ours. (J. Boice)

Rom. 1:9 **For** (Declarative Clause) **God** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **my** (Gen. Rel.) **witness** (Nom. Appos.; on the Supreme Court bench in heaven), **Whom** (Dat. Adv.; Relative Pronoun) **I continually serve** (λατρεύω, PAI1P, Iterative) **with my** (Poss. Gen.) **spirit** (Instr. Manner; idiom for the New Nature in all its manifestations) **by means of the gospel** (Instr. Means) **of His** (Gen. Rel.) **Son** (Poss.

Gen.; Paul served by both studying and teaching doctrine), **how without ceasing** (Adv. Manner; uninterruptedly), **I am continually making** (ποιέω, PMIS, Iterative) **mention** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; remembering) **of you** (Dat. Ind. Obj.) **always** (Adv. of Time) **in my** (Poss. Gen.) **prayers** (Adv. Gen. of Place; intercession),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:9** μάρτυς γάρ μου ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ᾧ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ ὡς ἀδιαλείπτως μνησίαν ὑμῶν ποιῶμαι

^{VUL} **Romans 1:9** testis enim mihi est Deus cui servio in spiritu meo in evangelio Filii eius quod sine intermissione memoriam vestri facio

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:10** When offering a petition, that if somehow at last [Paul was looking forward to this visit], I might have a successful journey by the will of God [as opposed to Paul's will] to come unto you.

^{KW} **Rom. 1:10** Making supplication if somehow now at last I may be prospered in the will of God to come to you,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:10** Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only does Paul pray for the Roman believers, but he also offers a petition (Tendential Present tense) on those occasions to be able to visit Rome, expressing His submission to God's will in the matter. In other words, he has the personal desire to visit Rome, but he surrenders his geographical location to God's will instead of forcing the issue. He does tell the Roman believers, however, that if the Lord allows him a visit, he prays for a successful journey (Predictive Future tense) if and when he is permitted to come (Gnomic Aorist tense) to Rome.

The conditional particle shows Paul is not certain that permission will be given, but the Infinitive of Intended Results is his personal wish for a pleasant journey to Rome soon. He eventually gets his trip to Rome, but not in the manner he prayed for. He tried to go to Jerusalem first, against God's will, and was shipwrecked on the way, bitten by a snake, and led to Rome in chains. If Paul were here, he would probably warn us about what we pray for, as well as not to disobey the Word of God when He points the way in a clear manner.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Note that three particles and an adverb work together to express Paul's feelings of emotion that "now at length somehow it may really come true". (A.T. Robertson) Paul was determined in his own spirit to go to Jerusalem, but in intense divine discipline. Ultimately, regardless of his reversionism, he ended up in Rome as God had planned.

(R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The constant and voluntary act of subjecting himself to God's sovereign intention for his (Paul's) life and labors was that which sustained him in all his trials ... with an attitude of wholehearted, unconditional submission. (W. Hendriksen)

Though long anxious to visit the capital, he met with a number of providential hindrances, insomuch that *nearly a quarter of a century* elapsed, after his conversion, ere his desire was accomplished, and that only as "a prisoner of Jesus Christ." Thus taught that his whole future was in the hands of God, he makes it his continual prayer that at length the obstacles to a happy and prosperous meeting might be removed. (R. Jamieson)

Rom. 1:10 when offering a petition (δέομαι, PMPTc.NSM, Tendentia, Temporal, Deponent), that if (Conditional Particle; expressing Paul's submission to God's will) somehow (Enclitic Particle), now (Adv. of Time) at last (Enclitic Particle; culmination, Paul had been looking forward to this visit), I might have a successful journey (εὐοδώω, FPIIP, Predictive, Deponent) by the will (Instr. Means) of God (Poss. Gen.; as opposed to Paul's will) to come (έρχομαι, AAInf., Gnostic, Intended Result, Deponent) unto you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:10** πάντοτε ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν μου δεόμενος εἴ πως ἤδη ποτὲ εὐοδωθήσομαι ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἔλθειν πρὸς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 1:10** semper in orationibus meis obsecrans si quo modo tandem aliquando prosperum iter habeam in voluntate Dei veniendi ad vos

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:11** For I am longing to see you, in order that I may impart to you some spiritual [communication] gift, so that you might begin to be stabilized [strengthened by doctrine],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:11** For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you resulting in your being stabilized,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:11** For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has a strong desire (Dramatic Present tense) to see the Roman believers (Futuristic Aorist tense), so that he might impart (Constative Aorist tense) to them a spiritual communication gift. Why do I say communication gift? The purpose clause points to the reason for his desired visit as imparting this gift to them. The Infinitive of Result points to their becoming stabilized in Bible doctrine (Ingressive Aorist tense) as the end product. The only type of spiritual gift that enables believers to grow in grace and knowledge and become stabilized in their soul is through the communication gift of pastor or teacher. In order for the end result to occur, the purpose must be fulfilled by the proper gift, i.e., in this case, a communication or teaching gift.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The imparting of spiritual truth is not a sharing but a proclamation. (D. Barnhouse) You cannot find even one Christian on this earth who has developed any strength of wisdom and witness in the Lord who has attained it by any other means than study and meditation in the Word of God. There are various other aspects of Christian life and worship, but none of them will build the believer in strength and vitality apart from the study of the Word of God. A program of light jazzy religion can equally stultify spiritual growth. And too many ministers have not learned that sermonettes by preaches make Christianettes. If you want to have a strong spiritual life, you must spend time on it. The growth of the soul is a definite thing, and we must obey the rules [precise protocol plan] of spiritual dietetics if we would come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (D. Barnhouse)

Rom. 1:11 For I am longing (ἐπιποθέω, PAIS, Dramatic; strong desire, yearning) to see (ὄράω, AAInf., Futuristic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; meet) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Romans), in order that (Purpose Clause) I may impart (μεταδίδωμι, AASubj.1S, Constativ, Purpose) to you (Acc. Adv.) some spiritual (Verbal Noun; communication gifts in this instance) gift (Acc. Dir. Obj.), so that you (Acc. Gen. Ref.) might begin to be stabilized (στηρίζω, APInf., Articular, Ingressive, Result),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:11** ἐπιποθῶ γὰρ ἰδεῖν ὑμᾶς ἵνα τι μεταδῶ χάρισμα ὑμῖν πνευματικὸν εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 1:11** desidero enim videre vos ut aliquid in partem gratiae vobis spiritualis ad confirmandos vos

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:12** For this [communication gift] must be added, so that I may receive encouragement together with you [Paul is encouraged when a congregation is growing in grace and knowledge] through doctrine [communication of Bible doctrine is the glue that holds them together] in each other [mutual benefit], both yours [doctrine in their souls] and mine [doctrine in Paul's soul].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:12** That is, moreover, that I may be strengthened by you through the mutual faith which is both yours and mine.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:12** That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says the communication gift must be (Gnomic Present tense) added to what they currently possess, so that he might have mutual encouragement (Infinitive of Result) with them. Paul is always encouraged when a congregation is positive to the Word of God. Their encouragement is glued to his when they all share the Word of Truth. Bible doctrine is what holds them together. Paul passes a communication gift on to them, it is exercised in their congregation on a daily basis, and they grow in grace and knowledge. This mutual advance to maturity is the intended result; it is Paul's blessing both to give instruction and to receive good feedback.

The doctrine in their souls and the doctrine resident in his soul is what constitutes their close relationship. Our fellowship with God is with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our fellowship with other believers is centered on the Word of God. Bake sales, athletic events, picnics, recreation and other programs are forms of social life. Social life with other believers is legitimate and encouraged, but social life is not the same thing as fellowship. If the Word of God is not being studied and taught as the center of the group activity, that activity does not qualify as fellowship.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's visit to Rome and the resultant teaching of the Word would strengthen them and comfort him. (C. Hodge) As the people depend on the apostle for spiritual gifts, so he depends on the people for spiritual encouragement. He must live by the experience of their spiritual growth. (C. Gore) "Yours and mine" could also be a reference to a mutual blessing to each party. (A.T. Robertson) Paul disclaims being in a position in which all the giving must be on his side. When he is among them his desire is that he may be cheered and strengthened with them by the faith which both they and he possess. (W.R. Nicoll) Prayer should be specific. Paul prayed for the specific reasons he wanted to come to Rome, he thanked God in his prayer for the specific faith of the Romans known throughout the world (v. 8), and he even prayed that he would "succeed in coming" to visit the Roman believers. That's getting to the heart of the matter when you pray. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:12 for this (Subj. Nom., explanatory demonstrative pronoun; ellipsis of repetition: verb from preceding clause, "communication gift") must be (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnomic; formal literary style) added (idiomatic ellipsis, verb added: present among them), so that I may receive encouragement together (συμπαρακαλέω, APInf., Constative, blending of Purpose & Intended Result, Deponent; Paul is encouraged when a congregation is positive) with you (Acc. Rel.) through doctrine (Instr. Agency & Means; the communication of Bible doctrine is the glue that holds them together) in each other (Loc. Reciprocal Pronoun; Paul is passing doctrine on to them by means of a spiritual communication gift so they may advance to maturity), both yours (Poss. Gen.; doctrine in their souls) and (enclitic particle indicating a close,

mutually beneficial relationship) mine (Poss. Gen.; doctrine resident in Paul's soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:12** τοῦτο δέ ἐστὶν συμπαρακληθῆναι ἐν ὑμῖν διὰ τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως ὑμῶν τε καὶ ἐμοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 1:12** id est simul consolari in vobis per eam quae invicem est fidem vestram atque meam

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:13** Moreover, I do not wish you to be ignorant [they need to progress from the basics to advanced doctrine], beloved, since frequently I myself intended [planned] to come face-to-face to you, but was forbidden until now, that I also might begin to bear some fruit [divine production] among you [Romans], (just as among the rest of the Gentiles).

^{KW} **Rom. 1:13** Moreover, I do not desire you to be ignorant, brethren, that often I proposed to myself to come to you, but I was prevented up to this time, in order that I might procure some fruit among you even as also among the rest of the Gentiles.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:13** Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul does not want the Roman believers to be ignorant (Descriptive Present tense) of his plans, nor of specific advanced doctrines that they have not yet been taught, because he planned (Constative Aorist tense) to come to Rome on numerous occasions to teach them. It was his intention to travel to Rome, but he was prohibited (Dramatic Aorist tense) from doing so by the Lord. There was other work for him to do in the Gentile world, preaching the gospel to unbelievers and teaching the Word of God to new converts.

Paul realizes, however, that the Roman believers need more advanced instruction in the Word, so they will not remain ignorant of advanced doctrine. The Roman believers have learned basic positional doctrines, but they need further instruction related to justification by faith, the sovereignty of God in salvation, the difference between Israel and the Church, and the mechanics related to experiential sanctification. Paul has had great teaching success by the power of the Spirit in other geographical locations, and he is determined to begin producing the same spiritual fruit (Ingressive Aorist tense) in Rome, if God permits.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Supported by the great mass of manuscripts, rather than "I do not suppose". (B. Metzger)
This means much more than a mere negative wish. It is a strong positive and earnest desire that they might assuredly know and be well instructed. (E.W. Bullinger)

Ignorance of transitional doctrines, the link between basics and advanced doctrine (RBT):

- (a) failure to understand grace mechanics as related to salvation - positional truth
- (b) failure to understand the function of the grace apparatus of perception (GAP) as related to spiritual growth after salvation - experiential truth
- (c) failure to understand the difference between Israel and the Church

Paul's delay in reaching Rome was due to God's will. (J. Edwards) It is indeed the presumption of impiety to pass by God, and without Him to determine on things to come, as though they were in our own power. The Lord employed Paul in more urgent concerns, which he could not have neglected without loss to the Church. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 1:13 Moreover (continuative conj.), I do not wish (θέλω, PA1S, Perfective) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be ignorant (ἀγνοέω, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; there was a gap between their lower echelon and upper echelon doctrine), beloved (Vocative), since (causal conj.; *aetiologia*, rendering a reason for what is said or done) frequently (Adv. Time; often) I myself intended (προτίθημι, AM1S, Constative; planned) to come (έρχομαι, AAInf., Constative, Intended Result, Deponent) face-to-face to you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), but (adversative conj.) was forbidden (κωλύω, API1S, Dramatic; prohibited, prevented) until (improper prep. with Gen.) now (Adv. of Time), that I also might begin to bear (έχω, AASubj.1S, Ingressive, Final Purpose Clause) some (enclitic indefinite pronoun) fruit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; production, divine good) among you (Loc. Sphere & Dat. Assoc.; the Romans), [just as (Adv. of Comparison; as also; parenthetical και) among the rest of (Dat. Ref.) the Gentiles (Loc. Sphere & Dat. Assoc.)].

^{WHO} **Romans 1:13** οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ἀδελφοί ὅτι πολλάκις προεθέμην ἔλθειν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ἐκωλύθην ἄχρι τοῦ δεῦρο ἵνα τινὰ καρπὸν σχῶ καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν καθὼς καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:13** nolo autem vos ignorare fratres quia saepe proposui venire ad vos et prohibitus sum usque adhuc ut aliquem fructum habeam et in vobis sicut et in ceteris gentibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:14** I am under obligation [sense of honor toward God, duty toward man] to the Greeks [civilized] and to the barbarians [uncivilized], both to the wise [maturing believers] and the unwise [reversionistic believers],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:14** Both to the Greeks and to those who do not possess Greek culture, both to the wise and unwise, I am debtor in such a manner,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:14** I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now states his obligation (Retrogressive Present tense) to the very people he has come to teach. He is obliged to them out of a sense of honor toward God, and a sense of duty toward man. His obligation is all encompassing. It includes the Greeks, representing civilized man, and the barbarians, representing uncivilized man. It includes the wise, the mature believers who are making great strides in their spiritual life, as well as the unwise, those reversionistic believers who are not making spiritual progress due to their struggle with the flesh and the world. In other words, Paul doesn't care what type of person the Lord sends to him, he is just happy for the opportunity to teach the Word of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Greeks and barbarians means all nations; wise and unwise means all classes of people. (C. Hodge) The wise and foolish probably means the cultured and uncultured. (J. Edwards) In the Jewish mind, there were only two kinds of people – Jews and everybody else, the Gentiles. In the Greek mind there were only two kinds of people – Greeks and everybody else, barbarians. And in God's mind there are only two kinds of people – the saved and the lost. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:14 I am (εἰμί, PAI1S, Retrogressive) under obligation (Nom. Appos.; a debtor; sense of honor toward God, sense of duty toward man) to the Greeks (Dat. Adv.; civilized) and (connective conj.) to the barbarians (Dat. Adv.; uncivilized), both (adjunctive) to the wise (Dat. Adv.; mature believer, great spiritual progress) and (connective conj.) to the unwise (Dat. Adv.; reversionistic believer, no spiritual progress; God also provides the spiritual IQ necessary to learn doctrine).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:14** Ἑλλησίν τε καὶ βαρβάρους σοφοῖς τε καὶ ἀνοήτοις ὀφειλέτης εἰμί

^{VUL} **Romans 1:14** Graecis ac barbaris sapientibus et insipientibus debitor sum

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:15** But in this situation [waiting for God's permission], on my part [personal preference], I am eager to proclaim the good news [teach Bible doctrine] even to you who are in Rome.

^{KW} **Rom. 1:15** That to the extent of my ability I am eager to proclaim the good news also to you who are in Rome.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:15** So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is in a situation where he would like to go to Rome to teach the Word of God to those believers who are ready to advance from the basics to intermediate and advanced doctrine. At this time, however, the Lord has other believers for him to minister to. As for his own personal preferences, he is quite eager to go to Rome to proclaim the good news (Constative Aorist tense) to both unbelievers and believers who are ready to grow. “Good news” in this context is not the gospel, because he is addressing Roman believers who have already heard and received the gospel. “Good news” in this context is Bible doctrine in general. There are many things the new believers in Rome need to learn, but a teacher of Paul’s caliber has not yet been made available to them.

There is no reliable evidence that Peter ever visited Rome. There is reliable evidence that Paul did, and that he took upon himself the burden of teaching them doctrines that nobody else (including Peter) was capable of teaching. Paul was given the ministry to the Gentiles, while Peter was given the ministry to the Jews. The center of Paul’s ministry, therefore, became Rome; the center of Peter’s ministry, therefore, became Jerusalem. When Paul tried to return to Jerusalem to teach, a rebellious crossing over into the sphere of Peter’s authority, his ministry there failed and he met with catastrophes which eventually carried him back to Rome where he belonged. The same conclusion would have occurred had Peter tried to go to Rome and exert any influence there. Roman Catholicism has tried to hide these facts for centuries, and has deliberately tampered with the original Greek text by deleting “in Rome” from 1:7 and 1:15, so they may continue to expound their heresy of apostolic succession through Peter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Origen's Latin translation omits "in Rome" probably for the same reason as in 1:7. The omission of “in Rome” is probably a deliberate excision, made in order to show that the letter is of general, not local, application. (B. Metzger) Roman Catholicism does not like any verses which point to Rome as being taught by Paul instead of Peter. (LWB)

The message of conditional election does not produce proper worship, for it rests God’s activity upon man’s response and thus magnifies the flesh. The message of free will cannot properly answer the question “What made you to differ from another?” for the answer ultimately must be that “I made myself to differ.” The message of general atonement cannot say, “If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him,” for the conclusion is tentative and depends finally on man and not the completed work of Christ. The message of apostasy cannot say, “Faithful is He that calls you, Who also will do it” (1 Thess. 5:24), for His doing it depends in the final analysis on the human will. T. Nettles) This quote belongs under Romans 1:16. (LWB)

Rom. 1:15 But (adversative conj.), in this situation (Adv. referring to what precedes), on my part (Articular Adverbial Acc. with a Reflexive Pronoun; *antimereia*, an exchange of an adjective for a noun: "with reference to me"; Paul's sense of responsibility for others developed from his taking in Bible doctrine and reaching supergrace status), I am (ellipsis, verb supplied) eager (Compl. Acc.; willing, ready) to proclaim the good news (εὐαγγελίζω, AMInf., Constativ, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; reference to Bible doctrine in general, not the Gospel message) even (ascensive conj.) to you (Dat. Adv.) who (relative pronoun) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) in Rome (Loc. Place).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:15** οὕτως τὸ κατ' ἐμὲ πρόθυμον καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι

^{VUL} **Romans 1:15** ita quod in me promptum est et vobis qui Romae estis evangelizare

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:16** For I myself am not ashamed [not wimpy or cowardly] of the good news [Bible doctrine in general], for it [Bible doctrine] is the power [sanctifying daily process] of God with reference to salvation [experiential sanctification] to each person who continues to believe [living the life of faith], to the Jew first [in priority], and then to the Greek;

^{KW} **Rom. 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the good news. For God's power it is, resulting in salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to Gentile,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul emphatically declares that he is not ashamed (Declarative Present tense) of the good news. When it comes to preaching the gospel and teaching the Word of God, he is not a wimp or coward. He understands fully that Bible doctrine is the power of God (manifestation of His omnipotence) with reference to salvation. This is not a verse that addresses evangelism; this is a verse that addresses growth to maturity. The Greek word for "good news" does not always refer to the gospel, and the Greek word for "salvation" does not always mean believing in the gospel and becoming positionally saved. This is a letter to Roman believers, not unbelievers. They have already believed the gospel and are positionally saved!

There are three stages in salvation: justification salvation, sanctification salvation, and glorification salvation. While Paul will add depth to what the Roman believers have already experienced as part of their justification salvation, his primary purpose in writing this letter is to further their sanctification salvation, i.e., growth to spiritual maturity. The ultimate goal is, of course, glorification salvation. When Paul says that "Bible doctrine (it) is the power of God with reference to salvation," he is stating unequivocally that the only way to grow in grace and knowledge experientially is (Gnomic Present tense) by the intake, metabolization, and

application of Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine is the power behind spiritual growth; you cannot grow without it. It is more crucial to your spiritual life than “bread” is to your physical body.

To whom is this salvation referring to? It refers to every believer who continues to believe. The Durative Present tense points to a life of faith: a day-after-day intake of the Word, a day-after-day categorical classification of doctrine in your soul, and a day-after-day application of the Word to your experiences in life. This is experiential sanctification, not positional justification. A believer who continues to believe is a believer who continues to live the life of faith; the life of faith is the life of Bible doctrine – they are one and the same. This life of faith has been provided to the Jew first, in privilege and priority, and then to the Gentile. FYI: The words “of Christ” are not in the original Greek manuscripts; its addition to the KJV came from the Latin Vulgate.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God’s election does not exclude the use of means through which He calls, and the Bible explicitly tells us that the proclamation of the gospel by believers is that means. (J. Boice) The gospel is not merely a powerful means in God’s hands, but is itself a divine energy. It is the good news of salvation energized by the Holy Spirit. It is a sweet and loving message of mercy and grace which the Holy Spirit in sovereign grace makes operative in the heart of the sinner elected to salvation before the foundation of the universe. (K. Wuest) Faith is the trunk of the tree whose roots represent grace, and whose fruit symbolizes good works. It is the coupling that connects man’s train with God’s engine. It is the sinner’s empty hand stretched out to God, the Giver. It is, from start to finish, *God’s gift*. (W. Hendriksen)

There are people who are ashamed of any position that demands a show of boldness. We call such people cowards. They are afraid of what some people are going to think. They love compromise. But God’s Word does not have an easy tolerance in matters which affect man’s destiny. There are times when you have no right to think or speak or feel moderately. You should be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. You should not equivocate. You should not excuse. You should not draw back. We must stand up for the right which we know to be right and for the truth which we know to be true. (D. Barnhouse)

When a person is so subjective, weak, or cowardly that he worries about the opinions of others - he does not know enough doctrine to come in out of the rain. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In comparison with Rome’s self-evident power, the gospel of Jesus Christ must have been dismissed as something of little consequence. But the power of which Paul speaks is a different power. It is not the power of state, ideas, movements, technology, progress, or whatever. It is the power of God, and God’s power is a combination of His freedom and sovereignty to do what He wills to do. The power of God is expressed supremely in God’s way of dealing with the world, which is summed up in the gospel. The gospel, as we noted, is not a thing, but a person, Jesus Christ. (J. Edwards)

The statement is sometimes made that we can have faith without creed. That is really arrogant nonsense. Such a thought arises out of the great ignorance that is the mark of our time. Faith and belief require a creed. You cannot have faith without faith, or believe without beliefs. It cannot be done. Even unbelief is a creed. (D. Barnhouse) God gave Martin Luther the decisive breakthrough. It was not out of the blue. It was in and through the mental labor of observation and analysis of the objective, historical text of God's written Word, saturated with prayer. (J. Piper)

Spiritual growth is a marvelous *divine* achievement. Simply desiring to grow does not produce growth, nor does slavish adherence to some religious formula – including rigid, unthinking, legalistic attendance to hear Bible teaching. Growth comes not by hoping or striving but as a result of learning, thinking, and solving problems with Bible doctrine, which is the power of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The gospel serves the eternal purposes of God, Who before the creation of the world chose to create for Himself a people who would respond to His love. Becoming a child of God requires deliverance from what we are as children of Adam. It is not something we can do for ourselves. It requires the power of God Himself working through the gospel. (R. Mounce) God the Energizer has two basic ministries to the royal family, one of which is indicated by His functional title in John 15:26, "Spirit of Truth, or Doctrine." He provides the spiritual IQ for learning Bible doctrine, which itself is the power of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

"Unto salvation" is aiming for the wholeness and perfection implicit in the consummation of our salvation. (D.A. Carson) The Gospel itself is the operation of God's power working towards salvation; not merely an announcement of the fact that salvation will at some future time take place, but a divine activity or power leading to salvation. It is God's power which is at work in the Gospel, not man's; it is at work not because man has chosen that it should be, but because God has acted through Jesus. It follows that the divine power operative in the Gospel is not dependent upon any human activity or condition. It is never without its effect, and that which determines what the effect shall be is not human virtue or wisdom, not works done in obedience to any law, however sacred, but nothing more or less than faith: the Gospel is the operation of God's power acting toward salvation, effective for everyone who has faith. (C.K. Barrett)

The exercise, or state of mind expressed by the word *faith*, as used in the Scriptures, is not mere assent, or mere trust; it is the intelligent perception, reception, and reliance on the truth, as revealed in the Gospel. (C. Hodge) This concept is very close to the often repeated phrase of R.B. Thieme, Jr.: "the intake, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine." Charles Hodge died in 1878, so it is not possible that he and Thieme ever met to discuss such topics. It's always a comfort to find a scholar from the past who taught doctrinal truths similar to the ones you do. Although Thieme has been attacked over the years for teaching biblical concepts with "new terminology," I've yet to discover one doctrine in his theological system that has not been taught in some form by another scholar in the past. Even his "breakthroughs" have seed-form in another theologian's

efforts. Although I have disagreements with some of Thieme's theology, I continue to support his ministry and believe his assailants to be ignorant and unread. (LWB)

The gospel is not to the Jew first in importance, but in point of time. It came to them before it came to us. (D. Barnhouse) Justification is right standing before God; sanctification is separation unto God; and reconciliation is right relationship with God. But salvation is the life of God. In Hebrews, I find I can come into rest by faith; in Galatians, I come into liberty by faith; in Romans, I come into salvation by faith. Those who live by faith are realizing what true liberty is, and those who walk by faith will come into rest. (K. Lamb)

The priority of effectual calling and of regeneration in the *ordo salutis* ... is causally prior to faith. (J. Murray) He works not effectually in all, but only where the Spirit, the inward Teacher, illuminates the heart. The gospel is indeed offered to all for their salvation, but the power of it appears not everywhere: and that it is the savour of death to the ungodly, does not proceed from what it is, but from their own wickedness. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 1:16 **For** (explanatory conj.) **I myself am not** (neg. adv.) **ashamed** (ἐπαισχύνομαι, PM11S, Declarative, Deponent; not wimpy or cowardly; "above being ashamed", no subjectivity) **of the good news** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrine in general), **for** (*tapeinosis*, a lessening of a thing in order to increase it) **it** (*metonymy*, the change of one noun for another related noun: "Bible doctrine") **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) **the power** (Pred. Nom.; ability, divine authority, sanctifying daily process) **of God** (Descr. Gen.) **with reference to salvation** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; *sanctification salvation* leading to the ultimate purpose of *glorification salvation*) **to each person** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; restrictive) **who continues to believe** (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DSM, Durative, Substantival, Dat. Qualification; living the life of faith), **[to the Jew** (Dat. Adv.) **first** (Adv. of Time; the Jew is first in privilege and penalty; foremost), **and** (connective enclitic particle) **then** (conj. introducing a result which comes from what precedes; likewise) **to the Greek** (Dat. Adv.)];

^{WHO} **Romans 1:16** Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι Ἰουδαίῳ τε [πρῶτον] καὶ Ἑλληνι

^{VUL} **Romans 1:16** non enim erubesco evangelium virtus enim Dei est in salutem omni credenti Iudaeo primum et Graeco

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:17** For by this [daily believing in Bible doctrine], the righteousness of God is revealed [presented in Scriptures, but revealed when a believer lives it] from faith [justification] to faith [glorification], just as it stands written [in Habakkuk 2:4]: But, the

righteous one [mature believer] shall continually live [experiential walk] by means of faith [sanctification].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:17** For God's righteousness in it is revealed on the principle of faith to faith, even as it stands written, And the one who is just, on that principle of faith shall live.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The righteousness of God is revealed (Perfective Present tense) by the daily believing in Bible doctrine by those who are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. God's own righteousness is *presented* in Scripture, but it is not *revealed* until a believer actually lives it experientially. It is revealed from faith to faith, from the beginning of the process at the point of justification to the end of the process at glorification. "Faith to faith" is a descriptive term for everything between justification salvation and glorification salvation. And it includes the experiential walk of the believer in between, known as sanctification salvation.

Paul's comparison of this concept is a verse in Habakkuk 2:4, in which it stands written (Descriptive Perfect tense) even today: "The righteous one shall continually live by means of faith." In this verse, the righteous one is the believer who is growing to maturity, not the unbeliever, nor the believer who is retrogressing in his spiritual life. The phrase "shall continually live" is the Progressive Future tense, referring not to justification at the point of belief in the gospel, but the daily Christian walk of the growing believer. And how is this daily walk supposed to be lived? The phrase "by means of faith" means by faithfulness to doctrine. The righteousness of God is revealed in the everyday process of the believer's walk, i.e, sanctification salvation.

I have heard the following taught on occasion and believe it is worthy of repeating. "Justification by faith" has different meanings or emphases in the New Testament. In the first instance, "THE JUST shall live by faith," the emphasis is on the imputation of God's righteousness to the believing sinner, making him positionally "just." Not only is the gift of faith from God, but so is the ability to exercise that faith. In the second instance, "the just SHALL LIVE by faith," the emphasis is on living by faith as opposed to the law. In the third instance, "the just shall live BY FAITH," the emphasis is on living by means of Bible doctrine (faithfulness to the Word). The meaning of justification depends on which part of the phrase has the emphasis; all three are true.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Josephus also notes that failure to adjust to the law brings legal retribution or judgment; therefore, he recognizes "righteousness" as the source of both blessing and cursing. It means to be fair and equitable in dealing with others; it means virtue, justice, integrity. In

Scripture, it means (a) the overall integrity of God, (b) the righteousness of God as the *principle* of His integrity, or (c) the justice of God as the *function* of His integrity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The *standing* of the justified man is due to God. The righteousness which becomes his is that which God declares to be righteousness and ascribes to him. Righteousness thus expresses the relation of being right into which God puts the man who believes. (K. Wuest) During His ministry on earth, Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision only. The spread of the gospel was to begin in Jerusalem, the center of Judaism. Paul did not forget that the gospel was to be first directed toward God's chosen nation, Israel. (W. Kroll)

Most commentators, taking "dikaiosune" to denote man's imputed righteousness, connect "by faith" with it, as if "out from" faith had been written. But the absence of the particle, as well as the collocation of words, seems rather to connect it with "revealed." It may be meant to express the subjective condition for man's apprehension, and appropriation, of God's righteousness. The prophet had in immediate view the trials of faith peculiar to his own time. (J. Barmby) The Greek word "dikaiosune" can be rendered by either "righteousness" or "justification." The former word usually refers to the character and activity of God, whereas the latter usually refers to the justified condition of the believer. Context alone determines how it should be understood. (J. Edwards) That's a round-about way to say it is "experiential" in nature. (LWB)

The expression, "faith from first to last," is an agreeable rendering of the Greek, which literally reads "from faith to faith." The saving activity of God occurs prior to human response and finds its correlative in faith. God's righteousness both awakens faith and produces faith. (J. Edwards) The righteousness of God refers to a status of man resulting from God's action, righteousness as a gift from God. (C.K. Barrett) By divine illumination, Luther realized that what was meant here was not God's retributive justice, but the righteousness freely imputed to the sinner by God's sovereign grace, on the basis of Christ's substitutionary atonement, and made the sinner's own possession by means of God-given faith. (W. Hendriksen)

This is the inviolable sanctity of God's law, the immutable dictate of holiness and the unflinching demand of justice. (J. Murray) Justice or righteousness has both a positional and an experiential meaning, "one related to forensic justification and one related to the maturity adjustment to the justice of God. At salvation we are justified as possessing His righteousness; at maturity we are vindicated as having in our souls Bible doctrine, the thinking and verbalization of His integrity". (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) "From faith to faith" refers to progressive sanctification, a growing faith. (A.W. Pink) This construction takes the emphasis off "faith," and lays it on the verb "live." (J.B. Lightfoot) No amount of skill, no degree of charisma, no slick presentation of the gospel to Jew or Gentile is sufficient to force the efficacy of the gospel on an unwilling hearer. (W. Kroll)

The discovery that "The righteous will live by faith" propelled the monk, Martin Luther, to launch the greatest reform the church has ever known. (J. Edwards) Faith begins as a seed and matures into the full fruit. It is from "faith to faith." From the beginning, faith is a faith in the

process of maturing from justifying faith to saving faith. The prophet Habakkuk tells us “but the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4). This same phrase occurs in three NT epistles, but each places a different emphasis on faith. In Hebrews 10:38 the just endure in hope by faith (also Heb. 11:1). In Galatians 3:11, the just live by faith in liberty as sons of God. In Romans 1:17 the just receive the salvation of God by faith. In Hebrews, I find I can come into rest by faith; in Galatians, I come into liberty by faith; in Romans, I come into salvation by faith. (K. Lamb)

Paul’s typical usage of righteousness carries the sense of acquitting, or conferring a righteous status on someone. It contains the idea of transference or conversion, the essence of which is that God considers believers right with Himself even though they are not yet morally good. (J. Edwards) The meaning is that those who are already justified shall find a rich experience of life only as they trust God. (J. Dillow) It is a mistake to limit “faith” to either the depending of faith in the individual or to its spread in the world at large: both are included. The phrase means “starting from a smaller quantity of faith to produce a larger quantity,” at once intensely and extensively, in the individual and society. (Sanday & Headlam)

This has been interpreted as referring to the advance from one degree of faith to another or as equivalent to “by faith alone” or as implying that the righteousness of God is by faith from beginning to end. It would appear that the clue to the interpretation is provided by Paul himself in a passage that furnishes the closest parallel, namely Galatians 3:22. Is the proposition to the effect that the righteous will live, or to the effect of intimating how the righteous will live, namely, by faith? There are good reasons for the latter alternative. Habakkuk 2:4 cannot naturally be interpreted any other way and the massoretic inter-punctuation favors this view. This construction takes the emphasis off “faith” and lays it on the verb “live.” (J. Murray)

It is said to be *from faith to faith*, from the faithfulness of God revealing to the faith of man receiving (so some); from the faith of dependence upon God, and dealing with Him immediately, as Adam before the fall, to the faith of dependence upon a Mediator, and so dealing with God (so others); from the first faith, by which we are put into a justified state, to after faith, by which we live, and are continued in that state. It is not from faith to works, as if faith put us into a justified state, and then works preserved and maintained us in it, but it is all along from faith to faith, from glory to glory; it is increasing, continuing, persevering faith, faith pressing forward, and getting ground of unbelief. (M. Henry)

Observe this transformation is not effected instantaneously, but by degrees. This great change is not accomplished by the Spirit in a moment, but is a gradual work. This is signified in the phrase “from glory to glory” which means, from one degree to another, or in “from faith to faith” which means from little faith to more faith, until sometimes it may be said “your faith grows exceedingly” (2 Thess. 1:3). This expression is parallel with “the rain also fills the pools: they go from strength to strength” (Psalm 84:6,7), which means that under the gracious revivings of the Spirit believers are renewed again and again, and so go on from one degree of strength to another. So it is with this blessed “change” which the Spirit works in believers. The first degree of it is effected at their regeneration. The second degree of it is accomplished during their progressive (practical) sanctification. The third and last degree of it takes place at their glorification. (A.W. Pink)

Our faith makes progress, and as it advances in knowledge, so the righteousness of God increases in us at the same time, and the possession of it is in a manner confirmed. When at first we taste the gospel, we indeed see God's smiling countenance turned towards us, but at a distance: the more knowledge of true religion grows in us, by coming as it were nearer, we behold God's favour more clearly and more familiarly. (J. Calvin) The doctrines of the mature believer studied in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 1:17 for by this (Instr. Efficient Cause; daily believing of Bible doctrine), the (anarthrous construction) righteousness (Subj. Nom.; God's own righteousness) of God (Poss. Gen.) is revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, PPI3S, Perfective; the righteousness of God is presented in the Scriptures, but it is not revealed until a believer actually lives it) from faith (Prep. Abl.; justification salvation) to faith (Acc. Gen. Ref. & Purpose; in other words, the righteousness of God is revealed from the beginning of the process to the end of the process; glorification salvation), just as (Adv. Comparison) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Descriptive; in Habakkuk 2:4): But (contrast conj.), the righteous (just) one (Subj. Nom.; the mature believer) shall continually (repeatedly, daily) live (ζάω, FMI3S, Progressive; daily Christian walk of the maturing believer) by means of faith (Abl. Means; faithfulness to doctrine; the righteousness of God is revealed in the everyday process of the believer's walk; sanctification salvation).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:17** δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν καθὼς γέγραπται Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 1:17** iustitia enim Dei in eo revelatur ex fide in fidem sicut scriptum est iustus autem ex fide vivit

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:18** For the just anger [divine wrath] of God is being revealed from heaven against all categories of heathenism [ungodliness] and unrighteousness of mankind, of those who make it a habit to reject the Truth [Gospel] for unrighteousness,

^{KW} **Rom. 1:18** For there is revealed God's wrath from heaven upon every lack of reverence and upon every unrighteousness of men who in unrighteousness are holding down the truth.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The just anger or divine wrath from God, according to Paul, is being revealed (Pictorial Present tense) from the Supreme Court of heaven. It is being revealed against all type of heathenism and anti-justice sentiments of mankind, i.e., ungodliness and unrighteousness. Sometimes we see the outpouring of his wrath visibly, and sometimes it is working inside individuals, invisible to our observation. In particular, His wrath is revealed against those who continually reject (Iterative & Durative Present tense) the Gospel and who remain in a state of anti-justice, i.e., unrighteousness.

This verse is primarily referring to the presentation of the Gospel and its continued rejection by unbelievers. Each time they hear the Gospel and refuse it, they become more hardened in their soul. There is a built-in penalty with each presentation of the Gospel; those who hear it and reject it are punished by God in some invisible manner. There is also a secondary reference against believers who hear the Word of God taught, but who ignore it and pursue their own devices or distractions. The believer who rejects Bible doctrine is disciplined by God, in much the same manner as the unbeliever is punished for continued rejection of the Gospel. i.e., progressive degeneracy.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God's anger does not jeopardize His goodness, rather, it is a corollary of it, for if God were not angered by unrighteousness He would not be thoroughly righteous. God's wrath is thus not an aberration of His divine nature, but the result of holy love encountering evil and righteousness. Wrath and righteousness, therefore, are equally expressions of God's grace. If in what follows we hear the gavel of condemnation, it is only to hush all human protestations and self-justifications so that the acquittal of grace may be heard. The Judge condemns *in order to save*. Only those who know that they are lost will look for help. The good news of free salvation can be heard only by those who have first been briefed on the hopelessness of their case. (J. Edwards)

God's righteousness is described, not as though it were contrary to God's wrath, but because it triumphs even in His wrath. God's judicial action against all unrighteousness is proclaimed with a ring of triumph. (M. Barth) There is a parallel and antecedent revelation of God's wrath corresponding to the revelation of God's righteousness. (A.T. Robertson) Paul's negative assessment of the human condition will no doubt offend many Westerners who have been raised to believe in the basic goodness of human nature. (J. Edwards) Atheism has nothing to do with man's supposed ignorance of God, since all people know God, according to Romans 1, but rather with man's dislike of Him. People do not "know" God because they do not *want* to know Him. (J. Boice)

Men are receiving in themselves the fitting reward of their perversity. Their life has found its own punishment. The divine wrath is actually disclosed in the facts of experience. And God's method of judgment is this: the punishment lies in the natural consequences of the lawless actions. The wages of sin is also its fruit. And further, this punishment of sin involves the increased liability to sin again. One sin gives us over to another, as one good action facilitates another. (C. Gore) The human predicament results

neither from ignorance nor from a malevolent fate. The problem is not lack of knowledge, but failure to acknowledge God and render proper worship and obedience. (J. Edwards)

It is necessary to show that men in themselves are exposed to condemnation and are destitute of any righteousness which can satisfy the demands of God. God is just, He is determined to punish sin, and because all men are sinners, all men are exposed to punishment. Men must be justified by faith, for the wrath of God is revealed. (C. Hodge) Only the one who first knows the love and acceptance of God can hear the grim truth about oneself. It is the physician who holds some hope of a cure who can reveal to a patient the severity of the diagnosis. (J. Edwards) God would not love good, unless He hated evil, the two being inseparable, that either He must do both or neither. (R. Earle)

No one denies that there is an element of mystery about the way in which God's sovereign purposes relate to our own responsibility to choose what is good and right. The Bible does not seek to resolve this tension for us any more than it seeks to unravel the mystery of the Trinity. For our current purposes, we assume that God is truly sovereign and accomplishes all the ends He decrees. But we also assume that each individual is genuinely responsible. And where there is a real search for God, He rewards it. (Z.C. Hodges) The problem is not that there is insufficient evidence to convince rational beings that there is a God, but that rational beings have a natural antipathy to the being of God. The nature of God is *repugnant* to man. (R.C. Sproul)

Man, the image-bearer of God, *knows* God exists. There is no honest atheist. Man suppresses that knowledge and twists his irrepressible religiosity into the horror that is idolatry. It is the very essence of sin to twist the proper relationship of God as Creator and man as creation. When man usurps *any* of the authority of God he is, in so doing, giving loud testimony to the radical depravity that grips every fallen child of Adam. (J. White) Sin is always an assault on the truth. God's wrath burns against perverting the truth, for once people stop believing in the truth, they do not believe in nothing, they believe in anything! Sacrificing the truth of God leads to the denial of reality, a lie, a depraved mind, and the approval of righteousness. (J. Edwards)

Before you can appreciate the good news, you must know that there is bad news. Before Paul tells us that the gift of God is eternal life, he tells us that the wages of sin is death. (W. Kroll) As a world view, materialism is not philosophically acceptable. It carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. It does not correspond to what the world is. It does not describe man as he is or does. It is unlivable on an individual level and unbearable on a political level. It must be viewed as the attempt of rebel sinners to suppress the truth of their ultimate accountability to God. (R. Morey) If they ponder the truth, it is not with delight; if they take pleasure in it, it is only because their store of information is increased and they are better able to hold their own in a discussion. Their design is to inform their understanding, not to quicken their affection for God. (A.W. Pink)

The person who is against God cannot be right with God. For if we are against God then God is against us. It could not be otherwise. God cannot be indifferent to or complacent towards that

which is the contradiction of Himself. His very perfection requires the recoil of righteous indignation. And that is God's wrath. (J. Murray) Ungodliness has to do with religion, our relation to a sovereign God. Unrighteousness has to do with morality, our relation to others. Ungodliness is sin against the being of God. Unrighteousness is sin against the will of God. Humans are both righteous sinners (they are ungodly) and moral sinners (they are unrighteous). The unrighteous live as if God's will has not been revealed. The ungodly live as if there is no God. God's wrath is against both. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:18 For (explanatory conj.) the just anger (Subj. Nom., anthropopathism; wrath, but not rage) of God (Subj. Gen.) is being revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, PPI3S, Pictorial) from heaven (Abl. Source; Supreme Court Justice) against all categories of (Acc. Measure) heathenism (Acc. Double Dir. Obj.; ungodliness) and (connective conj.) unrighteousness (Acc. Double Dir. Obj.; anti-justice) of mankind (Abl. Source), of those (Gen. Disadv.) who make it a habit to reject (κατέχω, PAPtc.GPM, Iterative & Durative, Substantival, Descriptive Gen.; suppressing, holding down) the Truth (Acc. Dir. Obj.; negative volition towards the Gospel) for (in their condition of) unrighteousness (Dat. Disadvantage & Loc. Sphere; anti-justice),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:18** Ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἀπὸ οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων

^{VUL} **Romans 1:18** revelatur enim ira Dei de caelo super omnem impietatem et iniustitiam hominum eorum qui veritatem in iniustitiam detinent

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:19** Because what is known about God [that He is the Creator] is manifest inside of them [in their consciences], for God has revealed Himself [by faith, rationalism and empiricism] to them [the entire human race],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:19** Because that which is knowable concerning God is plainly evident in them, for God made it clear to them;

^{KJV} **Romans 1:19** Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The objective knowledge of God as the Creator of the universe is known by all men. This knowledge has been planted in their conscience since birth. God revealed Himself (Static Present tense) in this universal manner, and manifested proof to the entire human race by faith perception, rationalism and empiricism. Unbelievers are allowed to objectively rationalize His existence away, or to subjectively say He doesn't exist because they can't see, hear, touch or in some way feel His presence. But faith perception is given to all believers, His sheep, and that

becomes the deciding factor. The Holy Spirit provides the ability of faith perception, and the unbelieving sinner becomes a born-again believer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is not just a mere external revelation of which the apostle is speaking, but of that evidence of the being and perfection of God which every man has in the constitution of his own nature, and in virtue of which he is competent to apprehend the manifestations of God in his works. (C. Hodge) Creation bears God's fingerprints, and through it humanity has experienced something of God's wisdom, power, and generosity. The guilt of humanity is due not to want of truth, but to the suppression of the truth. If guilt were due to ignorance it would be an intellectual problem, but in reality it is a problem of the will, which is sin. The fundamental problem of humanity was not, as the Greeks thought, a problem of reason, but a problem of the will. (J. Edwards)

The Truth can be a motive to holiness only if it is loved, while the natural man does not love the Truth, but hates it. Consequently, the Truth, presented externally, cannot be the efficient cause of regeneration. The Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of regeneration. (L. Berkof) The church is awash in strategies borrowed from psychology and business that, it is hoped, will make up for the apparent insufficiency of the Word and ensure more success in this post-modern culture. First, we substituted values for virtues. Second, we substituted the self for human nature. Third, we substituted personality for character. Finally, we substituted shame for guilt. It is a condition for which there are psychological remedies and the ultimate liberation is to become completely shameless. It is all too apparent that these substitutes are sinful. (G. Johnson, R.F. White)

Rom. 1:19 because (causal conj.) what (Subj. Nom., Relative pronoun) is known (*antimereia*, exchange of a Verbal Adj. for a noun; what is knowable in their hearts and consciences) about God (Obj. Gen.; objective knowledge of God as Creator, not just that there is a God) is (ἐπί, PAI3S, Static) manifest (Verbal Adj., apparent, instinctive; universal truth revealed) inside of them (Loc. Sph., God-consciousness in their souls), for God (Subj. Nom.) has revealed (φανερώω, AAI3S, Constative; manifested) Himself (reflexive; by faith perception, rationalism and empiricism) to them (Dat. Adv.; the entire human race).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:19** διότι τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς· ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐφανερώσει

^{VUL} **Romans 1:19** quia quod notum est Dei manifestum est in illis Deus enim illis manifestavit

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:20** For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes [the divine essence of God] have been and are still being clearly seen [general revelation], perceived [comprehended by the intellect] through the things created, namely, both His eternal

omnipotence [divine creative power] and divinity [divine nature and personality], so that they [the entire human race] are without excuse [no defense against the justice of God].

KW Rom. 1:20 For the things concerning Him which are invisible since the creation of the universe are clearly seen, being understood by means of the things which are made, namely, His eternal power and divine Being, resulting in their being without a defense.

KJV Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, the divine essence of God, have been and are still clearly being seen (Historical, Customary Present tense) by all men. This general revelation, inner awareness and external call is without exception; every man or woman who has ever lived has witnessed the truth of God through one or more of these factors. They have been perceived (Perfective Present tense) by the intellect of man and comprehended, if only for a moment. They are seen in the things He has created on earth and in the sky above.

It is impossible for anyone to observe His creation and not see the unmistakable divine creative power and the divine nature inherent in the material universe. It is impossible to view even the atomic structure underlying His creation and not see His eternal omnipotence and divine essence. With all these examples of deity buffeting man every moment of his existence, man has absolutely no excuse for not attributing them to God. The entire human race is without excuse (Descriptive Present tense) and has no defense against the justice of God. No one may say they have seen no evidence of the existence of God; there is no such thing, therefore, as a true atheist.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Before there can be a remedy, there must be a diagnosis, and before the diagnosis there must be a case history. This case history starts by revealing that man is necessarily under the wrath of God because of disobedience, being "by nature" the children of wrath. (D. Barnhouse) Romans chapter 1 is speaking of the general revelation in creation itself, not the "spiritual things" of the gospel that Paul is often addressing. (J. White) Human beings have fallen in love with the echo of God's excellency in creation and lost the ability to hear the incomparable original shout of His love. (J. Piper)

Divinity (theotes) is what pertains to God, rather than deity (theotes) which is the state of being God. Men can know divinity from observing the creation; only His saints can know deity. (W.R. Newell) Man chooses reason instead of revelation because he wants to live by sight and not by faith. God's Word demands that the just shall live by faith. (D. Barnhouse) God has continued to make known His invisible attributes, both His power and deity, through the created order, and no one can claim ignorance of them. (J. Edwards) The manifestation of God's invisible attributes has been continuously given in

His visible handiwork. “Divinity” is the totality of that which God is, as a being possessed of divine attributes. Hence divinity does not specify one invisible attribute, but the sum of the invisible perfections which characterize God. (J. Murray)

The first thing men and women dislike about God is His sovereignty, His most basic attribute - for if God is not sovereign, God is not God. Sovereignty refers to rule; in the case of God, it refers to the Being Who is ruler over all. We also dislike His holiness, because we are not holy, and His holiness exposes our sin. We do not like exposure. We also dislike His immutability, because it means that He will never be other than He is in all His other attributes. If he changed, we could wait Him out and do our sinning. We could live with that - but not if He is immutable. He is holy and He will always be there, and there is nothing you or I or anyone else can do about it. (J. Boice)

Rom. 1:20 For (explanatory conj.) since the creation (Adv. Gen. Time) of the world (Descr. Gen.), His (Poss. Gen.) invisible attributes (Subj. Nom.; the divine essence of God) have been and are still being clearly seen (καθοράω, PPI3S, Historical & Customary; inner awareness, general revelation, external call), perceived (νόεω, PPpTc.NPN, Perfective, Instr.; comprehended by the left lobe of the soul, the intellect) through the things (Instr. Means) created (Verbal Adj.), namely (Disjunctive part.), both His (Poss. Gen.) eternal (Descr. Gen.) omnipotence (Nom. Appos.; divine creative power) and (connective conj.) divinity (Nom. Appos., divine nature, personality & essence), so that (Result Clause with divine purpose in mind) they (the entire human race) are (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Result) without excuse (Adv. Acc. & Acc. Disadv.; having no defense against the justice of God),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:20** τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου τοῖς ποιήμασιν νοούμενα καθορᾶται ἢ τε αἰδῖος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θειότης εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀναπολογήτους

^{VUL} **Romans 1:20** invisibilia enim ipsius a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur sempiterna quoque eius virtus et divinitas ut sint inexcusabiles

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:21** Because when they knew God [by observing His creation], they did not honor *Him* as God [worship Him as Creator], nor did they feel obligated to thank *Him* [ungrateful for His blessings]; in fact, they became vain [empty] in their rationalizations [ridiculous notions] and their ignorant minds [having rejected divine truth] received darkness [blackout of the soul].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:21** Because, knowing God, not as God did they glorify Him, nor were they grateful, but they became futile in their reasonings, and their stupid heart was darkened.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:21** Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Mankind is all the more without excuse, because when they knew God (Temporal Participle) through His creation, they refused to honor (Culminative Aorist tense) Him as God the Creator. At a minimum, they should have worshipped God for providing them with food, water and shelter from the elements – but they did not. Nor did they feel obligated in any way to thank Him (Culminative Aorist tense) for the blessings they received daily by His hands. They remained stubborn and ungrateful. This is not a verse on believing in Christ *per se*, but a verse on believing in the existence of God altogether.

Because they ignored all the signs of divine creation around them, and refused to acknowledge the existence of God as Creator, they became vain (Ingressive Aorist tense) in their rationalizations. The Greek word for vain (*matiotēs*) means a vacuum or void in which every kind of nonsensical, empty and evil notion was “sucked into their minds” to replace God consciousness. The unbeliever dreams up every ridiculous notion and opinion contrary to God and fills his imagination with such corruption. Eventually, their ignorant minds receive (Culminative Aorist tense) darkness or blackout of the soul.

This verse is a description of the unbeliever who is continually confronted with evidence of the existence of God, but they refuse to acknowledge His existence or to thank Him for His continual supply of blessings. It is not directed at believing in Christ, it is directed at acknowledging that there is a God in general. It is directed to those who claim to be atheists. The persons this verse is describing will not believe in Christ because the internal calling of the Holy Spirit is not active upon them. These persons have apostasized from the truth of God in order to believe some other lie. Apostate unbelievers are those who have seen the witness of God in creation, and perhaps heard the external call of the Gospel, but said: No!

There is also an application in this verse for apostate or reversionist believers. It is possible for someone to become a believer, and then turn his back on everything related to the spiritual life in Christ. In times past, theologians might say these individuals were never Christians to begin with. But you will find ample evidence in the Corinthian church to show that believers may turn their backs on everything they ever knew about God, and become reversionists. Apostate Christians are those who became believers, but never learned much about God afterwards. Reversionist Christians are those who became believers, learned a basic set of theological truths, but then turned their back on Christianity and chased after the wind.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

No people, however degraded, have yet been found without some yearning after a god, a seeking to find the true God and get back to Him as Paul said in Athens in Acts 17:27. (A.T. Robertson) Paul emphasizes how man refuses to credit God for any of his blessings and foolishly credits himself for all his accomplishments. (D. Fuller) Their experiential

knowledge of God is not here a saving knowledge of Him. (K. Wuest) God is not unjust. No one will be condemned for not believing a message they have never heard. Those who have never heard the gospel will be judged by their failure to own up to the light of God's grace and power in nature and in their own conscience. This is the point of Romans 1:20-21. (J. Piper)

Human beings are not neutral observers who need to be persuaded by rational arguments that there is a God, so that subsequently they can be brought to faith. On the contrary, they have willfully chosen to worship the creature rather than the Creator, and their whole thinking is distorted by the presence of sin. This is the specific way of expressing the Reformed doctrine of total depravity. (W. Kaiser, M. Silva) The problem with immoral people is not that they are uneducated or unsophisticated as much as it is that they hate God. They hate what God stands for, and they hate His intrusion into their lives. They hate the twinge of guilt they get when they first do what they know is wrong, and then they keep on hating Him long after they have lost those feelings of guilt and have simply abandoned themselves to the consequences of their sin. (W. Kroll)

How instructive is the downward progress of the human soul traced here! When once darkness is suffered to overspread the mind, an impotent stupidity of all the active powers of the soul is the result; and thus the truth which God left with and in men, instead of having free scope to acquire strength and develop itself, came by degrees to be lost, and the still, small voice of conscience, first disregarded, was next thwarted, and at length systematically disregarded. (R. Jamieson)

If doctrine or establishment truth does not reside in the soul, falsehood will fill the vacuum. When it does, a high IQ becomes a liability, having the power to draw in much evil. This is the story of many liberals who have brilliant minds yet whose souls are blacked out to the truth in both temporal and spiritual matters. If orientation to reality is the criterion for wisdom, such highly intelligent, personally engaging, widely respected liberals are fools. Truth is not in them. With an untrue frame of reference, they cannot comprehend basic principles of establishment; spiritual truths are out of the question. Such people who claim to put so much stock in reason cannot be reasoned with. They are dead to clear thinking. Evil is always destructive, and the liberal's self-destructive path is the alternative to the way of imputed righteousness: He is following the path of human arrogance. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 1:21 because when they knew (γινώσκω, AAPtc.NPM, Constative, Temporal & Causal; aware of His existence) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.; by observing His creation), they did not honor (δοξάζω, AAI3P, Culminative; failure to worship) Him (ellipsis, direct object added) as God (Compl. Acc.; they did not believe in Christ because the internal calling of the Holy Spirit was not active upon them), nor (neg. adv.) did they feel obligated to thank (εὐχαριστέω, AAI3P, Culminative) Him (ellipsis, direct object added; ungrateful for the blessings which they daily received at His hands);

in fact (ascensive conj.; instead), they became vain (ματαιώω, API3P, Ingressive & Culminative, Deponent; futile, empty, worthless, evil) in their (Poss. Gen.) rationalizations (Loc. Sph.; reasonings, imaginations, thoughts, opinions) and (connective conj.) their (Poss. Gen.) ignorant (Nom. Descr.; stupid) right lobes (Subj. Nom.; minds) received darkness (σκοτίζω, API3P, Culminative, Deponent; apostasy has taken root, blackout of the soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:21** διότι γνόντες τὸν θεὸν οὐχ ὡς θεὸν ἐδόξασαν ἢ ἠὲ χαρίστησαν ἀλλ' ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐσκοτίσθη ἡ ἀσύνετος αὐτῶν καρδία

^{VUL} **Romans 1:21** quia cum cognovissent Deum non sicut Deum glorificaverunt aut gratias egerunt sed evanuerunt in cogitationibus suis et obscuratum est insipiens cor eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:22** Although they claimed to be wise [false profession], they became fools [deluded morons].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:22** Asserting themselves to be wise, they became fools,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:22** Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

These unbelievers professed (Pictorial Present tense) they were wise men, based on their college degrees, their high-sounding philosophies and metaphysics, and their twisted view of science as apart from God. They had false norms and standards which they called wisdom, but because they rejected the existence of God, they became (Ingressive Aorist tense) fools. The Greek word for “fools” (moraine) is where we get our word “morons.” Yes, Paul calls them morons! As unbelievers, they are apostate fools. Applied toward believers, they are stupefied reversionists.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The antiestablishment unbeliever cannot solve the problems of life because he is his own worst enemy – he thinks only foolishness. Today the United States is plagued with fools who think that what they are doing is wise – government leaders who advocate drastic military reductions, disarmament, appeasement, schemes for redistribution of wealth through confiscatory taxation, class warfare, and burgeoning bureaucracy that smothers personal initiative, and citizens who enthusiastically support such policies. Free enterprise, privacy, and liberty disappear with greedy, self-aggrandizing people who yearn for power and security. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Rejecting the light of God's knowledge in their consciences, men now arrogated to themselves wisdom, and became what? Fools! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of both knowledge and wisdom. (W.R. Newell)

Apart from certain chemical imbalances in the brain that are physiological not sinful, psychosis illustrates the self-destructive power of human, psychopathic arrogance. Bad

decisions limit future options; believer or unbeliever divorces himself from reality through his own volition. His subjective decisions evolve into a pattern of distorted thinking, which creates a fantasy world in his mind. He does not recognize this imaginary world as unreality and hence has no desire to remedy his illusions. Stubborn, intolerant, insecure, sometimes violent, he cannot relate to other people. This locked-in subjectivity often leads to suicide. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When man tries to be independent, to be his own master, he loses the true principle of self-government and becomes the victim of his own passions. (C. Gore) Scripture ever represents the human race as having fallen and become degraded, not as having risen gradually to any intelligent conceptions of God at all. (J. Barmby)

This mental darkness, this ignorance of mind, is insuperable to man unaided by supernatural grace. Fallen man never would, never could, dispel this darkness, overcome this ignorance. He labors under mental paucity to such a degree as to make it impossible for him to attain to the true knowledge of God and to understand the things of the Spirit. He has an understanding by which he may know natural things: he can reason, investigate truth, and learn much of God's wisdom as it is displayed in the works of creation. He is capable of knowing the moral truths of God's Word as mere abstract propositions; but a true, spiritual, saving apprehension of them is utterly beyond his unaided powers. There is a positive defect and inability in his mind. (A.W. Pink)

Whether believer or unbeliever, those who reject the divine institutions become antiestablishment: They misuse their freedom and distort their rights; disdain marriage and family; defiantly resist, either mentally or overtly, all divinely constituted authority, ranging from self-discipline to local, state, or national government. They repudiate elected officials and law and order, represented by the legislature, the courts, the police, and the military. The worst kinds of antiestablishment reversionists are those that embrace activism, civil disobedience, utopian socialism or communism, and revolution. Romans 1:18-32 reveals how unbelievers surrender to antiestablishment corruption. But remember, *believers in reversionism lapse into the same decadence and evil.* (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

God must consider many of the explanations given to students in university classrooms around the world today "futile speculations." This reasoning is described by God as vain or futile, because the whole structure of man-made philosophy is devoid of divine truth and therefore intrinsically invalid. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Prov. 9:10). Without these necessary components, education becomes a futile search for the truth that ends in the sanitary landfill of human reasoning. Thus, by suppressing the truth of God and believing their man-made falsehoods, the pagans plunged their foolish hearts deeper into darkness. When they exalted their human reasoning and paraded their wisdom before their peers, they acted as fools. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:22 Although they claimed (φάσκω, PAPTc.NPM, Pictorial, Concessive; alleged, professed) to be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Modifier) wise (Pred. Nom., Indirect

discourse; they had false norms for wisdom), **they became fools** (μωραίνω, API3P, Ingressive; unbelievers: deluded morons, believers: stupefied reversionists, psychopathic arrogance).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:22** φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:22** dicentes enim se esse sapientes stulti facti sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:23** In fact, they exchanged [decision made from arrogance] the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the likeness of corruptible man [self-worship] and birds and quadrupeds and reptiles [especially snakes].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:23** And exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for a likeness of an image of corruptible man and of birds and of quadrupeds and of snakes.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:23** And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As a matter of fact, they were such morons that they eventually exchanged (Culminative Aorist tense) the glory of the incorruptible God in heaven for an image in the likeness of corruptible man on earth. They refused to worship Deity, but instead began worshipping themselves. No doubt the first thing they did was find some person with a few noble qualities and they began worshipping him - like we do politicians, movie stars, athletes and entertainers today. Blind arrogance led them to ignore the Creator and to worship the creature.

Notice the downward progression in stupidity. They began by ignoring God; later they outright rejected His existence. Next they worshipped what they would call “noble men.” When these noble men died, being corruptible as we all are, they erected statues of them to worship. Then they broadened their stupidity by worshipping birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles {Latin: serpents). When these choice creatures died, they fashioned idols of them to worship. Have such practices ceased to exist in this modern and sophisticated world we live in? Birds and reptiles are still worshipped in Egypt, parts of Africa, and other areas of the middle-east. Cows are still worshipped in India by millions of people. This is not an ancient phenomenon only.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Romans 1:23 describes us all as having “exchanged” the glory of the Lord for the glory of his creation. Thus we have traded treasures. We prefer other things in life to the delights of seeing and knowing the God of glory. This is the sense in which we “lack” the glory of God. We lack it as the treasure of our lives. We lack it as our passion and goal. We lack it as our all-satisfying vision. This is the essence of sin: preferring other things to the glory of God. (J. Piper) The demotion of God and the exaltation of self gave birth to bitter irony, irony because those who

consider themselves wise deny their wisdom by their behavior; tragedy because they do not even recognize their failure. (J. Edwards) People do the same today. They don't always make images (although some worship their car, their job, their portfolio, their girlfriend or boyfriend, or something else), but they always deny the rightful place of God over His creation. (W. Kroll)

Idolatry is made to include not merely worship of false gods, but the worship of the true God by images. (C. Hodge) An amplification of the subject by repeating it in opposite terms (*pleonasm*) for the purpose of marking the emphasis. (E.W. Bullinger) Deities of human form prevailed in Greece, those of bestial form in Egypt, and both in Rome. Reptile worship was common in Chaldea and Egypt, especially serpents. (Vincent) Two forms of idolatry, both involving unworthy conceptions of the Divine Being – are alluded to, suggested, we may suppose, by the anthropomorphism of the Greeks and the creature-worship of Egypt, which were the two notable and representative developments of heathen religion. (J. Barmby)

Notice in the previous verses the steps or stages of heathen perversion. The first step of their idolatry is ingratitude; the second step is vanity, they became vain in their imaginations; the third step is blindness, for deprived of Truth and steeped in vanity, man becomes blind in all his thinking; the fourth step is man's total departure from God, with God giving him up to all manner of shame and vice according to the will of Satan. (M. Luther) Observe the descending scale of created things. (K. Wuest) Idolatry is devotion to the made rather than the Maker. Seeking to rid themselves of the mystery of God and creation, they became utterly sophomoric (wise fools) and a riddle to themselves. (J. Edwards)

This tragic process of human “god-making” continues apace in our own day, and Paul’s words have as much relevance for people who have made money or sex or fame their gods as for those who carved idols out of wood and stone. It is this putting some aspect of God’s creation – whether it be an animal, a human, or a material object – in place of God that is the essence of idolatry. (D. Moo) “Exchanged” means to transform that which is glorious into a state of depravity through a process of alteration and decline. Certain behavior contributes to the alteration – rejection of the laws of divine establishment and/or negative volition to Bible doctrine. The downward spiral begins with reaction and distraction and progresses to blackout of the soul. Here, they worship the natural world while refusing to recognize the Creator. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 1:23 in fact (emphatic conj.), they exchanged (ἀλλάσσω, AAI3P, Culminative; mutated, bad decision made from arrogance) the glory (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the incorruptible (Descr. Gen.) God (Poss. Gen.) for an image (Dat. Disadv.) in the likeness (Comp. Gen.; form, appearance, similitude) of corruptible (Gen. Disadv.) man (Obj. Gen.) and (connective conj.) birds (Obj. Gen.) and (connective conj.) quadrupeds (Obj. Gen.; four-footed animals) and (connective conj.) reptiles (Obj. Gen.; especially snakes).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:23** καὶ ἤλλαξαν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ ἀφθάρτου θεοῦ ἐν ὁμοιώματι εἰκόνοσ φθαρτοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πετεινῶν καὶ τετραπόδων καὶ ἔρπετῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:23** et mutaverunt gloriam incorruptibilis Dei in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:24** Therefore, God turned them over [gave them up to their own preferences] to the lusts [degenerate cravings] of their hearts to immorality of which [type or category] their bodies might be disgraced [degraded] among themselves [they dishonored one another through perverted sex].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:24** On which account God delivered them over in the passionate cravings of their hearts to bestial profligacy which had for its purpose the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves;

^{KJV} **Romans 1:24** Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Therefore, God delivered them up to their own preferences (Culminative Aorist tense), not just permissively, but also judicially. The Active Voice points to God's involvement in this judgment. He turned them over to the degenerate cravings of their sin natures, which desired every sort of immorality imaginable. In this specific instance, the form of immorality was physical and reciprocal. They were allowed to degrade one another (Pictorial Present tense) through perverted sex. The reflexive pronoun "among themselves" adds to the disgraceful activities they engaged in once their conscience was blackened by habitual sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These people had already willfully deserted God, Who merely left them to their own self-determination and self-destruction, part of the price of man's moral freedom. The withdrawal of God's restraint sends men deeper down. Paul uses "paradoken" here, in verses 24,26,28. (A.T. Robertson) They could be a repetition of the same withdrawal, or three stages in the "giving over": (1) emotional revolt of the soul, (2) scar tissue of the soul, and (3) blackout of the soul. I favor the progressive interpretation, where the nature of sinful man is ever declining from one stage to another. (LWB) "Impurity" means sexual aberration by which they would dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Somehow, some way, ungodliness and unrighteousness always leads to sexual impurity, whether heterosexual or homosexual. It just seems that humans cannot deny God's existence and influence in their lives and stay out of the gutter of their own lust. (W. Kroll)

There is a stage in the downward course when by God's law sin begets more sin and works out its own punishment in the degradation of the whole man. Thus there are moral

laws of God's government just as there are physical laws. This fact was perceived by thoughtful men even without the assistance of Christian teaching. (J.B. Lightfoot) God did more than simply let nature take its course. God acted to abandon people to expressions of a corrupt lifestyle that deserved God's wrath and the sentence of death. (J. Witmer) Without the restraint of doctrine, without respect for the law, reversionists swindle and defraud one another. They cheat in business; they are unfaithful in their social and sexual relationships. When apostasy rules the land, they literally weary themselves in perversion. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There is a theological Gresham's law at work here: as bad money drives good money out of circulation, so false gods render the true God unbelievable. Four times Paul says humanity exchanged the authentic for the counterfeit and that as a consequence God gave them over to what they desired. It is more than an anthropomorphism for the passive judgment of God, i.e., that the withdrawal of God's gracious aid leads to the inevitable consequences of human corruption. Paul ascribes a more active role to God's judgment, as does the OT at those terrible places where human actors are bent on resisting the divine will. (J. Edwards) The expression "among themselves" is not without its force, for it significantly expresses how deep and indelible are the marks of infamy imprinted on our bodies. (J. Calvin)

More than mere profligacy in the satisfaction of natural lust is described - bestiality, impurity in the physical, not only in the social and religious sense. (Alford) The last nine verses in the first chapter of Romans are the most terrible in the Bible. This is the description of mankind abandoned by God and the scene is a frightful one. The cause of the abandonment was the successive departure from God by the human soul in the successive steps of desertion [reversionism] that began with a failure to acknowledge God in worship and thanksgiving, and continued through the various stages of the deification of human reason to ultimate folly of man in the most corrupt form of idolatrous practices. Having departed from God, man made a god in his own image. Man away from God is always an idolater in some form or another. Even the atheist worships the projection of his own reason. (D. Barnhouse)

Rom. 1:24 **Therefore** (inferential conj.), **God** (Subj. Nom.) **turned** (παράδιδωμι, AAI3S, Culminative; delivered, gave them up to their own preferences) **them** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **over** (not just permissive, but also judicial) **to the lusts** (Loc. Sph.; evil cravings, desires, degeneracy) **of their** (Poss. Gen.) **hearts** (Gen. Spec.; right lobes) **to immorality** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; impurity, uncleanness), **of which** (Gen. Ref.; form of immorality) **their** (Poss. Gen.) **bodies** (Subj. Nom.; persons) **might be disgraced** (ἀτιμάζω, PPInf., Pictorial, Epexegetical; dishonored, degraded) **among themselves** (Dat. Assoc.; reflexive, reciprocally-they dishonored one another through perverted sex),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:24** Διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῶν καρδιῶν αὐτῶν εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν τοῦ ἀτιμάζεσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς·

^{VUL} **Romans 1:24** propter quod tradidit illos Deus in desideria cordis eorum in inmunditiam ut contumeliis adficiant corpora sua in semet ipsis

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:25** **Who were of such a character [apostate heathens] that they exchanged the Truth of God for a lie, and worshipped [inward reverence] and served [outward rituals] the creation [i.e., radical environmentalists] rather than the Creator, Who will be praised unto the ages [forever]. Acknowledge it.**

^{KW} **Rom. 1:25** Who were of such a character that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and rendered religious service to the creation rather than to the Creator who is to be eulogized forever. Amen.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:25** Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

These apostate unbelievers who practiced sexual perversion of one sort or the other also transformed themselves into heathen by their inward reverence and worship of the natural creation (Constative Aorist tense), and their outward ritualistic activities of service to it (Constative Aorist tense) as opposed to worshipping the Creator Himself. They were of such a low, despicable character that they exchanged the doctrine (Truth) of God for a lie. In the Latin, they exchanged (commuted) something *veritable* for something *mendacious*. The Greek word “ktizo” would normally be translated “the One Who created,” but is an idiom translated as a verbal noun, “the Creator.” The idea is that these persons ignored the God Who created the earth and its creatures and focused all their inner worship and outer activity towards the object of His creation.

The Greek word “ktizo” can be translated as either creation or creature. Those who translate it “creature” tie it back to the preceding verse and make a good case for the sexually perverse activity being between men and animals, i.e., bestiality. Those who translate it “creation” tie those who engage in sexually perverse activity between themselves (homosexuals and lesbians) in the preceding verse with those who worship the creation (i.e., radical environmentalists). Both were rather common practices in Paul’s day, as attested by many famous historians and satirists.

Because of the reciprocal pronoun “among themselves” in the prior verse, I am of the latter group of translators, i.e., “themselves” referring to men and women engaged in perversity rather than with animals. We have a precedent for these heathen practices today, as seen in radical environmentalist groups. By “following the money,” many authors have traced the leadership of various well-known environmentalist groups today to homosexual and lesbian organizations. It should not surprise anyone that two seemingly unlikely groups of misguided individuals might

combine their twisted practices into one: the inward reverence of the creation (worship) with the outward activities (service) of illegitimate sex. See my ENVIRONMENT page for more info.

Once these apostates have rejected God, and He has given them over to the vacuum of their minds (to suck-in every form of gutter nonsense imaginable), an interlocking system of religion is formed as a substitute for the Truth. In spite of this, the Creator will remain true and these practices will remain a lie. In the end, the Creator will be praised (Futuristic Present tense) forever, unto the ages (eternity future). Paul adds the emphatic phrase “Acknowledge it” or “Amen” to the end of this startling development. He knows it is hard for some Christians to believe such things happen, but they do and more frequently than imagined.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Placed side by side (“para,” the Creator and the creature) they preferred the creature. (A.T. Robertson) This is a *heterosis* of Number, pointing to the fact that eternity is made up of successive ages, the singular referring either to one age, or in this case, all as a whole. (E.W. Bullinger) This is the double whammy of sin. People degraded themselves in what they worshipped and at the same time exalted those things that were created by God to a position higher than the One who created them. The nations clearly become degenerate and must suffer the consequences if they do not turn to God in faith. (W. Kroll)

Professing merely to worship the Creator *by means of* the creature, they soon came to lose sight of the Creator *in* the creature. (R. Jamieson) God is the only Source of the spectrum of happiness – from orientation and tranquility to stimulation and ecstasies – which characterizes the mature believer through all the varied circumstances of life. God has provided for your soul everything necessary to develop capacity for happiness. This provision is Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 1:25 who were of such a character (Nom. Appos.; apostate heathens) that they exchanged (μεταλλάσσω, AAI3P, Constative) the Truth (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrine) of God (Poss. Gen.) for a lie (Prep. Loc.; pregnant use of ψεῦδος), and (continuative conj.) worshipped (σεβάζομαι, API3P, Constative, Deponent; inward reverence) and (continuative conj.) served (λατρεύω, AAI3P, Constative; outward rituals) the creation (Dat. Ind. Obj.; creation: radical environmentalists, creature: man, Satan) rather than (instead of) the Creator (κτίζω, AAPtc.ASM, Dramatic, Substantival, Comparative Acc.; literally: "the One Who created"), Who will be (εἰμί, PAI3S, Futuristic) praised (Pred. Nom.; eulogized) unto the ages (Acc. Spec.; forever).
Acknowledge it.

^{WHO} **Romans 1:25** οἵτινες μετήλλαξαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ψεῦδει καὶ ἐσεβάσθησαν καὶ ἐλάτρευσαν τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα ὃς ἐστὶν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:25** qui commutaverunt veritatem Dei in mendacio et coluerunt et servierunt creaturae potius quam creatori qui est benedictus in saecula amen

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:26** Because of this [heathenistic worship of the creation], God turned them over to disgraceful passion [sexual immorality and perversion], for not only have their females exchanged their natural sexual function [heterosexuality] for something contrary to their natural disposition [lesbianism],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:26** Because of this God gave them over to dishonorable passions, for even their females exchanged their natural use for that which is against nature.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:26** For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because of their heathenistic worship of the creation rather than its Creator, God turned them over (Culminative Aorist tense) to disgraceful sexual immorality and perversion. Since we seem to be deluged today by cries of alternative “sexual preferences,” from both heathenistic unbelievers and ignorant believers, I’m going to list some alternative translations of the Greek word ἡτιμία”so you can see what God’s opinion of these “alternative lifestyles” truly is: disgraceful, shameful, dishonoring, ignominious, humiliation, despised, lowliest, contemptible, offensive, disparaged, base, without honor, unbecoming, not befitting, harmful, unrighteous, and insulting. Now I ask you: Could Paul and the Holy Spirit have chosen a more suitable word to describe such sexual sins?

Paul continues his denunciation of the serious sin of sexual immorality by the incredulous phrase “not only.” He is amazed that such mutated practices (Latin: exchanged) of God’s original function of sex have developed. The first of such mutations is females “mutating” their natural, instinctive sexual function (Constative Aorist tense) for something that is completely contrary to their natural disposition as females. The word for “contrary to” means they were practicing something completely out of bounds, something against God’s intentions, something beyond what they were created for – lesbianism. Their natural function, which anybody with the most basic understanding of anatomy can tell, is heterosexuality.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul illustrates the consequences of idolatry by turning to the errors of lesbianism and homosexuality. Paul does not condemn homosexuality primarily as a moral aberration. Rather, homosexuality illustrates the theological error he has been expounding since verse 18, namely, the exchanging of something authentic for something counterfeit. Paul cites homosexuality not because it is a worse sin, but because it exemplifies better than other sins the very nature of sin, which is the perversion of an original good, and hence idolatry. His choice of terminology, natural ... unnatural relations, is instructive. Homosexuality is a forsaking of a natural

relationship instituted according to the purpose of the Creator, i.e., heterosexuality, for an unnatural relationship which reverses the Creator's purpose. (J. Edwards)

God left them unrestrained from their course of evil passion. But to say that God merely permits the good or evil actions of men is assuming that man is capable of operating independently of God. That assumption would deny God's sovereignty. Man's creaturely freedom is never sovereign; therefore, he is dependent. (W.E. Best) It is clear that Paul depicts homosexual activity as a violation of God's created order, another indication of the departure from true knowledge and worship of God. (D. Moo) When people engage in disgusting and despicable behavior, it warps their mind. They begin to believe that what they are doing is not so bad; in fact, it's their chosen lifestyle, and God ought to leave them alone. That's why verse 28 says God gave them over to a depraved mind. (W. Kroll)

The Greco-Roman society of Paul's day tolerated homosexuality with considerable ease. Among some advocates it was viewed as superior to heterosexuality. Barclay notes that "fourteen out of the first fifteen Roman Emperors were homosexuals." In Jewish culture, however, it was regarded as an abomination. No feature of the pagan society filled the Jew with greater loathing than the toleration, or rather admiration, of homosexual practices. The OT specifically (Lev. 18:22) prohibits homosexuality, calling it detestable. Against this background it is difficult to understand why some contemporary teachers – even some who claim to be biblical – make allowance for a practice clearly condemned in both the OT and NT. (R. Mounce)

People of undiscerning minds join Act Up; they march in gay pride parades; they accuse moral people of being intolerant and using hate speech. Condemning homosexuality and illicit heterosexuality is not hate speech; it is love talk. It is the kind of talk that comes from a heart of love toward those who are undiscerning because their minds are warped from suppressing the truth. These people are only hatemongers in the minds of those who no longer possess the ability to discern right from wrong. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 1:26 Because (causal conj.) of this (Dat.Ref.; apostate, heathenistic activity), God (Subj. Nom.) turned (παραδίδωμι, AAI3S, Culminative; delivered, gave them up to their own preferences) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.) over to disgraceful (Attrib. Gen.; shameful, dishonoring, ignominious) passion (Dat. Ind. Obj. & Disadv.; ungovernable affections, direct reference to sexual immorality and perversity), for (explanatory conj.) not only (neg. adv.) have their (Gen. Rel.) females (Subj. Nom.) exchanged (μεταλλάσσω, AAI3P, Constative; mutated) their natural (Compl. Acc.; instinctive, regular) sexual function (Acc. Dir. Obj.; heterosexuality) for something contrary to (against, beyond, out of bounds) their natural disposition (Acc. Comparison; direct reference to lesbianism),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:26** διὰ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας αἵ τε γὰρ θήλειαι αὐτῶν μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:26** propterea tradidit illos Deus in passiones ignominiae nam feminae eorum inmutaverunt naturalem usum in eum usum qui est contra naturam

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:27** But also in the same [sexually perverted] manner, even the males after they have abandoned [an act of deliberate volition, not something they were born with] their natural [instinctive] sexual function for females [heterosexuality], burned with sexual desire in their lust one for another, males with males [homosexuals], carrying the shameless deed to its ultimate conclusion in themselves [homosexuality leads to blackout of the soul] and receiving in return the penalty [payback, retribution, sexually transmitted diseases] which was fitting to the circumstances [inevitable, ordained by divine law], due to their wandering [being led astray] among themselves.

^{KW} **Rom. 1:27** And likewise also the males, having put aside the natural use of the females, burned themselves out in their lustful appetite toward one another, males with males carrying to its ultimate conclusion that which is shameful, receiving in themselves that retribution which was a necessity in the nature of the case because of their deviation from the norm.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:27** And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God does not have a case against lesbianism, while excusing homosexuality. In the same sexually perverted manner as lesbianism, even the males abandoned (Ingressive Aorist tense) their natural, instinctive, heterosexual function for females - for that of other men. The word “abandoned” is both Ingressive and Culminative, meaning these men made their first deliberate choice to have sex with a man instead of a woman, continued to make this perverted choice again and again, until they finally gave themselves over to this perversion entirely. The Active Voice points to this being an act of their volition, a deliberate choice to sin, not something they were inherently born with and could not control.

After repeated bad decisions, they eventually became inflamed with sexual desire for other men (Dramatic Aorist tense). Their first bad decision eventually became an overpowering lust “one for another,” or one man for another man. The phrase “males with males” points beyond a shadow of a doubt to homosexuality. Does the Lord think this is just an alternative lifestyle or sexual preference? Does he think we should be tolerant of such activity and vote for “marriage” in such cases? No, through Paul He calls it a “shameless deed,” a perverted act. Does He shake His head and ignore such vile practices? No, He instituted a form of retribution or divine punishment on those who engage in such activities.

Those who engage in homosexuality carry the ultimate conclusion in themselves. The Perfective Present tense means the Lord returns to them the perfect form of retribution for such practices – blackout of the soul. How does this particular form of blackout manifest itself? The Middle

Voice which is translated “in themselves” gives us a clue. Different categories of blackout of the soul produce different types of “vibes,” for lack of a better word. Have you noticed that those who are engaged in homosexual relationships change their mannerisms, their appearance, and the way they talk and think? Borrowing from the previous verse – *they choose a mutation* over their natural function and *they themselves become a mutation* of what they were originally created to be. Their inward sin and blackout of the soul eventually manifests itself outwardly.

The Lord has not completed his judgment upon them yet; they receive a double-dose of divine retribution for such practices. They receive in return (Perfective Present tense) for the perverted activities the penalty which is fitting (Descriptive Imperfect tense) to the circumstances. In other words, God gives them the perfect penalty for their imperfect activities (Latin: error for error). The penalty that is “fitting” is that which is ordained by divine law; it is inevitable, unavoidable, and necessary according to God’s standards. What is the nature of this penalty? Most commentators point to sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS. What perfect penalty could be levied against those who practice sexual perversion other than sexually transmitted diseases? In other words, the judgment fits the crime.

Paul adds the phrase “due to their wandering among themselves” at the end of this verse. He isn’t repeating the nature of the sexual perversion, reminding us that he is talking about homosexuality. That is already self-evident to even the most rebellious reader. He is describing the penalty in greater detail, specifically how it will operate. The penalty is administered to them by themselves, when they wander from one partner to another (Latin: recipients). As we all know, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are spread by engaging in such immoral activities with multiple partners. The greater the number of contacts, the greater the chance of disease. The more they burn and gratify their lusts with others, the more likely they will become infected and destroyed by their participation in such activities. Paul is most clever and graphic in his portrayal here.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Homosexuality changes something originally oriented to the opposite sex as a complement and inverts it to itself, thus perverting the created order. Like all sin, it is a disorientation which leads to confusion. Thus, the dishonoring of God results in the disordering of human life. Paul’s attitude toward homosexuality was unambiguous; these verses cannot be construed to argue that Paul regarded homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle acceptable to God. It is common today to hear that Paul’s pronouncements on this subject were historically and culturally conditioned and are therefore no longer morally valid. We have observed, however, that Paul condemns homosexuality not primarily on moral but on theological grounds. (J. Edwards) This gallery of iniquity was not only true of the first century world, but reads much like our newspapers today. (W. Kroll)

It is clear that the apostle is censuring the willful practice of homosexuality or sodomy. And indeed, Scripture does not make light of this vice. In Leviticus 20:13 the death penalty is pronounced upon its perpetrators. (W. Hendriksen) The “inevitable recompense” for homosexuality is to receive back the regular consequence of that practice. As a perversion of

God's intended relationship between man and woman, it carries its own destructive penalty. (R. Mounce) He who is unacquainted with the historical monuments of that age - especially Petronius, Suetonius, Martial, and Juvenal – can scarcely figure to himself the frightfulness of these excesses. Indeed, it was just the most civilized (Rome) that were plunged the deepest in the mire of pollution, the barbarians being comparatively virtuous! (R. Jamieson)

People are not born homosexual: burning with sexual “desire towards one another” does NOT refer to innate flaw, but to the volition responding to temptation from the trend of the sin nature. Homosexuality is an acquired vice and cultivated evil. Both homosexuality and lesbianism are not only carnality, but a blight on the soul – a trap of frustration, unhappiness, and torment that can lead to neurosis or psychosis (2 Peter 2:6-16). They are also a cancer on society. Sodom and Gomorrah are the prototype of the special judgment and cursing God executes on this evil. Homosexuality attacks human freedom, corrupts marriage and family, and ultimately defiles the entire nation. When such abject decadence is sufficiently widespread and becomes culturally acceptable, society degenerates and the nation eventually self-destructs, as in Gen. 19:4-5, 24-25. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 1:27 but (adversative particle) also (adjunctive) in the same (Comparative Gen.; sexually perverted) manner (Adv. Manner), even (ascensive conj.) the males (Subj. Nom.), after they have abandoned (ἀφίημι, AAPtc.NPM, Ingressive & Culminative, Temporal; an act of deliberate volition sometime in the man's lifetime, not something he is born with) their natural (Comp. Acc.; instinctive, regular) sexual function (Acc. Dir. Obj.; heterosexuality) for females (Acc. Gen. Ref.), burned with sexual desire (ἐκκαίω, API3P, Dramatic, Deponent; inflamed, perverse appetite) in their (Poss. Gen.) lust (Loc. Sph.) one for another (Acc. Gen. Ref.; of the same category), males (Nom. Appos.) with males (Acc. Rel.; direct reference to homosexuality), carrying the shameless deed (Acc. Dir. Obj.; perverted act) to its ultimate conclusion in themselves (κατεργάζομαι, PMPTc.NPM, Perfective, Circumstantial, Deponent; homosexual reversionism leading to blackout of the soul) and (continuative conj.) receiving in return (ἀπολαμβάνω, PAPtc.NPM, Perfective, Circumstantial) the penalty (Acc. Dir. Obj.; AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; judgment, retribution, payback) which was fitting to the circumstances (δεῖ, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive; inevitable, unavoidable, necessary, ordained by divine law), due to their (Gen. Rel.) wandering (Adv. Gen. Ref.; roaming, being led astray) among themselves (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:27** ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες

^{VUL} **Romans 1:27** similiter autem et masculi relicto naturali usu feminae exarserunt in desideriiis suis in invicem masculi in masculos turpitudinem operantes et mercedem quam oportuit erroris sui in semet ipsis recipientes

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:28** Even after examining and putting God to the test [they listened to the Truth, thought about its implications, but rejected it anyway], for the purpose of retaining Him in full practical knowledge [*epignosis*: a thorough investigation], God turned them over to a reprobate mind [*gnosis*: nothing of true value was retained], so that they might continue to practice those things [sexual perversions] which are not fitting and proper [contrary to God's will and creative intention].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:28** And even as after putting God to the test for the purpose of approving Him should He meet their specifications, and finding that He did not, they disapproved of holding Him in their full and precise knowledge, God gave them up to a mind that would not meet the test for that which a mind was meant, to practice those things which were not becoming or fitting;

^{KJV} **Romans 1:28** And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As if their sexual arrogance was not bad enough, they had the audacity to examine and put God to the test (Culminative Aorist tense) to see if He met *their* standards! Rather than submit to His truth in humility, they set themselves up as a tribunal to judge God, to see if He would meet the specifications of their own warped norms and standards. They listened to someone present the Gospel and on occasion they listened to someone speak about the Word, but they rejected both. If God wouldn't change His mind about the nature of their sexuality, then (in their thinking) they won't have anything further to do with Him. They set their worthless norm and standard called "alternative lifestyle" on a pedestal and used it to judge God. God said, "No!" and they turned their backs on him because He was so inflexible and old-fashioned. They disapproved of God and rejected His Word.

They alleged that their examination was for the purpose of learning (Static Present tense) about the deep things of God. But when God refused to budge on His opinion of their sexual perversion, they ignored Him and went their own direction. God turned them over (Constative Aorist tense) to a worthless, disqualified, reprobate mind. They became "castaways," being "cast away" by God. The contrast between *gnosis* (left lobe of the brain) and *epignosis* (right lobe of the brain) is quite important to this verse. *Gnosis* refers to academic knowledge that is mulled-over for a short time, but is never truly understood and is eventually lost. *Epignosis* refers to knowledge that is mulled-over, metabolized, is well understood, and is now available for application to daily life. These people who were engaged in sexually deviant behavior arrogantly listened to the message of the Word of God for the purpose of categorizing what *they* thought was valuable in it (*epignosis*), but God rewarded their arrogant investigation with a reprobate, useless mind (*gnosis*) full of worthless information.

God turned them over to a reprobate mind so that they might continue (Iterative Present tense) their sexually perverse behavior without being bothered by a guilty conscience. They knew God condemned their sexually deviant behavior, their minds understood the nature of their sin, but their conscience was *blackened* so this divine knowledge would not stand in their way of continuing in their sin. They fully understood (epignosis) the enormity of their sexual sins in God's eyes, but they refused to adhere to this knowledge and went about their unnatural, improper (Descriptive Present tense) activities with a twisted mind (gnosis) full of contradictory and sinful preferences.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The human race put God to the test for the purpose of approving Him should He meet the specifications which they laid down for a god who would be to their liking, and finding that He did not meet those specifications, they refused to approve Him as the God to be worshipped, or to have Him in their knowledge. (K. Wuest) There is a tendency among some critics to explain away all such language as anthropopathic, or as merely accommodated from human feeling to the Divine nature. But the justice of God is real and will exhibit itself in wrath in that day. (R. Jamieson) There is a difference between *gnosis* and *epignosis*, the knowledge and the acknowledgment of God; the pagans knew God, but did not, would not, acknowledge Him. (M. Henry)

The moral conscience, like the intelligence in general, requires enlightenment. It supplies no trustworthy information, except so far as we are at pains to keep it enlightened. More than this, its capacity to keep us admonished depends on our habitually observing its injunctions. To disobey conscience is to dull it, and finally to make it obdurate and insensitive. The absence of conscientious objection to a particular course of action may therefore be due to either our having neglected to enlighten our conscience or to having refused to obey it. The duty of an individual to himself is not only to obey his conscience, but also take pains to enlighten it. And the duty of the individual to society is to make continual efforts to keep the corporate conscience up to standard. (C. Gore)

The human race put God on trial, and because it rejected Him after trial, God gives them a "trialess" mind, one incapable of discharging the functions of a mind with respect to the things of salvation. As they did not think it fit, after a trial made to keep God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a mind which cannot stand trial. The one thing answers to the other. Virtually, they pronounced the true God disapproved (adokimos), and would have none of Him, and He in turn gave them up to a disapproved (adokimos) mind, a mind which is no mind and cannot discharge the functions of one, a mind in which the divine distinctions of right and wrong are confused and lost, so that God's condemnation cannot but fall on it at last. (Denney)

Calvin drew attention to its noetic or intellectual effects. Before sin affects behavior, it affects *thinking*. (J. Edwards) We see the resulting "base mind" in those who have given up God, in the progressive moral decline of Western civilization, the breakup of families, insanity and other

forms of psychological disintegration. We see it in our own lives in such supposedly minor things as restlessness, insomnia, a feeling of being unfulfilled, and unhappiness. (J. Boice) Straining after metaphysical accuracy, they dry up the springs of all that the Bible enjoins about God. (R. Jamieson) The rejection of *epignosis* doctrine opens the *mataiotes* vacuum which draws into the mind the evil doctrines of Satan and blacks out the soul. Stifled by scar tissue and evil, the reversionist is unable to orient to reality and openly rebels against authority. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

What God counts valuable man despises. The very purity of the divine rule makes it obnoxious to an impure heart. Not only is man's darkened understanding incapable of perceiving the excellence of God's commandments, but there is a disposition in his will which rises up against it. When any part of God's revealed will is made known to men, they endeavor to banish it from their thoughts. They do not like to retain God in their knowledge, therefore they resist the strivings of the Spirit for obedient compliance. Since the palate of man is corrupted, divine things are unsavory to him, and forever remain so until his taste is restored by divine grace. (A.W. Pink) As they chose not to continue in the knowledge of God, which alone guides our minds to true wisdom, the Lord gave them a perverted mind, which can choose nothing that is right. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 1:28 Even (ascensive conj.) after (Adv. of Time) examining and putting God (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to the test (δοκιμάζω, AAI3P, Culminative; they understood the Gospel and the Word of God, but they rejected both), for the purpose of retaining (ἔχω, PAInf., Static, Purpose) Him (ellipsis; or "it", referring to Bible doctrine) in full practical knowledge (Loc. Sph.), God (Subj. Nom.) turned them (Acc. Dir. Obj.) over (παραδίδωμι, AAI3S, Constative; delivered, gave them up to their own preferences) to a reprobate mind (Uncompl. Acc.; worthless, disqualified, unfit for any deed), so that they might continue to practice (ποιέω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose, Epexegetical) those things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; sexual perversions) which are not fitting and proper (καθήκω, PAPtc.APN, Descriptive, Attributive; contrary to God's will),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:28** καὶ καθὼς οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν τὸν θεὸν ἔχειν ἐν ἐπιγνώσει παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν ποιεῖν τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα

^{VUL} **Romans 1:28** et sicut non probaverunt Deum habere in notitia tradidit eos Deus in reprobum sensum ut faciant quae non conveniunt

LWB Rom. 1:29 Being filled to the point of overflowing [satiated] with every category of unrighteousness: depravity [wickedness], inordinate desire [greed], the function of evil [inflicting misery on others], full of jealousy [envy], full of murder [homicidal], full of strife

[quarrelsome], full of deceit [treachery], full of spite [puts the worst construction on everything], gossips [talking behind people's backs],

κω **Rom. 1:29** Being filled with every unrighteousness, pernicious evil, avarice, malice, full of envy, murder, wrangling, guile, malicious craftiness, secret slanderers,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:29** Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What are some of the by-products of a reprobate mind? Paul is going to name 21 of these by-products, all of which God gave to those who rejected His truth and will in favor of their own. He didn't just give them a mild case of mental disease; they became satiated [Dramatic Perfect tense], filled to the rim and then overflowing (Latin: replete), with every category of unrighteousness known to man. Each person received a perfect end result tailored to his or her sin nature. Several commentators see three categories (Instrumental of Measure) or types of sins, with examples following each category. I tend to agree, categorizing them as follows:

Thoughts: depravity, inordinate desire, evil motivation, jealousy

Motives: full of murder, full of strife, full of deceit, full of spite

Actions: gossips, slanderers, God-haters, treating others with contempt, snobbish attitude, braggarts, schemers, disobedient to parents, acting like fools, breaking contracts, showing no sense of justice, unable to love anyone, merciless and implacable

It's an unbecoming list of sins, no matter how you categorize them. Some became so depraved in their thoughts that they indulged in wickedness; some became excessively greedy and covetous for what other people had; some had their *modus operandi* taken over by evil emotions and deeds; some became insanely jealous, begrudging others for what they had; some became homicidal and actually committed murders; some caused trouble wherever they went, arguing, creating drama, and spreading a pall of gloom; some became cunning and treacherous, weaving a web of misery all around them; some became malicious, causing harm to everyone in their periphery; some became gossips, those who constantly talk behind other person's backs.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These who had disapproved of holding God in their knowledge were completely filled as a consequence with the 21 sins mentioned in verses 29-32, with the result that they remained in a full condition. (K. Wuest) Not all depraved people live in the gutter of sin. Many of them enjoy assembling, for what they call church-related activities. Their god is one whom they have conceived in their depraved minds. (W.E. Best) "Full of evil constructions" is defined as "taking everything for the worse." (Aristotle) Unrighteousness is a generic term and suggests that it is the genus of which the other vices are specifications. It is a picture of the utmost degeneracy, total depravity. (J. Murray)

There are three categories enumerated here, not just one. The first category pertains to *thoughts* - depravity, the second to *motives* - inordinate desire, and the third to *actions* - the function of evil. The Instrumental case is used to explain the three categories; the Genitive and Accusative cases are used to list the evil deeds that result from the third category. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) First come the outward acts (injustice, rascality, graspingness), then follows the inward disposition (viciousness). “Kakia” denotes the pleasure taken in injuring others, where vice has become habitual, and where injury is done to others, not for the sake of gain, but for its own sake. (J.B. Lightfoot)

Note *asyndeton*, no connective in the lists in verses 29 to 31; used for dramatic effect, vivid touches to this composite photograph of the God-abandoned soul. (A.T. Robertson) Paul uses a *paronomasia* or rhyming words, “phronou, phonou.” The play on words in the Greek takes many turns. The onomatopoeic words like “murmur” are very simple. This verse contains several figures of speech, whether conscious or unconscious. (A.T. Robertson)

Rom. 1:29 being filled to the point of overflowing (πληρώω, Perf.PPtc.APM, Dramatic, Circumstantial; over-reaching, craving for more, satiated) with every category of (Instr. Measure; three categories) unrighteousness (Instr. Manner; iniquity): depravity (Assoc. Instr.; wickedness, unrighteous; *thoughts*), inordinate (greedy, covetous) desire (Assoc. Instr.; *motives*), the function of evil (Assoc. Instr.; evil deeds, emotions, company; *actions*), full (Gen. Measure) of jealousy (Descr. Gen.; envy, begrudging someone for having something you don't have), full of murder (Descr. Gen.; homicidal), full of strife (Descr. Gen.; troublemakers, contention, discord, quarrelsome disposition), full of deceit (Descr. Gen.; treachery, cunning), full of spite (Descr. Gen.; maliciousness, evil craftiness, desire to harm people), gossips (Acc. Gen. Ref.; whisperers behind people's backs),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:29** πεπληρωμένους πάση ἀδικίᾳ πονηρίᾳ πλεονεξίᾳ κακίᾳ μεστοὺς φθόνου φόβου ἔριδος δόλου κακοηθείας ψιθυριστᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 1:29** repletos omni iniquitate malitia fornicatione avaritia nequitia plenos invidia homicidio contentione dolo malignitate susurrone

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:30** Slanderers [defamation of character], God-haters, arrogant [treats others with contempt], proud [haughty], braggarts [boasters], evil schemers [fabricators], disobedient to parents [authority arrogance],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:30** Backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, swaggerers, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

^{KJV} **Romans 1:30** Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with his list of 21 sins. Some will be slanderers, those who speak openly against another person, defaming their character; some will be God-haters, totally antagonistic toward the Word of God and anybody who believes in it; some will be completely swallowed by arrogance, treating others with contempt and disrespect; some became puffed up with pride and haughtiness, i.e., stuck-up; some are braggarts, presuming on God and boasting about their own accomplishments; some become evil schemers, contriving and fabricating lies and stories as opposed to being honest and truthful; some become disobedient to their parents, the first signs of complete authority arrogance.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Hybristes” means one who behaves with humiliating and unconscionable arrogance to those who are not powerful enough to retaliate. (F.F. Bruce) Paul suggests by the words “evil schemers” that one area in which our creativity excels is inventing new ways to do evil. The old ways are not good enough for us. They are too slow, too ineffective, too unproductive, too dull. So we expend our efforts to make more. (J. Boice) Whisperers, by secret accusations, break off the friendships of good men, inflame their minds with anger, defame the innocent, and sow discords. Slanderers, through an innate malignity, spare the reputation of no one, and, as though they were instigated by the fury of evil-speaking, they revile the deserving as well as the undeserving. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 1:30 slanderers (Acc. Gen. Ref.; evil speaking, openly defames another’s character), God-haters (Acc. Gen. Ref.), arrogant (Acc. Gen. Ref.; shameful, insolent, disrespectful, treats others with contempt), proud (Acc. Gen. Ref.; haughtiness), braggarts (Acc. Gen. Ref.; boasters, presumption), evil (Descr. Gen.) schemers (Acc. Gen. Ref.; contrivers, fabricators, inventors), disobedient (Acc. Gen. Ref.) to parents (Acc. Gen. Ref.; authority arrogance),

^{WHO} **Romans 1:30** καταλάλους θεοστυγείς ὑβριστάς ὑπερηφάνους ἀλαζόνας ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 1:30** detractores Deo odibiles contumeliosos superbos elatos inventores malorum parentibus non oboedientes

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:31** Foolish [senseless, ignorant], contract-breakers [no honor, integrity, or sense of responsibility], devoid of the instincts of love [no sense of justice], merciless [unforgiving and implacable],

^{KW} **Rom. 1:31** Stupid, faithless, without natural affection, merciless;

^{KJV} **Romans 1:31** Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul completes his list of 21 sins. All of the words in this verse begin with an alpha privative, pointing to their behavior as being the exact opposite to what God expects from mature believers. Some will become foolish, being senseless and without understanding on the important things in life; some will be contract-breakers, those who have no integrity, no sense of duty or responsibility, and who don't live up to their agreements or engagements; some will become devoid of the instincts of love, not having a strong sense of justice; some will be merciless, not willing to reconcile or to be forgiving in disagreeable situations.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses a *paronomasia* or rhyming words: "asunetous, asunthetous." (LWB) Human love is emotional, divine love is rational. It is better to treat someone in justice than with human love. Divine love and justice both require honor and integrity, while human love rests on instability. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul's long list of the marks of the reprobate mind is an *asyndeton*, meaning they contain no conjunctions. It could also be considered a *synathroesmos*, or an enumeration of the parts of a whole, the whole being the reprobate mind. (E.W. Bullinger)

Rom. 1:31 foolish (Acc. Gen. Ref.; active Verbal Adj.; without understanding, senseless, ignorant), contract-breakers (Acc. Gen. Ref.; middle Verbal Adj.; faithless, not to be trusted, no honor or integrity, no sense of duty or responsibility, doesn't live up to ones agreements or engagements; paronomasia), devoid of the instincts of love (Acc. Gen. Ref.; doesn't have a strong sense of justice), merciless (Acc. Gen. Ref.; unforgiving, implacable, irreconcilable) - all words in this verse begin with the alpha privative.

^{WHO} **Romans 1:31** ἀσυνέτους ἀσυνθέτους ἀστόργους ἀνελεήμονας·

^{VUL} **Romans 1:31** insipientes inconpositos sine affectione absque foedere sine misericordia

^{LWB} **Rom. 1:32** Such are those who, though fully knowing [total cognizance] the legal requirement of the justice of God, (that those who continually practice such things [categories of evil] are deserving of death), not only are they continually doing these same things [function of evil], but they also give hearty approval to those [degenerates] who continually practice them [public opinion is utterly worthless].

^{KW} **Rom. 1:32** Such are those who, knowing the judgment of God that these who practice such things are worthy of death, not only habitually do the same things, but also take pleasure in those who practice them.

^{KJV} **Romans 1:32** Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Those individuals who are slaves to Satan's cosmic system and are in one stage of apostasy or reversionism or another, are not innocent because they did not know they were violating God's moral and ethical requirements. Contrary to psychological principles, they know exactly what they are doing and they are fully cognizant (Gnomic Aorist tense) that their behavior is sinful. Like many criminals that have been interviewed after their crimes, they knew it was wrong, they freely admit it (Concessive Participle), but they didn't care. Their only regret was that they "got caught" in the act.

Not only do they understand that such habitual behavior (Iterative Present tense) is wrong and sinful, but in most cases, they also understand that when measured by God's bar of justice, they even deserve (Static Present tense) the death penalty for such sins. That may sound harsh to our norms and standards today, but our norms and standards today are warped and twisted when compared to Divine standards. Our sense of the enormity of sin, even those sins that seem relatively harmless (gossip, maligning, lying), is so deficient by God's standards, that "it's a wonder how we keep from going under!"

There's another group of individuals, politicians of sort, who are not seen by others as actively engaged in the list of sins Paul has just enumerated. They remain on the sidelines, cheering for those who commit such sins. These believers and unbelievers who function as Satan's cheerleaders, giving their hearty approval and support (Iterative Present tense) to those who indulge (Iterative Present tense) in such despicable sins, are just as guilty as the ones who engaged in the act. We have a parallel in our legal system: the man who hires the murderer is just as guilty as if he himself pulled the trigger, raised the blade, or mixed the poison.

You should keep two things in mind when reading the last few verses. First, while this list of sins obviously describes the mass of unbelievers in the world, it also applies to apostate and reversionistic believers. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have committed every single category of sin Paul has just enumerated. They remained believers and went to heaven in spite of their sins, because of His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross. Second, public opinion is virtually useless. Public opinion is usually based on the lowest common denominator: man's norms and standards. As believers, we are to live according to Divine norms and standards. Public opinion polls and issues decided by majority rule, are only as wise as the people who are interviewed – which doesn't bode well for those of us living today.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Though man in his natural state is spiritually dead, that is, entirely destitute of any spark of true holiness, yet is he still a rational being and has a conscience by which he is capable of perceiving the difference between good and evil, and of discerning and feeling the force of moral obligation. By having his sins clearly brought to his mind and conscience, he can be made to realize what his true condition is as a transgressor of the holy law of God. This sight and sense of sin, when aroused from moral stupor, under the common operations of the Holy Spirit, is usually termed “conviction of sin;” and there can be no doubt that the views and feelings of men may be very clear and strong even while they are in an unregenerate state. (A.W. Pink) The pagan world is not unaware of God’s displeasure with these activities. Homosexuals, adulterers, greedy people, slanderers are not happy little sinners. Their conscience may be seared, but it still pricks them occasionally. They know what God’s Word says, because preachers, radio Bible teachers, and Christian writers won’t let them forget it. (W. Kroll)

Paul says that approval of the behavior described above is as bad as – or worse than – the actual behavior. In modern law an accomplice to a crime is less guilty than the perpetrator of a crime. But Paul might not agree. The consenting bystander is normally more premeditative than the impassioned aggressor, and worse yet, consent (or silence!) in the face of wrongdoing lends subtle support to make something fashionable which deserves to be condemned. (J. Edwards) When sin is treated as though it is inconsequential, then the glory of God is treated as inconsequential. When God passes over sin, it looks as though He is agreeing that His glory is of little value. But if God acts in such a way as to deny the infinite value of His Own glory, then He commits the ultimate outrage; He desecrates what is infinitely holy and He blasphemes what is ultimately sacred. (J. Piper)

The difference between man and God appears in man’s unwillingness that any should observe God’s law. Not satisfied with being a rebel himself, man would have God left without any loyal subjects in the world; therefore he uses both temptations and threats to induce others to follow his evil example. He paints the pleasures of sin in glowing colors, and sneers at and boycotts those who have any scruples. Ordinarily the workers of iniquity consider those who walk with God to be freaks and fools, and take delight in ridiculing them. It is not that the righteous have wronged the wicked in any way, but that they refuse to have fellowship with them in defying God. This is proof of their awful enmity. Not only are they themselves angry at God’s laws, but they cannot bear to see anyone else respecting them. They delight in accomplishing the downfall of their fellowmen. (A.W. Pink)

Rom. 1:32 Such are those (Correlative Demonstr., Attrib.) who (as apostates and reversionists), though fully knowing (ἐπιγινώσκω, AAPTc.NPM, Gnostic, Concessive, Substantival; total cognizance) the legal requirement of the justice (Acc. Dir. Obj.; judgment) of God (Poss. Gen.), [that (Relative

Clause) those (Subj. Nom.) who continually practice (πράσσω, PAPTc.NPM, Iterative, Substantival) such things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the function of evil) are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Static) deserving (Pred. Nom.; worthy of, fit for) of death (Adv. Gen. Ref.)], not only (neg. adv.) are they continually doing (ποιέω, PAI3P, Iterative) these same things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the function of evil), but (adversative conj.) they also (adjunctive) give hearty approval to (συνευδοκέω, PAI3P, Iterative; agree with, approve of, consent to; heathenism approves of heathenism) those (Dat. Disadv.; apostates and reversionists) who continually practice (πράσσω, PAPTc.DPM, Iterative, Substantival) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; points out the worthlessness of public opinion).

^{WHO} **Romans 1:32** οἵτινες τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγνόντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσὶν οὐ μόνον αὐτὰ ποιοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 1:32** qui cum iustitiam Dei cognovissent non intellexerunt quoniam qui talia agunt digni sunt morte non solum ea faciunt sed et consentiunt facientibus

CHAPTER 2

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:1** Therefore, you [self-righteous unbeliever who claims he hasn't done any of the terrible things listed] are without excuse [no defense before the Supreme Court of heaven], O man, every one of you when you judge [judging others draws attention to yourself], because whenever you pass judgment upon another of a different kind [one of the sinners from the previous verses], you are actually condemning yourself, because you who keep judging practice the same things.

^{KW} **Rom. 2:1** Therefore, you are without a defense, O man, everyone who judges, for in that in which you judging another, yourself you are condemning, for you who judge practice the same things.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:1** Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The self-righteous unbeliever who claims he hasn't done any of the terrible things listed in the past few verses thinks he has an excuse to escape the wrath of God. But Paul says this imaginary "good man" is (Pictorial Present tense) without excuse. Why is that? Paul's imaginary antagonist

stands in self-righteous arrogance and judges (Static Present tense) one of the sinners guilty of some terrible deed on his list of 21 sins. The very act of judging the *obvious* sinners (Temporal Participle) automatically draws attention to the *concealed* sinner.

In addition, the very act of judging others (Static Present tense) is actually a form of maligning and accusing others - a terrible sin itself. Whether you are the perpetrator of one of Paul's 21 sins or are passing judgment on those who practice them, both make you a sinner; so even the person who is judging is condemned (Perfective Present tense) for his participation. In many cases, those who stand aloof and judge are engaged in practicing the very same sins (Iterative Present tense) that they are judging. Therefore, their judgment boomerangs right back on themselves!

Paul's imaginary antagonist is thought by many to be the Jews, since they were given the Law and have been judging the Gentile world for centuries. Others think he is the self-righteous unbeliever who is judging the sins of the unbeliever whose sins are more obvious and less hidden from view. Sins of lasciviousness tend to be more open to scrutiny, while sins of asceticism tend to be hidden and less recognizable. Regardless of type, both are sins. So in my opinion, either option (legalistic Jews or Gentiles) adheres to the context and furnishes the contrast between the antagonist and the protagonist.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle has now to prove that the righteousness of God is as necessary to the Jew as to the pagan; it is the Jew who is really addressed in this chapter from the beginning. (Denney) Paul begins his argument at a distance; he states his principles in such general terms, that they could not fail to secure the assent of the Jew, before he was aware of their application to himself. (C. Hodge) Today, most commentators believe that Paul was thinking of Jews throughout the chapter, even though he does not mention Jews specifically until later. Yet I am not fully convinced. I think a broader reference is in mind, to both Jews and Gentiles. (J. Boice) Considerable difference of opinion has prevailed among interpreters respecting the identity of those addressed in the earlier part of this chapter: some Jews ... some Jews and other legalists. (J. Murray)

Romans 2:1-16 concerns those who lead ethically superior lives. They are the moral people. They might say, "All you have said about hedonists is true. They certainly are on a path leading away from God, and they will be justly judged for it. But I am not like that. I do not live only for myself or set my own ethical standards. On the contrary, I pursue the highest moral standards I know. Therefore, your proposed solution and your call to repentance do not apply to me." Paul responds, however, that they do. First, the standards of moralists, however high, still fall short of God's standards. God demands a perfection we cannot even dream of. We all understandably fall short. Second, moralists fall short of even their own standards, regardless of what they may be. Either way, they have no excuse. (J. Boice)

God's justice cannot tolerate man's righteousness anymore than He can tolerate man's sinfulness. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In the religious world, we condemn so freely those who

are of a different party to ourselves: in the social world, those of a different class, those who employ us, or whom we employ, those whom in any way we do not like or who go contrary to us. We are always judging. But to judge, we are taught, is a great responsibility. With what judgment we judge, we shall be judged. So we should be charitable in our estimate of others, because we are deeply conscious of our own need of merciful and lenient consideration. (C. Gore) Paul begins his discussion of the failure of the Jew to attain to the God-kind of righteousness. (A.T. Robertson)

Paul uses a *paregmenon*, or a repetition of words derived from the same root, i.e. *krinon*, *krineis*, *katakrineis*. Those who live ethically superior lives also need salvation. The standards of moralists, however high, still fall short of God's standards. God demands a perfection that we cannot even dream of. We all understandably fall short. Moralists fall short even of their own standards, regardless of what they may be. Moralists must disabuse themselves of the thought that they can earn heaven. They must admit that they too need God's righteousness. (J.M. Boice) The argument here is inexorable. The man who judges others must be prepared to submit to the same judgment himself. There is no surer way of condemning himself than by sitting in judgment on those who commit the sins of which he is guilty. (A.E. Knoch)

The philosophical schools especially claimed superiority to the mass of mankind, and would be likely to resent their own inclusion in the general condemnation. Notably the Stoics, whose philosophy was at that time, as well as that of the Epicureans, extensively professed by educated Romans. The Stoics might be suitably designated as "judges," because they affected to look down from a position of calm philosophical superiority on those who followed their mere natural impulses, professing to be themselves guided by right reason, and superior to the passions of ordinary humanity. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 2:1 Therefore (inferential conj.), you (addressed to the self-righteous unbeliever who claims he hasn't done any of the terrible things listed in the past few verses) are (εἰμί, PAI2S, Pictorial) without excuse (Pred. Nom.; no defense before the Supreme Court of Heaven), O man (Voc. Address with particle of emotion; Paul is fond of arguing against an imaginary antagonist), every (*synecdoche*, all is put for the greater part) one of you (Subj. Nom.) when you judge (κρίνω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Temporal, Articular; when you judge someone else, you are automatically drawing attention to yourself), because (causal conj.) whenever (Local use of the temporal phrase) you pass judgment upon (κρίνω, PAI2S, Static; malign, accuse) another of a different kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; refers to the *obvious* sinners in prior verses), you are actually (from the emphatic reflexive pronoun) condemning (κατακρίνω, PAI2S, Perfective) yourself (Acc. Dir. Obj.; reflexive pronoun), because you who keep judging (κρίνω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Causal, Articular)

practice (πράσσω, PAI2S, Iterative) the same things (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:1** Διὸ ἀναπολόγητος εἶ ὧ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων· ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίνεις τὸν ἕτερον σεαυτὸν κατακρίνεις τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ πράσσεις ὁ κρίνων

^{VUL} **Romans 2:1** propter quod inexcusabilis es o homo omnis qui iudicas in quo enim iudicas alterum te ipsum condemnas eadem enim agis qui iudicas

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:2** But we [mature believers] have come to know beyond any shadow of a doubt [optimistically] that the judicial verdict from God according to the Truth [Bible doctrine] is against those who practice similar things [self-righteous arrogant people also commit mental, verbal, and overt sins].

^{KW} **Rom. 2:2** But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:2** But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The mature believer, like Paul, has come to know beyond any shadow of a doubt (Intensive Perfect tense) that the judicial verdict from God is against the self-righteous sinner just like it is against the lascivious sinner. Mature believers are not fooled by a slick, outward show of morality or legal adherence. Paul is speaking optimistically, because even a mature believer can be deceived by a well executed “strap-on” or con job. In general, however, a mature believer has been around long enough to know that legalism is a smokescreen for a host of vicious sins.

The norms and standards of Truth from the Word of God is not exclusively against the lascivious sinner, but is (Static Present tense) also against the ascetic sinner. The ascetic, legalistic sinner practices (Iterative Present tense) the same mental, verbal and overt sins as the lascivious sinner. It is a different brand of sin, but it is sin nevertheless. The divine standard of Truth judges all sin, regardless of type. Again, these verses could be referring directly to Jews at the time Paul was writing, since they possessed the Law and thought their standing with God was fine as long as they adhered to this law. Paul is writing part of Romans to clear up this misconception!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The whole hope of the Jews was founded on the assumption that the judgment of God regarding them would be guided by some other rule than truth. He was not to judge them according to their real merits, but according to their national and ecclesiastical relations, just as men now hope to be saved because they belong to the true Church. (C. Hodge) Paul declares that there is a Pharisee in the heart of everyone who esteems his or her own morality. Their error consists in passing judgment on others, for in passing judgment one

supposes oneself *apart from* humanity, whereas in truth one is always and only a *part of* humanity. Do not even truly moral individuals discover to their acute disappointment that the evils they detest and strive to overcome are also in themselves? (F.F. Bruce)

The constant effort to uplift humanity ignores the true cause of human depravity. These things are the result of refusing to recognize God. One of the most alarming signs of modern times is the increasing desire to eliminate all reference to God in every sphere of life. Education must be strictly Godless, business has no place for the Deity, society shuns all mention of Him, and even many of the so-called churches have little more than a formal recognition of an unknown God. (A.E. Knoch)

Rom 2:2 But (contrast conj.) we (mature believers) have come to know beyond any shadow of a doubt (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Intensive; Paul is speaking optimistically) that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) the judicial verdict (Subj. Nom.) from God (Abl. Source) according to the Truth (Adv. Acc. Ref.; Bible doctrine) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) against those (Prep. Acc.) who practice (πράσσω, PAPtc.APM, Iterative, Substantival) similar (Noncompl. Acc.; mental, verbal, overt sins) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul is referring to the different brand of sins committed by self-righteous arrogant people).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:2** οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν ἐπὶ τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας

^{VUL} **Romans 2:2** scimus enim quoniam iudicium Dei est secundum veritatem in eos qui talia agunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:3** **And do you presume [calculate] this, O man, who condemns those who practice similar things [different category, but still sin] when you also [behaving like self-righteous hypocrites] commit the same category of things [hiding behind a façade of legalism], that you will escape the judicial verdict from God?**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:3** And do you reason thus, O man, who judges those who practice such things, and are doing the same things, that as for you, you will escape the judgment of God?

^{KJV} **Romans 2:3** And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul questions his imaginary, self-righteous antagonist again (Interrogative Indicative mood). This time he asks him if he presumes (Pictorial Present tense) to condemn (Dramatic Present tense) those who practice (Iterative Present tense) similar types of sins, even though they aren't the same "brand" of sin that is their own particular weakness. The self-righteous, arrogant, legalistic person commits the same type of sins (mental, verbal and overt) as the antinomian,

lascivious person, yet this person hides behind his sin of self-righteous arrogance and condemns the other person! What hypocrisy! The Greek word “logizomai” is where we get our word logic, and it refers to a long, drawn out conclusion based on mathematical calculations. The sins of these people are very rational, calculated, and planned; they are not as emotion-based as those of the antinomian. But they are sins, nevertheless, and they will be judged.

Paul then asks his imaginary antagonist if he thinks this façade of legalism and self-righteousness is going to prevent him from being under the judicial verdict from God. Does this hypothetical person actually believe he will escape (Deliberative Future tense) the wrath of God by being a self-righteous legalist? Just because the type of sin this person commits is hidden and looks respectable in man’s eyes does not mean God is fooled by this smokescreen. God sees exactly what is going on and sees sin as sin, no matter how obvious or subtle. The hypothetical question has an obvious answer in the negative: They will not escape God’s judicial verdict, any more than will the person who commits the more obvious sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Jew certainly thought, in many cases, that the privilege of his birth would of itself ensure his entrance into the kingdom. (K. Wuest) Imperfect people are not qualified to judge imperfect people; everybody has their own brand of sin. Some tend towards antinomianism, some tend towards legalism; this is called polarized fragmentation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Gentiles did not have the law of Moses, as the Jews had, but they had the law of conscience, the distinction between right and wrong, engraved on their hearts. (F.F. Bruce) Salvation rests solely on God’s grace toward sinners, not on sinners bargaining with bogus merits. (J. Edwards)

A number of years ago Thomas A. Harris wrote a book of pop psychology called *I’m O.K., You’re O.K.* But the message of these early chapters of Romans is: “I am not O.K. You are not O.K. No one is O.K.” And the sooner we admit that we are not okay and turn to the One who knows that we are not, but who offers us a way of salvation anyway, the better off we will be. Jesus does not excuse us; He forgives us. He calls us sinners. He says, “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” The most important thing in life is to know that Jesus is able to save you from sin. The second most important thing is to know that you require it. (J. Boice)

Rom. 2:3 And (continuative conj.) do you presume (λογίζομαι, PMI2S, Pictorial, Interrogative, Deponent; reason, infer, calculate) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.), O man (Voc. Address; Paul's imaginary, self-righteous antagonist), who condemns (κρίνω, PAPtc.NSM, Dramatic, Substantival, Articular) those (Acc. Gen. Ref.; reversionists) who practice (πράσσω, PAPtc.APM, Iterative, Substantival) similar things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; it may be a different category of weakness, but it is still sin) when you also commit (ποιέω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Temporal; they are hiding behind a facade of legalism) the same category (mental, verbal, overt) of

things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul is calling them self-righteous hypocrites), **that** (Obj. Clause) **you** (Nom. Appos.; emphatic) **will escape** (ἐκφεύγω, FMI2S, Deliberative) **the judicial verdict** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **from God** (Abl. Source; man's respectability does not minimize man's sins) ?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:3** λογίζη δὲ τοῦτο ὧ ἄνθρωπε ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας καὶ ποιῶν αὐτά ὅτι σὺ ἐκφεύξῃ τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:3** existimas autem hoc o homo qui iudicas eos qui talia agunt et facis ea quia tu effugies iudicium Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:4** Or do you continue to treat with contempt [despise] the wealth of His kindness [based on His integrity] and forbearance [clemency] and longsuffering [restraint], being ignorant of the fact that the benevolence of God is trying to lead you to repentance [change your mind about living a life of sin]?

^{KW} **Rom. 2:4** Or, the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and longsuffering are you treating with contempt , being ignorant that the goodness of God is leading you to repentance?

^{KJV} **Romans 2:4** Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to question his imaginary antagonist, asking why (Interrogative Indicative mood) he continues (Iterative Present tense) to treat the wealth of God's kindness, forbearance and longsuffering with contempt. Treating God with contempt means to look down your nose at God. It's hard to imagine anyone doing this, but it happens every day. The "wealth" of God means He is rich with kindness, forbearance (military truce or cease-fire) and longsuffering. He has an endless supply of this wealth. His kindness is based on His integrity and generosity, His forbearance is exemplified by His clemency, and His longsuffering is seen by His patience and restraint against those who try and test Him every day by their recalcitrance.

Paul is all the more dumbfounded that his antagonist appears to be ignorant (Descriptive Present tense) of the fact that the benevolence of God that he is spurning is trying to lead him to repentance (Tendential Present tense). This is NOT a picture of God begging and pleading with unbelievers to become Christians. What a pathetic scene that would be for the Omnipotent God! Repentance here means to change one's mind about sin because judgment is waiting just around the corner. Most unbelievers have an erroneous concept of God's attributes. They think His love, patience, forbearance and restraint mean He will ignore their sin. They completely ignore His holiness, justice, and wrath, because these attributes might actually mean they would have to repent! But they don't want to repent of their sins, because they *enjoy* their depravity.

The Arminian jumps on this verse to try and prove that man has the final decision on whether to become a believer or not. The Arminian, however, has no sword to draw from this verse, because Paul is not talking about believing in Christ. The Greek word “metanoieo” means “to change one’s mind about something.” It could mean “to change your mind about Christ,” - believing in Him, and becoming part of the family of God. But the context in this passage is sin, not belief in Christ. This is not an evangelistic call; this is a common sense, “good advice” verse about not engaging in habitual sin. There is no mention of changing one’s mind about Christ, only changing one’s mind about sin. They are not identical concepts. Sin is bad for everyone, believers and unbelievers alike. It makes good sense to avoid sin whenever possible. It even behooves an unbeliever not to sin, because by doing so, he avoids the law of retribution (divine judgment against sin) and life is better for him.

Can an unbeliever live a life free from sin? Not entirely, even as a believer cannot. Both have a sin nature, ready for action at a moment’s notice! But an unbeliever can live a moral, ethical life based on establishment principles and be blessed by God *even though he remains an unbeliever*. Even though Isaac (a believer) received the promise, Ishmael (an unbeliever) was blessed by God. There are many unbelievers today who live a happy life because they do not live a life of habitual sin, while many of their believing counterparts live a miserable life because they are engulfed in a life of habitual sin. This is a tragic commentary on Christianity, to be sure, but an accurate one nevertheless. Many Stoics in the ancient world changed their mind (repented) about sin and altered their behavior to eliminate them as much as possible. They believed correctly that good behavior led to a better life. But this change in behavior did not mean they embraced the Lord and became Christians. Bear with me while I labor on the following point: “The point at issue here is a new attitude to sin, not explicitly a new attitude to God and His will.” (TDNT)

When you see the word “repentance,” always investigate the context around the word and find out what “change of mind” is being referred to. Those commentators who make it say “changing your mind about Christ” on every occasion are committing the *illegitimate totality transfer*, a violation of hermenutics. They are adding “meaning” or “identity” to a word that in this case is not there. We have all said something or done something that we have “changed our mind about” later. That is all this Greek word (Latin: penitent) means by itself; context determines the rest. Acts 3:19 has two parts, “Repent you therefore,” (change your mind about something) “and be converted” (now we’re referring to Christ). This verse in Romans only has the first half of the salvation formula. It is *possible* that conversion may follow after a person changes his mind about sin, but that concept is not *presupposed* by the word “repent” alone. Conversion is a *potential consequence* of changing one’s mind about sin, but it is not a *guaranteed presupposition* that it will indeed occur. In other words, an unbeliever may change his mind about his bad behavior, but not change his mind about Christ.

Here are some examples of how the Greek word “metanoia” is used from the TDNT: “to change one’s mind, to adopt another view, to change one’s resolve or purpose, averting the curse brought down on someone by his transgression, to come to a different opinion, an intellectual act of rational self-criticism, ethical dissatisfaction, self-consideration, and ‘if I had known better I would have acted otherwise.’ It represents the philosopher who is the victim of error, which as the opposite of the virtue of wisdom is beneath the dignity of the sage. Whether linguistically or

materially, one searches the Greek world in vain for the origin of the NT understanding of ‘metanoeo’ and ‘metanoia.’ The word does not lead, then, to a personal and existential relation between God and man.” As in this verse, repent merely means to change one’s mind about sin; it does not follow that the persons addressed will also change their mind about Christ. You must look elsewhere for a corresponding salvation passage.

It is being dissatisfied with thoughts cherished, plans followed, and acts performed. In the dissatisfaction there may reside no more than the wish that these things had not been thought, willed, or done, even though good. It bears witness to a sense of committed faults which must be corrected. It expresses pain or grief at what has happened. It leads man out of the misery in which he must otherwise pass his life, by freeing him from false thoughts, passions and joys and showing him the way to true, rational and ethical development. It denotes a change in moral judgment, regret for wrongs which have been committed ... an individual instance of change of judgment or remorse in respect of a specific act which is now no longer approved. For the Greeks “metanoia” never suggests an alteration in the total moral attitude, a profound change in life’s direction, a conversion which affects the whole of conduct. (Those concepts have been added to the Greek word by Christianity).

Some commentators believe the first few verses of this chapter are addressed to Jews. If this is true, that begs another question. Is it possible for a Jewish unbeliever to obey the commandments and statutes of the law and yet remain an unbeliever? Yes, there were many Jews who obeyed the law, ceased from certain sins that plagued them, adhered to all the cultic rituals, and embraced a national ethic – but they remained unbelievers because they did not believe in Christ. Turning from a former life of sin is not equivalent to conversion. Embracing “a garland of virtues” is not equivalent to conversion. “Turning from ignorance to knowledge, from lack of understanding to perception, from license to restraint, from unrighteous to righteous behavior, and from cowardice to bravery” is not equivalent to conversion. Transgressions may cease and the Law might be scrupulously obeyed, but these are not equivalent to conversion.

As a matter of fact, the emotional appeal to “feel sorry for your sins” and “repent” as preached by many evangelicals is a perversion of the Gospel and has left multitudes of people unconverted, but living “a cleaned-up life.” Christian churches today are full of unbelievers who lead moral and ethical lives, but who are nevertheless unregenerate. Then there are those who read the Epistle to the Hebrews where it says “be renewed again by repentance” and conclude that a believer can lose his salvation and must be converted again! What blasphemy! What heresy! Did it never occur to these well-meaning, but misguided believers, that born-again Christians can change their mind about living a holy life and ensnare themselves in a lifestyle of sin *while remaining believers in the Lord Jesus Christ*? Yes they can, and they do! They do not need to be converted (regenerated) again, they need to change their mind about the sinful lifestyle they are living and re-enter God’s sphere of power by private confession of sin.

You may think I’m pushing this issue about the word “repentance” too far. But let me offer one last defense of why I’m doing so. In Hebrews 6:6, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are being told that they need to be “restored again to repentance.” The average preacher who has not been properly educated in doctrine will jump on this verse and claim “backsliding believers need to

get saved again.” This is a patently false conclusion, reached because they have “loaded” the word ‘repentance’ with meanings that are not there. The people who are addressed in this verse have reverted to the OT economy of living by the law and sacrifices again. In Hebrews, they have abandoned the *reality* of the living Christ for the *shadow* of Him in animal sacrifices. They have, therefore, gone astray by defecting from God’s protocol for Church Age believers to the practices of Judaism. They are being told to “change their mind” (repent) about their return to Judaism and to get back on track with proper protocol. Now are you beginning to see why I’ve spent so much time on this one word? It has a host of meanings and it is crucial that you know which meaning is being used in the context.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God also blesses them that curse Him. (L. Berkhof) To “despise” is to underestimate the significance of something, to think lightly of it and thus fail to accord it the esteem that is due. It can also take on the strength of scorning and contempt. (J. Murray) It is due to common grace that God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the sinner, and does not do so now, but maintains and prolongs the natural life of man and gives him time for repentance. He does not at once cut short the life of the sinner, but affords him an opportunity to repent, thereby removing all excuse and justifying the coming manifestation of His wrath upon those who persist in sin unto the end. (L. Berkhof)

Paul begins a series of *synonymia*, the repetition of words similar in sense, but different in sound and origin - verse 4: goodness, forbearance, longsuffering; verse 7: glory, honor, immortality, eternal life; verses 8 & 9: indignation, wrath, tribulation, anguish; verse 10: glory, honor, peace. (E.W. Bullinger) Three anthropopathisms displaying the concept of God's grace coming before judgment. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Repentance is granted to us and is not a contribution we make of ourselves. (A. Custance) Do you expect exemption on the ground of the peculiar goodness of God? That the goodness of God gives you a license to sin and that this same goodness of God is so great that you will escape His punishment, though others perish? (C. Hodge)

Unless God intervenes sinful men will continue on in their sin. But when he gives men the gift, they turn away from their sin and experience repentance. (L. Morris) We may reflect that repentance, true repentance, is such an uncomfortable experience that sinners naturally shun it. (W. Law) They will adopt all sorts of subterfuges to hide from themselves and from others their need of it, and they will engage in all manner of activities in substitution for it. (M. Jarrett-Kerr) I do not think these words apply to the Jews explicitly. (J. Boice) Forbearance has to do with the magnitude of sin; longsuffering with the multiplicity of it. (C. Spurgeon)

The Greek word “metanoein” (repent) has a host of meanings, such as the following: the change of mind that results from after-knowledge, regret for the course of action that was pursued, displeasure with oneself, a certain suffering of mind which comes from a displeasure about a previous opinion, a change for the better or a change for the worse, taking a wiser view of the past, the soul’s perception of the wicked things it has done,

regret for the ill done in the past that results in a change of life for the better, a virtuous change in the life and practice. (R. Trench)

Although God's longsuffering is abused by the wicked, it never excuses them for turning God's forbearance into a reason to persevere in their wickedness. Paul warned that the wicked will be punished according to their accumulated wickedness. (W.E. Best)
Longsuffering adds something more to forbearance, for it respects a long course of ingratitude and sins on the part of that people, and imports an extreme degree of patience on the part of God – a patience which many ages, and a vast accumulation of offences, has not exhausted. This is acting as if it were imagined that the justice which lingers in its execution has no existence, and that it consists solely in empty threats. (R. Haldane)

The law could not lead me to righteousness and a sorrowful heart could not move me to righteousness. So what does move me to do righteously and sin not? The goodness of God leads me to repentance. God has done wonderfully in my behalf and the better I understand this, the more I respond to Him in obedience. How completely “undoing” it is to have our Father show us an act of love and kindness on the heels of one of our worst failures. Thus growing in grace is understanding our great need of Him, while growing in knowledge is understanding His great provision for us. The more we grow, the more we obey. (K. Lamb)

Rom. 2:4 Or (connective conj.) do you continue to treat with contempt (καταφρονέω, PAI2S, Iterative, Interrogative; despise, disparage, look down your nose at) the wealth (Obj. Gen.; riches; anthropathism as to circumstances connected with God) of His (Poss. Gen.) kindness (Adv. Gen. Ref.; based on His integrity, goodness, and generosity) and forbearance (Adv. Gen. Ref.; clemency, suspension of arms) and longsuffering (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the patience and restraint of God continues regardless of our recalcitrance), being ignorant of the fact (ἀγνοέω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Circumstantial) that the benevolence (Subj. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.) is trying to lead (ἄγω, PAI3S, Tendentia, Conative Progressive; bring) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to repentance (Acc. Gen. Ref., Cognate; change your mind about living a life of sin)?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:4** ἢ τοῦ πλούτου τῆς χρηστότητος αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀνοχῆς καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας καταφρονεῖς ἀγνοῶν ὅτι τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς μετάνοιάν σε ἄγει

^{VUL} **Romans 2:4** an divitias bonitatis eius et patientiae et longanimitatis contemnis ignorans quoniam benignitas Dei ad paenitentiam te adducit

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:5** **But according to your stubborn and unrepentant heart [hardening of the spiritual arteries due to scar tissue of the soul], you are storing up [accumulating] wrath [punishment] for yourself on the day of wrath [Great White Throne judgment], even**

revelation [disclosure] of the righteous judgment from God [shock of the unbeliever when he sees his human righteousness discarded from the proceedings],

kw **Rom. 2:5** But according to your obstinate and unrepentant heart you are storing up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

KJV **Romans 2:5** But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Unbelievers who are stubborn, obstinate, and unrepentant when they hear the gospel are continually hardening their spiritual arteries. The Greek word for “stubborn” is where we get our word “sclerosis” for hardening of the arteries. There is a mechanism in the soul for hearing, thinking, analyzing, storing, believing and utilizing both the gospel message and Bible doctrine in general. Each time an unbeliever hears the gospel and rejects it, this grace apparatus for perception (GAP) of doctrine is corroded by scar tissue and becomes increasingly “constricted.” The flow of biblical information is hindered, bit by bit, until eventually the spiritual arteries are completely coated with scar tissue so that nothing can get through. By way of application, each time a believer rejects Bible doctrine, the same scar tissue forms on his spiritual arteries. This grace apparatus for perception of doctrine resides in the “heart” or right lobe of the soul, i.e., the thinking mechanism of the brain.

Paul’s mixed metaphor of the apostate storing up (Iterative Present tense) or stockpiling treasure combined with scar tissue of the soul is magnificent. Stockpiling treasure portrays a picture that nearly all of us can appreciate! But in this case, he puts a twist on things: the treasure they are stockpiling everytime they say “No!” to the gospel is scar tissue on the soul and wrath which will be poured out against them at the Great White Throne judgment in the future. There will be divine discipline against all apostasy in that day. There will be a disclosure of everything the unbeliever has ever done that he has evaluated as being “righteous deeds,” but unfortunately for him, all of those deeds will fall short of the standard of God’s righteousness and they will be discarded as worthless. The total elimination of everything the unbeliever has done that appeared noble and good in life will no doubt “shock and awe” the unbeliever.

This accumulation of scar tissue (wrath) in the soul is not an unimportant matter even for the unbeliever. As there is no equality in heaven for the believer, there is no equality in hell for the unbeliever. The believer with an abundance of scar tissue on his soul will lose rewards, but still be in heaven. The unbeliever with an abundance of scar tissue will be in hell, but his punishment will be according to *how much* wrath he has accumulated in his treasury. Scar tissue for the believer prevents him from growing in grace and knowledge, with the ultimate result that he will stand naked at the Judgment Seat of Christ with nothing to show for his spiritual life, i.e., no rewards, honors, or decorations. The more scar tissue the unbeliever has stored in his treasury the more torment and suffering he will experience in hell throughout all eternity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

While the fact of judgment is determined by what we are, i.e., our nature - the degree of punishment is determined on the basis of the true knowledge an unbeliever has received and the quality of life that he has lived. These degrees of punishment are a solid argument for eternal, conscious torment. According to Christ, some sinners may store up greater torment than others. (R. Morey) The standard of judgment is the light which men have severally enjoyed. (C. Hodge) Occurs in a papyrus record of a sale, denoting that there was to be no change in the conditions of the sale. (E.W. Bullinger) Every man will be judged according to his deeds, Jew and Gentile alike. Hard impenitence is an investment in divine wrath at compound interest to be realized on the day of wrath. (R. Martin)

This is a reference to a day in the future when the lives of both Christians and non-Christians will be examined and rewarded according to their works. The Christian will stand before the Judgment Seat (bema) of Christ where he will be judged according to his works. The non-Christian will stand before the Great White Throne (thronos) where he will be judged according to his works. The outcome of the Christian's judgment is either rewards or the loss thereof. The outcome of the non-Christian's judgment is always the lake of fire because his works are not adequate to redeem. (J. Dillow) One might expect that the hardened heart would characterize the heathen and pagan world, but it is not mentioned in 1:18-32. The hardened heart is rather the problem of *religious and moral humanity*. (J. Edwards)

Every time a Christian sins, Christ's blood is there to cleanse them. Conversely, sins of unbelievers are credited to their accounts. All the sins they commit are treasured up for punishment. When unbelievers stand before the Lord at the Great White Throne judgment, all those sins will be reviewed and judged by the wrath of God. (W.E. Best) The wrath of God is revealed to us chiefly in the debilitating, downward drag of sin upon our lives. We think when we sin that we can sin "just a little bit." But we cannot! Sin captures us and pulls us down inexorably, until - if we are allowed to continue in sin long enough - we end up calling what is good, evil, and what is evil, good. And we perish utterly! The moral turmoil and chaos of the world, including our own personal world, is evidence that the wrath of God is no fiction. (J. Boice)

These passages and many similar ones denote an inclination to wickedness so strong and so rooted, that it has entire possession of the man and of all the powers of the soul, without his being able to undeceive himself, and to turn to God. It does not refer merely to the act of impenitence, and to the heart being in that state at present, but to the fact of its being so enslaved to sin, that the word literally means "cannot repent." Without the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, these will always prove ineffectual. (R. Haldane) The person who knows but resists truth does not go away from the encounter morally neutral. Truth resisted hardens the heart. It makes it all the more difficult to recognize truth the next time around. Life is not a game without consequences. (R. Mounce)

Disobedience is always followed by a hardening of the spiritual arteries. The consequences of this are just as pathetic as, and far more tragic than, arteriosclerosis. (R. Earle) The justice and righteousness of God demand that sin be punished. Either the sinner himself must be punished or a suitable substitute must be found who will be able to bear the full punishment of sin. (R. Morey) It never occurs to moralists that they personally need the goodness of God just as blatant sinners do. They are unaware of their need for repentance. The Lord will deal as justly with moral people as He does with the immoral ones. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 2:5 But (adversative conj.) according to your (Poss. Gen.) stubborn (Prep. Acc.; hardness) and unrepentant (Prep. Acc.; obstinate) heart (Adv. Acc.; right lobe, scar tissue of the soul), you are storing up (θησαυρίζω, PAI2P, Iterative; heaping up, accumulating scar tissue) wrath (Acc. Dir. Obj.; *metonymy*, change of one noun for another—where wrath is used for punishment and the various acts which flow it) for yourself (Dat. Disadv.) on the day (Loc. Time; Great White Throne judgment) of wrath (Attrib. Gen.; anthropopathism for divine discipline against apostasy), even (ascensive) revelation of (Adv. Gen. Ref.; disclosure) the righteous judgment (Adv. Acc.) from God (Abl. Source; the shock of the unbeliever when he sees his human righteousness discarded from the proceedings),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:5** κατὰ δὲ τὴν σκληρότητά σου καὶ ἀμετανόητον καρδίαν θησαυρίζεις σεαυτῷ ὀργὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:5** secundum duritiam autem tuam et inpaenitens cor thesaurizas tibi iram in die irae et revelationis iusti iudicii Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:6** Who will render judgment [reimburse] to each person [believer and unbeliever] according to his works [rewards and torment are levied by degrees].

^{KW} **Rom. 2:6** Who recompenses each according to his works,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:6** Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ will render judgment (Predictive Future tense) to each unbeliever at the Great White Throne judgment. He will evaluate each believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ and distribute rewards to them accordingly. All unbelievers will end up in hell, so their judgment has little to do with their end destination; that will be settled in seconds, when their names are not found in the Book written before the foundation of the world. All believers will end up in heaven, so their evaluation has nothing to do with their end destination; that will be settled in seconds, when their names are found in the Book written before the foundation of the world.

The judgment of unbelievers is two-fold: (1) the burning of their sins and human works as wood, hay and stubble because none of them meet God's standards, and (2) the determination or extent of the torment and suffering to be levied on them throughout eternity. Unbelievers who lived a decent, moral, and ethical life according to establishment principles, will receive less torment and suffering than unbelievers who lived an indecent, immoral and unethical life according to the dictates of their sin nature and satan's continual prompting.

The evaluation of believers is two-fold: (1) the burning of their human works as wood, hay and stubble because none of them meet God's standards, and (2) the determination or extent of their rewards, honors and decorations to be levied on them throughout eternity. Believers who lived a spiritual life in the sphere of God's power according to divine protocol will receive an abundance of rewards and responsibilities in heaven. Believers who continually rejected Bible doctrine and the spiritual life of power, will end up in heaven with a naked resurrection body – no rewards, no honors, no decorations, and no responsibilities.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Remunerative justice manifests itself in the distribution of rewards to both men and angels. *Retributive* justice relates to the infliction of penalties, an expression of divine wrath. (L. Berkhof) He will judge men neither according to their professions nor their relations, but according to their works. The apostle is not here teaching the method of justification, but is laying down those general principles of justice, according to which, irrespective of the Gospel, all men are to be judged. (C. Hodge) A bit later (3:18) Paul affirms that a person "is justified by faith apart from observing the law." But in the immediate context Paul was not teaching how we are made right with God, but how God judges the reality of our faith. (R. Mounce)

It is well to consider the basis on which the judgment of mankind will proceed. It is not all one-sided. God will not only sentence the evil, but reward the good – *if such there be*. That there are none to claim His rewards does not alter the great fact which is here laid down as the just basis of God's dealings with mankind. *He will be paying each one according to his acts*. No one can say this is not just and right. He is just as ready to reward the good as to punish the bad. (A.E. Knoch) There is no real antithesis between faith and works. Justification is a past act, resulting in a present state; it belongs properly to the beginning, not to the end, of the Christian's career. (Sanday & Headlam)

There is nothing obscure about Romans 2:6-7 at all. It says that those who persevere in doing good will obtain eternal life. However, because that seems to involve a contradiction with the doctrine of justification by faith alone, "theological exegesis" (Reformed preunderstandings) is brought in by some to "save the day." However, the phrase "eternal life" occurs 42-times in the NT, and in 11 of those 42 usages (26%), eternal life is presented to the believer as something to be earned or worked for! Just as there are two kinds of inheritance, two dimensions to salvation, there seem to be two

sides to eternal life. In this verse, it is a dynamic relationship with Christ Himself, not a mere gift of regeneration. (J. Dillow)

The unjustified can never earn honor, glory and peace, but the justified can if he shows "persistence in doing good". (J. Dillow) In some parts of the Bible the inheritance of the saints is set forth as the recompense of good works, while there are others in which it is represented as the free gift of grace, a thing that faith alone can receive. While the work of the Savior accounts for the gift of eternal life as enjoyed in common by all the saints, it leaves unexplained those diversities by which their life in heaven is characterized. Therefore, a free gift may be seen to be in perfect harmony with the idea of recompense. Some will stand higher than others in the joy of heaven because of the larger capacity for spiritual enjoyment to which they have attained in their course on earth. (J.S. Exell)

Pauline doctrine deals with the conditions of entering on the Christian life – that life rooted and grounded on faith alone. But in the life that follows, “works” as the spontaneous expression of the life of faith ... are no less an integral part of the life that will one day be judged by God – only they are no longer simply the result of conformity to an external code. (R. Mounce) While the fact of judgment is determined by what we are, i.e., our nature - the degree of punishment is determined on the basis of true knowledge we have received and the quality of life that we live. (R. Morey)

Rom. 2:6 Who (Nom. Appos.) will render judgment (ἀποδίδωμι, FAI3S, Predictive; reimburse a person for doing something) to each person (Dat. Disadv.; reference to self-righteous unbeliever) according to his (Poss. Gen.) works (Adv. Acc., production, deeds).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:6** ὃς ἀποδώσει ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.

^{VUL} **Romans 2:6** qui reddet unicuique secundum opera eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:7** On the one hand, to those [believers with positive volition towards Bible doctrine] who on the basis of spiritual fortitude [perseverance] characterized by good of intrinsic value production [meets divine standards] are continually striving for glory [sharing His attributes] and honor [obtaining rewards] and incorruptibility [resurrection body]: a spiritually rich [eternal in quality] life;

^{KW} **Rom. 2:7** To those on the one hand who by steadfastness of a good work seek glory and honor and incorruptibility, life eternal;

^{KJV} **Romans 2:7** To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the mature believer who is growing in grace and knowledge against the unbeliever who has rejected the gospel and is living a horribly sinful life. In this verse, he addresses those believers who have exhibited consistent positive volition towards Bible doctrine. These are winner believers, those who are accumulating excellent, qualitative spiritual production because they are continually in fellowship. They are continually utilizing their divine assets and by their unfailing, daily metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, they are producing works (both internal and external) worthy of future rewards.

This category of believers is continually zealous (Iterative Present tense) to share God's attributes, to obtain rewards and responsibilities in eternity, and to receive their resurrection bodies that do not possess the contamination of sin. How do we "share" God's attributes? By residing in His sphere of power, i.e., being filled with the Spirit and walking in the Spirit. These believers have this glory, honor and incorruptibility before their faces every day, as the supreme goal or reason for their existence on earth. Regardless of job, career, marital status, education level, financial means, or political affiliation, their *personal sense of destiny* is to grow in grace and knowledge in the Lord Jesus Christ. They cannot wait to have a perfect relationship with God.

These believers receive a two-fold blessing: they will receive a spiritually rich life on earth due to their adherence to divine protocol, and they will receive a spiritually rich life in eternity with an abundance of rewards and responsibilities. Again, this category of believers refers to winners, not losers. Apostate and reversionist believers are not included in this category of blessing. Winner believers are continually in fellowship; they keep a short account of their sins, acknowledging them to the Lord asap so they may re-enter the sphere of God's enabling power. Believers who ignore their personal sins, not acknowledging them to the Lord until He disciplines them severely enough to get their attention, will not have a spiritually rich life on earth or in eternity.

At the Evaluation (Judgment) Seat of Christ, every believer will be evaluated on how much time they "clocked" or "logged" in the sphere of God's love and power. In other words: How much time did you spend in fellowship with the Lord while on earth? How much time were you filled with the Spirit and walking in the Spirit? If you spent the majority of your day in unconfessed sin, the amount of time you spent "fellowshipping" with the Trinity was minimal and will receive little if any rewards, both in time and eternity. If you spent the majority of your day in fellowship with the Lord, i.e., sins confessed - the amount of rewards you will receive, both in time and eternity, will be substantial.

So far, I've only covered the quantitative time a believer has "logged in" with the Lord. There's also a qualitative aspect: What do you know about the Lord? "Putting on the mind of Christ" means you are continually saturating yourself in His Word. If you do not know His Word, you do not know Him. If you sing songs, clap your hands, shout praises to Him, and other such activities, but you do not know His Word, you are not "putting on His mind." There is nothing wrong with these activities, but they do not increase your growth in grace and knowledge, which is your ultimate personal destiny in life! Study the Word of God, learn doctrine from a qualified

pastor or teacher, grow in grace and knowledge, and then sing songs, clap your hands, and shout praises to His Name. ☺

There's a second type of qualitative aspect to a believer's walk with the Lord. As a believer metabolizes the entire realm of Bible doctrine, growing in grace and knowledge, eventually he or she will discover they have one or more spiritual gifts. The cultivation and exercise of spiritual gifts also receives rewards in time and eternity. Please heed this warning: Before you go out into the streets to save the world, make sure you do not have *the cart before the horse*. First, make sure you have acknowledged sins and are in fellowship; second, make sure you have a firm grasp on at least the basics of systematic theology; then proceed with the cultivation and exercise of your spiritual gift(s).

You are not doing God a favor by living in unconfessed sin, ignoring the greater part of His Word, and standing on the streetcorner wailing at unbelievers like a braying donkey. One Balaam's ass is enough! If this sounds like a description of your behavior, you have a serious problem that needs to be taken care of by personal prayer and study under a qualified instructor. God is sovereign. He is in control of all things, events, persons and places. You have plenty of time to make sure you are in fellowship and know something about the Lord other than John 3:16. The Lord will take care of the world's unbelieving sinners long enough for you to "get your spiritual act together."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses a *merismos*, an enumeration of the particulars of the two great classes of deeds. (E.W. Bullinger) Verses 7 & 10 are addressed to believers; verses 8 & 9 are addressed to unbelievers. (A. Murray) There are several *ellipses* in verses 7-10 which may be translated with a colon, or by supplying the resultant verbs. (E.W. Bullinger) Eternal life in this verse is an abundant quality of life beyond regeneration which is the possession of those who "persevere in doing good," a vibrant experience with Christ. (J. Dillow) How do you get off the wrong path and onto a right one? First, recognize that you are on the wrong path. Second, admit that the path itself will not change. Third, turn around and face the opposite direction. Fourth, get on with obeying His commands. (J. Boice)

There are two sides to eternal life. We must remember that eternal life in the Bible is not a static entity, a mere gift of regeneration that does not continue to grow and blossom. No, it is a dynamic relationship with Christ Himself. But growth is not automatic; it is conditioned upon our responses. Only by the exercise of spiritual disciplines ... does our intimacy with Christ increase. Possessing eternal life is one thing, but "taking hold" of it is another. The former is static; the latter is dynamic. The former depends upon God; the latter depends upon us. The former comes from "faith alone"; "taking hold" requires faith plus obedience. (J. Dillow)

Justification is by the blood (spiritual death) and is appropriated by belief in Jesus Christ. Salvation is by His resurrection and is appropriated by many daily decisions *to metabolize Bible doctrine*. A lot of people are going to go to heaven without being saved;

they believe in Jesus Christ and are justified, but they never move forward with God's *protocol* plan on earth, meaning they are not saved. They "never have heaven to go to heaven in". (K. Lamb - paraphrased) "Glory" is frequently used to describe the believer's expectation and points to the transformation that will be effected when believers will be conformed to the image of God's Son and reflect the glory of God. "Honor" focuses on the approbation God will accord to them. "Incorruption" refers to the resurrection hope of the people of God. (J. Murray)

Eternal life is a quality of life in relationship with God that is conditioned upon obedience. Eternal life is no static entity but a relationship with God. Some Christians have a more intimate relationship with their Lord than others. They have a richer experience of eternal life. Jesus Himself said, "I came to give life more abundantly". It is extremely important to note that in every place where eternal life is presented as *something which can be obtained* by works, it is contextually **always** described as a future acquisition. Conversely, whenever eternal life is described as *something in the present*, it is obtained by faith alone. When eternal life is presented as a **reward**, it is something to be acquired in the **future**; when it is presented as a **gift**, it is to be acquired in the **present**. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 2:7 On the one hand (μέν used as an Concessive clause), to those (Dat. Adv.; believers with positive volition towards Bible doctrine) who on the basis of spiritual fortitude (Adv. Acc.; perseverance, discipline) characterized by good of intrinsic value (Descr. Gen.; divine) production (Attrib. Gen.; work, reference to their unfailing daily metabolization of Bible doctrine) are continually striving for (ζητέω, PAPtc.DPM, Iterative, Substantival, Articular; searching, seeking) glory (perfect relationship with God, sharing His attributes) and honor (rewards and responsibility in eternity) and incorruptibility (Acc. Triple Dir. Obj.; resurrection body without the ability to commit sin): a spiritually rich (Compl. Acc.; eternal in quality) life (Acc. Dir. Obj.);

^{WHO} **Romans 2:7** τοῖς μὲν καθ' ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσιν ζῶνι αἰώνιου

^{VUL} **Romans 2:7** his quidem qui secundum patientiam boni operis gloriam et honorem et incorruptionem quaerentibus vitam aeternam

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:8** **On the other hand, to those [extremely sinful unbelievers] who out of contentiousness [virulent antagonism] are both disobedient to the truth [reject the gospel] and are constantly being misled by unrighteousness [slaves to Satan's cosmic system]: anger [divine judgment in time] and indignation [divine judgment in eternity].**

κω **Rom. 2:8** But to those on the other hand who out of a factious spirit are both also non-persuadable with respect to the truth and persuadable with respect to unrighteousness, wrath and anger.

KJV **Romans 2:8** But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now comments on the second half of the contrast, those who are disobedient to the truth (Descriptive Present tense) of the gospel. They have heard the gospel, perhaps many times, but have rejected it every time. Not only have they rejected it, but they have become virulently opposed to both the message and the deliverer of the message. They have come to oppose the gospel by creating strife in every quarter possible. Some of them even enter pulpits, preaching a false gospel, such as human righteousness or the brotherhood of man, a New World Order with socialism and the welfare state as the highest goal, the supremacy of the United Nations over patriotism and nationalism, worship of the environment instead of the Creator, and other related tenets of liberalism today. In the Latin, they exchange *verity* (truth) for *iniquity* (public lies).

Each time the unbeliever rejects the gospel or any other part of Bible doctrine, scar tissue of the soul is formed on his/her spiritual arteries. Eventually, the scar tissue becomes so bad that no amount of truth, even if presented lucidly and intelligently, is able to penetrate their thought processes. They are constantly misled (Iterative Present tense) by all forms of unrighteousness, in both thoughts and deeds. Their negative volition to the truth turns into positive volition toward every category of falsehood and panacea. Satanic concepts and activities are sucked into the mental vacuum created by the absence of Bible doctrine. What is the end result of this continual mental corruption? They will receive divine judgment in time (anger) and divine judgment in eternity (indignation) for opposing Divine truth in thought, word, and deed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Rebels against the truth” means revolt and open war against what is true and right concerning God ... revolting against what is good, and becoming slaves to what is evil. (R. Haldane) It is generally agreed that “orge” denotes God’s fixed attitude of abhorrence of sin, while “thymos” indicates the outflow of that attitude in judgment on the stubborn, rebellious sinner. (R. Earle)

Rom. 2:8 On the other hand (δέ), to those (Dat. Ind. Obj.; unbelievers) who out of contentiousness (Partitive Abl.; strife, quarrelers, inordinate ambition, power lust; preachers of human righteousness and brotherhood, liberals and other proponents of the New World Order) are both disobedient (ἀπειθέω, PAPtc.DPM, Descriptive, Substantival, Articular; rebellious) to the truth (Dat. Ref.; negative volition towards the Gospel) and (connective conj.) are constantly being misled (πείθω, PMPTc.DPM, Iterative & Gnostic, Substantival) by unrighteousness (Dat. Disadv.;

positive volition towards the cosmic system as the vacuum opens up and sucks in evil): **anger** (Acc. Double Dir. Obj. or Pred. Nom.; irritation; anthropopathism for divine judgment *in time*) **and indignation** (anthropopathism for divine judgment *in eternity*).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:8** τοῖς δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας καὶ ἀπειθοῦσιν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πειθομένοις δὲ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ ὀργὴ καὶ θυμὸς

^{VUL} **Romans 2:8** his autem qui ex contentione et qui non adquiescunt veritati credunt autem iniquitati ira et indignatio

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:9** **There is personal stress [pressure and anguish from the inside] and historical trouble [difficulties and calamities from the outside] for every soul of mankind [primarily unbelievers] who continues to produce evil [rotten fruit from Satan’s cosmic system], first to the Jew [race is not an issue] and then the Greek [culture is not an issue].**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:9** Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man who works out to a finish the evil, both upon the soul of a Jew first and also upon the soul of a Gentile,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:9** Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every soul of mankind, primarily referring to unbelievers in this verse, will receive personal stress and historical trouble. Personal stress is pressure and anguish attacking their soul from the inside. Historical trouble is difficulties and calamities attacking the soul from the outside. The use of the word “soul” emphasizes that this stress and trouble primarily attacks the soul and not the body. In other words, the corruption starts on the inside (soul) and later spreads to the outside (body). So a person might look attractive on the outside, but their soul may be totally disfigured on the inside. Beware of nice packaging! Because the Jews possessed the law of Moses, they are dealt with first by God’s judgment: “To whom much is given, much is required.”

The stress and trouble mentioned here is not the normal, everyday variety we all go through. This is a special dose of discipline levied by the Lord upon those who make it a habit to produce evil (Iterative Present tense). Evil has many forms, some blatant and some subtle. For example: murder is a blatant form, liberalism is a subtle form. They are both rotten fruit from Satan’s cosmic system, but one meets with universal condemnation, while the other becomes more-or-less acceptable when society degenerates. The added emphasis on Jew and Greek means neither race nor culture is an issue; stress and trouble comes to extremely sinful unbelievers in all spheres of life, without exception. The stress and trouble referred to here is primarily related to extremely sinful unbelievers, but it can also be applied to apostate or reversionistic believers.

If you are an apostate or reversionistic believer, you may receive the same stress and trouble that the extremely sinful unbeliever receives. If this occurs, you, as a believer, become an evangelist for Satan. You become a witness *in favor of evil* against the Lord during Satan's appeal trial. You are on the wrong side of the angelic conflict. "The battle between the Lord and Satan in the soul of man cannot be over the possession of the soul. The battle is within the soul of the *redeemed one* as to whether he will honor and glorify God or whether he will live to his own ends." (D.G. Barnhouse) Therefore, the angelic conflict is not over *positional* truth, but over *experiential* truth only. Your justification has already been sealed in heaven from eternity past, but your walk on earth and its resultant rewards in eternity are not sealed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What a horrible thought, that a man should be forever in the solitude of his own thoughts, with all his desires but with no fulfillment, with all his memories of wasted possibilities, and with the knowledge that none of his fleeting joys could have brought any lasting satisfaction. To describe eternal punishment as being absolutely alone forever would be about the worst thing that could be said about it. (D.G. Barnhouse) The Jew shall not only be punished as certainly as others, but more severely, because he has been more highly favored. The Jew first is equivalent to the Jew especially. (C. Hodge)

The unbelieving Jew precedes the Gentile into God's judgment. (J. Piper) Some writers think that when Paul used the two words together, "thlipsis" refers to outward affliction and "stenochoria" to inner stress. (R. Mounce) I am one of those people – the first represents the outer pressures of life on the soul, the latter represents the soul's collapse under stress when unable to apply doctrine consistently. (LWB) "Thlipsis" suggests the heavy pressures of life that sometimes become almost unbearable. One feels as if he is being trodden down until he cannot take it any longer. (R. Earle)

When God's forgiveness has become our sure possession, we are still faced with the duty of expressing in conduct of an appropriate kind the new relationship to which it leads. Consequently, it is possible to set faith and works in opposition to each other only if we overlook the necessary stages which mark the development of the spiritual life. Possibly the complementary character of the two terms becomes more apparent if we insist that justification is by faith, but that judgment is according to works. The doctrine of justification deals with the initial stage; it sets forth the conditions on which the Christian finds peace with God and enters upon the new life made possible by Jesus Christ. In the next stage, when the possibilities before us are translated into terms of actual experience, good works become the concrete expression of that new life which faith has made possible. (J. Knox)

Rom. 2:9 There is (ellipsis, verb supplied; "will be") personal stress (Pred. Nom.; pressure and anguish attacking the soul from the *inside*) and (connective conj.) historical trouble (Pred. Nom.; angst, difficulties and calamities attacking the soul from the *outside*) for every (Acc. Spec.)

soul (Acc. Dir. Obj.; expresses the idea that the soul and not the body is to suffer the penalty) of mankind (Adv. Gen. Ref.; primarily addressed to the unbeliever) who continues to produce (κατεργάζομαι, PMPTc.GSM, Iterative, Substantival, Deponent; commits, accomplishes) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; rotten fruit from the cosmic system), first (Acc. Degree; especially) to the Jew (Gen. Disadv.; race is not an issue) and (continuative conj.) then (Corresponding enclitic particle) the Greek (Gen. Disadv.; culture is not an issue);

^{WHO} **Romans 2:9** θλιψις καὶ στενοχωρία ἐπὶ πάσαν ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου τοῦ κατεργαζομένου τὸ κακόν Ἰουδαίου τε πρώτον καὶ Ἕλληνας·

^{VUL} **Romans 2:9** tribulatio et angustia in omnem animam hominis operantis malum Iudaei primum et Graeci

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:10** But there is glory and honor and prosperity for each one [positive believers] who continues to produce good [according to divine norms and standards], first to the Jew and then to the Greek.

^{KW} **Rom. 2:10** But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works out to a finish that which is good, both to a Jew first and also to a Gentile.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:10** But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The believer who continues to produce good works (Iterative Present tense) by adhering to divine protocol, will receive glory, honor and prosperity – both in time and eternity. The believer who is producing divine good is the one who is continually in fellowship with the Lord and is consistently positive towards the Word of God. *Glory*, as in verse 7, is the desire to share the attributes of God; *honor* is the desire to receive rewards and responsibilities in time and eternity; *prosperity* is blessing in all categories of life (not restricted to financial status).

The scope of blessing is the same as the scope of judgment: race and culture is not an issue. But since the Jew was given the law and the promises, rewards are distributed to him first in season. Am I talking out of both sides of my mouth, by saying race and culture is not an issue and then saying Jews get special (first, primary in importance) consideration? I think both statements are true, so maybe I am! Fact: Rewards and judgment are not dispensed on the basis of race or culture. Fact: The Jew is rewarded or judged first because they were the OT chosen people, the wife of Yahweh, the recipients of the law, covenants, promises, etc. As Paul will cover in greater detail, there are some benefits in being Jewish, IF you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Over the whole field of life we are faced with the fact that we are fashioning the kind of destiny we shall finally receive. Paul, by returning to the fact that judgment works both ways (for glory and honor and peace as well as for fury and wrath, tribulation and distress), redresses a balance which Christians have subsequently often allowed to be disturbed. Each man will be judged by what he actually *knows*. The circumstances by which we have been surrounded and the opportunities we have enjoyed will be taken into account. (J. Knox)

Rom. 2:10 but (contrast conj.) there is (ellipsis, verb supplied; "will be") glory (Pred. Nom.) and (connective conj.) honor (Pred. Nom.) and (connective conj.) prosperity (Pred. Nom.) for each one (Dat. Ind. Obj.; believers with positive volition towards doctrine) who continues to produce (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.DSM, Iterative, Substantival, Articular, Deponent) good (Acc. Dir. Obj.; divine production), first (Acc. Degree; especially) to the Jew (Dat. Adv.) and (connective conj.) then (Corresponding enclitic particle) to the Greek (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:10** δόξα δὲ καὶ τιμὴ καὶ εἰρήνη παντὶ τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι·

^{VUL} **Romans 2:10** gloria autem et honor et pax omni operanti bonum Iudaeo primum et Graeco

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:11** For there is no partiality [preferential treatment] with God [He never makes exceptions for anyone].

^{KW} **Rom. 2:11** For there is not partiality in the presence of God.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:11** For there is no respect of persons with God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There is (Gnomic Present tense) no partiality with God. What does that mean? It means He never gives preferential treatment to anyone. He does not pick favorites and give them benefits over and above what He gives to others. There will never be a time when God makes exceptions for anyone. So racial, cultural, financial, educational and other categories of “membership” are all treated the same by divine justice. All persons, good or bad, are judged by the same standards. This verse has absolutely NOTHING to do with election and predestination; it is about evaluation and judgment.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God deals with all mankind with the same standards of justice. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The phrase “God is no respecter of persons” never refers to how He places people in His plan. Whenever you hear somebody take this out of context, they are almost always fighting against the sovereignty of God. In its seven uses in Scripture, two are used ‘man to man’

and five are ‘God to man’, but none of them have anything to do with justification. (K. Lamb) God shows no favoritism. His election of the Jews and the undoubted advantage which they possess, do not mean that they, or any other self-righteous, self-appointed judges of mankind, enjoy an exclusive right to His favor. (C.K. Barrett) The equity of distributive justice is the dispensing of frowns and favours with respect to deserts and without respect to persons: such is the righteous judgment of God. (M. Henry)

Whatever advantages certain races of mankind seem undoubtedly to have above others in this world, all men are described as standing on an exactly equal footing at the bar of eternal equity. (J. Barmby) The declaration that God has no respect of persons is frequently quoted as militating against the doctrine of election, but it has no bearing on the subject. It relates to men’s character, and God’s judgment according to character. Every man will be judged according to his works. This, however, does not say that God may not choose some eternally to life, and give them faith, and create them unto good works. (R. Haldane)

The impartiality of God is an essential feature of Jewish as well as Pauline theology, and on the other hand it was never seen to contradict the election of Israel. The impartiality of God is never a description of His election. In fact, the decisive difference between God’s impartiality in judgment and His freedom in election can be clearly seen by contrasting Romans 2:6-11 and 9:11-13; He judges each man according to a lifetime of good or evil works (2:6); He elects “before they have done anything good or evil” (9:11). Neither has this verse anything to do with any 20th century egalitarian slogan that ends up forcing God to bless equal percentages of every class and race with identical blessings. (J. Piper)

Rom. 2:11 **For** (illative post-positive conjunction) **there is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) **no** (neg. adv.; never) **partiality** (Pred. Nom.; favoritism, respect, bias, preferential treatment, positive inclination of one person over another) **with God** (Instr. Manner; there will never be a time when God makes exceptions for anyone).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:11** οὐ γάρ ἐστιν προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:11** non est enim personarum acceptio apud Deum

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:12** **For as many as sin without the law [Gentiles], shall also perish without the law; and as many as sin under the law [Jews only], shall be judged by the law.**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:12** For as many as without law sinned, without law shall also perish. And as many as in the sphere of law sinned, through law shall be condemned.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:12** For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul addresses both Gentiles and Jews, those without the law and those with the law, in a contrast and comparison. Arrogant self-righteousness will be crushed by the justice of God, whether the law is involved or not, whether a person is a Jew or Gentile. Important concept: The law was not given to Gentiles, it was given to the nation Israel only. Therefore, Gentiles who sin (Constative Aorist tense) without the law, will perish (Gnomic Present tense) without the law. And Jews who sin (Constative Aorist tense) under the law, will be judged (Predictive Future tense) by the law. The change in verdict from “perish” (Gentiles) to “judged” (Jews) is merely an accommodation to whether the law is present or not.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses a series of *antanaclasis*, or word clashes, concerning the law. (E.W. Bullinger) There is no Scriptural evidence on which we can base the hope that adult Gentiles, or even Gentile children that have not yet come to years of discretion, will be saved. (L. Berkhof) Even the Gentiles, though they do not know that clear manifestation of God's law which was found in the Old Testament, have God's law written upon their hearts [right lobe of the soul] and are without excuse when they disobey. They are far indeed from being emancipated from the duty of obedience to God's commands. (J.G. Machen)

The trenchant argument of Romans 2 is that the law serves to condemn men, not to give them grounds for confidence. So strongly does Paul hold to this that he can even say 'the power of sin is the law' in I Cor. 15:56. (L. Morris) Those Jews who distort the law into legalism are judged on the same basis as the Gentiles who do not have the law. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Sin unchecked leads to perdition one way or another, but Gentiles will not be condemned for failure to conform to a law-code which was not accessible to them. The principle is laid down that men and women are judged by the light that is available to them, not by the light that is not available. (F.F. Bruce) The essential difference between Jew and Gentile did not constitute ground for favorable treatment on one side or the other. (C.K. Barrett)

The change from *perish* to *judge* is suggested *by the law*. The Jews alone will be, strictly speaking, subjected to a *detailed inquiry* such as arises from applying articles of a code. (Godet) Both classes of men shall be *condemned*, in both the result will be *perishing*, but the judgment *by the law* is confined to those who have the law. (Alford) Although the Jew has had great advantages, he shall be justly judged for his use of them, not treated as a favorite of Heaven; the Jews are regarded first in responsibility. (Alford)

Those who sin without a written revelation - although they are to be judged fairly, and are to be treated less severely than those who sin without a written revelation - are still to perish. (C. Hodge) The law is the Mosaic Law which included not only the Ten Commandments, but the whole body of decrees and ordinances in the Pentateuch, which, according to rabbinic count, totaled 613 commandments - 365 negative, 248 positive. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 2:12 **For** (explanatory conj.) **as many as** (Subj. Nom.) **sin** (ἁμαρτάνω, AAI3P, Constative) **without the law** (Gen. Atten. Circum.; reference to Gentiles), **shall also** (adjunctive) **perish** (ἀπόλλυμι, FMI3P, Gnostic) **without the law** (Gen. Atten. Circum.); **and** (connective conj.) **as many as** (Subj. Nom.) **sin** (ἁμαρτάνω, AAI3P, Constative) **under the law** (Loc. Sphere; reference to Jews only), **shall be judged** (κρίνω, FPI3P, Predictive) **by the law** (Abl. Means; arrogant self-righteousness will be crushed).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:12** ὅσοι γὰρ ἀνόμως ἥμαρτον ἀνόμως καὶ ἀπολοῦνται καὶ ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ ἥμαρτον διὰ νόμου κριθήσονται·

^{VUL} **Romans 2:12** quicumque enim sine lege peccaverunt sine lege et peribunt et quicumque in lege peccaverunt per legem iudicabuntur

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:13** **For those hearers of the law [students who never apply what they learn] are not just before God; however, those doers of the law [who continually apply what they learn] will be declared righteous.**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:13** For not those who are instructed in the law are righteous in the presence of God but those who are doers of the law shall be justified.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:13** (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Those who hear the law but who never apply what they are learning are not just before God. But those who hear the law and continually apply what they are learning (doers) will be made righteous (Predictive Future tense). “Those who hear the law” is a reference to Jewish students, those who study the law regularly in the Synagogue, but who do not apply or live what they are studying. Many of those who knew the letter of the law by heart were hard-core, self-righteous types, considered religious snobs by many. Their knowledge of the law was virtually useless before God.

“Those who do the law” is a reference to those who may or may not know the law, but they nevertheless live according to its mandates and attain a certain level of spiritual accomplishment. These persons will be declared righteous (Predictive Future tense) by God. This does not mean they believed in Christ and were justified. Observing, doing, adhering to the law NEVER justified any person. “Being declared righteous” refers to their behavior having God’s approval – nothing more. We will get to all the positional doctrines related to justification and salvation soon enough, but not in this verse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Not the usual word which refers to the act of hearing, but one used of pupils who hear, constant hearers who are educated in the law. (K. Wuest) Like the Jews, who heard it regularly in the Synagogues - those whose business is hearing. (Vincent) "He whose works exceed his wisdom, his wisdom endures; but he whose wisdom exceeds his works, his wisdom does not endure." (Aboth) The law was read in the synagogue, but there was no actual virtue in listening. (A.T. Robertson)

What the law commands is good; if only men would not merely listen to it but do it, they would be righteous. The present passage refers only to the sentence, whether of condemnation or acquittal, pronounced at the last judgment; that is, it does not deal with the specifically Christian conception of justification which rests upon the anticipation of the eschatological righteousness of God in the saving event of Jesus Christ. (C.K. Barrett) It is quite unnecessary to find in this verse any doctrine of justification by works in conflict with the teaching of this epistle in later chapters. This is the first occasion that the word "justify" is used in this epistle. It is not used here with reference to the justification which is the grand theme of the epistle. (J. Murray)

Both categories of people fall behind God's just standard and neither survive by their own self-righteousness. Verses 13-15 are an explanatory parenthetical. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This is to explain to the Jew the fact, that not his mere hearing of the law read in the synagogue (his being by birth and privilege a Jew) will justify him before God, but (still keeping to general principles and not touching as yet on the impossibility of being thus justified) the doing of the law. (K. Wuest) Law made judgment possible, and supplies a means by which man's failure and destruction can be analysed. The law is not a talisman calculated to preserve those who possess it. It is an instrument of judgment, and sin is not less sin, but more, when it is wrought within the sphere of the law. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 2:13 **For** (explanatory conj.) **those** (Subj. Nom.) **hearers** (Pred. Nom.; students who never apply what they are learning, hard-core self-righteous type, functional religious snobs) **of the law** (Obj. Gen.) **are** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **not** (neg. adv.) **just** (Nom. Appos.) **before God** (Dat. Agency); **however** (contrast), **those** (Subj. Nom.) **doers** (Pred. Nom.; the hard-core self-righteous type, the functional religious snob) **of the law** (Obj. Gen.) **will be made righteous** (δικαιόω, FPI3P, Predictive).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:13** οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ [τῶ] θεῶ ἀλλ οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιοθήσονται

^{VUL} **Romans 2:13** non enim auditores legis iusti sunt apud Deum sed factores legis iustificabuntur

LWB Rom. 2:14 For every time that Gentiles, who do not have the law, instinctively practice doing those things characterized by the law, those ones not having the law, are a law unto themselves,

^{KW} **Rom. 2:14** For whenever Gentiles, who do not have law, do habitually by nature the things of the law, these not having law, are a law to themselves,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:14** For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every time the Gentiles who do not have (Pictorial Present tense) the law practice doing (Iterative Present tense) the things contained in the law by instinct, they are (Perfective Present tense) a law unto themselves. Gentiles are able to live and apply the law without knowing anything about it, by an inner disposition or natural order. This does not mean they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they know right from wrong innately and structure their behavior towards righteousness. By doing the things required by the law, they actually create their own version of the law (internally) to live by.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Human nature, or instinct, is not corrupt. It is in line with God's law and conscience. The *heart* of humanity is corrupt. By following their nature it was quite possible for men to do by instinct what was later inscribed in the written code. (A.E. Knoch) The law was not given to the Gentiles. Lev. 26:46 - It was between God and the children of Israel. (C. Ryrie) This covenant was made with Israel, the physical seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and with them alone. (D. Pentecost) Everything right about the Jews on the outside was made wrong because they did not have a heart after God. By the same principle, all that was wrong about the Gentiles was made right because they had a heart after God. The one thing God is after in His people is for them to hunger and thirst after Him. (K. Lamb)

Paul uses an *epanodos*, or repetition of the same words in an inverse order, but with the same sense. (E.W. Bullinger) The Scripture clearly teaches that the Mosaic covenant of the law was made with the nation Israel only. Romans 2:14 definitely states that the law was not given to the Gentiles. Romans 6:14 and Galatians 3:24-25 show that the Christian is not under the law. Second Corinthians 3:7-11 states that the ten commandments specifically are done away. There can be no question as to whom pertains the law: it is for Israel alone. (C. Ryrie)

The Abrahamic covenant, the Palestinian covenant, the Mosaic Law, the Davidic covenant, and the New Covenant to Israel are accurately interpreted and most clearly understood in terms of Israel as a nation. They did not and never will belong to Gentiles living throughout the world, although Israel was founded to benefit all nations of the earth. Nor did God's covenants with Israel anticipate the Church, which transcends ethnic distinctions and national boundaries and which in OT times remained an undisclosed mystery. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) What the law requires is ultimately neither ceremonial nor

moral conformity, but believing obedience, or obedient faith. This is the only tolerable basis of relationship between man and his Creator. When man recognizes and accepts this relationship he may be said to do what the law requires “by nature.” (C.K. Barrett)

A Gentile, though knowing nothing of the ten commandments, on principle refrains from stealing, his conscientious honesty will have its own reward as much as that of the Jew who refrains in obedience to the revealed commandment. The very possibility of their doing this is evidence of an innate moral sense in the human heart, which, however it may often be obscured or perverted, remains as a characteristic of humanity, and is more or less operative in all communities. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 2:14 For (explanatory conj.; Paul's first refutation) every time that (temporal particle; whenever) the Gentiles (Subj. Nom.), who do not have (ἔχω, PAPtc.NPN, Pictorial, Substantival, Articular) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.), instinctively (Instr. Manner; by their disposition, following the natural order) practice doing (ποιέω, PASubj.3P, Iterative, Temporal Clause) those things (Acc. Dir. Obj.) characterized by the law (Adj. Gen.), those ones (Subj. Nom.; Gentiles) not (neg. adv.) having (ἔχω, PAPtc.NPM, Descriptive, Predicative) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.), are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Perfective) a law (Pred. Nom.) unto themselves (Dat. Disadv.; keeping the law does not mean you are adjusting to the justice of God),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:14** ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν οὗτοι νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος·

^{VUL} **Romans 2:14** cum enim gentes quae legem non habent naturaliter quae legis sunt faciunt eiusmodi legem non habentes ipsi sibi sunt lex

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:15** **The very ones [Gentiles] who continually demonstrate that the accomplishment characterized by the law is written upon their hearts [mentality], their conscience [norms & standards] bearing witness to the testimony [confirming the law without having the law]; in fact, their thoughts [reasonings] alternately accuse [prosecute] and excuse [defend] one another,**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:15** They being such that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing joint-witness and their reasonings in the meanwhile accusing or also excusing one another,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:15** Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Gentiles who are a law unto themselves, continually demonstrate (Iterative Present tense) that the accomplishment characterized by the law is written upon the mentality of their heart, the right lobe of the soul. They don't possess the precepts of the law, but the principles of the law exist within their thinking. The norms and standards associated with their "inner law" are located in their conscience, which bears witness (Pictorial Present tense) to the testimony of the law. "Bears witness" is the first of several legal terms used by Paul in Romans.

In addition to bearing witness to the principles of the law, their reasonings (thoughts) alternate between accusing and excusing (Pictorial Present tense) one another. "Accusing" refers to the prosecuting attorney, and "excusing" refers to the defense attorney. Because the principles of the law are contained in their conscience, they understand the difference between right and wrong. Knowing the difference between right and wrong means they are able to prosecute their bad thoughts and defend their good thoughts, without the assistance of the written law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God expressed His absolute holiness to man in legal terms long before the Mosaic Law existed, and He continues to provide ethical norms and spiritual instructions now that the Law has ceased to govern. Indeed, before, during, and after the time in which the Mosaic Law was in effect in Israel, other expressions of divine law functioned among Gentiles to whom the Mosaic Law never applied. In the Church Age the operative divine law is not the Mosaic Law but "the law of Christ." This also is called "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Christ fulfilled and abrogated the Mosaic Law, so it is not included in the post-salvation plan of God for the Church Age. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

All men have this faculty of passing judgment on their actions. It can be over-scrupulous or "seared" by abuse. It acts according to the light it has. (A.T. Robertson) Sin is not imputed where there is no law, and only Israel had the law. So Gentiles were treated by God more leniently than Jews. (K. Lamb) Here is triple proof that the Gentiles, who are regarded as not having the law, are a law unto themselves: (1) their conduct, (2) their conscience, and (3) their thoughts. In their mutual intercourse with each other, they are often bringing accusations or defending themselves of moral functions which imply the recognition of a law. (K. Wuest)

Liberalism *accuses* conservatism on every occasion it can. Liberalism sets up its own self-righteous standards in place of God's standards and then accumulates political power to arrogantly enforce these standards on others. They steal your money by taxation, steal your freedom by outlawing guns and prayer, destroy capitalism by trying to make everybody equal through the welfare state, and shut down free enterprise by environmental legislation and civil rights activity. Then when the balloon goes up, they *excuse* themselves from all responsibility for the tyranny and economic disasters they have created. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

No man could accuse and condemn another, if there were not some standard of right and wrong, and no man could defend an action without a similar standard. To these ideas of

right and wrong are naturally joined the idea of God, Who is the sovereign Judge of the world, and that of rewards and punishment, which will follow either good or bad actions. (R. Haldane) The word “heart” is not to be taken for the seat of the affections, but only for the understanding, as it is found in Deut. 29:4 and Luke 24:25. (J. Calvin) Moral people may possess a heightened conscience and live in light of it, but God demands righteousness, not just morality. Since no one innately possesses such righteousness, God deals with the moral and the immoral in the same way. Both fall short of God’s glory. While moralists may be better citizens, they are not better candidates for heaven. The human need for righteousness permeates both blatant sinners and moralists. (W. Kroll)

Man was created with a sensitivity towards God called ‘conscience’. But the further we get away from the Fall, the more corrupt his conscience gets, and his sensitivity becomes insensitivity. But that moral nature of God is still written on his heart. Fallen man is still made in the image of God, but this moral nature or conscience is not sufficient to bring him to God. So all this ‘getting to know the inner self’ will not cut it. When the Spirit speaks to the soul and the soul agrees with Him, that is a pure conscience. When the soul ignores the Spirit, it is a grieved conscience. The moral nature of God is written on the heart (spirit of man) and can deteriorate through neglect of renewal day-by-day. Daily renewal (Bible study) scrapes the callouses from the heart [right lobe of the soul] and the conscience. Without it, a conscience becomes seared and has no interest in Godly things. (K. Lamb)

Rom. 2:15 The very ones (Subj. Nom.; second refutation) who (qualitative relative pronoun indicating a class or category of people) continually demonstrate (ἐνδείκνυμι, PMI3P, Iterative) that the accomplishment (Adv. Acc.) characterized by the law (Descr. Gen.) is written (Adv. Acc.) upon their (Poss. Gen.) hearts (Loc. Sph.; mentality of the right lobe), their (Poss. Gen.) conscience (Gen. Absolute; moral consciousness, norms and standards) bearing witness to the testimony (συμμαρτυρέω, PAPtc.GSM, Pictorial, Circumstantial; confirming the law without having the law); in fact (adjunctive), their thoughts (Gen. Absolute; reasonings, sentiments, calculations) alternately (Improper Adv.) accuse (κατηγορέω, PAPtc.GPM, Pictorial, Modal; prosecute) and (continuative conj.) excuse (ἀπολογέομαι, PMPTc.GPM, Pictorial, Modal, Deponent; speaking in one's own defense) one another (Dat. Ind. Obj.),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:15** οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως καὶ μεταξύ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων

^{VUL} **Romans 2:15** qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis testimonium reddente illis conscientia ipsorum et inter se invicem cogitationum accusantium aut etiam defendentium

LWB **Rom. 2:16** In the day [Great White Throne judgment] when God will judge the secret thoughts [hidden plans] of men according to my gospel [as opposed to the false teachings which were rampant in Rome] through Jesus Christ.

KW **Rom. 2:16** In the day when God judges the hidden things of men according to my gospel through Jesus Christ.

KJV **Romans 2:16** In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God will judge (Futuristic Present tense) the secret thoughts, the hidden plans and conspiracies, and the liberal norms and standards of men at the Great White Throne judgment. They will be judged according to Paul's gospel, not the various false gospels that were being peddled in Rome at that time. Cults and "isms" were already forming, before the church had time to stabilize itself. Paul reiterates that the gospel he received and taught was through Christ Jesus.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"My gospel" means the gospel committed unto me to preach. (J. Barnby) In the divine judgment the hidden things will be revealed and a just sentence will be based on all the facts. Doubtless the motives will be laid bare as well as the acts themselves and thus the quality of each action will receive due recognition. (A.E. Knoch) The message Paul brought to the Church is the basis of the believer's reward at the judgment seat of Christ. Paul, not the other apostles, is the messenger to the Body of Christ and, as its messenger, outlines its judgment and reward. His gospel emphasizes obedience and reward. (K. Lamb) In a day when so much preaching has sold its birthright for a pot of psychological porridge, the need for renewed focus on the essential gospel has never been greater. (R. Mounce)

Rom. 2:16 in the day (Loc. Time; Great White Throne judgment) when (temporal conj.) God (Subj. Nom.) will judge (κρίνω, ΠΑΙΣ, Futuristic) the secret thoughts (Acc. Dir. Obj.; liberal norms and standards, hidden plans, conspiracies, purposes) of men (Poss. Gen.) according to my (Poss. Gen.; as opposed to false teachings about the Gospel which were running rampant in Rome) gospel (Adv. Acc.) through Christ Jesus (Abl. Agency).

WHO **Romans 2:16** ἐν ἡ ἡμέρᾳ κρίνει ὁ θεὸς τὰ κρυπτὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ

VUL **Romans 2:16** in die cum iudicabit Deus occulta hominum secundum evangelium meum per Iesum Christum

LWB Rom. 2:17 Now assume you classify yourself as a Jew [an illusory superiority], and your peace rests [blind, mechanical reliance] in the law [distorted into salvation by works], but you make it a practice to boast in God [brag about your assumed relationship to Him because of the law],

KW Rom. 2:17 Now assuming, as for you, that you bear the name of Jew, and have a blind and mechanical reliance on the law, and boast in God,

KJV Romans 2:17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begins this section by making a concession on several points, but he requires the readers to make some assumptions on their own. First, you must assume the identity of a self-righteous Jew, one who proudly classifies himself as a Jew (Tendential Present tense), but on the grounds of an illusory superiority. Second, you must assume that your peace rests on a blind and mechanical reliance (Durative Present tense) in the law. Either known or unknown to you, your reliance on the law is a distortion of the truth which leads to the heresy of salvation by works. Third, you must make it a habit to brag (Iterative Present tense) about your relationship with God because you keep the law. Paul is building a straw man, but he observed candidates all around him that met these distorted qualifications. I dare say there are some legalists around today!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Romans 2:17-20 contains a *Direct Chiasmus*, or an *Extended Alternation*, which is two series consisting of more than two members arranged next to each other. Series One: (a) rests in the law, (b) and makes thy boast of God, (c) and knows His will, (d) and approves the things that are more excellent, (e) being instructed out of the law. Series Two: a guide of the blind, (b) a light to them who are in darkness, (c) an instructor of the foolish, (d) a teacher of babes, (e) which has the form of knowledge and of the truth of the law. (E.W. Bullinger)

The Jew boasts in God as the covenant God of Israel who are His peculiar people. (Denney) The Jew, who had the law, considered himself in an entirely different class, so the apostle devotes a considerable section to prove to him that the possession of the law did not make him immune from judgment, but rather invites a severer sentence. (A.E. Knoch) Paul addresses the moralizer explicitly as a Jew. (F.F. Bruce) The apostle, having at the beginning of this chapter addressed himself generally to “whosoever you are who judges,” now summons the Jew exclusively to the bar of judgment, whose claims to exemption from the general condemnation have come to the front in the preceding verses. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 2:17 **Now** (temporal conj.; verses 17-20 is a protasis of a 1st class condition, verses 21-22 is the apodosis), **assume**

(Paul uses a *synchoresis*, making a concession of several points to gain the final point in verse 23) you (Subj. Nom.; in self-righteousness) classify (ἐπινομάζω, PPI2P, Tendentia, Deponent) yourself (Dat. Ind. Obj.) as a Jew (Compl. Acc.; racial pride, an illusory superiority), and (continuative conj.) your (ellipsis, Poss. Gen. supplied) peace rests (ἐπιαναπαύομαι, PMI2P, Durative, Deponent; moral support, comfort, blind and mechanical reliance) in the law (Loc. Sph.; a distortion of the law into salvation by works), but (adversative conj.) you make it a practice to boast (καυχᾶσθαι, PMI2P, Iterative, Deponent; glory) in God (Instr. Assoc; brag about your relationship to God which you base on your keeping the law),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:17** Εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπινομάζῃ καὶ ἐπιαναπαύῃ νόμῳ καὶ καυχᾶσαι ἐν θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:17** si autem tu Iudaeus cognominaris et requiescis in lege et gloriaris in Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:18** And you have an intimate knowledge of His will [misplaced confidence], and you have examined and approved the teachings that are superior [the self-righteous, arrogant person thinks his brand of legalism is equivalent to the holiness of God], since you have been instructed [sarcastic statement] by the law [in the synagogue],

^{KW} **Rom. 2:18** And have an experiential knowledge of His will, and after having put to the test for the purpose of approving the things that differ, and having found that they meet your specifications, you put your approval upon them, being instructed in a formal way in the law,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:18** And knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Fourth, you must assume that you have an intimate knowledge (Perfective Present tense) of His will, which is actually arrogant presumption. The Greek word for knowledge (ginosko) is actually an incomplete, basic comprehension of God's will, but you (hypothetically) think far more highly of your relationship with Him than that. Fifth, you have examined and approved (Aoristic Present tense) the legalistic teachings that you assume are superior to all others (Descriptive Present tense), and quite frankly you believe they are equivalent to the holiness of God. Sixth, you accumulated all this knowledge and delusion of superiority because you have been instructed (Perfective Present tense) in the synagogue by the professionals. By now, as you are assuming the role of Paul's legalistic, Jewish straw man, you should be catching his sarcastic manner.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Jew was the chosen of God, and the gift of the Torah was a proof of the fact. Hence possession was considered to be enough without worrying about practice. He is charged with a wrong idea of his relationship with God. (R. Martin) The term “knows” signifies not a confused knowledge, such as the Gentiles had by the revelation of nature, but a distinct knowledge by the revelation of the Word, which the Gentiles did not possess. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 2:18 and (continuative conj.) you have an intimate knowledge (γινώσκω, PAI2P, Perfective) of His (ellipsis, Poss. Gen. supplied) will (Acc. Dir. Obj.; presumption, misplaced confidence in yourself), and (continuative conj.) you have examined and approved (δοκιμάζω, PAI2P, Aoristic) the teachings (Acc. Dir. Obj.; legalism) that are superior (διαφέρω, PAPtc.APN, Descriptive, Attributive, Articular; the self-righteous arrogant person thinks his brand of legalism is equivalent to the holiness of God), since you have been instructed (κατηχέω, PPPtc.NSM, Perfective, Predicative; taught catechisms in the synagogue) by the law (Abl. Means; a sarcastic statement addressing their delusions of superiority),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:18** καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα καὶ δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα κατηχούμενος ἐκ τοῦ νόμου

^{VUL} **Romans 2:18** et nosti voluntatem et probas utiliora instructus per legem

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:19** And have convinced yourself [to the point of inflexibility] that you are a guide of the blind [actually the blind leading the blind], a light to those in darkness [though you yourself are walking in darkness],

^{KW} **Rom. 2:19** You have persuaded yourself and have come to a settled conviction that you are a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness,

^{KJV} **Romans 2:19** And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Seventh, you have convinced yourself (Consummative Perfect tense), and there is no way you will ever change your mind, that you are (Descriptive Present tense) a guide of the blind. The legalistic straw man thinks he has all the answers for the neophyte in the law; he has persuaded himself that he is leading others to the spiritual “promised land.” The self-righteous, arrogant Jew thinks he is a light to those who are walking in darkness, but in actuality, he himself is walking in darkness because the law was long ago fulfilled and abrogated by Christ Jesus.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses an *asyndeton*, a list of items without conjunctions. (E.W. Bullinger) It should be shattering to us all if we find ourselves thinking that our case is somehow different than that of other persons, because of our religious leanings. If you have been trusting in your baptism, your confirmation, your church membership, your generous stewardship, your Christian upbringing, anything other than Jesus Christ ... abandon it. Stamp on it. Grind it down. Dust off the place where it lay. Then turn to Jesus Christ alone. (J. Boice)

Rom. 2:19 and (continuative conj.) have convinced (πείθω, Perf.AI2S, Consummative; persuaded) yourself (Acc. Gen. Ref.; your position is fixed and there is no way you will ever change your mind regarding these things) that you are (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. as a Dir. Obj. of a Verb) a guide (Pred. Acc.; leader) of the blind (Obj. Gen.; actually a case of the blind leading the blind), a light (Pred. Acc.) to those (Dat. Disadv.) in darkness (Loc. Sph.; the maladjusted Jew is himself walking in darkness),

^{WHO} **Romans 2:19** πέποιθάς τε σεαυτὸν ὁδηγὸν εἶναι τυφλῶν φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει

^{VUL} **Romans 2:19** confidis te ipsum ducem esse caecorum lumen eorum qui in tenebris sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:20** A corrector [disciplinarian, trainer] of the foolish [immature], a teacher of novices, having a superficial framework [outline] of the knowledge [rudimentary principles] and the truth [doctrine] in the law.

^{KW} **Rom. 2:20** A corrector of those who are without reflection or intelligence, a teacher of the immature, having the rough sketch of the experiential knowledge of the truth in the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:20** An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to sarcastically evaluate the arrogant, self-righteous, legalistic Jew. His straw man also assumes he is an accomplished trainer and disciplinarian of the helpless, immature, run-of-the-mill fool. He also thinks he is a teacher, perhaps even a professor over novice students, i.e., babes in the Torah. But in reality, he only has a superficial outline (Descriptive Present tense) of the knowledge of Bible doctrine. He only knows the rudimentary precepts contained in the Bible, because intermediate and advanced knowledge in the Bible cannot be known by embracing the law. They can only be known by means of grace through faith perception.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Surely it is a gross infatuation to risk that precious jewel, the soul, in seeking to grasp the pomps of the world, or to grovel in the dust of its pollutions ... a condition most

characterized during the years of childhood ... when the mind invariably takes the wrong direction, and by degrees develops its sinful tendencies. If the young mind is not cultured by the Word of God it will speedily bring forth an abundance of foolish and evil habits. If man expresses a natural inability to recover himself from the way of folly, and advance in the true life of God, how much truer must it be of his childhood. (J.S. Exell)

You will be sorely tried on account of the little impression which seems to be made upon your children, the little that is manifested as the result of your teaching. Do not despair, for the seed often remains a long time in the soil before it begins to fructify. If nothing else, the teacher has savingly taught himself, while teaching others. (J.S. Exell) The purpose of the law is *condemnation*; the legalistic, self-righteous Jew turns it into *commendation*. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) “Babes” means novitiates or proselytes to Judaism. (A.T. Robertson)

The Law itself is by no means disparaged because the Jew presumed on it without keeping it. (J. Barmby) Such proud claims all rested upon the possession of the embodiment of knowledge and truth contained in the law of Moses and its rabbinical interpretation which made it cover every facet of human experience. (R. Martin)

Rom. 2:20 A corrector (Pred. Acc.; one who disciplines, instructor, child trainer) of the foolish (Obj. Gen.; ignorant and helpless condition, stupid, immature), a teacher (Pred. Acc.) of novices (Obj. Gen.; babes, infants, proselytes), having (ἔχω, PAPTc.ASM, Descriptive, Predicative) a superficial framework (Acc. Dir. Obj.; rough sketch, outline without the substance) of the knowledge (Obj. Gen.; rudimentary principles) and the truth (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrine) in the law (Loc. Place).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:20** παιδευτὴν ἀφρόνων διδάσκαλον νηπίων ἔχοντα τὴν μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ νόμῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:20** eruditorem insipientium magistrum infantium habentem formam scientiae et veritatis in lege

LWB Rom. 2:21 According to these assumptions, when you are continually teaching another, are you not teaching yourself [Do you practice what you preach]? When you continually preach in a loud voice against stealing, do you steal?

^{KW} **Rom. 2:21** Therefore, you who are constantly teaching another, are you not teaching yourself? You who are constantly preaching a person should not be stealing, are you stealing?

^{KJV} **Romans 2:21** Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

According to the previous list of assumptions, Paul now has five questions to ask the Jewish straw man he has created. When you make it a practice to teach others (Temporal Participle), aren't you in reality teaching yourself (Iterative Present tense)? In other words: "Do you practice what you preach?" When you make it a practice to preach against stealing (Iterative Present), do you steal (Aoristic Present tense)? The assumed answer is: Guilty! Paul knew of cases where those who were doing the teaching and preaching were not following the standards they had set for everyone else; they were hypocrites.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To set ourselves up as instructors, and yet not to apply our principles to ourselves, is not only an inconsistency, but offensive arrogance and hypocrisy. (C. Hodge) Paul uses a *polyptoton*, or the repetition of the same part of speech in different inflections: teaches, steals, commits adultery, the law. (E.W. Bullinger) In what follows it is not, of course, implied that all Jews who relied on the Law were, in fact, thieves, adulterers, etc., but only that the Jews as a nation were no more exempt from such sins than others; and it may be that those specified were not selected by the apostle at random, but as being such as the Jews had a peculiar evil notoriety for at that time. (J. Barmby)

The work of teaching presumes that some are able and willing to teach, and that others are equally in a position to learn. Knowledge begets the desire of communication to others; truth by its dissemination enriches all, leaves none the poorer. The possession of the Scriptures constitutes a capacity in those who study to explain their meaning to others less happily situated for meditation. The mind must be fed as well as the body, or we have dwarfed, stunted souls, miserable and corrupt. To neglect the garden is to fill it with weeds. Teachers, remember that you are not responsible for success, but only for effort. There is the felt necessity of being in advance of the learners. The more we know and the more thoroughly and clearly we understand it, the greater the enjoyment and the success of the work. How can we teach if we do not instruct ourselves? Earnest, sincere teaching not only demands self-culture and progress, but for the Christian should be self-rewarding. Teaching clarifies our own views, enforces truth upon our souls. Many a teacher has enjoyed prayer and realized the sweetness and significance of the Scriptures most when preparing the lesson for his scholars. (S.R. Aldridge)

Rom. 2:21 According to these assumptions (inferential particle sets off the apodosis, also an anacoluthon consisting of five questions in indirect discourse), when you are continually teaching (διδάσκω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Temporal) another (Acc. Dir. Obj.), are you not (neg. adv.) teaching (διδάσκω, PAI2S, Iterative, Interrogative) yourself (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in other words: "Do you practice what you preach?"; the teacher who depends on the law is saturated with evil himself) ? When you continually preach in a loud voice (κηρύσσω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Temporal) against

stealing (κλέπτω, PAInf., Pictorial, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of a Verb), **do you steal** (κλέπτω, PAI2S, Aoristic, Interrogative) ?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:21** ὁ οὖν διδάσκων ἕτερον σεαυτὸν οὐ διδάσκεις ὁ κηρύσσων μὴ κλέπτειν κλέπτεις

^{VUL} **Romans 2:21** qui ergo alium doces te ipsum non doces qui praedicas non furandum furaris

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:22** While you [the self-righteous, legalistic Jew] are speaking against adultery, are you committing adultery? While you are expressing disgust at idolatry, are you robbing temples [stealing from heathen banks & treasuries]?

^{KW} **Rom. 2:22** You who are constantly saying that a person should not be committing adultery, are you committing adultery? You who are turning away constantly from idolatry as from a stench, are you robbing temples?

^{KJV} **Romans 2:22** Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While you, the self-righteous, legalistic Jew, are speaking (Iterative Present tense) against adultery (Pictorial Present tense), are you committing adultery (Aorist Present tense)? While you are expressing disgust at idolatry (Pictorial Present tense), are you robbing temples (Aoristic Present tense)? “Expressing disgust” is the Greek word for turning your nose away from something because it has a horrible stench, and the Latin word for “abomination!” The question about robbing temples (Latin: sacrilege) is a reference to a known practice of some Jews of stealing from the treasury of the heathen temples where idolatry is practiced. And since adultery was part of the “religious practice” in these heathen temples, they were robbing money from the temple prostitutes! Both of these sarcastic questions point to the hypocrisy of Paul’s legalistic, straw men.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The conjunction with idolatry suggests the robbing of pagan temples. Temple robbery was reckoned a most heinous crime. (F.F. Bruce) The one who has taught others the truth has failed to learn it himself; the one who has moralized against theft, adultery, and idolatry has been caught in the act. This is a charge of hypocrisy, which is serious enough. Failure at the behavioral level has mocked profession at the verbal level, besmirching God’s name before the Gentiles, to whom Jews were to illumine it. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 2:22 **While you** (the self-righteous, legalistic Jew) **are speaking** (λέγω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Temporal, Articular) **against** (neg. adv.) **adultery** (μοιχεύω, PAInf., Pictorial, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of a Verb), **are you committing adultery**

(μοιχεύω, PAI2S, Aoristic, Interrogative) ? While you are expressing disgust at (βδελύσσομαι, PMPTc.NSM, Pictorial, Temporal, Deponent; turn away from a thing on account of a stench) idolatry (Acc. Dir. Obj.), are you robbing temples (ἱεροσυλέω, PAI2S, Aoristic, Interrogative; stealing from heathen banks or treasuries)?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:22** ὁ λέγων μὴ μοιχεύειν μοιχεύεις ὁ βδελυσσόμενος τὰ εἰδῶλα ἱεροσυλεῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 2:22** qui dicis non moechandum moecharis qui abominaris idola sacrilegium facis

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:23** You [Judaizers] who are constantly boasting in the law [promoting themselves], do you dishonor God by breaking [violating] the law?

^{KW} **Rom. 2:23** You who are making your boast in the law, through your transgression of the law are you dishonoring God?

^{KJV} **Romans 2:23** Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

You Judaizers who are constantly boasting (Iterative Present tense) in the law, promoting yourselves as experts in the knowledge of God – do you dishonor (Gnomic Present tense) God by transgressing the very law you are bragging about? The Iterative Present points to their non-stop, continual bragging about their knowledge of the law, while the Aoristic Present means they ultimately ended up breaking the law and dishonoring God. The answer to both of these questions is obvious: Guilty!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law was not given just to condemn Gentiles. It was also given to condemn the Jews, even the Jewish priests and rabbis who taught the law. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Jewish privileges were of no profit in themselves, or without their meaning and purpose being understood and acted on. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 2:23 You who (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) are constantly boasting (καυχάομαι, PMI2S, Iterative, Deponent) in the law (Loc. Sph.; addressed to the Judaizers who are promoting themselves), do you dishonor (ἀτιμάζω, PAI2S, Gnomic, Interrogative) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.; insulting His honor) by breaking (Adv. Acc.; transgressing, violating, stepping across the line) the law (Obj. Gen.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:23** ὃς ἐν νόμῳ καυχᾶσαι διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ νόμου τὸν θεὸν ἀτιμάζεις·

^{VUL} **Romans 2:23** qui in lege gloriaris per praevaricationem legis Deum inhonoras

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:24** Consequently, because of you [Jewish hypocrisy], the reputation of God is being blasphemed among the Gentiles, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:5].

^{KW} **Rom. 2:24** For the Name of God because of you is reviled among the Gentiles, even as it stands written.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:24** For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Consequently, because of the hypocrisy of the Judaizers, the integrity of God is being maligned (Descriptive Present tense) among the Gentiles. Rather than honoring God by their adherence to the law, they dishonored Him in front of the world by not adhering to the law they bragged about so much. This very fact was written about in the past and stands written (Intensive Perfect tense) in Isaiah 52:5.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The fallacy of ritual over reality is about to be covered in verses 25-29. The ritual of circumcision without reality is meaningless and has no relationship with the integrity of God. The doctrine must be in your soul, or you are slandering God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) For Paul, 'doing the things which the law requires' does not mean carrying out the detailed precepts written in the Pentateuch, but fulfilling that relation with God to which the law points; and this proves in the last resort to be a relation not of legal obedience but of faith. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 2:24 Consequently (inferential conj.), because of you (Abl. Source), the reputation (Subj. Nom.; person, name) of God (Poss. Gen.; refers to His integrity) is being blasphemed (βλασφημείται, PPI3S, Descriptive; maligned, slandered) among the Gentiles (Loc. Place; due to the hypocrisy of the Jews), just as (Comp. Adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; Isaiah 52:5):

^{WHO} **Romans 2:24** τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ δι' ὑμᾶς βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν καθὼς γέγραπται

^{VUL} **Romans 2:24** nomen enim Dei per vos blasphematur inter gentes sicut scriptum est

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:25** So, on the one hand, circumcision is beneficial if you accomplish [keep] the law [hypothetical impossibility]; but on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision [without spiritual circumcision, physical circumcision is useless].

κω **Rom. 2:25** For indeed, circumcision is profitable if you are making a practice of the law, but if, on the other hand, you are a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

ΚJV **Romans 2:25** For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a 3rd class conditional clause with the apodosis stated before the protasis. He combines this with a contrast, with two options stated as “on the one hand, on the other hand.” On the one hand, physical circumcision is advantageous (Descriptive Present tense) if you keep the law (Tendential Present tense). Of course, keeping the law to perfection is impossible, since the law only condemns a person by making sin exceedingly sinful. The purpose of the law was never to save, only to serve as a standard for judgment. The first half of this contrast is, therefore, a theoretical impossibility.

On the other hand, if you are a transgressor of the law (Descriptive Imperfect tense), and the 1st class condition means you should assume that you are, then your physical circumcision has become (Consummative Perfect tense) uncircumcision. This means the ritual of circumcision that was performed at birth anticipated a corresponding spiritual circumcision of the heart or mind. If a person transgresses the law, the spiritual circumcision is rendered invalid, and therefore the physical circumcision (without the spiritual) is useless. In other words, ritual without reality is useless. The contrast between the Imperfect tense (transgressor) and the Perfect tense (spiritual circumcision) is quite clever.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul teaches that circumcision had no inherent, magical efficacy; it had no value beyond that of a sign and seal; it secured the blessings of the covenant to those who kept the covenant; but to the transgressors of the law it was to no avail. If circumcision is in itself nothing, its presence cannot protect the guilty; likewise, its absence cannot invalidate the claims of the righteous. (C. Hodge) The apostle had an inveterate mistrust that signs and rituals could become substitutes for the will of God rather than signs of it. (J. Edwards) If you flout the law, you are to all intents and purposes uncircumcising yourself. (L. Allen) If you are a lawbreaker, your circumcision has become a foreskin. (J. Witmer)

The Jew is then like the Gentile, with no privilege at all. Circumcision was simply the seal of the covenant relation of Israel with God. (A.T. Robertson) Keeping the law of God without having a heart for God renders circumcision uncircumcision. Having everything right on the outside (Pharisees) means nothing if the inside is corrupted. (K. Lamb) Circumcision of the heart, not the mere circumcision of the flesh, is the all-important matter. The circumcised in flesh may secure praise from men, but the circumcised in heart look for approbation to God only. It is for us all to seek the inward

and spiritual circumcision, the true sign of membership in God's invisible kingdom.
(R.M. Edgar)

The law of all symbolism in religion is wrapped up in the words, "Circumcision indeed profits, if you are a doer of the law." An attestation of spiritual truths can be emphasized by an outward sign. So circumcision spoke forcefully to the heathen around, and so perhaps baptism and the Lord's supper have such use now. That, however, which is educative and attesting, has no intrinsic worth. The *unvalue of mere symbolism* is a childish trifling. Nay worse – a perpetual condemnation, mocking the reality with the shadow. If the lesson is learned, and the witness borne, the work is done. The man of baptized spirit who feeds upon Christ by faith is the true Christian. Let us learn, then, in the best sense. (T.F. Lockyer)

Certain people are always exposed to the temptation of confusing the incidental externals with the essential realities. They feel confident of a place in the Christian community because they have been baptized or because they are nominally members of a church, and they would be highly incensed if anyone suggested that they were not really Christians at all. In addition to this superficial assumption that outward signs are a sufficient substitute for active participation in the life of faith, it is necessary to note a parallel from which the trust in outward signs often assumes. It is usually the person who trusts in his own religious achievements who feels that the visible tokens of religion are important. This need not be the product of a humanistic pride; it may simply be the result of a limited view which fails to distinguish between essential and inconsequential things. (J. Knox)

Rom. 2:25 So (inferential conj.), on the one hand (μέν ... δέ), circumcision (Subj. Nom.) is beneficial (ώφελέω, PAI3S, Descriptive; profitable, helpful, advantageous) if (3rd class condition, "maybe yes, maybe no"; the apodosis comes before the protasis) you accomplish (πράσσω, PASubj.2S, Tential, Concessive clause; keep, perform) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.; since this is impossible, the law only further condemns); but (contrast particle), on the other hand (μέν ... δέ), if (1st class condition, "yes, and it's true") you are (είμι, Imperf.AI2S, Descriptive) a transgressor (Pred. Nom.) of the law (Obj. Gen.), your (Poss. Gen.) circumcision (Subj. Nom.; at birth) has become (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Consummative, Deponent) uncircumcision (Pred. Nom.; ritual circumcision at birth anticipated spiritual circumcision in the future; without this future reality, physical circumcision was useless).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:25** περιτομή μὲν γὰρ ὠφελεῖ ἐὰν νόμον πράσσης· ἐὰν δὲ παραβάτης νόμου ᾖς ἡ περιτομή σου ἀκροβυστία γέγονεν

^{VUL} **Romans 2:25** circumcisio quidem prodest si legem observas si autem praevaricator legis sis circumcisio tua praeputium facta est

LWB Rom. 2:26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision [Gentile] continues to observe [keep] the righteous requirements of the law, shall his uncircumcision [physical] not be counted as circumcision [spiritual]?

KW Rom. 2:26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision habitually guards the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be credited to his account for circumcision?

KJV Romans 2:26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a 3rd class conditional clause to ask yet another question. If the uncircumcision, a reference to Gentiles, continues to observe (Durative Present tense) the righteous requirements of the law even though he was never under the law – shall his physical uncircumcision not be reckoned (Deliberative Future tense) spiritual circumcision? In other words, the Gentile who never had the law and was not circumcised may still perform the righteous requirements of the law due to God’s requirements being written on his conscience.

Paul asks if this physically uncircumcised Gentile who is also without the law, but who is keeping the principles of the law, shall not be considered spiritually circumcised because of his performance? The answer is a resounding: Yes! Ritual circumcision was only meant as a symbol for the reality in the first place. Ritual without reality is meaningless; reality without ritual is acceptable. Is there a precedent for such a bold statement in the Old Testament? Yes! The principle is well stated in Psalm 51:15-17.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses an *antanaclasis*, or a repetition of the same word in the same sentence with different meanings. The 2nd use of uncircumcision refers to their condition as fulfilling the requirements of the Law. (E.W. Bullinger) The obedient, uncircumcised heathen would be better off, he would stand on higher ground, than the disobedient, circumcised Jew. (C. Hodge) Circumcision is not confined to the Jewish people, but is widely practiced as a sanitary measure, and in some areas of the world used as a rite of initiation. But ritual without reality is meaningless. The true Jew is one who is a Jew inwardly, that is, one who is circumcised of the heart, after the pattern of Abraham’s salvation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

True religion is not observance of the sacraments. “What!” some may say, “you tell us that the sacraments are of Divine appointment, that a sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, and yet you tell us that religion does not consist in the observance of the sacraments!” But what for? Christ instituted the sacraments as a means to an end, as the symbols, the outward signs, of spiritual truths. They are helps to religion. They teach us the foundation of all true religion – the death, sufferings, the cross of Christ. They

teach us the meaning of true religion – the cleansing and purity and change of heart ... but they are not in themselves true religion. If they were, would not more stress be laid upon them? Observe the attitude of our Savior Himself towards the sacrament. We read that “Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples” (John 4:2). If the sacrament of baptism had such regenerating power as is attributed to it, the Savior would surely have used it on every possible occasion. Paul did not think that religion consisted in the observance of the sacraments, or he would have put the sacraments in the very forefront of his work. Yet how many are resting entirely on the sacraments! They have been baptized. They have been regular communicants at the Lord’s table, and therefore they think they are Christians. Ah! Religion is something more than this. The sacraments will not save our souls. We need something more than the observance of sacraments, if we are to enter into the kingdom of God. (C.H. Irwin)

Rom. 2:26 Therefore (inferential conj.), if (3rd class condition, "maybe yes, maybe no") the uncircumcision (Subj. Nom.; reference to the Gentiles) continues to observe (φυλάσσω, PAsubj.2S, Durative, Concessive clause; follows, perform, keep) the righteous requirements (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.), shall his (Poss. Gen.) uncircumcision (Subj. Nom.) not (neg. adv.) be counted as (λογίζομαι, FPI3S, Deliberative, Interrogative, Deponent; reckoned, calculated, considered, evaluated) circumcision (Pred. Acc.) ?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:26** ἔὰν οὖν ἡ ἀκροβυστία τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσῃ οὐχ ἡ ἀκροβυστία αὐτοῦ εἰς περιτομὴν λογισθήσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 2:26** si igitur praeputium iustitias legis custodiat nonne praeputium illius in circumcisionem reputabitur

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:27** Furthermore, shall the uncircumcision [Gentiles], by instinctively keeping the law, judge you [Jews], a transgressor of the law, with the advantage of the letter [books of Moses] and the circumcision?

^{KW} **Rom. 2:27** And the uncircumcision which by nature is fulfilling the law will judge you who with the advantage of the letter and of circumcision are a transgressor of law.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:27** And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with his sarcastic questioning. He asks the legalistic Jew if the uncircumcised Gentile who instinctively keeps the law (Durative Present tense) is going to end up judging (Predictive Future tense) him, a transgressor of the law, even though he has the advantage of possessing the books of Moses and the rite of circumcision? What a burn! All of the Jewish

advantages could amount to nothing if they are transgressors of the law. And all the disadvantages of being a Gentile can be overcome by instinctively (Latin: by nature) keeping the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Superior knowledge enhances the guilt of sin, and increases the certainty, necessity, and severity of punishment. (C. Hodge) The letter and the circumcision is a *hendiadys*, where two words are used, but one thing is meant. (E.W. Bullinger) The emphasis is shifted away from ritual and custom toward faith and ethics. (J. Edwards) Outer righteousness is praised by men and reproved by God; inner righteousness, however, is praised by God and reproved and persecuted by men. (M. Luther)

We come here as immortal souls, seeking after truth, and we turn from all human answers and sacraments on the question of religion to the one infallible guide of faith and practice – the Word of God. That Word is the lamp to our feet, and the light to our path. I come, then, to this Divine Word; I come to the Father of my spirit; I come to Jesus, the Savior and the Teacher of the world; I come to the Spirit of truth; and, as a humble and unworthy sinner, I ask this question: What is true religion? The answer to that question is given by the apostle in the verses now before us: **Religion does not consist in the observance of any outward form.** (C.I. Irwin)

The Jew is a law-transgressor, in spite of the fact that he possesses a written revelation of God's will, and bears the seal of the covenant, obliging him to the performance of the law upon his body. He has an outward standard, which does not vary with his moral condition, like the law written in the pagan's heart; he has an outward pledge that he belongs to the people of God, to encourage him when he is tempted to indolence or despair; in both these respects he has an immense advantage over the Gentile, yet both are neutralized by this - he is a law-transgressor. (Denney)

Rom. 2:27 **Furthermore** (conj. which expresses an unexpected conclusion), **shall** (suggests either a 1st or 3rd class condition) **the uncircumcision** (Subj. Nom.; reference to the Gentiles), **by instinctively** (Abl. Means; naturally, inherently) **keeping** (τελέω, PAPTc.NSF, Durative, Modal) **the law** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **judge** (κρίνω, FAI3S, Predictive, Interrogative) **you** (Dat. Disadv.), **a transgressor** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **of the law** (Obj. Gen.), **with the advantage of** (related to, accompanied by) **the letter** (Gen. Adv.; reference to the books of Moses, and the law in particular) **and the circumcision** (Gen. Adv.; sanctified sarcasm) ?

^{WHO} **Romans 2:27** καὶ κρινεῖ ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία τὸν νόμον τελοῦσα σὲ τὸν διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς παραβάτην νόμου

^{VUL} **Romans 2:27** et iudicabit quod ex natura est praepetium legem consummans te qui per litteram et circumcisionem praevaricator legis es

^{LWB} **Rom. 2:28** Consequently, a person is not a Jew outwardly [receiving the surgical procedure does not make you a proselyte Jew], neither is the circumcision [spiritual] outwardly in the flesh [not due to a surgical procedure].

^{KW} **Rom. 2:28** For, not he who is so in an outward fashion is a Jew, nor even that which is an outward fashion in flesh is circumcision.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:28** For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Consequently, a person is not (Descriptive Present tense) a Jew because he has the outward sign of circumcision. Becoming a proselyte Jew is a matter of belief, not ritual. As a matter of fact, neither is the true circumcision something that is visible in the flesh. True circumcision is not the surgical procedure performed shortly after birth. As the next verse concludes, true circumcision is on the inside, and is confirmed not by an outward sign, but by a soul that is in harmony with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gentile who keeps the law instinctively becomes the true circumcision by his adherence to the truth. All the touted rituals of Judaism, as well as those of Christianity, are totally useless, hollow in fact, without the reality of Christ operating on the inside. God is not interested in the letter of the law, but in the Spirit working inside the believer, whether Jew or Gentile.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God repudiates formalism without a heart change, and the man who trusts in liturgical ceremonies or religious rites without having a definite change of heart is in the folly of self-deception. (D. Barnhouse) Religious persons fail to see that their valued religious practices clean up only the outside of their lives while leaving untouched the serious corruption within. (J.M. Boice) Christianity was indeed the development and the fulfillment of Judaism. (J. Barmby) The apostle is saying that the outward has no spiritual significance except as the sign and seal of that which it represents, and the *true* circumcision is that work of grace in the heart which the external rite signifies. (J. Murray)

In the judgment of the outward visible tokens will count for nothing. Only that which is vital, in spirit, which will meet the scrutiny of God, will receive recognition. Men may applaud many an action which God detests, and may condemn that which God approves. Human standards and outward appearances will weigh little in the judgment. (A.E. Knoch) It is that behavior of an individual which is in the sphere of a man's spirit, his religious, God-conscious inner life, rather than in the realm of an outward meticulous observance of law, concerning which the apostle is speaking. (K. Wuest)

There is a natural tendency in our nominal Christianity today, that contents itself with baptism and the Lord's Supper, reading the Bible, and subscribing to societies. Their religion ends there – mere formalism. Resting in the embodiment, we neglect the spiritual significance. It saves the trouble of investigating our spiritual condition. Definite rules please us, by relegating to codes or authorities the difficulty and weariness of understanding principles, and deciding as to times and degrees and dispositions of religious service. The rites or sacraments may be performed without necessarily renouncing pleasurable vices. There is a sort of compromise affected, such and such duties condoning such other laxities. Even asceticism is easier than rigorous inward control. So to deprecate internal religion is wrong. (S.R. Aldridge)

Paul shows us the uselessness of the form of religion instead of the reality. The form is useful along with the reality. But without the reality the form is utterly useless. Your profession of religion is right, is useful, if you show the spirit and obey the teachings of Christianity; but if your life is in opposition to that spirit and teaching, then your Christianity is no better than heathenism. Religion is not to be regulated by the opinions of men. It has always been an injury to true religion when it has been influenced too much by the opinions of men. It was so in the history of the Jewish religion, when the kings of Israel corrupted it by their desire to imitate heathen nations. The more the Church came under the control of the state, under the control of human authorities, the more worldly it became, the further clear-headed, Christian-hearted men, who in all ages have resisted the intrusion of human authority and human opinion in matters of religion. It is a great principle, worth dying for, worth living for, too. (T.F. Lockyer)

Rom. 2:28 **Consequently** (paratactic causal sentence, Ind. clause with an inferential particle), **a person** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (είμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **not** (neg. adv.) **a Jew** (Pred. Nom.; true Jew) **outwardly** (Loc. Sph. or Instr. Manner, adverbial; what is visible, manifest, apparent), **neither** (neg. adv.) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied: είμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **the circumcision** (Subj. Nom.; definite article emphasizes 'true' circumcision) **outwardly** (Loc. Sph. or Instr. Manner, adverbial; what is visible,) **in the flesh** (Loc. Place; 'true' circumcision is not a surgical procedure).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:28** οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἐν τῷ φανερῷ Ἰουδαίος ἐστίν οὐδὲ ἡ ἐν τῷ φανερῷ ἐν σαρκὶ περιτομή

^{VUL} **Romans 2:28** non enim qui in manifesto Iudaeus est neque quae in manifesto in carne circumcisio

LWB Rom. 2:29 **Instead, a person is a Jew inwardly [by instinctively keeping the law]; furthermore, circumcision [spiritual] is in the frontal lobe of the soul, in the spirit [as opposed to flesh], not by the letter [books of Moses], whose recognition is not from men, but out from God.**

^{KW} **Rom. 2:29** But he who is so in the sphere of the inner man is a Jew, and circumcision is of the heart in the sphere of the spirit, not in the sphere of the letter, concerning whom the praise is not from men but from God.

^{KJV} **Romans 2:29** But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Instead of a person being a Jew by receiving the physical rite of circumcision or by adhering to the Mosaic Law and becoming a proselyte, a Jew is one who inwardly keeps the law by instinct.

Not only that, but true spiritual circumcision is in the heart, the frontal lobe of the soul where thinking is carried on. True spiritual circumcision is in the sphere of the spirit, as opposed to a ritual performed on the flesh. A person is a Jew inwardly not by strict adherence to the books of Moses (the letter: Torah), but by keeping the law instinctively in his inner spirit. The letter, or books of Moses, may receive recognition according to the standards of men, but it is not the sign of spiritual circumcision from God. The same applies to baptism and the “Lord’s Supper;” neither of these rituals has any spiritual significance apart from the content of the believer’s heart or thinking. Ritual without reality is meaningless.

This is not a verse on regeneration, but on sanctification: instinctively keeping the principles of the law after becoming a believer. Nor is it a proof-text for the absurd notion that the promises to the nation of Israel have been forfeited and given in their entirety to Gentiles (the Church). These people, both Jews and Gentiles, may in effect “circumcise themselves” if they adhere to the *principles* of the law from their inner spirit (and supported by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit during the Church Age) as opposed to adhering to the *precepts* of the law in the flesh, i.e., through legalism, external rites and rituals, and self-righteous arrogance. The contrasts between spirit and flesh, principle and precept, and spiritual circumcision versus the surgical procedure of circumcision, are crucial to understanding this chapter of Romans.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The figurative expression of circumcising the heart very probably does not refer to regeneration or conversion. When God commanded Abraham to circumcise Isaac, Abraham was already a sincere worshiper of God. So too was Isaac. Instead of this verse having to do with regeneration, it more probably indicates some works subsequent to regeneration. In Deut. 10:4, we have “circumcise yourselves,” which means those who are already regenerate should now strive toward righteousness. We read here of the circumcision of the heart, in the Spirit and not of the letter, whose praise is of God, not of men. Note that literal circumcision was performed by a man, and insofar as it was done in obedience to God, the man was worthy of a measure of commendation. But this circumcision is not performed by a man. It is a circumcision made without hands. Even circumcision of the flesh, administered to infants, expresses the passivity of the recipient. (G. Clark)

It is not, therefore, mere descent from Abraham, nor connection with the external theocracy or church, that can secure His favor; but the possession of those internal dispositions which external rites are intended to symbolize. (C. Hodge) The Jews have misused and misapplied the Mosaic Law. The law was given to condemn us all before God, and to turn us from our sins to Him. It never had the inherent power to save anyone. And nobody ever kept it perfectly except Jesus Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Religion is a matter of heart and spirit. The outward form is useless without the inner reality. We want inward Christians – Christians in heart, Christians in spirit. All other Christians are useless, and worse than useless. They are deceiving others, and perhaps they are deceiving themselves. We want Christians whose everyday life is of praise, who meditate on God’s law day and night, and who commune with God in silent but earnest prayer. (C.I. Irwin)

It is abhorrent to the flesh to walk by the Spirit. It is infinitely easier to be occupied with the ‘Christian duties’ practiced or prescribed by your sect. The flesh cannot bear to be little, despised, but desires to be of those that have the regard of the *Christian world* - an awful word. (W. Kelly) Whenever true religion declines, the disposition to lay undue stress on external rites is increased. The Jews, when they lost their spirituality, supposed that circumcision had power to save them. The Christian Church, when it lost its spirituality, taught that water baptism washed away sin. How large a part of nominal Christians rest all their hopes on the idea of the inherent efficacy of external rites! (C. Hodge) The contrast is between the Holy Spirit and the law as externally administered, a contrast between the life-giving power which the Holy Spirit imparts and the impotence which belongs to the law as mere law. (J. Murray)

The apostle’s detestation of a merely external religion is evident all through this Epistle, equally in the doctrinal and the practical sections. To no compromise upon this point would he for a moment consent. For a Jew who was a Jew only outwardly, he had no consideration, and circumcision merely in the flesh he held in no esteem. Even in our own time there is need of a protest against a religion of forms and of custom; there is no Church which is free from the danger here intimated; for the temptation against which the inspired apostle puts us upon our guard is a temptation which gathers strength from a principle and habit deep-seated in human nature itself. A man might be a descendant of Israel, and yet might not be a Jew, in the deeper and spiritual significance which the apostle attached to the designation. There were many who boasted that they were “Abraham’s seed,” who had “Abraham to their father,” according to natural descent, who yet lacked Abraham’s faith, the true “note” of incorporation in the elect race. Circumcision was a badge of nationality, and a sign and seal of the covenant which God entered into with His chosen people; but it conferred no special grace, and the grace which it symbolized was often received in vain, for privilege and prerogative are in many cases misused. But under the new covenant, the only circumcision which avails is that of “the heart,” the “spirit.” Such is the peculiar character of Christianity, which commended it to the reason and the conscience of the apostle. The conception of God must be spiritual; the character or worship must be spiritual; the morality of Christ’s disciples must be spiritual; the religious life as a whole must be spiritual. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 2:29 Instead (contrast conj.; rather), a person (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) a Jew (Pred. Nom.; true Jew) inwardly (Loc. Sph. or Instr. Manner, adverbial; hidden, concealed, secret, withdrawn from sight, the soul-life; by regeneration); furthermore (continuative conj.), circumcision (Subj. Nom.; true circumcision) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) in the frontal lobe of the soul (Loc. Sph. or Instr. Manner; heart, mind), in the spirit (Loc. Sph.; as opposed to the flesh), not (neg. adv.) by the letter (Instr. Means; referring to the books of Moses, particularly the law), whose (Poss. Gen.) recognition (Subj. Nom.; praise, approval) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) not (neg. adv.) from men (Abl. Source), but out from God (Abl. Source).

^{WHO} **Romans 2:29** ἀλλ ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος καὶ περιτομῇ καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι οὐδ ὁ ἔπαινος οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 2:29** sed qui in abscondito Iudaeus et circumcisio cordis in spiritu non littera cuius laus non ex hominibus sed ex Deo est

CHAPTER 3

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:1** What, therefore, is the advantage of being a Jew? Or what profit is circumcision?

^{KW} **Rom. 3:1** What pre-eminence or advantage is there therefore which the Jew possesses? Or, what profit is there in circumcision?

^{KJV} **Romans 3:1** What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

So far, it seems like there is no advantage whatsoever in being a Jew. Therefore, the interrogative asks exactly that question: What is the advantage of being a Jew? As a matter of fact, what profit is there in circumcision? Jews have been boasting for centuries about their race and circumcision, but the rhetorical Jewish questioner can't figure out what they had to brag about! After all, even the Gentile, the barbarian, was now on equal spiritual ground during the Church Age. But there is a list of advantages in Romans 9 which we shouldn't forget: the adoption as sons, the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple, the promises, the patriarchs, and the human ancestry of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It was the distinguishing advantage of the Jewish people that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. But during the long period between Moses and the Babylonian exile they showed little appreciation of their heavenly treasure. The law was ignored, the prophets were persecuted, the people turned to idolatry, and the penalty of exile and dispersion, fore-announced by Jehovah Himself, followed at last with terrible severity. (M. Terry)

Many people, beginning at an early period in Christian history and continuing until the present, have been ready to sweep away the whole Jewish background of Christianity and dispense entirely with the O.T. which contains its sacred books. But Paul is not for a moment ready to dispense with Judaism. (J. Knox) Under the figure *antimetathesis*, or transference of speakers, Paul shows how the objections of an imaginary Jewish opponent are stated and met. (E.W. Bullinger)

Rom. 3:1 What (Rhetorical Interr. pronoun), therefore (inferential particle), is (ellipsis, verb supplied) the advantage (Pred. Nom.; preeminence) of being (ellipsis, verb supplied) a Jew (Obj. Gen.)? Or (disjunctive particle in a double indirect question) what (Interr. pronoun) profit (Pred. Nom.; use) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) circumcision (Obj. Gen.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 3:1** Τί οὖν τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου ἢ τίς ἡ ὠφέλεια τῆς περιτομῆς

^{VUL} **Romans 3:1** quid ergo amplius est Iudaeo aut quae utilitas circumcisionis

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:2** **Much, in every way! Most important, to be sure, is that they [Israel] were entrusted with the oracles [Old Testament canon] of God.**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:2** Much in every way, for, first of all, because they were entrusted with the divine utterances of God.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:2** Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul isn't about to divest Israel of her advantages, and they still have them "much in every way!" First and foremost (Latin: primary), without a doubt, Israel was entrusted with (Constative Aorist tense) the Old Testament canon. Israel was the chosen people of God, to whom He gave His words of wisdom and prophecy. It was both a privilege and a responsibility to be the custodians of God's Word.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Neither the change in dispensation nor the fifth cycle of discipline administered to Israel changes the future of Israel in God's plan. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The greatest treasure in all the world was once the exclusive possession of the Jews. To them were confided the oracles of God. Today we, who in that day had no revelation from God, are entrusted with the same treasure, yet with jewels infinitely more precious than were ever in their care. This epistle is one of them. Have we anything like a true sense of our responsibility? Have we explored and enjoyed these treasures in any measure as they deserve? (A.E. Knoch) American revere the Bible – but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates. (W. Kroll)

The term for “oracles” is “logia,” and it is probably intended to refer here to the whole Scriptures, but with special regard to the promises of God to Israel which the Scriptures contain. (J. Knox) The deposit of revelation in the Scripture of the O.T. is called “the oracles of God.” The Scripture is therefore regarded by the apostle as oracular words of God. (J. Murray) An outstanding characteristic of the Jewish Age was Israel's sole custodianship of God's Word. One nation was responsible for the dissemination of the Gospel and scriptural truth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Having the Word of God does little good if you don't read and obey it. (W. Kroll)

Nothing could ever destroy the fact that the Jews were the chosen people of God, the people chosen to be the channel of God's revelation to the world by the patriarchs and lawgivers and prophets, chosen also to be the channel through which the Divine Word becomes flesh and tabernacled among men. It is an advantage to have a Divine revelation entrusted to us. The possession and knowledge of God's Word is a privilege not to be despised or lightly esteemed. In these days of sensational evangelism it is well that we should not undervalue the importance of a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. They who are well instructed in the Holy Scriptures are, as a rule, more likely to become true and permanent Christians than those who, under the influence of sudden excitement or emotion, without any previous religious knowledge, profess their readiness to follow the banner of Jesus. (C. Irwin)

Rom. 3:2 Much (Comparative Adv.; great), in (Prep. of Dispersion) every (Acc. Spec.) way (Acc. Spec.; how much)! Most important (Ind. Nom.; foremost, primarily, in the first place), to be sure (affirmative particle), is (ellipsis, verb supplied) that (Causal conj.) they (Israel) were entrusted with (πιστεύω, API3P, Constative) the oracles (Acc. Dir. Obj.; written canon, promises, utterances) of God (Abl. Source).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:2** πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον πρῶτον μὲν [γὰρ] ὅτι ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 3:2** multum per omnem modum primum quidem quia credita sunt illis eloquia Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:3** For what if some people will not believe [reject the gospel]? Will not their unbelief cancel [nullify] the faithfulness of God?

^{KW} **Rom. 3:3** Well then – if, as is the case, certain ones did not exercise faith? Their unbelief will not render the faithfulness of God ineffectual, will it?

^{KJV} **Romans 3:3** For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's hypothetical questioner now asks a two-part question. What if some people will not believe (Culminative Aorist tense) in Christ, rejecting the gospel? Perhaps they have heard the gospel once and rejected it; perhaps they have heard it 100 times and rejected it every time. The protasis of the 1st class condition says this person heard it at least once. Keeping that in mind, will their unbelief abrogate (Deliberative Future tense) the faithfulness of God? Of course not! God has been and will remain faithful to the Jews whether they believe or not. He cannot do otherwise or He would compromise His divine attributes.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses a *tapeinosis*, or a lessening of a thing in order to increase it. In reality only "some" believed, while the nation as a whole did not believe. (E.W. Bullinger) The "faith of God" would be better rendered "faithfulness of God." (M. Vincent) Torah was not a possession to be hoarded, but a gift which entailed a responsibility. The Jews were first to be the depositaries of Torah and then the dispensers of it. But in this they failed. (J. Edwards) The expression "the faith of God" does not mean our faith in God, but God's faithfulness. It is God's faith-keeping in contrast with man's faithlessness. (J. Murray)

One confusion which is prevalent today arises out of the false doctrine which looks upon the Church as a kingdom to be established upon the earth for the purpose of ruling, instead of a group of people to be martyred because of a witness, and which therefore sees no place for the fulfillment of the oracles which God gave to the Jews. This is one of Satan's subtlest inventions. (D.G. Barnhouse) Undoubtedly "pistis" has the sense of "faithful" here and not "faith." God has been faithful whether the Jews were simply disbelievers or untrue to their trust. (A.T. Robertson)

God is the Author of saving faith. Whose faith ultimately justifies the sinner before God? The unbelief of men does not make the faithfulness of God without effect. The faithfulness of God is subjective, not objective. God's faithfulness is not dependent on depraved man ... man's unbelief cannot render God's work ineffectual. Every born-again person was an unbeliever until God in regeneration gave him the ability to believe. His

unbelief did not nullify God's ordination that he believe. The absence of faith on man's part cannot render God's faithfulness unproductive. If the absence of faith on the part of anyone could render God's work unproductive, there would be no hope for anyone. That would indicate that man is controlling God. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:3 For (enclitic post positive conj.) what (Interr. pronoun; protasis; idiom for "well then, how stands the case with regard to the two alternatives?") if (1st class condition, "yes, and it's true") some people (Subj. Nom.) will not (neg. adv.) believe (ἀπιστέω, AAI3P, Culminative; rejection of Christ)? Will not (an apodosis of unqualified negation; "finessing the point") their (Poss. Gen.) unbelief (Subj. Nom.; incredulity) cancel (καταργέω, FAI3S, Deliberative, Interrogative; make ineffective, abrogate, abolish, nullify) the faithfulness (Acc. Dir. Obj.; solemn promise, reliability, integrity) of God (Poss. Gen.; God has been faithful, whether the Jews believe or not)?

^{WHO} **Romans 3:3** τί γὰρ εἰ ἠπίστησάν τινες μὴ ἡ ἀπιστία αὐτῶν τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ καταργήσῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 3:3** quid enim si quidam illorum non crediderunt numquid incredulitas illorum fidem Dei evacuabit absit

LWB Rom. 3:4 **May it never happen! Rather, let God continue to be proved true [reliable], though every man is a liar [basically dishonest], just as it stands written: So that You might be demonstrated righteous by Your doctrines and so You will prevail [win the lawsuit] when You are being judged by it [the law & promises].**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:4** Let no one ever think such a thing. Let God be found veracious and every man a liar, even as it stands written, To the end that you may be acknowledged righteous in your words, and may come out victor when brought to trial.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:4** God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul answers his hypothetical question with a Dramatic Aorist tense which can be translated in many ways: God forbid! Absolutely not! Hell no! How dare someone question the faithfulness of God! Instead of assuming such a ridiculous notion, let God be proved reliable and true (Imperative of Entreaty). And let it be known that every man is a liar. In effect, Paul is saying man is basically dishonest due to his sin nature, i.e., total depravity. Do you have a problem with that? It's true. This statement is a contrast, with both sides being equally true: God is true, man is a liar. The ellipsis of the second verb ("is") meets the same Gnomic Present tense of the former verb ("proved true"). Both are absolute facts, like it or not.

It is written (Intensive Perfect tense) means the verse Paul is about to quote has been around a long time and continues to exist as part of OT scripture. Psalm 51:4 is the verse Paul quotes, but the active voice in the Hebrew (where God does the judging) is changed in the Greek to passive (God is being judged). Therefore, God will be demonstrated (Culminative Aorist tense) righteous by His doctrines in Scripture. And God will prevail (Gnomic Future tense) when He is being judged (Pictorial Present tense) by His Word. So in the end, God is proved to be righteous by His Word as anyone with genuine honesty will attest when they immerse themselves in His Word and evaluate the veracity of His doctrines. He will fulfill His promises to Israel (faithfulness), which Paul will develop fully in chapters 9-11.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God is not a contingent being whose actions depend on something outside Himself. God is an essential being whose actions are true to His character, despite human response to it. This verse is not a philosophical abstraction of metaphysics and anthropology; it is a truth hammered out on the anvil of experience, a punishing truth that all are liars, and yet a liberating hope that God is true. Whatever we must concede about ourselves – and it will not be optimistic – we must confess that God is true. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 3:4 May it never (neg. adv.) happen (γένοιτο, AMOpt.3S, Dramatic, Deliberative, Deponent; God forbid, absolutely not, hell no, impossible)! Rather (contrast particle), let God (Subj. Nom.) continue to be (γίνομαι, PMImp.3S, Gnomic & Iterative, Entreaty, Deponent) proved true (Pred. Nom.; reliable), though (contrast particle) every (Acc. Spec.) man (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) a liar (Pred. Nom.; basically dishonest), just as (Comp. Adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive): so that (Adv. Purpose) You might be demonstrated righteous (δικαιώω, APSubj.2S, Culminative, Purpose) by Your (Poss. Gen.) doctrines (Instr. Means) and (continuative conj.) so (Purpose particle) You will prevail (νικάω, FAI2P, Gnomic; overcome, win the lawsuit, be victorious) when You (Acc. Dir. Obj.) are being judged (κρίνω, PPInf., Pictorial, Contemporaneous Time) by it (Instr. Means; meaning the law).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:4** μή γένοιτο· γινέσθω δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἀληθῆς πᾶς δὲ ἄνθρωπος ψεύστης καθὰ περ γέγραπται Ὅπως ἂν δικαιωθῆς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου καὶ νικήσεις ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε

^{VUL} **Romans 3:4** est autem Deus verax omnis autem homo mendax sicut scriptum est ut iustificeris in sermonibus tuis et vincas cum iudicaris

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:5** But if our unrighteousness [wrongdoing] promotes the righteousness [divine integrity] of God, what shall we say [to what conclusion are we forced]? Is the God Who

inflicts judgment unrighteous? I am speaking as [according to the standards of] a man [debater's technique: as a self-righteous straw man].

^{KW} **Rom. 3:5** But in view of the fact that our unrighteousness establishes by proof God's righteousness, what shall we say? God is not unrighteous who inflicts wrath, is He? I am using a mode of speech drawn from human affairs.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:5** But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks two rhetorical questions using a particular debater's technique called the "straw man." The straw man in this case is a self-righteous, arrogant, Jewish unbeliever. The first question is asked as a protasis of a 1st class condition, meaning "yes, the content of the question is true." If our unrighteousness establishes (Static Present tense) the righteousness of God (and it does), what shall we conclude (Deliberative Future tense)? The hypothetical Jewish unbeliever is drawing a correct conclusion – that his wrongdoing actually proves or enhances the divine integrity of God. This assumption is misdirected, however, in his conclusion that follows.

In a manner of speaking, an unbeliever's wrongdoing does pose a stark contrast compared to God's divine integrity. The contrast between man's unrighteousness and God's righteousness is of great magnitude, at opposite ends of the spectrum, so to speak. The second question the straw man asks, however, is a wrong conclusion. By asking this question, he implies that God is unrighteous because He inflicts punishment (Descriptive Present tense) and pronounces judgment on those who are actually enhancing the revelation of His divine nature by their lifestyle of sin! With one disingenuous question, they question God's ability to stand judgment over His own creatures.

Paul knows this conclusion (in the form of a question) is blasphemous, so he lets the Roman believers know that he is speaking (Pictorial Present tense) according to the standards of man. This is an idiomatic way of admitting he is using debater's technique, concocting a straw man. It was, in his estimation, the best method of communicating the arrogant human viewpoint he has been meeting as he preaches and teaches in the synagogues. He uses a straw man, but there is truth behind the technique.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Again, the ground shifts. His antagonist, catching at the echo of a perversion of Paul's teaching, suggests that our unrighteousness cannot both vindicate God's righteousness and merit His punishment. If our sin only displays His goodness, that surely gives it a status of its own in the moral world. Then God cannot justly judge it as evil. This is the kind of jugglery which is always possible in debate. It is a method of scoring a point without making any pretense of reaching the truth, and it is prompted purely by a spirit of

carnal contention. That is why Paul, apologetically but with a shudder, interjects the comment, I speak in a human way. (J. Knox) This is a clever but illogical argument. It is twisting Scripture to make what is inherently evil appear to be ultimately good. Paul is using the form of human reasoning to express this inspired truth about God. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:5 But (contrast conj.) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "yes, and it's true") our (Poss. Gen.; Jewish unbeliever) unrighteousness (Subj. Nom.; wrongdoing) promotes (συνίστημι, PAI3S, Static; proves, establishes, recommends, demonstrates) the righteousness (Acc. Dir. Obj.; integrity) of God (Poss. Gen.), what (apodosis, interrogative pronoun) shall we say (λέγω, FAI1P, Deliberative, Interrogative; idiom for "to what conclusion are we forced")? Is (ellipsis, verb supplied) the God (Subj. Nom.) Who inflicts (ἐπιφέρω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Substantival, Articular; brings, pronounces) judgment (Acc. Dir. Obj.; wrathful punishment) unrighteous (Pred. Nom.)? I am speaking (λέγω, PAI1P, Pictorial) as (Characteristic Prep.; according to the standards of) a man (Adverbial Acc.; Paul, using a straw man as a debater's technique, assumes the self-righteous, arrogant human viewpoint - *epidiorthosis*).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:5** εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀδικία ἡμῶν θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην συνίστησιν τί ἐροῦμεν μὴ ἄδικος ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργὴν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω

^{VUL} **Romans 3:5** si autem iniquitas nostra iustitiam Dei commendat quid dicemus numquid iniquus Deus qui infert iram secundum hominem dico

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:6** **May it never happen [God forbid]! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:6** Away with the thought. Otherwise, how would it be possible for God to judge the world?

^{KJV} **Romans 3:6** God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul answers this hypothetical question with a loud, "Hell no!" A more literal translation of the idiom, using the Dramatic Aorist tense and a Deliberative Optative mood, would be "May it never occur!" Scholars who understand the idiom translate the phrase as "Absolutely not!" or "God forbid!" However it is translated, the idiom is one of the strongest negative pronouncements available in the Greek language. The question that follows sums up the issue Paul has with this erroneous assessment: If this conclusion was true, how would God judge (Gnomic Future tense) the world?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The real objection to Paul's case is that it impugns the moral government of the universe and the righteousness of God. It leaves God with no room to vindicate virtue and punish sin. Paul meets it with a direct negative. (C.K. Barrett) To play with words and prove that our wickedness promotes the righteousness of God threatens the whole conception of a world in which God's judgment can operate. (J. Knox) God certainly does not act unjustly if He inflicts wrath on His people. The point of this question is to draw out the absurd and clearly impossible consequences of the supposition. (D. Moo)

Rom. 3:6 May it never (neg. adv.) happen (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Dramatic, Deliberative, Deponent; God forbid, absolutely not, hell no)! Otherwise (Causal conj.), how (Rhetorical Interrogative. particle) shall God (Subj. Nom.) judge (κρίνω, FAI3S, Gnostic; the Future Indicative is used where the Potential Optative would have suited the Attic idiom) the world (Acc. Dir. Obj.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 3:6** μή γένοιτο· ἐπεὶ πῶς κρινεῖ ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον

^{VUL} **Romans 3:6** absit alioquin quomodo iudicabit Deus mundum

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:7** For if the Truth of God has greatly abounded [become more prominent] unto His glory by means of my lying, why am I in particular still being judged as a sinner?

^{KW} **Rom. 3:7** Moreover, assuming that the truth of God by means of my lie became the more conspicuous, resulting in His glory, why then yet am I also being judged as a sinner?

^{KJV} **Romans 3:7** For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's hypothetical man asks yet another question that Paul has likely heard on numerous occasions. Put simply: If my lies abound to the glory of God, then why is He judging me as a sinner? This is, of course, a complete misunderstanding of divine protocol. The straw man is accusing God of being unfair for judging him, and is trying to find a way of escaping his inevitable spiritual death. The question is not coming from a person who is genuinely interested in the gospel message, but from a person who is trying to tie Paul up in knots.

The protasis of a 1st class condition says, "Yes, man's lying does greatly magnify (Constative Aorist tense) the glory of God by contrast." The straw man takes a true concept and then twists it into an erroneous conclusion. The fact that his lying is in stark contrast to God's glory has nothing to do with his trying to escape divine judgment. But he nevertheless believes that his

lying is actually contributing to God's plan, His glory. And rather than being judged (Durative Present tense) as a sinner, he thinks he should be pardoned. The question to us is ludicrous: anyone who lies, even once, is guilty of sin and deserves judgment when measured by God's divine standards. There is no escape from spiritual death.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This shows that Paul at least knew how to indicate the finer shades of thought by means of the Greek particle. Paul transfers by a fiction the objection to himself. (A.T. Robertson) The unusual insertion of the particle "ti" places emphasis on the person who is asking the question, meaning "why me in particular?" The straw man is using himself as an example – a common practice among debaters. (LWB) This kind of argument is used only in the unscrupulous anger which controversy produces. Such things are said to merely embarrass or vilify an opponent. They were, however, actually said, and the vividness of his confused wrangle is sharpened by the sarcastic quotation which Paul introduces. (J. Knox)

Rom. 3:7 For (inferential conj.) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "yes, and it's true") the Truth (Subj. Nom.; doctrine) of God (Descr. Gen.) has greatly abounded (περισσεύω, AAI3S, Constative; has become more prominent) unto His (Poss. Gen.) glory (Prep. Acc.) by means of my (Instr. Agency) lying (Instr. Means; falsehoods), why (Interrogative. pronoun, apodosis) am I in particular (emphatic, using himself as an example - debater's technique) still (Adv. Time) being judged (κρίνω, PPI1S, Durative) as a sinner (Nom. Exclamation; there is no escaping the doctrine of spiritual death)?

^{WHO} **Romans 3:7** εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ ψεύσματι ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ τί ἔτι κἀγὼ ὡς ἁμαρτωλὸς κρίνομαι

^{VUL} **Romans 3:7** si enim veritas Dei in meo mendacio abundavit in gloriam ipsius quid adhuc et ego tamquam peccator iudicor

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:8** In fact, not true, as we have been slandered and as some [self-righteous, arrogant legalists] continually insist that we are saying: Let us do evil things, so that good things may come [accused Paul of teaching "the ends justify the means"]. Their condemnation is deserved.

^{KW} **Rom. 3:8** And not, as we were slanderously reported and even as certain are saying that we are saying, Let us do the evil things in order that there might come the good things; whose judgment is just.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:8** And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says these conclusions are not true. Not only are they not true, but he tells the Roman believers that he and his colleagues have been slandered (Perfective Present tense) and that other malicious persons have accused them of teaching false doctrine. Some of these malicious individuals insisted (Iterative Present tense) that Paul was teaching (Static Present tense) others to commit (Constative Aorist tense) evil deeds so that good things might come (Culminative Aorist tense). This accusation is the equivalent of teaching “the ends justify the means,” one of the tenets of communism (murder productive citizens in order to steal their property and redistribute it to a lazy, elite class of citizens) and utopian socialism (steal from productive citizens through excessive taxation to provide for lazy, unproductive citizens).

Paul denies this and other alleged teachings falsely attributed to him and his colleagues. Not only that, but he says their judicial verdict and punishment is deserved (Static Present tense). These lies and false accusations will not go unpunished (Latin: damnation). Those who utter them will be condemned and punished by the Lord. Paul could have been more severe in his condemnation of these legalists, and he could have offered a more thorough defense of the doctrines of grace, but he chose not to do so at this time. Instead, he ignores their false claims and absurd questions and says they will not escape divine judgment for promoting legalism. Legalists are the enemy of grace teaching, and as many commentators point out, there is no lack of legalism inside the church today.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Self-righteous arrogance always attacks grace-oriented teaching. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It sounds almost uncanny to find this maxim of the Jesuits attributed to Paul in the first century by Jews. It was undoubtedly the accusation of antinomianism because Paul preached justification by faith and not by works. (A.T. Robertson) The law brings out men and women’s sinfulness but does nothing to cure it. Jews as well as Gentiles, then, have to confess themselves morally bankrupt. If there is any hope for either group, it can be found only in the mercy of God and not in any claim that individuals or nations may try to establish on him. Because of the universal fact of sin, the way of acceptance with God by reason of our works of righteousness is closed – the notice is clearly worded: “No Road This Way.” (F.F. Bruce)

This is an intellectual exercise at the expense of conscience, an excuse for immorality. And Paul shows, by the very contempt with which he treats it, that a man who will play false with his conscience, and then proceed to find intellectual justifications, is not to be met in the intellectual region at all. He has been condemned already. Whatever be the bewilderment of my intellect, I am self-condemned, God-condemned, if I play false to the moral light. And arguments to the contrary, however clever sounding or philosophical, are in fact sophistry. There is, we must confess, a good deal of such sophistry today in the

use of arguments drawn from the current philosophy of necessitarianism and the idea of heredity. (C. Gore)

We must not be surprised if the enemies of God should falsify our assertions and draw erroneous inferences from them. Yet this must not deter us from proclaiming all the counsel of God or keeping back anything that would be profitable to His people. (A.W. Pink) There will always be some who hear such a truth and immediately cry out that it teaches that Christians may sin with impunity. The accusation is made here against Paul, but he teaches nothing of the kind. Sin is still sin. It has consequences. Evil is still evil, but God is greater than the evil. That is the point. (J.M. Boice) Nothing shows more clearly the true meaning of "salvation by grace" than the charge of immoral tendency brought against it. (D.G. Barnhouse)

If the apostle Paul was slanderously reported of teaching "Let us do evil, that good may come," we must not be surprised if the enemies of God should falsify our assertions and draw erroneous inferences from them. Yet his must not deter us from proclaiming all the counsel of God or keeping back anything that would be profitable to His people. (A.W. Pink) Paul refuses to meet the argument; he regards it as insincere. Only an unscrupulous debater will descend to such tactics. All one needs to do is to show the kind of argument it is, and one has already refuted it. (J. Knox)

Rom. 3:8 In fact (adjunctive), not (neg. adv.) true (ellipsis), as (Comparative Adv.) we have been slandered (βλασφημέω, PPI1P, Perfective) and as (Comparative Adv.) some (Subj. Nom.; self-righteous arrogant legalists) continually insist (φημί, PAI3P, Iterative; affirm, allege) that (conj. as Dir. Obj.; recitative) we are saying (λέγω, PAInf., Static, Dir. Obj. of Verb): "Let us (Subj. Nom.) do (ποιέω, AASubj.1P, Constative, Hortatory; practice, commit) evil things (Acc. Dir. Obj.), so that (Purpose & Result) good things (Subj. Nom.) may come (έρχομαι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Purpose, Deponent; accusing Paul of teaching that "the ends justify the means"). Their (Poss. Gen.; referring to those who practice antinomianism and/or legalism) condemnation (Subj. Nom.; judicial verdict & punishment) is (είμι, PAI3S, Static) deserved (Complementary Acc.; right, just).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:8** καὶ μὴ καθὼς βλασφημούμεθα [καὶ] καθὼς φασὶν τινες ἡμᾶς λέγειν ὅτι Ποιήσωμεν τὰ κακὰ ἵνα ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ὧν τὸ κρίμα ἔνδικόν ἐστιν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:8** et non sicut blasphemamur et sicut aiunt nos quidam dicere faciamus mala ut veniant bona quorum damnatio iusta est

LWB **Rom. 3:9** What then? Are we better [superior]? Not by any means! For we have already proved all Jews and Greeks to be under sin [both have sin natures and are spiritually dead],

KW **Rom. 3:9** What then? Are we better? Not in any way, for we previously brought a charge against both Jews and Gentiles that all are under sin;

KJV **Romans 3:9** What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul concludes this set of hypothetical questions by asking, “How are we to understand the situation?” Are we superior (Descriptive Present tense) to others before God? “Not at all,” he answers. We have already indicted (Constative Aorist tense) all Jews and Gentiles to be (Descriptive Present tense) under sin. Both Jews and Gentiles (Greeks) are born with sin natures and are spiritually dead. The law does not improve the standing of Jews before God. Bad behavior does not improve the sinner before God. The law condemns all people under sin. The one-word sentence, “Are we better?” comes from the untenable position that the legalistic questioner thinks he can escape the judgment of God by hiding behind the ritual of circumcision and the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Idiomatically translated as "Do we possess anything that might shield us from the justice of God?" (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The necessity of saving faith is revealed in that human character is basically corrupt (Rom. 3:9-12), depraved man is inwardly corrupt (Rom. 3:13-14), and depraved man is outwardly corrupt (Rom. 3:15-18). Verses of Scripture were drawn from the Mosaic legislation and the prophets to bring fourteen horrible indictments against every person who comes into the world. Paul presented his argument from the viewpoint of a court scene: (1) the accused – all are under sin, (2) the Judge – God, (3) the jury – the deeds of the law, (4) the charge – fourteen violations, (5) the prosecuting attorney – the law, (6) the defense – rested by saying every mouth is stopped, and (7) the verdict – guilty before God. (W.E. Best) No fear of God may be the root cause of all rebellion. (W. Kroll)

Rom 3:9 What (Interrogative. pronoun) then (inferential particle; idiom for "How are we to understand the situation?")? Are we better (προέχω, PM1P, Descriptive, Interrogative, Deponent; superior; one-word sentence in the Greek)? Not (neg. adv.) by any means (Instr. Means)! For (explanatory conj.) we have already (Temporal particle) proved (προαιτιάομαι, AM1P, Constative, Deponent; charged, indicted) all (Nom./Acc. Spec.) Jews (Subj. Nom.) and (connective conj.) Greeks (Subj. Nom.) to be (εἶμι, PAI3P,

PAInf., Descriptive, Modifier) **under sin** (Prep. Acc.; both are born with old sin natures and are spiritually dead),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:9** Τί οὖν προεχόμεθα οὐ πάντως· προητιασάμεθα γὰρ Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας πάντας ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι

^{VUL} **Romans 3:9** quid igitur praecellimus eos nequaquam causati enim sumus Iudaeos et Graecos omnes sub peccato esse

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:10** Just as it stands written [in Psalm 14:3]: There is none righteous, not even one.

^{KW} **Rom. 3:10** As it stands written, There is not a righteous person, not even one.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:10** As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul supports his position that all men, both Jew and Gentile, are under sin by quoting an OT verse from Psalm 14:3. It was written in the past and it continues to be written (Intensive Perfect tense) in the Psalm, that “there is (Gnomic Present tense) none righteous.” When measured by divine norms and standards, all mankind is under sin and even their best efforts at keeping the law or leading a moral life without the law is nevertheless tainted by sin. This conclusion from Scripture is what is referred to as “total depravity” in theological textbooks. Paul then intensifies this statement by adding, “not even one.”

There is absolutely no exception to the rule that all men are under sin and have no acceptable righteousness before God – not one solitary exception. Buddha was not an exception, Mohammed was not an exception, Ghandi was not an exception, Lao Tzu was not an exception, Joseph Smith was not an exception, Russell was not an exception – all men who refused to believe that Jesus Christ was God and accomplished salvation for His sheep will be judged under sin, and after the Great White Throne judgment they will spend eternity under severe torment in the Lake of Fire with Satan, the Antichrist, the False Prophet and all fallen angels.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul here uses a catena or chain of quotations to prove his point in verse 9 that Jews are in no better fix than the Greeks, for all are under sin. (A.T. Robertson) Alienation from God is total in its effect. It has plunged us into a state in which it is not possible for us to find our way back to God unless aided by His Holy Spirit. (J.M. Boice) Do not be misled by distortions of Calvinism. It is not as though contrite and sorrowful sinners stand before God pleading that He grant them repentance, and God, locked in by His cruel decree, refuses to heed their request. No, there is “no one righteous,” says Paul, there is “no one who seeks God.” If any should repent, he will be saved. But none will repent,

because none want to repent, unless God graciously brings life to their otherwise spiritually dead hearts. (T. Schreiner, B. Ware)

If there is no God-seeker in Romans 3:10-11, the assertion that men seek after God and choose to believe and repent outside of the work of God's sovereign grace is refuted. Paul taught that the unregenerate man cannot do what is pleasing to God and that there is none who seeks after God. Is anyone ready to say that the thought of this passage is dependent upon reading into a subordinate clause the concept of human free will and autonomy? Christ intercedes for all for whom He dies. Just as the high priest could not intercede for anyone without a sacrifice, so too Christ does not intercede for anyone for whom He does not make atonement. The scope of the atonement, then, is the scope of intercession. We will see the error of Arminian free-will as we move shortly to the discussion of God's unconditional election of a specific people in Christ. (J. White)

The meaning of depravity is explained in Romans 3:10-12. Every person is naturally unrighteous (v. 10). Everything that proceeds from an unrighteous person corrupts. Every person is naturally without spiritual understanding (v. 11). He lacks spiritual understanding. No man naturally seeks God. Mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, have gone out of the way. Natural man is unprofitable (v. 12). A natural man does not and cannot do good. Improper motives may prompt him to social benevolence, but he does nothing for God's glory. (W.E. Best) Next in the judicial procedure is an indictment. Webster defines indictment as "a formal written statement framed by a prosecuting authority and found by a jury charging a person with an offense." An indictment, then, is a formal, written charge, and every indictment must have at least one count, one specific charge. The more serious the crime, the more counts to the indictment. (W. Kroll)

Prior to regeneration, a sinner has all the passive properties belonging to a corpse. Every effort to claim for the sinner the minutest co-operation in this first grace destroys the gospel, severs the artery of the Christian confession and is anti-scriptural in the highest degree. Like a spiritual corpse, he is unable to make a single move toward God, think a right thought about God, or even respond to God – unless God first brings this spiritually dead corpse to life. Romans 3:10-11 is a serious, indeed a devastating picture of the race, because it portrays human beings as unable to do even a single thing to please, understand, or seek after God. Sin corrupts the heart, the mind, and the will. (J. Boice)

Paul immediately follows the pattern of an indictment by quoting from a series of OT passages that demonstrate, in no less than fourteen counts, the total depravity of the entire world. Count 1, verse 10: There is not righteous, not even one. Count 2, verse 11: There is none who understands. Count 3, verse 11: There is none who seeks for God. Count 4, verse 12: All have turned aside. Count 5, verse 12: They have become useless. Count 6, verse 12: There is none who does good, there is not even one. Count 7, verse 13: Their throat is an open grave. Count 8, verse 13: With their tongues they keep deceiving. Count 9, verse 13: The poison of asps is under their lips. Count 10, verse 14: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Count 11, verse 15: Their feet are swift to shed blood. Count 12, verse 16: Destruction and misery are in their paths. Count 13, verse 17: And

the path of peace they have not known. Count 14, verse 18: There is no fear of God before their eyes. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:10 just as (Comparative Adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; Psalm 14:3), that (Demonstrative conj.; not necessary to translate "that", it can be used as quotation marks): There is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) none (Neg. Adv.) righteous (Pred. Nom.; Total Depravity), not even (Neg. conj.; intensifying compound negative) one (Emphatic numeral).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:10** καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Οὐκ ἔστιν δίκαιος οὐδὲ εἷς

^{VUL} **Romans 3:10** sicut scriptum est quia non est iustus quisquam

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:11** **There is none [unbelievers] who understands [comprehends the essence of Bible doctrine]; there is not one who seeks after the God [unbelievers have no spiritual momentum in the right direction].**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:11** There is not the one who understands; there is not the one who seeks out God.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:11** There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds to his statement that all men are under sin. There never has been, never will be, and is not currently (Gnostic Present tense) any unbeliever who comprehends the essence of Bible doctrine. An unbeliever can read the Bible, can memorize verses, and understand simple narratives, but they have no comprehension or insight into the salvation of God without the quickening and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. They are all spiritually blind, without exception. Understanding begins with regeneration; until an unbeliever is regenerated by the Holy Spirit and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, he has no true knowledge of God whatsoever.

There is (Gnostic Present tense) also not one unbeliever who seeks after (Static Present tense) the one and only God. No matter what efforts they make in directions that others call “spiritual,” it is all erroneous and ineffective (Latin: without intelligence). There never has been and there never will be one single case of an unbeliever who is exercising true spiritual momentum. All unbelievers, without exception, are ignorant of true spiritual life. Without the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, they are lost without hope in this world. All of their attempts to be “spiritual” will be rejected by God at the Great White Throne judgment.

This passage of Scripture, and many others that are closely related to it, is also the death-stroke to Arminianism, i.e., those believers who think the exercise of their “free will” was the reason they became Christians. When they were unbelievers, they did not understand the biblical doctrines of salvation. When they were unbelievers, they did not seek after the one and only

God. Until they were regenerated by the Holy Spirit, they possessed neither the faith nor the will to believe in Jesus Christ. Before we became believers, we were all under the condemnation of sin, and our faith and will towards anything spiritual was dead. Those who teach that the exercise of their “free will” was the determining factor in their salvation are in error; they are teaching heresy and are blaspheming the glory of God Who alone saves sinners.

There is no such thing as saving faith that is “non-meritorious,” that is, faith that originates from the *spiritually dead* will of man. The only faith that saves is “saving faith” (by definition) and “saving faith” is a gift from God. “Saving faith” as a gift from God is indeed “non-meritorious” from the human side of the equation. It is passively received as a gift from God as the result of the regenerating operation of the Holy Spirit. Until such time as the Holy Spirit gives this gift of saving faith to an unbeliever, that unbeliever will remain spiritually dead indefinitely - forever. The soul of an unbeliever may cry out in its misery, wondering what the purpose and meaning of life is, but that is not “non-meritorious faith.” The Lake of Fire will be full of those who cry out in misery, wondering what the purpose and meaning of life is, but there is no hint that any of them will ever be saved.

Spiritually dead unbelievers do not send up “positive blips” toward God, asking Him for salvation. That philosophical tenet is diametrically opposed to everything Paul is now teaching us in Romans. “Spiritual death” and the unaided “exercise of free will” is an oxymoron. The mind and will of the unbeliever is completely unable to exercise itself in a Godward direction UNTIL the Holy Spirit regenerates (creates new, gives power to) it from its state of spiritual death. The will of the unbeliever is enslaved to sin and is spiritually dead, not sick; a dead person, by Paul’s definition, can do nothing to save himself. Regeneration (a gracious act of God on behalf of His elect) precedes faith (the instrument by which justification is accomplished).

Arminians say “we exercised faith towards God and He honored our faith by saving us.” Paul says, “No one seeks after God, not one.” Somebody is confused; somebody is in error; somebody is lying. Somebody (Paul) is giving glory to God for his salvation; somebody (an Arminian) is giving glory to himself for his salvation. Somebody (Paul) honors God for his sovereign grace in salvation; somebody (an Arminian) is blaspheming God’s sovereign grace. Somebody (Paul) is worshipping God’s free will; somebody (an Arminian) is worshipping his own free will. Those who insist that they were saved because of the “non-meritorious exercise of their own free will” are guilty of creating an idol out of their spiritually dead free will.

Attention, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ: Some day, when you are standing before the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and He asks you why you should go to heaven – you will have two options to choose as your response: (1) “because I exercised non-meritorious faith in Your direction and you honored that exercise of my faith by saving me,” or (2) “because when I was spiritually dead in my trespasses and sins, the Holy Spirit graciously regenerated my will and gave me the gift of faith, with the result that I believed in Christ and was saved.” Now I ask you, which response gives God the glory for the exercise of His sovereign grace, and which one gives man the glory by boasting in the exercise of his free will?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We are dead so far as any ability to respond to God or to choose God. If we could respond on our own, what does Paul mean when he says that "no one seeks for God"? And what does Jesus mean when He says that "no one can come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me draws him?" Such questions suggest the importance of the will's bondage. (J.M. Boice) God Himself takes the place of the seeker, convicter, persuader, giver, and final perfecter of all man's salvation. His sovereign grace goes ahead of, and brings into being, all human response to God. (W.R. Newell)

Because of Adam's headship over fallen mankind, each person comes into existence with a will totally adverse to God and with a *total inability* to savingly believe in Christ. It is a fact that fallen man must be divinely drawn to Christ; otherwise, he can never come to Christ. Man can neither actually nor logically cause or contribute any efficacy to his salvation because he is spiritually unable to do so, that is, totally depraved. (G. Long) Regardless of what has been taught, no unregenerate person seeks the Lord. His is always viewed as running and hiding from God. To say that man, in his unregenerate condition, can repent and believe is to deny depravity. Do not overlook the fact that both repentance and faith are of God. They are God's gifts of salvation; therefore, they cannot be man's contribution to his salvation. (W.E. Best)

The natural man is so completely enslaved by sin and enchained by Satan, that he is unable to take the first step toward Christ. He is so bent on having his own way and so averse to pleasing God, he is so in love with the things of this world and so out of love with holiness, that nothing short of Omnipotence can produce a radical change of heart in him. The Spirit's drawing is the freeing of the mind, the affections, and the will, from the reigning power of depravity; it is His emancipating of the soul from the dominion of sin and Satan. (A.W. Pink)

Universal redemptionists view Christ as having purchased potential but not actual salvation. Such a concept makes nothing definite in God's purpose and is contrary to Scripture: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10). Their concept makes the efficacy of redemption dependant on the will of man. Hence, it denies depravity. Depraved man does not seek salvation. To say that Christ made only a conditional purchase of man's salvation is a low view of redemption. It would leave man's actual deliverance from his sins in his own hands. This view of Christ's redemption only exalts the pride of the sinner. It would indicate that the sovereign God can do nothing until depraved man lets him. (W.E. Best)

Whatever else may be said, God's sovereignty over the human will includes His initiating, pursuing, persuading, and saving grace without which no one would ever will to be saved. For "there is no one who understands, no one who seeks after God." Again the words are specific: God initiates, God pursues, God persuades, God gives saving grace, but despite it all, man thinks the final decision is his. Thorough-going

Arminianism says, God wills to save man, but unless man wills to save himself, he will not be saved. In this system, man determines the shape and form of actions in time, and God passively “determines” that it should be so. Obviously, this indicates a priority of the free choices of men: the list of the elect seemingly is made up of those who vote for themselves. God is not presented as the free and sovereign Elector, but the one who responds to the free choices of men. Reformation theology, however, is not based on the freedom of creatures, but on the freedom of the Creator. (J. White)

If we are as desperately lost in sin as the Bible says we are, then no one can come to God, choose God, or even believe on Jesus Christ and be saved – unless God first makes that person alive in Christ and draws him. But this is what troubles many. It does not seem consistent with what they know of their ability to choose what they want to choose and reject what they want to reject. This is probably the root view of most people today, including many Christians. But it is faulty because it limits the nature and scope of sin and because it leads to a denial of the necessity of God’s unmerited grace in salvation. When confronted with God, the mind of a sinner never thinks that God’s way is good. The will is free to choose God. Nothing is stopping it. But the mind does not regard submission to and service of God as desirable. Rather, it turns from God, even when the gospel is presented most winsomely. It turns away because it does not want God to be sovereign over it. It does not consider the righteousness of God to be the way to personal fulfillment or happiness. It does not want its sinfulness exposed. Therefore, unless God changes the way we think – which He does by the miracle of the new birth – our minds always tell us to turn from God. (J. Boice)

Rom. 3:11 There is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) none (Neg. Adv.; unbelievers) who understands (συνίημι, PAPtc.NSM, Static, Substantival, Articular; comprehends, has an insight into; spiritual blindness, total ignorance of Bible doctrine); there is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) not one (Neg. Adv.; unbelievers) who seeks after (ἐκζητέω, PAPtc.NSM, Static, Substantival, Articular) the God (Acc. Dir. Obj.; unbelievers have no spiritual momentum).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:11** οὐκ ἔστιν συνίων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκζητῶν τὸν θεόν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:11** non est intellegens non est requires Deum

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:12** Everyone [unbelievers] has turned aside [avoided the truth]. At the same time, they have become depraved. There is none [unbelievers] who attains integrity [according to divine standards], not even one.

^{KW} **Rom. 3:12** All turned aside; all to a man became useless. There is not the one who habitually does goodness; there is not as much as one.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:12** They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every unbeliever has shunned and avoided (Latin: declined) the truth (Culminative Aorist tense). At the same time, they have all become depraved (Culminative Aorist tense), totally unprofitable and useless. There is (Gnomic Present tense) not one single unbeliever who has attained (Perfective Present tense) integrity according to divine standards, not even one. Paul concludes all men under sin, all men under total depravity, and he does not allow one single exception.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Hebrew counterpart means to go bad, become sour like milk. (Lightfoot) Nowhere is the depravity of human nature more painfully shown than in the exercise of the human will. (C. Irwin) This passage of Scripture explicitly tell us that no one seeks after God. No doubt there is a verse that commands us, Seek ye the Lord; but the trouble is that no one obeys this command. Men ought to seek God, but no one does in his sinful condition. To put it quite plainly, no unregenerate person ever wants to be born again. (G. Clark)

Who is it who wills to come? The answer is, No one, except those in whom the Holy Spirit has already performed the entirely irresistible work of the new birth, so that, as a result of this miracle, the spiritually blind eyes of the natural man are opened to see God's truth, and the depraved mind of the sinner, which in itself has no spiritual understanding, is renewed to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. (J. Boice) It doesn't mean we cannot be of benefit to society; it means that no one can do anything of spiritual or eternal value. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:12 Everyone (Subj. Nom.; unbelievers) has turned aside (ἐκκλίνω, AAI3P, Culminative; shunned, avoided). At the same time (Loc. Time; coincidental), they have become depraved (ἀχρειόω, API3P, Culminative, Deponent; useless, worthless, unprofitable). There is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnomic) none (Neg. Adv.; unbelievers) who attains (ποιέω, PAPtc.NSM, Perfective, Substantival; performs) integrity (Acc. Dir. Obj.; divine good, virtue), not even (Emphatic Conj. of Degree & Measure) one (Acc. Dir. Obj.; unbeliever).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:12** πάντες ἐξέκλιναν ἅμα ἠχρεώθησαν· οὐκ ἔστιν ποιῶν χρηστότητα οὐκ ἔστιν ἕως ἐνός

^{VUL} **Romans 3:12** omnes declinaverunt simul inutiles facti sunt non est qui faciat bonum non est usque ad unum

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:13** Their [unbelievers] vocal chords [words] are a tomb which has been opened [verbal sins]. They repeatedly practice deceit with their tongues [maligning, slandering]. The venom of cobras [deadly verbal toxin] is upon their lips,

κω **Rom. 3:13** Their throat is a grave that stands open. With their tongues they continually were deceiving. Asps' poison is under their lips;

κῆν **Romans 3:13** Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The unbeliever's vocal chords, a metonym for the words they speak, are an open tomb. In other words, their verbal sins are so foul that they smell like a dead and purrifying body inside a tomb. Sins of the tongue seem to be glossed over in many Christian circles today, but they are a serious sin according to divine norms and standards. Unbelievers also constantly practice deceit (Iterative Imperfect tense) with their tongues. There is no end to the flattery, slander, gossiping and maligning which unbelievers engage in. Although not addressed directly in this verse, the same conclusion can be drawn about Christians.

The deadly poisonous venom of an Egyptian cobra or asp is upon the unbeliever's lips. You don't see the fangs of a cobra until they strike you; then you feel the pain. The verbal attack of an unbeliever is being compared to the secretive, deadly attack of a cobra. This could be what we refer to as being "blindsided" by the antagonistic and hateful speech of a personal enemy. It's actually worse to be struck by surprise, than to know such deadly character assassinations are coming from an unknown quarter. While this is directed primarily to unbelievers, it should also serve as a warning to believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The depraved individual is inwardly corrupt. His throat is likened to a grave containing the unsealed remains of the dead. His tongue may charm, but it is deceitful. The unsaved person's mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Its fullness signifies that there is room for nothing else. Poison is manifested in the areas of vocabulary, literature, politics, and religion. The influence of an unsaved person continues to spread, like waves caused by a thrown rock in a placid lake, until it reaches the shore of eternity. (W.E. Best)

The full import of "Stink like a newly opened grave" can only be appreciated in hot climates like the Middle East. (K. Wuest) The sugared tongue, which is used to butter up the boss, is next listed by Paul as characteristic of sinful people. The apostle indicts the world for the Madison Avenue approach to life, which makes something out of nothing and promises what cannot be performed. Deceit, even in simple advertising or in making personal claims, is deceit nonetheless, and it is evidence of humankind's unrighteousness. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:13 Their (Poss. Gen.; the unbeliever's) vocal chords (Subj. Nom.; *metonymy* for the words spoken; throat, larynx) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) a tomb (Pred. Nom.; grave, sepulcher) which has been opened (ἀνοίγω, Perf.PPtc.NSM,

Consummative, Attributive; reference to the 'sins of the tongue'). They repeatedly practice deceit (δολιόω, Imperf.AI3P, Iterative) with their (Poss. Gen.) tongues (Instr. Means; gossip, slander, flattery, maligning). The venom (Subj. Nom.; poison, deadly toxin) of cobras (Descr. Gen.; asps) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) upon their (Poss. Gen.) lips (Loc. Place; you don't see their fangs until they strike you),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:13** τάφος ἀνεωγμένος ὁ λάρυγξ αὐτῶν ταῖς γλώσσαις αὐτῶν ἐδολιοῦσαν ἰδὸς ἀσπίδων ὑπὸ τὰ χεῖλη αὐτῶν·

^{VUL} **Romans 3:13** sepulchrum patens est guttur eorum linguis suis dolose agebant venenum aspidum sub labiis eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:14** Whose mouth is full of cursing [hatred and revenge motivation] and bitter words [verbal animosity and harshness].

^{KW} **Rom. 3:14** Whose mouth is full of imprecations and bitterness;

^{KJV} **Romans 3:14** Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The unbeliever's mouth is full of (Perfective Present tense) cursing and bitter words. This cursing is evil modus operandi, fueled by hatred and revenge motivation. Bitter words are the result of inner animosity and harshness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To inflict suffering is a delight to the malignant. This is a revelation of a nature truly diabolical. (C. Hodge) From men so utterly bereft of truth, one can expect nothing but falsehood. Within is only corruption, and as a natural consequence smooth deception is the mark of all they say. (J. Knox) The reference to cursing and bitterness may well mean that in the process of attempting to deceive their neighbors, people will at times perjure themselves; that is, they will pronounce bitter curses upon themselves, to be poured out if what they say turns out not to have been true. (W. Hendricksen)

Rom. 3:14 whose (Poss. Gen.) mouth (Subj. Nom.) is full of (γέμω, PAI3S, Perfective) cursing (Noncompl. Acc.; revenge, hatred, evil modus operandi) and (connective conj.) bitter words (Noncompl. Acc.; animosity, anger, harshness);

^{WHO} **Romans 3:14** ὦν τὸ στόμα ἀρᾶς καὶ πικρίας γέμει

^{VUL} **Romans 3:14** quorum os maledictione et amaritudine plenum est

LWB **Rom. 3:15** Their feet are swift to shed blood [commit murder].

KW **Rom. 3:15** Their feet are swift to pour out blood.

KJV **Romans 3:15** Their feet *are* swift to shed blood:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Their feet, representing the whole man, are in a great hurry (Latin: velocity) to use violence (Dramatic Aorist tense) to gain their objectives. This includes committing murder to advance their political objectives if necessary.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The depraved person is outwardly corrupt. His feet are swift to shed blood. Murders have continued since Cain murdered Abel, and they will continue until Jesus Christ comes as King and demonstrates His victory. The ways of the unredeemed are opposite from peace which is found only in the way. They know no peace, and they have no reverential fear of God. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:15 their (Poss. Gen.) feet (Subj. Nom.; *synecdoche*, the feet represent the whole man) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) swift (Pred. Nom.; quick) to shed (ἐκκέω, AAIInf., Dramatic, Substantival, Subject of a Verb, Purpose clause) blood (Acc. Dir. Obj.; commit murder; they use violence to advance their political objectives);

WHO **Romans 3:15** ὅξεις οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν ἐκκέαι αἷμα

VUL **Romans 3:15** veloces pedes eorum ad effundendum sanguinem

LWB **Rom. 3:16** Historical disaster [ruin] and personal suffering [misery & distress] are in their paths [their journey in life].

KW **Rom. 3:16** Destruction and misery are in their paths.

KJV **Romans 3:16** Destruction and misery *are* in their ways:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Historical disaster and personal suffering are going to be the major part of their journey in life. The unbeliever who lives a life without God will face destruction, ruin, misery and distress all his life. This principle of cursing by association may also expand to his family and community.

At the highest level, the nation that operates without God will likewise face destruction and misery.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Wherever they go they leave a trail of woe and destruction. (Denney) The five cycles of discipline have been put into effect. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Without a changed nature, human beings naturally labor to destroy and ruin one another. (J. Boice)

Rom. 3:16 Historical disaster (Subj. Nom.; ruin, destruction) and (connective conj.) personal suffering (Subj. Nom.; misery, distress, trouble) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) in their (Poss. Gen.) paths (Loc. Place; modus operandi of a nation without God; their journeys in life);

^{WHO} **Romans 3:16** σύντριμμα καὶ ταλαιπωρία ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:16** contritio et infelicitas in viis eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:17** **In fact, they have not understood the way of prosperity [peace, intimate relationship with God].**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:17** The road of peace they did not know.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:17** And the way of peace have they not known:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The unbeliever, and by way of application the reversionistic believer, have not understood (Constative Aorist tense) the path of prosperity. The path, road or way of peace and prosperity is precise, according to God's plan. The precise road is a relationship with the Lord. That relationship is positional, when the unbeliever is regenerated and believes in Christ. It is experiential, when the born-again believer follows divine protocol, growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Having no peace themselves, they disrupt the peace of other people. Such is a just description of man's ferocity, which fills the world with animosities, quarrels and hatred in the private connections of families and neighborhoods; and with revolution, wars and murders among nations. The most savage animals do not destroy so many of their own species to appease their hunger, as man destroys of his fellows to satiate his ambition, revenge or cupidity. (J. Boice) The United Nations and other peace oriented agencies are doomed to failure, because humankind is a ferocious animal. Rarely will the most savage of animals destroy its own species to appease its

hunger, but humans destroy fellow humans for much less. The world is filled with animosity, hatred, terrorists, and murderers. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:17 In fact (adjunctive), they have not (neg. adv.) understood (γινώσκω, AAI3P, Constative) the Way (Acc. Dir. Obj.; God's protocol plan) of prosperity (Descr. Gen.; peace, harmony, tranquillity; refers to a relationship with the integrity of God).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:17** καὶ ὁδὸν εἰρήνης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:17** et viam pacis non cognoverunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:18** **There is no fear of God before their eyes.**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:18** There is not a fear of God before their eyes.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:18** There is no fear of God before their eyes.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There is no fear or respect of God before their eyes, both personally and nationally. This is primarily a personal indictment of unbelievers, but with extended application to entire nations of unbelievers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Their borrowed interest in morality and charity is a poor commendation in view of their fallen and Christ-rejecting attitude before God. (L.S. Chafer) The apostle terminates his description by exposing the source from whence they all flow, which is, that men are destitute of the fear of God; His fear is not before their eyes to restrain them from evil. They love not His character, not rendering to it that veneration which is due; they respect not His authority. Such is the state of human nature while the heart is unchanged. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 3:18 There is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) no (Neg. Adv.) fear (Pred. Nom.; respect, awe) of God (Obj. Gen.) before (Improper prep.; in the presence of) their (Poss. Gen.) eyes (Gen. Place; both personally and nationally).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:18** οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος θεοῦ ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:18** non est timor Dei ante oculos eorum

LWB Rom. 3:19 Now we understand that what the [Mosaic] law says, it communicates to those under the jurisdiction of the law [Jews], so that every mouth [including Gentile legalists] might be stopped, and all the world might become accountable to God.

kw Rom. 3:19 But we know absolutely that whatever things the law says, it says to those within the sphere of the law, in order that every mouth may be closed up and the whole world may become liable to pay penalty to God.

KJV Romans 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now we completely understand (Gnomic Perfect tense) that what the Mosaic law says (Historical Present tense), it communicates to those under the jurisdiction of the law. This is a primary reference to Jews, but it also applies toward Gentile legalists who embrace the law even though the law was never given to them by God. In either case, Jew or Gentile, the law imposes itself upon unbelievers and cuts them off (Dramatic Aorist tense) from the grace of God. The entire world, a reference to all those who place themselves under the jurisdiction of the law, thereby become (Culminative Aorist tense) answerable to God. When they fail the law they have placed themselves under, He is the One Who renders judgment upon them for their failure. Paul is sealing up all means of escape from the gospel of grace. Those who retreat to the law for comfort and salvation fail in their attempt and end up judged by God like those without the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Stopping mouths is a difficult business. (A.T. Robertson) The law reveals sin, condemns the sinner, is a pedagogue that leads us to Christ, and is a revelation of the Divine character, attributes, and will. (J. Barmby) Total fulfillment of the law cannot produce salvation. Observing the law cannot remove a person from the cloud of condemnation which results from being under sin. That is not the way to a restored relationship with the Creator, because the law, even if adhered to, is not sufficient to resist the power of sin. The law provides the knowledge of sin, but no rescue from it. It is a diagnosis, not cure. (J. Edwards)

God will not be blamed by the unsaved for their condemnation, for God's justice will be admitted by all; the saved will claim no merit, for God's grace will be admitted by all. (A. Custance) When the evidence against the universal sinfulness and guilt of humankind is presented and the opportunity for defense comes, there will be no defense. "That every mouth may be closed" is indicative of how little will be said in our defense. The mouth of the immoral person will be closed. The mouth of the moral person and religious person will also be shut. Even the mouth of the cursing and bitter person will be stopped. The figure used is dramatic, fear-inspiring, unforgettable. Everybody is standing in front of God, the Judge. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 3:19 Now (Transitional particle) we understand (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Gnostic) that what (correlative relative pronoun) the law (Subj. Nom.; the Mosaic Law) says (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical), it communicates (λαλέω, PAI3S, Historical; speaks) to those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) under the jurisdiction of the law (Loc. Sph.), so that (Purpose clause) every (Nom. Spec.) mouth (Subj. Nom.) might be stopped (φράσσω, APSubj.3P, Dramatic, Purpose; closed, shut; cut off any system of law that might impose itself upon the grace of God), and (connective conj.) all (Nom. Spec.) the world (Subj. Nom.) might become (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Purpose, Deponent) accountable (Pred. Nom.; answerable, liable to judgment or punishment, guilty) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:19** Οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ὅσα ὁ νόμος λέγει τοῖς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ λαλεῖ ἵνα πᾶν στόμα φραγῆ καὶ ὑπόδικος γένηται πᾶς ὁ κόσμος τῷ θεῷ·

^{VUL} **Romans 3:19** scimus autem quoniam quaecumque lex loquitur his qui in lege sunt loquitur ut omne os obstruatur et subditus fiat omnis mundus Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:20** **Therefore, by the works [deeds] of the law, no flesh [person] shall be justified at His presence [at the Great White Throne], for the full knowledge of sin is through the law.**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:20** Wherefore, out of works of law there shall not be justified any flesh in His sight, for through law is a full knowledge of sin.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Nobody will ever be justified (Gnostic Future tense) by the works of the law. The purpose of the law was never to vindicate or declare a man righteous. The purpose of the law was to pronounce the Jewish man guilty under sin. The place where those who embrace the law hope to be justified is at the Great White Throne judgment. They are going to be sorely surprised, for the law will not justify them before the Lord, but will instead condemn them. When you combine the Mosaic law with all the rites and prohibitions given to Israel in the Pentateuch, you can immediately understand why Paul used the Greek word “epignosis” for the “full knowledge” of sin.

“Epignosis” means clear and exact knowledge of something, in this case, sin. It is a knowledge that goes beyond simple “gnosis,” which is knowledge that is not fully understood or believed and is not available for efficient use or application. “Epignosis knowledge powerfully influences the form of the religious life, and hence contains more

of the element of personal sympathy than simple gnosis knowledge. Hence the knowledge of sin here is not mere perception, but an acquaintance with sin which works toward repentance, faith, and holy character.” (M. Vincent)

The purpose of the law was to provide Israel with the full knowledge of sin, so they might turn to Jesus Christ as represented (types) in the sacrifices, furniture of the tabernacle, garments of the priesthood, etc. Jews were, of course, supposed to use the law as phase I of their evangelistic endeavors to condemn Gentiles of their sin as well. They failed miserably in this responsibility, so we now have the Church Age dispensation. Whether used to convict Jews or Gentiles, the purpose of the law is not to justify anyone before God, but to condemn everyone under sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The effect of law universally is rebellion to it. (I Cor. 15:56) After mounting up to heaven, as it were, in personal grasp and use of the truth of justification by faith apart from all works, then the Reformers put Christians back under Moses as a "rule of life," under law. (W.R. Newell) The law has absolutely nothing to do with living the Christian way of life. The law has absolutely nothing to do with experiential sanctification. (LWB) Only by spiritual blindness and distortion of the most aggravated type can justification by works ever be entertained or proposed in any form or to any degree. (J. Murray) The law has several functions, but the one thing it cannot do is make a woman or man righteous before God. Instead, it reveals them guilty. (J.M. Boice)

The reality of sin has many witnesses. The law of God was given to uncover the fact of sin. The law is a standard to measure man's shortcomings. It is the scale on which man must weigh his deficiency, a looking glass which shows man his sinfulness, a stethoscope which shows the condition of man's heart, a rule which evidences man's crookedness, an officer which demands man's condemnation, and a judge that condemns man to death for his disobedience. (W.E. Best) The law of the Gentiles, the law of nature, the law of morality, the law of conscience, the Law of Moses – none can justify a person and make him or her righteous in the sight of God. Even the law of Christ, laid down in the Sermon of the Mount, cannot justify anyone. The Law can convict men and women of sin, and it can define sin, but it cannot emancipate them from sin. Only the grace of God can do that. (W. Kroll)

God never gave the law of Moses with the thought that anyone would ever keep it, and the Lord Jesus never gave the Sermon on the Mount with the thought that anyone would ever live by it in perfection. In fact, the law was not even a goal to aim at. The law was a standard that was given in order to convince men of their own hopeless incapacity, so that they might come to God in grace. (D.G. Barnhouse) Commands are given, not because any man can obey them, but in order to convince man that he is a sinner. Let him try to obey and he will find he cannot. When a man discovers this, he will be more willing to see the need of divine grace. (G. Clark)

Rom. 3:20 **Therefore** (Inferential conj.; *aetiologia*, rendering a reason for what is said), **by the works** (Abl. Means; deeds) **of the law** (Descr. Gen.), **no** (Nom. Spec.; not any) **flesh** (Subj. Nom.; *synecdoche* which represents mankind) **shall be justified** (δικαιῶ, FPI3S, Gnostic; vindicated, declared righteous) **at His** (Poss. Gen.) **presence** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; in His sight, Great White Throne), **for** (paratactic causal sentence) **the full knowledge** (Subj. Nom.) **of sin** (Obj. Gen.) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **through the law** (Abl. Means & Agency).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:20** διότι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ διὰ γὰρ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας

^{VUL} **Romans 3:20** quia ex operibus legis non iustificabitur omnis caro coram illo per legem enim cognitio peccati

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:21** Now, as a matter of fact [real, not hypothetical], the righteousness of God [justification as the free gift of eternal life] apart from the law has been revealed, having been witnessed by the law and the prophets [OT canon],

^{KW} **Rom. 3:21** But now, apart from the law, God's righteousness has been openly shown as in view, having witness borne to it by the law and the prophets.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now Paul introduces a real situation as opposed to the hypothetical ones he has been communicating. The righteousness of God apart from the law has been made known (Consummative Perfect tense). Justification, as the free gift of eternal life, is the same word in the Greek as "righteousness." Paul is revealing this free gift of justification during the Church Age, its already having been witnessed (Historical Present tense) by the law and the prophets in the OT canon.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God's righteousness has been manifested in Christ in a different way, and on a different principle, from that of law. The principle of law is to enjoin and forbid, and to require complete obedience; but law, even as exhibited in the Divine law of the Jews, has been shown to fail to enable man to thus attain to righteousness. Therefore, apart from this exacting principle, the righteousness of God is now revealed to man, embracing him in itself. (J. Barmby) Every time a man took his sacrifice to the temple for a sin offering, confessed his sin, and killed the animal, he was testifying that he had faith in a

righteousness that was not his own. Thus the Law bears witness to an external righteousness that God provides but the Law itself cannot provide. (W. Kroll)

Paul nowhere claims that law, rightly understood, was ever a means of salvation. It had a preparatory and subordinate function to reveal sin, and thereby to lead one to Christ. But that salvation had always been intended by faith is evinced in the case of Abraham, who even before the law was given, was promised righteousness by faith. (J. Edwards) This God kind of righteousness is “apart from law” of any kind and all of grace, as he will show in verse 24. But it is not a new discovery on the part of Paul, but witnessed by the law and the prophets, made plain continuously by God Himself. (A.T. Robertson)

Rom. 3:21 Now (Adv. of Time; also), as a matter of fact (Adv. introducing a real situation), the righteousness (Subj. Nom.; divine integrity) of God (Poss. Gen.; justification as the free gift of eternal life) apart from (Adv. Sep.) the law (Abl. Sep.) has been revealed (φανερώω, Perf.PI3S, Consummative; manifested, made known), having been witnessed (μαρτυρέω, PPpTc.NSF, Historical, Circumstantial) by the law (Abl. Source; O.T. canon) and the prophets (Abl. Source),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:21** Νυνὶ δὲ χωρὶς νόμου δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:21** nunc autem sine lege iustitia Dei manifestata est testificata a lege et prophetis

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:22** **That is, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ [Who voluntarily submitted to the humiliation of the cross] to all those who believe (for there is no distinction [between Jew and Gentile],**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:22** Indeed, God’s righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, for there is not a distinction,

^{KJV} **Romans 3:22** Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ refers to His voluntary submission to the humiliation of the cross. This verse is about the “faithfulness” of Christ and has nothing to do with our “faith” in Him. His righteousness or justification is to all those who believe (Descriptive Present tense), both Jews and Gentiles. In the dispensation of the Church Age there is (Static Present tense) no distinction between the two groups of people.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We have customarily read these familiar passages as though they were speaking about *our* faith in Jesus Christ. The phrase is correctly rendered, "the faithfulness of the Son of God." (Dana & Mantey) Paul elaborates on the phrase "from faith to faith" that he used in Romans 1:17 - the righteousness of God which is *by* faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all *them that believe*. The first faith is Christ's; the second faith is ours. His faith is joined with our faith to effect justification. Christ's faith is ratified by our confession of faith. (J. Murray) God as judge pronounces a verdict of acquittal upon a guilty party, thereby reckoning or imputing to that party a quality which it does not possess on its own, nor can it possess apart from God's pronouncement. (J. Edwards)

The righteousness of God is through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ who is the object of saving faith. As stated in Romans 1:16, the gospel being the power of God unto salvation proves the gospel does not come to mankind in general to inform them of a new objective state of affairs. It invades in the same manner as the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ invades the elect. (W.E. Best) Note that the righteousness of God which is imputed to us is not described as being the result of our faith in Jesus Christ. Rather, the correct rendering is "The righteousness of God which is through the faithfulness of Him" ... that is, through His faithfulness. (A. Custance)

The variation of the preposition is a skillful way of condensing thought, each preposition adding a new idea. Paul is especially fond of this form of idiom, called *condensation by variation*. (A.T. Robertson) At the moment of salvation, God imputes His own righteousness to every believer, and declares each believer justified, vindicated, and acceptable to the absolute standards of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The channel through which we may obtain this righteousness is the faith of Jesus Christ. He alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith. (A.E. Knoch)

The original Greek could be rendered "through the faith of Jesus Christ," implying that righteousness comes from Christ's faithfulness rather than the believer's faith in Him. (J. Edwards) It is called the righteousness of faith, because faith is the only instrument which God is pleased to employ in applying His righteousness. It is not called the righteousness of any other grace but of faith; we never read of the righteousness of repentance, of humility, of meekness, or of charity. Justification belongs solely to faith, and faith is the gift of God. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 3:22 **That is** (ascensive conj.; even), **the righteousness** (Subj. Nom.) **of God** (Poss. Gen.) **through the faithfulness** (Instr. Means & Intermediate Agency) **of Jesus Christ** (Subj. Gen.; Who voluntarily submitted to the humiliation of the Cross) **to all** (Acc. Spec.) **those** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **who believe** (πιστεύω, PAptc.APM, Descriptive, Substantival), **[for there is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) **no distinction** (Pred. Nom.; difference; between Jew and Gentile),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:22** δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν διαστολή

^{VUL} **Romans 3:22** iustitia autem Dei per fidem Iesu Christi super omnes qui credunt non enim est distinctio

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:23** **Because everyone has sinned and continues to come short of [fails to pass the divine standards of] the glory of God),**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:23** For all sinned and are falling short of the glory of God;

^{KJV} **Romans 3:23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There is no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile, because everyone has sinned (Gnomic Aorist tense) – everyone meaning without exception. Everyone who is still alive also continues to flunk the divine standards of (Iterative Present tense) the glory of God. Man's righteousness by works does not measure up.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Have sinned” is aorist, presenting a panoramic view of the human race as doing nothing except committing sin. (K. Wuest) In a very real sense, there is nothing strange about the fact that many men perish. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. “By nature all are dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1) All are deserving of eternal death. That such men should perish is no wonder. It is a wonder of divine grace that of them any at all are saved. It is a manifestation of truly marvelous grace that out of the fallen human race God from eternity chose certain persons unto everlasting life, and that in the course of time, He imparts to those persons, dead as they are, spiritual life, by which they are enabled to receive Christ in faith and thus are saved. (R.B. Kuiper)

There is a big difference between sin and trespass. You can commit a sin and not know it. Sin is simply coming short of the appointed mark or coming short of the glory of God. The word trespass, however, means to proceed beyond a known line, to violate a known regulation or stipulation. It means to destroy a commandment willfully. God did not even impute to you what you did when you knew you ought not do it. That is good news! (K. Lamb) Human depravity is universal. It includes Jews and Gentiles. Social, cultural, educational, and financial advantages are only veneers which are removed, and all men stand alike before God. Depraved man continually comes short of God's glory. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:23 **Because** (explanatory conj.) **everyone** (Subj. Nom.) **has sinned** (ἁμαρτάνω, AAI3P, Constative, Gnomic; gathers up the whole human race into one statement) **and** (continuative

conj.) **continues to come short of** (ὕστερέω, PMI3P, Iterative; fails to pass the standards of, inferior, lacking) **the glory** (Abl. Separation) **of God** (Poss. Gen.)],

^{WHO} **Romans 3:23** πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 3:23** omnes enim peccaverunt et egent gloriam Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:24** Being justified [judicial, forensic] without payment [received as a gift] by His grace through redemption [bought from the slave market of sin by paying a ransom], the one in Christ Jesus [the only qualified kinsmen-redeemer],

^{KW} **Rom. 3:24** Being justified gratuitously by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

^{KJV} **Romans 3:24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All believers received judicial (forensic) justification (Perfective Present tense) without payment, freely, as a gift. The Passive Voice points to our complete lack of contribution to our justification; it was a gracious gift from the sovereignty and omnipotence of God. The phrase “by His grace” is Paul’s rich expression of salvation as God’s free gift. We did not earn it, we did not deserve it. Paul further describes our inability to contribute anything to our own salvation by using the Greek word “apolutrosis,” which means to buy back a slave or captive, making him free by payment of a ransom. Most translators render this word “redemption,” from the Latin.

Redemption was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ without any contribution on our part. Were you there when He died on the cross? Of course not. When you were enslaved to sin, standing on the auction block as a captive, did you contribute anything to your purchase price? Of course not. Did you ransom yourself from the slave market of sin with Christ’s assistance, or were you helpless waiting for the grace of God to reach down and pay your ransom for you? Only one Person was qualified to pay our purchase price, the Kinsmen-Redeemer. Jesus Christ was the only qualified kinsmen-redeemer Who could purchase our freedom.

Many commentators concentrate on the word “faith” in “justification by faith,” ignoring completely “by His grace.” Sovereign grace is the “means” while faith is the “instrument.” Grace comes first; without God the Holy Spirit graciously regenerating the unbelieving sinner, the gift of faith is not activated and the sinner remains lost in his sins. Once the sovereign grace of God the Holy Spirit regenerates the unbeliever, he receives the gift of saving faith, exercises it, and become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. “By His grace” means God saves sinners; sinners do not save themselves with God’s help.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There can be no doubt about this redemption. Jesus gave His life for many. There was a releasing by ransom. (A.T. Robertson) Here and in the NT generally the doctrine of atonement being required for man's justification is undoubtedly taught, viewed not only as manifesting God's righteousness in His life, and reconciling believers through His influence on them, but as *effecting* such reconciliation by an atoning sacrifice. (J. Barmby) "Freely" underscores that God's righteousness is unwarranted and determined by nothing but His sovereign will. The beneficiary has no contribution to make; he receives all and gives nothing. (J. Edwards) Not only is our justification without prior conditions being met, but, on the other hand, it is graciously given. (W. Kroll)

The word is also used in finance for the redemption of bond issues, where a company finds it possible to call some of its bonds representing indebtedness, pay the borrower, and cancel the obligation. (D.G. Barnhouse) Redemption is such that it is something that man could not do if he would, and would not do if he could. If I begin to contribute anything whatsoever to the work of redemption, then it is no longer 'good news.' Being redeemed is not predicated upon my response. It is predicated entirely upon the finished work of Jesus Christ before the Father - the blood (spiritual death) and nothing else. (K. Lamb) Propitiation is the Godward side, reconciliation is the manward side, and redemption is the sinward side - it takes all three to explain salvation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Scripture does not teach an indefinite atonement, but a definite atonement. Specifically the Scripture represents Christ's work as redemption: this implies that the people in view are *actually redeemed*. The Scripture speaks of propitiation (3:25): this term implies that God is actually appeased and that He does not deal any further in terms of His righteous anger with those who are under the benefit of propitiation. The Scripture speaks of reconciliation (5:10): this term implies that those who were estranged are actually brought back into a relationship of friendship and fellowship. What kind of redemption would this be where the redeemed are still under the power of the enemy? What kind of propitiation, where God still deals in wrath? What kind of reconciliation where estrangement continues to exist and is even sealed for eternity? These three terms, severally and jointly, bear witness to the fact that the Scripture views the work of Christ as bringing about the effectuation of salvation. (R. Nicole)

The word forms of the Greek "lutroo" (including its compound forms) are not used of all men indiscriminately, but only of believers. The noun form "lutron" teaches the releasing or setting free of those for whom it was purchased. Scripture specifically presents Christ's priestly work as accomplishing redemption for a definite people and not a hypothetical redemption which renders all mankind savable. Proof for this is attested by Scripture, such as, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people" (Luke 1:68). Perhaps a better translation would be: "Bless is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and accomplished redemption for His people." Neither Luke nor Romans teach a hypothetical or potential redemption. Can there be anything in God's

plan that is hypothetical? They teach that redemption is an accomplished fact. His plan is and must be all inclusive, otherwise God would cease to be God. (G. Long)

It must be concluded from the nature and purpose of God's everlasting covenant that Christ did not die equally or provisionally for all mankind, but He died as a substitutionary ransom for His people and for them alone. An unlimited reference into the priestly office of Christ violates the qualifications of the kinsmen-redeemer concept. The four qualifications for a kinsmen-redeemer are that he must: (1) be a near kinsman (close relative); (2) be able to accomplish the redemption; (3) be willing to redeem; (4) accomplish the redemption. Yet, if an unlimited reference is introduced into the priestly office, it would make Christ the near kinsman of the seed of the serpent, and it would have required Him to be willing to redeem them for whom the Father had not willed to give Him. In addition, the fourth qualification cannot be met at all unless one is willing to hold to universal salvation. Providing redemption does not meet the fourth qualification of a kinsman-redeemer. What kind of a redeemer is it who does not accomplish redemption? All who are orthodox in their beliefs hold that the supreme significance of Christ's sacrifice was its substitutionary nature, although many logically deny it in effect when they insist that Christ died for all mankind without exception. A substitution which does not substitute is not a substitution. Christ did not die for all mankind without exception; He gave Himself for His sheep, His friends, His people, His church, for many, for us, and for me. (G. Long)

Rom. 3:24 Being justified (δικαιόω, PPpTc.NPM, Perfective, Predicative; judicial, forensic justification) **without payment** (Adv. Acc.; freely, as a gift, undeservedly) **by His** (Poss. Gen.) **grace** (Instr. Means; Paul's rich expression of salvation as God's free gift) **through redemption** (ἀπολύτρωσις, Prep. Gen.; buying back a slave or captive, making him free by payment of a ransom), **the one** (Nom. Appos.; specifically) **in Christ Jesus** (Loc. Sph.; Jesus Christ was the only qualified kinsmen-redeemer who could purchase our freedom),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:24** δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ·

^{VUL} **Romans 3:24** iustificati gratis per gratiam ipsius per redemptionem quae est in Christo Iesu

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:25** Whom God [the Father] appointed by His blood [representative analogy for Christ's spiritual death on the cross] a mercy seat [a gift to procure expiation or propitiation] through faith [reconciliation for those who believe: the elect, His sheep], for a demonstration of His righteousness [God the Father demanded the atonement and then provided it] for the remission of sins [imputation of our sins to Jesus Christ] which were committed in former times [before the cross of Christ] under His clemency [delay of judgment],

κω Rom. 3:25 Whom God placed before the eyes of all as an expiatory satisfaction through faith in His blood for a proof of His righteousness in view of the pretermission of the sins previously committed, this pretermission being in the sphere of the forbearance of God,

KJV Romans 3:25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God the Father appointed (Constative Aorist tense) His Son, Jesus Christ, to be an expiation or propitiation for the sins of His sheep, i.e., the elect. This was accomplished by His spiritual death on the cross, shown here in the phrase “by His blood,” which is a representative analogy for His spiritual death. The gift of expiation (Latin: propitiation) is pictured by the OT translation of “hilasterios” as “mercy seat.” The use of this OT type for the spiritual death of Christ on behalf of His sheep should NOT be stretched into a pagan symbol of His literal blood being sprinkled on believers or taken to heaven in a cup!

Expiation or propitiation is often referred to as the *God-ward* side of the atonement, meaning God’s wrath against sin was expiated by Christ’s becoming sin for us and being judged on our behalf, i.e., by His spiritual death. The *man-ward* side of the atonement is often referred to as reconciliation, meaning believers are reconciled to God by Christ’s spiritual death on the cross through faith (as opposed to works). In other words, we are not reconciled by *doing* something to placate an angry God, but by believing in His Son. Christ is the mercy seat for those who believe, i.e., His sheep, the elect. The heresy of unlimited (ineffective, indecisive, indefinite) atonement finds no support in this verse.

Propitiation points to God’s wrath being turned away. Imputation points to our sins being transferred to Jesus Christ as our substitutionary sacrifice. Expiation points to our sins being wiped out. All of these concepts are contained in the word “hilasterios,” which makes its translation rather difficult. “God’s favor must be obtained. He Himself fulfills the preliminary conditions. Men can do nothing at all, they cannot so much as believe. God does all in Christ. That is the religion of Paul, and our passage in Romans is but another expression of this same mystery of salvation.” These are some of Deissmann’s words on the Greek word “hilasterios.” He spends several pages condensing his research of this word into this conclusion.

God the Father demanded the atonement and then provided it through His Son, Jesus Christ. This was done as a demonstration of His righteousness for the remission of sins. Before other blessings could be distributed from God, justification must first occur. Before justification can occur, the unbeliever must be regenerated by the Holy Spirit and provided the gift of faith. The believer’s sins are imputed to Jesus Christ, and God’s righteousness is then imputed to the believing sinner. “Remission” refers to the believer being passed over by God’s judgment on sin, because the believer’s sins were imputed to Jesus Christ and were judged on the cross.

Sin is not ignored or passed over by God entirely. The believer in Jesus Christ is not punished or judged for his sins at the Judgment Seat of Christ. However, the unbeliever's sins will be judged and punished at the Great White Throne because his sins were not taken care of on the cross. If a person never believes in Jesus Christ, his sins are never imputed to Jesus Christ and he never receives the righteousness of God. Remission means the believer is not judged; his sins were punished or judged in the Person of Christ Jesus. Unbelief is a sin. If you are a believer, your sin of unbelief was imputed to Jesus Christ. The sin of unbelief for an unbeliever is never imputed to Jesus Christ.

The cross also looked backwards. Many sins were committed by believers (Aorist Perfect tense) before the cross of Christ. These sins were "stored up," so to speak, and were judged on the cross years later. His clemency or forbearance in delaying judgment on these sins until the cross is referred to in the last phrase of this verse. Again, this propitiation, expiation, satisfaction, reconciliation and clemency is limited to believers only. If Christ is a propitiation through faith in His blood ... then those who never have faith never receive the benefits of propitiation. Their sins are not added to Christ when they believe! They were either historically imputed to Him or not. If they exercise faith, it is a foregone conclusion that their sins were imputed to Christ in the past. It is also certain that if they remain an unbeliever, their sins were not imputed to Christ on the cross.

Old Testament believers were saved because they believed in Jesus Christ who was going to die for them on the cross. Their sins were "rolled forward" every year on the day of atonement, but they were not actually "cleansed" or justified until Jesus Christ died. They looked forward in time to His coming and sacrifice. They were not justified until the Testator died. Christ is the Testator, the one Who died on the cross and executed His own will. He did not remain in the grace, but was resurrected in victory to execute His will. The OT saints were part of His will.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The important fact concerning the death of Christ is that God thought of it and planned it. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief". Christ was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God". (D.G. Barnhouse) The blood, that is, *the sacrificial death* of Jesus Christ, abolished God's anger against us, and ensured that His treatment of us for ever after would be propitious and favorable. (J.M. Boice) The blood of Jesus refers to Jesus' violent, sacrificial death. (A. Stibbs) In general, the blessings that the Scriptures show to be accomplished or achieved by the blood of Jesus are equally said to be accomplished or achieved by the death of Jesus. (D.A. Carson) We must bear in mind, of course, that when Paul speaks of "Christ's blood," he means "His life as laid down in self-dedication to God." (J. Knox) The words "by the shedding of His blood" refer to Messiah's voluntary sacrifice of His life in the place of those whom He came to save. (W. Hendriksen)

Evidence from various inscriptions point to the use of this word as “a votive offering” or “propitiatory gift.” (A. Deissmann) The meaning of the whole sacrificial ritual is there expressed as being that the life of man being forfeit to Divine justice, blood, representing life, must be offered instead for atonement. Hence, the frequent references in the NT to the physical blood-shedding of Christ, is not the material blood of Christ, shed on the cross, but it signifies to us the fulfillment in Him of the type of an atoning sacrifice. (J. Barmby) The mercy seat speaks of the atonement of Jesus Christ. It sets forth God’s righteousness. God’s mercy does not extend beyond those He chose and gave to His Son in the covenant of redemption. The mercy seat signifies that God’s justice has been satisfied. (W.E. Best)

The term “propitiation” means God’s wrath against sin, demanded by His justice, is appeased on account of the death of Christ for sinners. This propitiation implies that God is actually appeased and that he does not deal any further in terms of His righteous anger with those who are under the benefit of propitiation. What kind of propitiation would this be where God still deals in wrath? This word propitiation means *satisfaction* and *appeasement*. It is strictly limited to a definite people, namely, the elect of God. Romans 3:25 states that God set forth Christ “a propitiation through faith in His blood.” From this reference it may be observed that, if Christ is a propitiation “through faith,” He cannot be a propitiation to those who never have faith, and (II Thess. 3:2) “all men have not faith.” Propitiation is restricted in design to God’s elect. (G. Long) “Through faith in His blood” is to be understood all the sufferings of Christ, and above all, His death, by which they were consummated. (R. Haldane)

It would be unrighteous to justify any but him who believed in Jesus, or for God to be propitiated through Christ on behalf of any one who did not believe on Christ. (J.S. Exell) God appeases His own holy wrath in the cross of Christ in order that the purpose of His love to lost men may be accomplished in accordance with and to the vindication of all the perfections that constitute His glory. (J. Murray) That there must be propitiation does not indicate, primarily, that God is offended and must be appeased; but that God is holy and cannot by sinful creatures *be approached*. He is holy and cannot look upon sin. (W.R. Newell) It is somewhat difficult to understand Him Who was at once the Victim, whose blood was offered, and the High Priest who offered His own blood, at the mercy seat, as being also the Mercy Seat itself. (J. Barmby)

The part assigned to faith in the work of our reconciliation to God is that of an instrument; it apprehends or appropriates the meritorious ground of our acceptance, the work or righteousness of Christ. It is not itself that ground, nor the means of attaining an inherent righteousness acceptable to God. This is obvious, because our justification would not then be gratuitous, or without works. Paul would then teach the very reverse of the doctrine which he has been laboring to establish. These expressions cannot possibly mean that faith in Christ is, or produces, a state of mind which is acceptable to God. The ground of acceptance is outside of ourselves; it is something done for us, not something experienced, or produced in us, or performed by us. (C. Hodge) The important point in

this passage is not our justification, but God's, for it is His righteousness which we receive. (A.E. Knoch)

The blood of Christ is an expression used in obvious reference to the sacrificial character of His death. (C. Hodge) Paul uses a *metalepsis*, two metonymies, one contained in the other, but only one expressed, i.e. through faith in the merits of the atonement accomplished by it. (E.W. Bullinger) Is not the rejection of Jesus as our propitiation a sin? And if it is a sin, is it not like other sins, covered by the death of Christ? If this great sin is excepted from the expiatory (effectual covering) of Christ's blood, why does not Paul (or John) tell us so, instead of declaring without qualification that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins? And surely it would be very odd if the sin of the rejection of the Redeemer were the only condemning sin, in a world the vast majority of the dwellers in which have never heard of this Redeemer, and nevertheless perish. On what ground do they perish, all their sins having been expiated? (B. Warfield)

The consistent Calvinist who holds to a *definite atonement*, sees no purpose, benefit or comfort in a redemption that does not redeem, a propitiation that does not propitiate, or a reconciliation that does not reconcile, which would be the case if these terms were applicable to the non-elect. Neither do we have any faith in a hypothetical salvation for hypothetical believers. Rather, we have faith in a redemption which infallibly secures the salvation of each and every one for whom it was designed, namely, "the children of God that were scattered abroad", which is such a multitude of sinners declared righteous that no man can number them. (G. Long) Justification, propitiation and redemption can be seen as a triangle. Jesus Christ propitiates God the Father and redeems Christians; God the father justifies Christians. (J.M. Boice)

It is God, and not the sinner, who has provided this propitiation. The OT similarly ascribes the initiative in this matter to God's grace (Leviticus 17:11). It is an OT text like this that explains Paul's use of the expression "by His blood" in the present context and justifies the NEB interpretation of it as "by His sacrificial death." The phrase "by His blood" refers to the sacrificial death of Christ as the means by which the one effective atonement for sin has been made. (F.F. Bruce) There is a two-fold application of the blood (spiritual death) of Christ. It cleanses us of our sins and clothes us with His righteousness. (J. Murray) Paul has thus pressed into service the language of the lawcourt (justified), the slave market (redemption), and the altar (expiation, atoning sacrifice) in the attempt to do justice to the fullness of God's gracious act in Christ. (F.F. Bruce)

The syntax of "through faith in His blood" should not be construed as faith in the agency of blood. Were that Paul's meaning he would have used the preposition "eis" (into) instead of "en" (in). Paul nowhere teaches believers to trust in Jesus' blood, but in the blood of Jesus, whom God put forth as a sacrifice of atonement. (J. Edwards) Someone [those who believe in the heresy of unlimited, ineffective, indefinite atonement] who denies that Christ's death was an actual atonement must also deny that it was an actual propitiation. But what kind of propitiation would it be in which Jesus turns the wrath of God aside by His death, but in which God nevertheless pours it out on the sinner? Even

in human law there is a generally recognized principle that a crime cannot be punished twice. Legal statutes pertaining to “double jeopardy” prohibit what lawyers call “multiple penalty.” God does not punish a sin twice. Therefore, if sin was actually punished in the person of Christ by His dying for it, God cannot also punish the sinner for the same crime. (J. Boice)

The sinner is justified in the presence of God by grace. God is the performing noun in this verse. God purposed Christ as a propitiation through faith in His blood. The Father had perfect confidence in the Son’s work. Therefore, he gave the elect grace in Christ before time began. What the Son did and what the Father purposed did not fail, is not failing, and will not fail. Furthermore, the instrumental work of the Holy Spirit in applying what the Father purposed and the Son provided cannot fail. The grace of the Father purposed salvation (2 Tim. 1:9), the grace of the Son purchased salvation (2 Cor. 8:9), and the grace of the Holy Spirit applies salvation (John 3:8). Conclusively, salvation is purposed, purchased, and applied apart from the recipient’s assistance. The synergistic (cooperative) theory of regeneration is heresy. God and the sinner can never work together in either the purposing, purchasing, or applying of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. How can the sinner assist God in a re-creative work? (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:25 Whom (Nom. Appos.) God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) appointed (προτίθημι, AMI3S, Constative; set forth, displayed publicly, planned, purposed) by His (Poss. Gen.) blood (Instr. Means; representative analogy for His *spiritual death*) a mercy seat (ἱλαστήριος, Acc. Dir. Obj.; a gift to procure expiation, often called *propitiation*) through faith (Abl. Means; faith as the manward side of the equation, often called *reconciliation*; Christ is the mercy seat for those who believe, i.e. the elect), for a demonstration (Acc. Purpose; declaration) of His (Poss. Gen.) righteousness (Subj. Gen.; God the Father demanded the atonement and provided it; justification must precede all other blessings from God) for the remission (Acc. Purpose; passing over, letting go unpunished) of sins (Obj. Gen.; *imputation* of our sins to Jesus Christ, followed by the imputation of God's righteousness to the believing sinner) which were committed in former times (προγίνομαι, Perf.APtc.GPN, Aoristic, Attributive, Deponent; retroactive, sins *before* the cross of Christ) under (before, in the presence of) His (Poss. Gen.) clemency (Acc. Gen. Ref.; forbearance, delay of judgment),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:25** ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων

^{VUL} **Romans 3:25** quem proposuit Deus propitiationem per fidem in sanguine ipsius ad ostensionem iustitiae suae propter remissionem praecedentium delictorum

LWB Rom. 3:26 For the demonstration of His righteousness at this present time [during the Church Age], so that He might be just [displaying perfect integrity] even when He justifies someone [emphasis on the sovereignty of God in justification] by means of the faithfulness of Jesus [emphasis on Christ's voluntary acceptance of the cross].

KW Rom. 3:26 Also for a proof of His righteousness at the present season, with a view to His being just and the justifier of the one whose faith is in Jesus.

KJV Romans 3:26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Salvation is the same during the Church Age dispensation as it was in times past. The imputation of the righteousness of God to the believing sinner is the same now as it was in prior dispensations. There is only one way of salvation. The phrase "at this present time" refers to the remission of sins *after* the cross – for us, during the Church Age. The purpose clause that follows points to the fact that God is (Gnomic Present tense) the personification of perfect integrity even when (Temporal Participle) He sovereignly justifies (Customary Present tense) the believing sinner. This phrase places emphasis on the sovereignty of God in justification.

The phrase "by means of the faithfulness of Jesus" refers to His voluntary acceptance of the shame of the cross. It also points to Him as being the only Just Person in history, therefore, the only possible Substitute. This phrase has nothing whatsoever to do with our believing in Christ. This phrase is a portrayal not of our faithfulness or exercise of faith, but of Jesus' faithfulness on our behalf. It is a direct slap in the face to those who oppose the sovereignty of God in salvation. Sinful man does not like to hear about God's sovereignty or omnipotence. Sinful man likes to think he is in charge of his future. Sinful man tries to impugn God when He exercises His free will because man wants to think that his free will is the determining factor in justification. This is a sin of arrogance, pride and rebellion against the Creator.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Hebrews 9:12 says Christ as High Priest "entered the Most Holy Place once and for all by His own blood, *having obtained redemption*. And now by the power of the Holy Spirit He is applying that *obtained redemption*. He is not, as I have heard by someone in the past: "throwing out lottery tickets for those who have positive volition to pick and choose". This would make Hebrews 9:12 read "*not yet having obtained redemption*". (J. Reisinger)

Either Christ died as a substitute, a *satisfaction*, for the guilt and penalty of the sins of all mankind *without exception* (Arminianism) or he did not (Calvinism). The proof is manifested in the end results of redemption. Only the elect are saved. The atonement, therefore, must be definite, not indefinite. (G. Long) An indefinite atonement, therefore,

as pleaded for by some in the interests of the freeness of the gospel call, is one of the most self-contradictory and self-negating devices that can be imagined. (H. Martin)

Redemption requires the provision of a perfect righteousness and the imputation of that righteousness to sinners so that at one and the same time God is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. (E. Hulse) Sin was paid for, not condoned. Thus, the believing sinner is saved not only by the mercy of God, but by the righteousness of God, for his salvation rests upon the fact that his sins are paid for and justice has been maintained. Thus, God is just and at the same time the One who justifies the believing sinner. (K. Wuest) Justification by faith is not the subject of this chapter, but justification of the elect by the Justifier. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:26 for the demonstration (Acc. Purpose) of His (Poss. Gen.) righteousness (Obj. Gen.; the *imputation* of the righteousness of God to the believing sinner is the same now as it was in past times - there is only one way of salvation) at this present (Adv. of Time; current, immediate) time (Loc. Time; remission of sins *after* the cross - during the Church Age), so that (Purpose clause) He might be (εἰμί, PAInf., Gnostic, Purpose) just (Pred. Nom.; perfect integrity) even (ascensive) when He justifies (δικαίωω, PAPtc.ASM, Customary, Temporal; emphasis on the sovereignty of God in *justification*) someone (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the believing sinner) by means of the faithfulness (Instr. Means) of Jesus (Poss. Gen.; refers to His voluntary acceptance of the shame of the Cross; Jesus Christ was the *only* just person in history, therefore, the only possible *substitute*).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:26** ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 3:26** in sustentatione Dei ad ostensionem iustitiae eius in hoc tempore ut sit ipse iustus et iustificans eum qui ex fide est Iesu

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:27** **Consequently, where is boasting [self-righteousness]? It has been eliminated. By what kind of principle? Of works? No, rather by the principle of faith.**

^{KW} **Rom. 3:27** Where then is the glorying? It was once for all excluded. Through what kind of a law? Of the aforementioned works? Not at all, but through the law of faith,

^{KJV} **Romans 3:27** Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sums up a few things he has been discussing with a few short questions. Where is the often heard, self-righteous boasting? This is a question addressed to both legalists and those who insist they control their own salvation and destiny, not God. Such arrogant boasting has been completely eliminated (Dramatic Aorist tense), totally shut out (Latin: excluded). Salvation is of God, not man. By what principle was salvation accomplished? Was salvation attained by works? No, salvation was accomplished by the principle of faith. The translation of “nomos” as “law” in this verse is most unfortunate.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Imagine a battlefield over which troops are advancing under heavy fire. They flatten themselves to the ground and hold their prone position until the enemy artillery is silenced. For the sake of our example, we will imagine that all of the soldiers are either dead, or alive and unwounded. When the command to advance is given, he that gets up and walks has life. Does that mean that life is given to the soldiers who get up and walk, or that the soldiers who possess life manifest it by getting up and walking? It is obvious that there can only be the latter meaning. This is the exact meaning of the words in the fourth gospel: "He that hears My Word and believes on Him that sent Me, does so because he has eternal life planted within him." The hearing and believing are the marks of the existence of the new life of God implanted within the individual. (D. Barnhouse)

When this is understood, we can realize that there is no struggle between God and Satan for the possession of man's soul. God is irresistible, and everything that He has planned will come to pass. Satan can never, under any circumstance, frustrate the grace of God. [Neither can man]. What God has promised He will perform. God promised Christ before the foundation of the world that He would give to Him the *whole body* of those who had been thus chosen in eternity, and Christ Himself declared: "All that the Father has given Me shall come to Me, and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." (D.G. Barnhouse) Such a deliverance, entirely on the ground of grace, bars all boasting, unless it be in Christ and in His God, Who has become our Justifier. (A.E. Knoch)

Christ occupies a unique position as God's representative with man and man's representative with God. As the representative man He absorbs the judgment incurred by human sin; as the representative of God He bestows God's pardoning grace on men and women. (F.F. Bruce) Boasting is excluded. We are saved by grace through faith – and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8-9). We do not even contribute our own saving faith. And so boasting is excluded indeed. (A. Custance) Here “law” in both instances must mean “system,” “principle,” “method,” “order,” or “rule.” (J. Murray) Paul uses the word “law” here in the sense of a governing principle, somewhat we speak of as the laws of nature. (C. Scott)

Rom. 3:27 Consequently (Inferential particle), where (Interr. Adv. of Place) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) boasting (Pred. Nom.; self-righteousness)? It has been eliminated (ἐκκλείω, API3S, Dramatic; excluded, completely shut out). By what kind of (Qualitative Interr. pronoun)

principle (Abl. Means; law, standard)? Of works (Descr. Gen.)? No (simple negative), rather (contrast; instead) by the principle (Abl. Means; law, standard) of faith (Descr. Gen., Attributive).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:27** Ποῦ οὖν ἡ καύχησις ἐξεκλείσθη διὰ ποίου νόμου τῶν ἔργων οὐχὶ ἀλλὰ διὰ νόμου πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 3:27** ubi est ergo gloriatio exclusa est per quam legem factorum non sed per legem fidei

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:28** Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from [without the assistance of] the works of the law.

^{KW} **Rom. 3:28** For our reasoned conclusion is that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:28** Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a mathematical term for calculating or reckoning, after thinking something through from one end to the other. He concludes after careful calculation (Gnomic Present tense) that a man is justified (Descriptive Present tense) by means of faith without the assistance of the works of the law. The passive voice points to justification being something that is passively received by a believer, as is pointed out in other verses when it is said to be “by means of sovereign grace.” The means of salvation is grace; the instrument of salvation is faith. Both the means and the instrument are in stark contrast to (Genitive of Separation) works of the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is by faith alone, and not by legal works, or by any other fancied means of justification, that men and women receive the righteous status which God by His grace bestows. When this is grasped, it can be seen that they have no ground for self-congratulation as they contemplate the way of salvation: it is sola gratia, sola fide, soli Deo Gloria - by grace alone, through faith alone, to God alone be the glory. (F.F. Bruce) Faith does not justify as an act of righteousness, but as the instrument by which we receive Christ and His righteousness. Believers are said to be justified BY faith and OF faith and THROUGH faith, but never ON ACCOUNT OF faith. (R. Haldane) On this subject, to teach us would not have been enough; it was necessary that the Holy Spirit should loudly thunder, in order to lay prostrate our loftiness. But he says that glorying is beyond all doubt excluded, for we cannot adduce anything of our own, which is worthy of being approved or commended by God. (J. Calvin)

Faith and justification differ in nature. Righteousness is the ground of acceptance before God, and faith is simply the instrument of embracing and resting in the righteousness of God. Since justification is a sentence that passed in the mind of God from eternity and passed on Jesus Christ in the covenant, faith is not first. It is not the efficient cause because God, and not faith, justifies. The moving cause is the free grace of God. The substance of justification is Jesus Christ. The relation of faith to justifying righteousness in no way indicates that faith itself is that righteousness. Faith is the experience of the individual appropriating what the Father has declared. The Father's declaration, not the believer's faith, gives the believer assurance. Regeneration is inseparable from its effects, one of which is faith. Without regeneration none can savingly believe in Jesus Christ. Moreover, the regenerated cannot do other than believe in Jesus Christ because the objective message flows through the subjective faith that was given him in regeneration, and he experiences conversion. Regeneration is the act of God. Subjective faith is the act of the regenerated person in the power of the Holy Spirit. One cannot believe he is justified until he has been justified. He cannot reason himself into justification. That is the reason objective faith must flow through subjective faith. The testimony of objective truth to the finished work of Jesus Christ gives basis to one's confidence and assurance. God-given faith does not come through hearing God's word. Faith is the fruit of regeneration. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:28 Therefore (Inferential particle), we conclude (λογίζομαι, PMIIIP, Gnostic, Deponent; reckon, calculate) that a man (Subj. Acc.) is justified (δικαιόω, PPIInf., Descriptive, Dir. Obj. of a Verb) by faith (Instr. Agency, Means) apart from (Improper Adv., separated from, without the activity or assistance of) the works (Gen. Separation) of the law (Descr. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:28** λογίζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιούσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου

^{VUL} **Romans 3:28** arbitramur enim iustificari hominem per fidem sine operibus legis

LWB Rom. 3:29 **Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, even of the Gentiles.**

KW Rom. 3:29 Or, of Jews is He God? Is He not also of Gentiles? Yes, also of Gentiles,

KJV Romans 3:29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with some hypothetical questions which I'm sure he was asked on occasion. Is He God of the Jews only? Isn't He also God over the Gentiles? There are no

verbs, so the interrogatives are supplied by ellipsis. The answer to the first question is not given, but a “negatory” answer is assumed because the answer to the second question is “affirmative.” Yes, He is God over both Jews and Gentiles; they are related to each other (Genitive Relationship) by way of having the same God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

For the circumstance, that God, for a time, chose for Himself a peculiar people, did not make void the origin of mankind, who were all formed after the image of God, and were to be brought up in the world in the hope of a blessed eternity. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 3:29 Is He (ellipsis, interrogative verb supplied) the God (Pred. Nom.) of the Jews (Gen. Relationship) only (Acc. Spec.)? Is He (ellipsis, interrogative verb supplied) not (simple negative) also (adjunctive) of the Gentiles (Gen. Relationship)? Yes (affirmative particle), even (ascensive) of the Gentiles (Gen. Relationship).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:29** ἡ Ἰουδαίων ὁ θεὸς μόνον οὐχὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν ναὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:29** an Iudaeorum Deus tantum nonne et gentium immo et gentium

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:30** Since it is one and the same God, Who shall justify the circumcision [Jews] by faith [source] and the uncircumcision [Gentiles] through this same faith [intermediary instrument],

^{KW} **Rom. 3:30** Assuming that there is one God who will justify the circumcision out of a source of faith and the uncircumcision through the intermediary instrumentality of faith.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:30** Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his explanation with a rhetorical particle meaning “there is no doubt.” There is no doubt that He is the God of both Jews and Gentiles. Not only that, but there is a hint of perfect harmony and agreement in the Trinity here. “One and the same” means one in essence and integrity. The main thrust of the verse, however, is that God justifies (Gnomic Present tense) both Jews and Gentiles by the same instrument: faith. Neither Jew nor Gentile is justified by works or by the law. They are both justified by the same principle of faith. Grace rules and faith is its instrument. Greek professor Kenneth Wuest translates this anomaly (in case and prepositions) by Source “out of” and Secondary Means “intermediary instrumentality.” I like that, but it seems somewhat confusing to the average reader.

The different prepositions (with the Ablative Case) are rather unusual. “Ek” usually implies separation and is translated “out from,” while “dia” usually implies instrumentality and is translated “through.” In some circumstances, when contrasting faith against works and the law, Paul uses them as a combination of instrumentality and means, i.e., using the word “by.” In some verses, the emphasis is on justification “by grace” through the “instrument of faith.” In other verses, such as here, the emphasis is on justification “by faith” as opposed to “by works of the law.” The best translation in both cases would be “through” implying Agency, but that is difficult since agency usually implies a person rather than a thing.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Ek” denotes source, “dia” intermediate agency or attendant circumstance. (A.T. Robertson) Faith does not make the law void. The law was established by the execution of its penalty, not by relieving the lawbreaker. The penalty must be paid by either Jesus Christ or the lawbreaker himself. The satisfaction of God’s divine nature was necessary so that He might look favorably upon sinful mankind. That which satisfies God involves His holy character. His holiness prohibits His looking in mercy on the ungodly. His holy law must be satisfied before His mercy and love can operate to declare the ungodly just before the law. The Lord Jesus Christ died to satisfy divine justice. (W.E. Best)

The law could not save, and yet the law was the revelation of God for that time. That the law could not save is perfectly clear. Men were saved under the law economy, but not by the law. Scripture is plain concerning this fact, here and in 2 Corinthians 3:6-7. And yet the law contained the revelation which brought men to a realization that their faith must be placed in God the Saviour. How did it do this? Primarily through the worship which it instituted through the sacrificial system. The sacrifices were part of the law; the keeping of them did not save; and yet a man could respond to what they taught so as to effect salvation. (C. Ryrie)

The seat of saving faith is the heart of the regenerated person. Justification of the elect in the presence of God is the foundation for justification by faith. Faith is not substituted for or accepted in the place of righteousness before God. Faith and righteousness must be distinguished. Faith is the act of the person who has been made righteous in the righteousness of Christ. It is the fruit of imparted righteousness. Righteousness is what Christ purchased for the elect (Rom. 5:17-19). Identifying faith with righteousness makes many passages of Scripture unintelligible. Righteousness is connected with faith, but to identify it as faith destroys the various meanings of some Greek prepositions used in connection with faith: “by faith” (Rom. 1:17), “through faith” (Rom. 3:30), “by faith” (Phil. 3:9), and “by faith” (Gal. 2:16). On the other hand, faith is through the righteousness of God. (1) Faith is brought about by the impartation of righteousness. (2) Faith is the means of embracing and understanding. (3) Faith and its fruits are imperfect, but the righteousness of God is perfect. A person is declared righteous before God, not on the basis of his imperfect faith, but on the foundation of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. (4) Faith, while directed to the righteousness of Christ, is not the righteousness of

Christ. (5) Faith is a righteous act, but it is not a perfect act. One can never be declared righteous before God by an imperfect act. Having been declared righteous by the sovereign God, justifying righteousness is revealed through faith. This is the fruit of regeneration, and the results are now unfolded. The justifying act of God is followed in time by an appropriating act of faith on the part of the one who has been justified before Divine justice. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 3:30 Since (Rhetorical particle, protasis; there is no doubt) it is (ellipsis, interrogative verb) one (in essence and integrity - perfect harmony and agreement in the Trinity) and the same (emphatic numeral) God (Pred. Nom.), Who (Subj. Nom.) shall justify (δικαίω, FAI3S, Gnostic) the circumcision (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jews) by faith (Abl. Source; "out from") and (connective conj.) the uncircumcision (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Gentiles) through this same (Adv. Gen. Ref.; ellipsis) faith (Abl. Intermediary Instrument, Gen. Attendant Circumstances),

^{WHO} **Romans 3:30** εἶπερ εἰς ὁ θεός ὃς δικαιοῦσιν περιτομῆν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 3:30** quoniam quidem unus Deus qui iustificabit circumcisionem ex fide et praeputium per fidem

^{LWB} **Rom. 3:31** Do we then make the law invalid [nullified] through faith? On the contrary! Rather, we confirm the law [it fulfills its intended purpose: to make sin exceedingly sinful].

^{KW} **Rom. 3:31** Then are we making law of none effect through this aforementioned faith? Let not such a thing be considered. Certainly, we establish the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 3:31** Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues by asking the hypothetical question: Do we then invalidate the law (Aoristic Present tense) through faith? The dramatic answer is: "Hell no!" or "God forbid!" or "Absolutely not!" Instead, we confirm (Aoristic Present tense) the law. How is this possible? The purpose of the law was never to justify, but to make sin exceedingly sinful. Justification by faith, therefore, does not nullify (Latin: destroy) the law, but allows the law to perform its intended purpose: convince unbelievers of sin because their thoughts and deeds fall short of divine norms and standards.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the present passage the word “law” is apparently used of the Torah in the most inclusive sense, implying promises as well as commandments. It means nothing less than the entire covenant of God with Israel. It is this covenant which, Paul says, his teaching about justification by faith upholds. (J. Knox) The doctrine of justification by grace through faith establishes the law by showing that the law is so high and holy that we who are sinners could never have fulfilled it. The law remains the standard and would have condemned everybody, if a way of fulfilling its requirements had not been found ... Jesus Christ as our substitute. (J. Boice)

Rom. 3:31 do we then (inferential particle, apodosis) make the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.) invalid (καταργέω, PAI1P, Aoristic & Perfective; make ineffective, nullify) through faith (Abl. Intermediary Instrument)? On the contrary (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Dramatic, Deliberative, Deponent; "May it never happen", God forbid, absolutely not, hell no)! Rather (Adversative particle), we confirm (ἵστημι, PAI1P, Aoristic; establish) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the purpose of the law was *not* to justify, but to make sin exceedingly sinful).

^{WHO} **Romans 3:31** νόμον οὖν καταργοῦμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ νόμον ἱστάνομεν

^{VUL} **Romans 3:31** legem ergo destruimus per fidem absit sed legem statuimus

CHAPTER 4

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:1** Therefore, to what conclusion are we forced? That Abraham, our forefather, obtained [justification] on the basis of the flesh [by human means only]?

^{KW} **Rom. 4:1** What then shall we say that Abraham our forefather found with reference to the flesh?

^{KJV} **Romans 4:1** What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the interrogative indicative mood to present this question: Did Abraham obtain justification (Consummative Perfect tense) by his own efforts? Is that the conclusion we are forced to accept (Deliberative Present tense) after the cogent arguments in the previous chapter? But look at all the things Abraham did in Genesis to win God’s favor. What about circumcision? What about the various covenants? Paul is being quite sarcastic, because his previous arguments squashed any idea of justification by works. The expected answer is negatory. No ceremonies, no

rituals, no works, no legal requirements are involved in justification. Nothing contributes to God's grace in salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Two distinct lines of seed were promised to Abraham. One, an earthly seed, to be like the dust of the earth without number (Gen. 13:16), was centered wholly in the earth by a relationship of physical generation. The other seed was likened to the stars of heaven without a number (Gen. 15:5), centered wholly in the heavenlies by a relationship of Spirit regeneration, which is the present answer of God to all true Abrahamic faith. The earthly people found their origin in the physical fatherhood of Abraham, while the heavenly people find theirs in the shed blood of Christ. One had an earthly history from Abraham's time to their dispersion among the Gentiles - a history which will yet be resumed and the everlasting covenants fulfilled in the faithfulness of God. The other has a transient earthly pilgrimage from the cross continuing until their completion as a separated people, when they will be caught up to meet and marry their Bridegroom, and be forever with the Lord. (L.S. Chafer)

Forensic justification is not regeneration, the impartation of life in Christ. It is not a "new heart" or a "changed heart", nor is it "making an unjust man just" in his life and behavior. It is not to be confused with sanctification, which is the state of those placed in Christ. It is a forensic declaration by God in heaven concerning a man, that he stands righteous in God's sight. (W.R. Newell) Abraham's introduction serves three purposes: first, that he was justified by faith and not by works; second, that his justification took place before he was circumcised, thus proving that righteousness is for Gentiles as well as Jews; and finally, that the promise of God to Abraham was not fulfilled through the law but through faith. Abraham was thus not only the father of Israel, he is the prototype of Christian faith. (J. Edwards)

All believers since Abraham may be considered his "children" in the sense that they are saved by faith, just as he was. The fact that our salvation is by faith, just as was Abraham's, and that we therefore are related spiritually to him, in no way dissipates the promises made to Abraham about his physical descendants possessing the Promised Land as an eternal possession. (R. Zuck) The thought is: did Abraham attain to justification with God by the energy of his own natural powers? The flesh would be parallel to "from works" in verse 2, works done in the energy of the flesh. (J. Murray) Paul uses a *prolepsis*, the answering of an argument by anticipating it before it is used. (E.W. Bullinger)

Physically, Abraham became the father of the Jewish and Arab peoples, through Isaac and Ishmael respectively. Spiritually, Abraham became the father of all true believers, both Jews and Gentiles. He is our father in faith if we have believed on Jesus. In the NT the origins of salvation are always traced to Abraham. If Paul can show that Abraham, the father of all the faithful, came into a right relationship with God by faith and not by any amount of human good works, his case is proved. Then the gospel he is expounding

is the true gospel; there can be no other. God did not look down from heaven to see whether he could find someone with a little bit of human goodness (even a little bit of human faith), on the basis of which it would be possible to save that person – and then find Abraham. How then was he saved? The answer is by God's gift of righteousness to him, which he received by faith. (J. Boice)

Rom. 4:1 Therefore (Inferential particle), to what conclusion (Interrog. pronoun, rhetorical question) are we forced (λέγω, FAI1P, Deliberative, idiomatic form)? That (Resultant particle) Abraham (Subj. Nom.; Paul's hypothetical "test case"), our (Poss. Gen.) forefather (Acc. Appos.; ancestor), obtained (εὗρησκω, Perf.AInf., Consummative, Dir. Obj. of Verb; discover, found) [justification] (ellipsis) on the basis of the flesh (Adv. Acc.; by human means only)?

^{WHO} **Romans 4:1** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν Ἀβραάμ τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα

^{VUL} **Romans 4:1** quid ergo dicemus invenisse Abraham patrem nostrum secundum carnem

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:2** For if [assume it's true] Abraham had been justified by means of works [although works have never entered into the principle of salvation in any dispensation], then he would have reason to boast [before men], but not before God [God is not impressed with human works, human personality or human good].

^{KW} **Rom. 4:2** For, assuming that Abraham was justified out of a source of works, he has ground for boasting, but not when facing God.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:2** For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The first class condition is hypothetical and means we should assume for a moment that Abraham was indeed justified (Culminative Aorist tense) by works. This is, of course, absurd, since works have never entered into the principle of salvation in any dispensation. However, for the sake of argument, if Abraham was indeed justified by works, this would allow him the opportunity, if desired (Tendential Present tense), to boast before men. Even if this were true, however, he would have no basis for boasting before God. Not only is God not impressed with human works, human personality or human good – but He supplied Abraham with His spiritual assets in the first place.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is only by spiritual blindness and distortion of the most aggravated type that justification by works could ever be entertained or proposed in any form or to any degree. (J. Murray) Through Paul's interpretation of Gen. 15:6, Abraham is wrested from the Jews as an exemplar of torah-obedience and made into an exemplar of faith. As a result, Abraham ceases to be for Paul the father of Jews exclusively, but the father of all who believe. Both Paul's insistence that justification is by faith alone and his concern for the full inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God make it necessary for him to integrate Abraham theologically into his scheme. At least, it was necessary if Paul's teaching was to have any claim to continuity with the OT. (D. Moo)

Justification is not the forgiveness of sin. The phrase "just as if I'd never sinned" is both erroneous and ridiculous. Justification is the imputation of the perfect righteousness of God to the believing sinner. Sin has already been taken care of on the cross. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It is never said that people are saved because of their faith or even on the basis of their faith. They are saved by faith. The Greek preposition is *dia* with the genitive, not the dative, and it means by faith as a channel, not the grounds of salvation. (J. Boice) Although work's justification does not give one standing before God, it does justify him before men. (W.E. Best) There is perfect liberty to mix the tenses *ad libitum* when proposing a hypothetical situation. (A.T. Robertson)

There are many verses in Scripture which teach or support that saving faith is a gift of God. Some of the key passages are: (1) "for unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29); (2) the believers at Ephesus are said to have "believed through grace" (Acts 18:27); (3) the fact that faith is said to be imputed (aorist indicative passive verb) to Abraham in Romans 4:3,9,22); (4) John 1:12-13 and James 1:18 clearly teach that the power to receive Christ comes by the will of God, which means that faith must be a gift of God, for man cannot will of himself to receive (believe, have faith in) Christ; (5) believers know that the Son of God is come because He "has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true" (1 John 5:20), and to know Christ involves saving faith; yet, the understanding spoken about here is an understanding given to us by Christ; (6) "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:2); and (7) "for by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). (G. Long)

Rom. 4:2 **For** (explanatory conj.) **if** (1st class condition, "and it's true", hypothetical, protasis) **Abraham** (Subj. Nom.) **was justified** (δικαιώω, API3S, Culminative) **by means of works** (Abl. Means; works have never entered into the principle of salvation at any age of God's dealings with men), **then** (apodosis) **he would have reason to boast** (Adv. Acc.; before men), **[but** (Adversative conj., contrast) **not** (neg. adv.) **before God]** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; sanctified sarcasm - God is not impressed with human works, human personality or human good).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:2** εἰ γὰρ Ἀβραὰμ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ἔχει καύχημα ἀλλ οὐ πρὸς θεόν

^{VUL} **Romans 4:2** si enim Abraham ex operibus iustificatus est habet gloriam sed non apud Deum

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:3** For what does the Scripture [Genesis 15:6] say? Abraham believed God and it was credited to him [put on his ledger account] because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

^{KW} **Rom. 4:3** For what does the Scripture say? Now Abraham believed God and it was put to his account, resulting in righteousness.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:3** For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What does the Scripture in Genesis 15:6 say (Static Present tense) about this matter? Abraham believed (Constative Aorist tense) God and it – faith-righteousness - was credited (Culminative Aorist tense) to him because of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Abraham trusted God to perform His promise, but this trust was not possible until Christ's righteousness had first been imputed to him. Please note that Abraham's faith was PRECEDED by righteousness ("because of"). He was justified before God because of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, not by his faith. Faith followed regeneration and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Scripture always speaks of our being justified *by* faith, or *through* faith, or *upon* faith, but never speaks of our being justified *on account of* faith or *because of* faith. The fact that the apostle refrains from such terms is itself sufficient to make us careful not to think or speak in any way which would suggest such a view of justification ... Faith is an indispensable instrumentality in connection with justification. We are justified by faith and faith is the prerequisite. (A. Murray) The Lord God Himself, by an act of grace moved by His sovereign love, stooped to the record and blotted out everything that was against Abraham, and then wrote down on the record that He, God, counted, reckoned, credited, imputed this man Abraham to be perfect even at a moment when Abraham was ungodly in himself. That is justification. (D.G. Barnhouse)

God does not pronounce the unholy to be holy. He simply declares that the demands of justice have been satisfied on behalf of those who have no righteousness of their own. In sin there are the two elements of guilt and pollution - the one expressing its relation to the justice, the other in its relation to the holiness of God, or what amounts to the same thing, the one expressing its relation to the penalty, and the other its relation to the precept of the law. When a man is declared to be just, it means he has a "righteousness" which satisfies the demands of the law. His moral character is not the ground of that declaration, and is not affected by it. (C. Hodge) Romish expositors and Arminian

Protestants make this to mean that God accepted Abraham's act of believing as a substitute for complete obedience. But this is at variance with the whole spirit and letter of the apostle's teaching. (R. Jamieson)

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." We have seen that "it" refers, not to Abraham's faith, but to the righteousness of Christ, which God credited to Abraham. We have seen this as a bookkeeping transaction. God took the sin of Abraham from the ledger book of Abraham's life and transferred it to the ledger book of Christ, Who died for such sin. And He took the righteousness of Christ from Christ's book and transferred it to Abraham. We also saw that faith is the channel through which this happens. (J. Boice) He might expect honor from men, and he might receive it, but that is a different matter from having something to boast about before God. Even the exceptional man, says Paul, cannot claim merit in the presence of God. (J. Knox)

It was not the act of believing which was reckoned to him as a righteous act, or on account of which perfect righteousness was laid to his charge, but that the fact of his trusting God to perform His promise introduced him into the blessing promised. The proffered hand of a drowning man makes it possible for the lifeguard to save him. There is nothing meritorious in the act of a drowning man in stretching out his hand in order to be saved. But it is only the efficient medium through which he is saved. God lifts him out of the mire and places him in the rock, Jesus Christ. (K. Wuest) Faith is not the ground of justification, but only the instrument. We never find Paul, nor any other of the sacred writers, referring his readers to anything in themselves, as the ground of their confidence. Paul is simply contrasting faith to works; Abraham was justified as a believer, not as a worker. (C. Hodge)

Distinction must be made between faith-righteousness and Christ-righteousness. The elect are not justified on the basis of faith-righteousness, but on the basis of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. There can be no faith-righteousness antecedent to either imputed or imparted righteousness. The latter are the cause of the former. Faith-righteousness makes no contribution to the righteousness of God that justifies. Furthermore, it can do nothing subsequent to imputed and imparted righteousness to assist in the justification of the sinner, because the justified sinner can do nothing to help obtain what he already has. Justification is by the righteousness of One and not the righteousness of two. (W.E. Best)

Paul's Jewish contemporaries understood the word "believed" as an act of faithfulness, which was itself a meritorious work. However, Abraham's faith was not a work, not a virtue, not an expression of the heroic will, but a resignation in weakness, a powerlessness in the face of overwhelming opposition to the sovereign word of God. It was God's word alone which created and determined Abraham's existence, and to which he relinquished himself by a commitment of trust. Faith is a form of poverty. It is the place where the Creator alone can and will act as such. Faith is deriving from Another what is wanting in oneself. It is an attitude of resigning and receiving. The passive voice "it was credited" is a divine passive, meaning actually "God credited it." This is an

essential nuance in Paul's argument. Righteousness was not Abraham's due, but God's determination, "the act of a gracious will." Righteousness is God's attribute, not Abraham's, and if Abraham is to participate in it he must receive it solely as a gift from the kindness of God. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 4:3 For (explanatory conj.) what (interrogative pronoun; protasis) does the Scripture (Subj. Nom.; Genesis 15:6) say (λέγω, PAI3S, Static)? "Abraham (Subj. Nom.; δέ introduces the apodosis) believed (πιστεύω, AAI3S, Constative) God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) and it (faith-righteousness) was credited (λογίζομαι, API3S, Culminative, Deponent; to his ledger account) to him (Dat. Adv.) because of righteousness" (Acc. Cause).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:3** τί γὰρ ἡ γραφή λέγει Ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 4:3** quid enim scriptura dicit credidit Abraham Deo et reputatum est illi ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:4** Now to the one who works [for justification]: a reward not credited according to grace [God's gift], but according to debt [obligation].

^{KW} **Rom. 4:4** Now, for the one who works with a definite result in view [his wages], the remuneration is not put down on his account as an undeserved, gratuitous gift,

^{KJV} **Romans 4:4** Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now to the person who continues to work for justification in a legalistic manner (Iterative Present tense), there is a reward that is due to that person by way of debt, as opposed to the grace of God. God will not be in debt to a man. Away with such nonsense! Objective justification before God is based solely on grace with no hint of obligation or debt. The legalist who is trying to take heaven by storm (by his works) is in fact rejecting God's gracious offer and is trying to place God in his debt. God will not credit (Static Present tense) justification to a man's account based on works. This theory turns divine protocol on its head.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Justification is as free, or freer, than sunlight. In judgment He will pay everyone who is entitled to wages. He will not be in debt to anyone. But when He gives He gives, and refuses to allow His gifts to be paid for, even if anyone could pay the price. (A.E. Knoch) Work's justification on the ground of imparted righteousness does not give a person standing before God. He already has that standing. (W.E. Best) The harder you work for

justification-salvation, the greater you go into debt. This is the modus operandi of the legalistic, self-righteous, arrogant human being. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The implicit “theologic” of Paul is clear: since work means the reward is given by obligation, the reward of righteousness must not be dependent on work – for God is never obliged by His creatures; justification is a gift, freely bestowed, not a wage, justly earned. That God acts toward His creatures graciously – without compulsion or necessity – is one of Paul’s nonnegotiable theological axioms. Grace is not the end point, but the beginning of his logic; from the fact of grace comes the conclusion that the faith that justifies must be a faith that is “apart from” all works. Faith for Paul is something qualitatively distinct from any human-originated endeavor. We believe, but we can take no credit for it. (D. Moo)

Rom. 4:4 Now (transitional particle) to the one (Dat. Adv.) who works (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.DSM, Iterative, Substantival, Articular, Deponent; works as a function of legalism) (for justification) (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied): a reward (Acc. Dir. Obj.) not credited (λογίζομαι, PMI3S, Static, Deponent; counted, reckoned, imputed) according to grace (Adv. Acc.; God’s gift), but (adversative conj.) according to debt (Adv. Acc.; what is due, wages for work done, obligation).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:4** τῶ δὲ ἐργαζομένῳ ὁ μισθὸς οὐ λογίζεται κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ὀφείλημα

^{VUL} **Romans 4:4** ei autem qui operatur merces non inputatur secundum gratiam sed secundum debitum

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:5** **But, to the one who does not continually work [relinquishes all human effort in obtaining justification-salvation], but who believes [an instantaneous activity] on Him [Jesus Christ] Who justifies the ungodly: his faith is credited because of [the imputation of Christ’s] righteousness.**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:5** But in the case of the one who does not work with a definite result in view [salvation] but who places his trust upon the One who justifies the person who is destitute of reverential awe towards God, there is put to his account his faith, resulting in righteousness,

^{KJV} **Romans 4:5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

To the one who does not continually work (Iterative Present tense) in order to obtain justification-salvation, his faith is credited to his account (Static Present tense) because of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. This belief is an instantaneous activity and is not repeated

again. His faith is not faith in just anything, but in the finished work of Christ (Aoristic Present tense), the One Who justifies (Customary Present tense) the ungodly.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The grace of the Father purposed salvation (2 Tim. 1:9), the grace of the Son purchased salvation (2 Cor. 8:9), and the grace of the Holy Spirit applies salvation (John 3:8). Conclusively, salvation is purposed, purchased, and applied apart from the recipient's assistance. The application of grace is as free as electing and purchasing grace. Grace is not free unless it is free in its application. The synergistic (cooperative) theory of regeneration is heresy. God and the sinner can never work together in the purposing, purchasing, or applying of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. How can the sinner assist God in a re-creative work? A non-creative means cannot be associated with a creative antecedent. That means a sinner cannot be associated with God in the application of salvation. God justified the elect sinner on the basis of His own faith, assurance, and confidence in the work of His Son. (Rom. 8:33) A person cannot be justified by his faith, because faith is active, and justification before God is passive. His active faith is the fruit of being justified before God. Believing does not regenerate. Therefore the person acting is not acting in the new birth. (W.E. Best)

"Ungodly" is an *ampliatio*, a retaining of an old name after the reason for it is passed away. (E.W. Bullinger) Since the fall of man, the means of salvation in every dispensation has always been faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed in that era. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The unbeliever's balance sheet has two possible options: (1) if he works for his salvation, he receives a liability - a debt; but (2) if he believes only, and does not intrude any human works into the process, he receives an asset - the righteousness of God. (ibid)

Justification is an act which proceeds from God's free grace. It is an act of God and of God alone. And the righteousness which supplies its ground or basis is the righteousness of God. It might seem that this emphasis upon divine action would not only make it inappropriate but inconsistent for any activity of which we are the agents to be given any instrumentality or efficiency in connection with justification. But the Scripture makes it quite clear that activity on the part of the recipient is given its own place in relation to this act of God's grace. The activity on the part of the recipient is that of faith, and it is faith alone that is brought into this relationship to justification. We are justified by faith, or through faith, or upon faith. (J. Murray)

Rom. 4:5 **But** (contrast), **to the one** (Dat. Adv.) **who does not** (neg. adv.) **continually work** (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.DSM, Iterative, Circumstantial, Substantival, Deponent; relinquishes all human effort in obtaining justification-salvation), **but** (contrast) **who believes** (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DSM, Static, Substantival; an instantaneous activity) **on Him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) **Who justifies** (δικαίωω, PAPtc.ASM, Aoristic, Substantival) **the ungodly** (Acc. Dir. Obj.): **his**

(Poss. Gen.) **faith** (Subj. Nom.) **is credited** (λογίζομαι, PMI3S, Customary & Gnostic, Deponent; counted, reckoned, imputed) **because of righteousness** (Acc. Cause).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:5** τῶ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

^{VUL} **Romans 4:5** ei vero qui non operatur credenti autem in eum qui iustificat impium reputatur fides eius ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:6** As it were [for example], even David [in Psalm 32] confirmed the divine blessing [happiness] upon the man to whom God credited [imputed] righteousness apart from works:

^{KW} **Rom. 4:6** Even as David also speaks of the spiritual prosperity of the man to whose account God puts righteousness apart from works:

^{KJV} **Romans 4:6** Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates objections to his doctrine of justification by grace through faith. In this case, he quotes from the Psalms to show that even David understood this vital doctrine. This reinforces the fact that justification by faith was also taught in Old Testament times. David described and confirmed (Historical Present tense) this privilege of divine favor upon the sinner to whom God imputed (Customary Present tense) righteousness without works. The Greek word “makarios” is often translated as “happiness” or “blessedness,” which we should keep in mind as we acknowledge our gratitude for God’s grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The sinner is not accepted as if he were righteous, but because in Christ Jesus he is so. The majesty of the law is not sacrificed; its requirements are fulfilled in their exceeding breadth; its penalty is endured in all its awfulness. (R. Haldane) The apostle continues to emphasize that this new system of justification, which is his gospel, has its roots in the OT by showing that David is also a “faith” man; for he expresses the blessedness of those who are reckoned righteous apart from any merit accrued by works. This state of the highest happiness is not pronounced upon the forgiven by David, but by God Himself. The psalmist is merely recording the blessed fact, even though with personal exultation, out of his own experience. (R.P. Martin) David gave witness that the same principle of justification was operative even for those living under the Mosaic Law. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 4:6 **As it were** (idiomatic conj.; "for example"), **even** (ascensive) **David** (Subj. Nom.) **confirmed** (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; described) **the divine blessing** (Acc. Dir. Obj.;

happiness, privilege of divine favor) upon the man (Obj. Gen.) to whom (Dat. Adv.) God (Subj. Nom.) credited (λογίζομαι, PMI3S, Customary, Deponent; counted, reckoned, imputed) righteousness (Acc. Gen. Ref.) apart from (Adv.) works (Abl. Separation; in Psalm 32:1-2):

^{WHO} **Romans 4:6** καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει τὸν μακαρισμὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ᾧ ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην χωρὶς ἔργων

^{VUL} **Romans 4:6** sicut et David dicit beatitudinem hominis cui Deus accepto fert iustitiam sine operibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:7** **Happinesses [divine favor] to those [all believers] whose iniquities have been forgiven [imputation of the sins of the elect to Jesus Christ on the cross] and to those whose sins have been covered [reference to the blood covering the mercy seat].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:7** Spiritually prosperous are those whose lawlessnesses were put away and whose sins were covered.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:7** *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

David pronounces blessings and happinesses to those whose iniquities have been forgiven (Culminative Aorist tense). “Happinesses” refers to all categories of divine blessings and favor that the Lord provides to His sheep. God gives 40 blessings (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) to the believer at the moment of justification. What are iniquities? Iniquities are trespasses, deliberate violations of the law. Some theologians call these “known” sins as opposed to “unknown” sins. We sin in many ways each day without knowing we are doing it; these are unknown sins, or in some cases, just “sins.”

“Iniquities” imply we know exactly what we are doing, even though it is wrong, but we do it anyway because our sin nature wants to. If you walk across a person’s property after reading a sign that says “No trespassing,” you are committing a known sin or iniquity. If there is no sign posted, you are still on another person’s property, but you are not trespassing (technically), only sinning. In this case, the law serves as the sign that says “No trespassing.” If you know the law and break it, that is iniquity. If you don’t know the law and you unknowingly break it, it is not iniquity but rather sin.

“Those whose iniquities have been forgiven” refers to the same group of people that Christ went to the cross for. Jesus Christ went to the cross for His sheep, for those that the Father had given Him, not for every man indiscriminately. He did not go to the cross for hogs or dogs, only His sheep. In the second analogy, “those whose sins have been covered” also referred to His sheep. The blood on the mercy seat, representative of

Christ's future death on the cross, did not save every human being alive at that time. Only those who believed in Jesus Christ during the dispensation of Israel (also the elect) were covered (Culminative Aorist tense) by the blood on the mercy seat.

Both known and unknown sins were forgiven and covered by Jesus Christ on the cross. The known and unknown sins of the believer were imputed to Jesus Christ, and His righteousness was in turn imputed to the believing sinner at the point of justification. There is a big difference between pardoning sin and covering sin. Propitiation is what we would call in legal terms an "acquittal." The offending party leaves the courtroom without the guilt of sin. Atonement in the OT was only a covering of sin, what we would call in legal terms a "pardon." The offending party leaves the courtroom pardoned, but still guilty of sin. Paul's purpose by quoting David here isn't to distinguish between the OT and NT handling of sin, but it is still an important difference that he will cover in later verses.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are two kinds of forgiveness of sins in the N.T. One pertains to our eternal salvation (justification by faith), the other to our temporal fellowship with the Father. Insofar as our eternal salvation is concerned, yes, our sins are washed away and will not be held against us. It does not follow, however, that God does not see what sins we commit after our conversion. He *does* see them. Paul never intended that the glorious doctrine of justification should remove the possibility of committing actual sin in this life. (R.T. Kendall)

Atonement in the OT was covering for sin - pardon. Propitiation in the NT is removal of sin - acquittal. The reason why the Holy Spirit never found a permanent dwelling place in the believer in OT times was because sin had only been covered, not removed. (K. Lamb) The forgiveness of sins is a basic component of justification. Paul reveals again his strongly forensic understanding of justification. He uses this quotation to compare justification to the non-accrediting or not "imputing" of sins to a person. This is an act that has nothing to do with moral transformation, but "changes" people only in the sense that their relationship to God is changed – they are "acquitted" rather than condemned. (D. Moo)

Rom. 4:7 Happinesses (Ind. Nom.; blessedness, divine favor; reference to each of the 40 things given to the believer at the moment of justification-salvation) to those (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied) whose (Adv. Gen. Ref.) iniquities (Subj. Nom.; trespasses, violations of law) have been forgiven (ἀφίημι, API3P, Culminative; pardoned, cancelled, remission; contains a temporal augment; refers to the imputation of the sins of the elect to Jesus Christ on the cross) and (connective conj.) to those (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied) whose (Gen. Ref.; repetition of the relative ὅς) sins (Subj. Nom.) have been covered (ἐπικαλύπτω, API3P, Culminative;

refers to the blood covering on the mercy seat during the dispensation of Israel);

^{WHO} **Romans 4:7** Μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι·

^{VUL} **Romans 4:7** beati quorum remissae sunt iniquitates et quorum tecta sunt peccata

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:8** **Happiness [divine favor] to the man to whom the Lord will never, ever reckon sin [the sins of the believing sinner were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:8** Spiritually prosperous is the man to whose account the Lord does not in any case put sin.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:8** Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The sum total of all happiness is now gathered together into one divine package and is given to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Once this happiness or divine favor is given to the believing sinner, it is never revoked or taken back. The Lord will never (Emphatic Negation) impute sin (Gnomic Aorist tense) to the believer again. The sins of the believing sinner were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross. This is a finished work. At the point of justification, the righteousness of God is imputed to the believing sinner. This also is a finished work. Neither imputation is reversed, ever. This is indeed just cause for the believing sinner to be happy!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are two sides to the mathematical equation: (1) Subtraction - the imputation of the sins of men to Jesus Christ on the Cross, and (2) Addition - the imputation of the righteousness of God to the believing sinner. (K. Lamb) Justification corresponds to the righteousness of God, by the imputation of which it is received. By that righteousness the penalty of the law is fulfilled, which secures the pardon of sin, and also the precept on account of which the inheritance is awarded. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 4:8 **Happiness** (Ind. Nom.; blessedness, divine favor; Paul is now dealing with a *single* blessing) **to the man** (Dat. Adv.; believing sinner, member of the royal family) **to whom** (Obj. Gen.) **the Lord** (Subj. Nom.) **will never, ever** (double Neg.) **reckon** (λογίζομαι, AMSubj.3S, Gnomic, Emphatic Negation, Deponent; count, credit, impute) **sin** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; refers to the imputation of the righteousness of God to the believing sinner).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:8** μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν

^{VUL} **Romans 4:8** beatus vir cui non inputabit Dominus peccatum

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:9** Therefore, is this happiness [divine favor] for the circumcision and the uncircumcision as well? For we quote: Faith was credited to Abraham because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

^{KW} **Rom. 4:9** Therefore, does this spiritual prosperity come upon the circumcised one or the uncircumcised one, for we say, There was put to Abraham's account his faith, resulting in righteousness?

^{KJV} **Romans 4:9** Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now reminds his Jewish brothers that this happiness or divine favor from the Lord on the basis of *justification by faith* (positional) applies to both Jews and Gentiles, or the circumcision and uncircumcision. He uses an OT prooftext that faith was imputed (Culminative Aorist tense) to Abraham because of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. It doesn't say circumcision was imputed to Abraham for righteousness. Abraham was justified BEFORE he was circumcised. Abraham was justified by grace through faith, just like we are today. Where did this faith come from? Did this justifying faith originate from within us? Did Abraham come up with this faith by his own power? Of course not.

Faith itself was imputed to Abraham by God, so that he might believe in Jesus Christ and obtain the righteousness of God. Faith was first given to us by God, and then accepted in return because of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The purpose of God's giving us the gracious gift of justifying faith is so we are able to believe in Christ and receive the imputation of divine righteousness. The righteousness of God, then, was imputed to Abraham through faith, not works, circumcision, or the law. The same is true of us. Justification was on the same basis for Abraham as it is for us now, faith alone in Christ alone.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God is the Author of saving faith, Christ is the Object of faith, and works are the fruit of faith. The average professing Christian says the word "justify" means to make one righteous before God. If that is true, does a person's faith or his works make him righteous before God? Neither faith nor works make a person righteous before God. Although God, faith, and works declare the elect to be righteous, the declarations are before different persons and for different reasons: (1) The elect are justified before God on the basis of imputed righteousness. (2) The person justified before God is justified by faith before his own consciousness. (3) The person justified before God and before his own consciousness is justified by works before others. (W.E. Best)

The fact that Abraham was justified while still uncircumcised opens the door of justification to the uncircumcision. They, too, may claim him as their father, for they have the reality of which circumcision was but the outward sign. (A.E. Knoch) Paul notes another significant aspect of the reckoning of Abraham's faith for righteousness – it took place before he was circumcised. This circumstance allows Paul to claim Abraham as the father of all believers, both circumcised and uncircumcised. Paul thereby makes it clear that it is not necessary to be Jewish to become a member of the people of God. Faith alone – apart from works, apart from circumcision – is sufficient to gain entrance into Abraham's spiritual family. (D. Moo)

Rom. 4:9 Therefore (inferential conj.), is (ellipsis, rhetorical verb supplied) this (immediate demonstrative pronoun) happiness (Subj. Nom.; divine favor, blessedness) for the circumcision (Prep. Acc.; Jews) and (connective conj.) the uncircumcision (Prep. Acc.; Gentiles) as well (comparative interrogative)? For (explanatory conj.) we quote (λέγω, PA11P, Static; contend, cite, say): "Faith (Subj. Nom.) was credited (λογίζομαι, PMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; count, imputed, reckon) to Abraham (Dat. Adv.) because of righteousness (Acc. Cause)."

^{WHO} **Romans 4:9** ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν λέγομεν γὰρ Ἐλογίσθη τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 4:9** beatitudo ergo haec in circumcisione an etiam in praeputio dicimus enim quia reputata est Abrahae fides ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:10** How then was it [God's righteousness] credited? When he was in the status of circumcision [Jewish status] or in the status of uncircumcision [Gentile status]? Not in the status of circumcision [he was 99 years old when he was circumcised], but rather in the status of uncircumcision [he believed God and was justified when he was 75 years old].

^{KW} **Rom. 4:10** How then was it put to his account, at the time when he was circumcised or at the time when he was uncircumcised? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:10** How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to remind his Jewish brethren that God's righteousness was not imputed by works, circumcision or the law. How was God's righteousness imputed (Historical Present tense) to Abraham? Was it imputed to him when he was (Historical Present tense) in a state of circumcision or uncircumcision? Abraham was circumcised when he was 99 years old, but he believed God and was justified when he was 75 years old.

Therefore, he was justified when he was still a Gentile in uncircumcision, as opposed to when he became a Jew immediately following his circumcision. He was justified by faith and then lived as a Gentile 24 additional years before he was circumcised and became the father of the Jewish nation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses a figure of thought belonging to the period of Attic oratory, a rhetorical question, which shows dialectical liveliness and perspicuity. This is one of Paul's many "brilliant oratorical passages" that occurs when his soul is ablaze with a great idea. (A.T. Robertson) Abraham was himself uncircumcised when he was spoken of as being thus justified, so that neither the capability nor the inheritance of such justification can be viewed as dependent on circumcision. The Law could not appropriate the privilege to his carnal descendants, the very principle of law being the opposite of that on which Abraham is said to have been justified. (J. Barmby)

If God had called and justified Abraham before he had a son, then he was not at the time a patriarch; and if God had justified him before he was circumcised, then he was not at the time a Jew! In other words, Abraham was an uncircumcised Gentile when he was reckoned righteous by God. The logic of grace may be offensive, but it is irrefutable. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 4:10 **How** (interrogative) **then** (inferential particle) **was it** (God's righteousness) **credited** (λογίζομαι, PMI3S, Historical, Deponent; count, impute, reckon)? **When he was** (εἰμί, PAPtc.DSM, Historical, Temporal) **in the status of circumcision** (Loc. Sph.; Abraham was 99 years old before he was circumcised, i.e. becoming a Jew) **or** (connective conj.) **in the status of uncircumcision** (Loc. Sph.; Abraham was 75 years old when he believed God and was justified, i.e. he was a Gentile for another 24 years before being circumcised)? **Not** (neg. adv.) **in the status of circumcision** (Loc. Sph.; Jewish status), **but rather** (adversative conj.) **in the status of uncircumcision** (Loc. Sph.; Gentile status).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:10** πῶς οὖν ἐλογίσθη ἐν περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ·

^{VUL} **Romans 4:10** quomodo ergo reputata est in circumcisione an in praeputio non in circumcisione sed in praeputio

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:11** In fact, he received the physical sign [distinguishing ritual mark] of circumcision, a confirming seal of righteousness by faith in the status of uncircumcision [Gentile status], so that this same one [Abraham] might be the pattern [father] of all those who believe while in the status of uncircumcision [Gentiles], so that righteousness is imputed to them [Gentiles] as well,

^{KW} **Rom. 4:11** And he received the attesting sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteous character of the faith which he had in his uncircumcision, resulting in his being the father of all who believe while in the state of uncircumcision, in order that there may be put to their account the righteousness;

^{KJV} **Romans 4:11** And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds us that Abraham received (Constative Aorist tense) the distinguishing ritual mark of circumcision after he had already been justified by faith. He was justified by faith while in Gentile status, i.e. before ritual circumcision. Ritual circumcision was not THE seal of righteousness for Abraham; it was merely a confirmation of righteousness which was previously obtained by Abraham by faith. Faith was the true seal, while circumcision was a confirmation of that seal. Therefore ritual circumcision without faith accomplished nothing. Moreover, in subsequent dispensations, the seal or distinguishing ritual mark is in the soul, not the flesh. So during the Church Age in which we live, it is not necessary to receive physical circumcision in order to prove your imputed righteousness by faith. During the Church Age, both the seal and the confirmation are in the soul.

The reason Abraham was justified by faith while in Gentile status was so those Gentiles that followed could also receive justification by faith without the physical ritual of circumcision. Abraham became (Static Present tense) the pattern or father of all future Gentiles that will be justified by faith. When God provides the gracious gift of saving faith to a Gentile and he believes (Perfective Present tense) in Jesus Christ, the Gentile receives the imputation of God's righteousness by faith – just like Abraham did. Because Abraham was justified by faith while still in Gentile status, he becomes the spiritual father of all Gentiles who receive the imputation of God's righteousness (Gnomic Present tense) in the same manner.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Circumcision did not convey the righteousness, but only gave outward confirmation ... the "in the state of circumcision" faith. (A.T. Robertson) The pattern for imputed righteousness by faith in O.T. dispensations is still the same in N.T. dispensations; Abraham is still our pattern. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Since Abraham was justified before he was circumcised, his circumcision was a "sign" of righteousness, not a cause of it. Whereas Judaism came to regard circumcision as a good work, as something achieved, Paul refers to it as something received. Judaism emphasized the doer of the act; Paul emphasizes the Giver of the sign. (J. Edwards) Circumcision did not bring righteousness

but was the visible sign to Abraham's descendants of the righteousness that was imputed to him by faith. Also, circumcision was God's seal of righteousness. (W. Kroll)

The premillenarian takes the Abrahamic covenant provisions literally. In other words, the promises given to Abraham will be fulfilled by Abraham; the promises to Abraham's seed will be fulfilled by his physical seed; the promises to "all the families of the earth," will be fulfilled by Gentiles, or those not the physical seed. While possession of the land is the promise to the physical seed, the promise of blessing is to "all the families of the earth." Both are to be fulfilled exactly as promised. The premillenarian position insists upon fulfillment of promises to Israel as the physical seed, and thereby its national preservation and future hope of possession in the land. The premillenarian recognizes that there is a spiritual as well as a natural seed of Abraham. Premillenarians also recognize the distinction between the natural and spiritual seed within Israel itself. Within Israel, there is a believing remnant, who are both natural and spiritual children of Abraham. These inherit the promises. (J. Walvoord)

Paul is arguing against an external, ceremonial view of religion, such as was too customary among the Jews, and indeed is too customary among all people through all time. And he made a "point" when he brought forward the fact that Abraham exercised faith in God whilst still uncircumcised; for this is a proof that the essence of religion does not depend upon external privileges, even though they be of Divine appointment. A lesson we need to learn today, even as did the contemporaries of Paul. The real teaching of Paul aims at removing religion from outward actions to inward dispositions. The righteousness which God values is not the performance of services or the submission to rites, so much as the pure thoughts and intents of the heart. So far as what is external is valuable, it is as an inclination of what is deep-seated within. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 4:11 In fact (ascensive conj.), he received (λαμβάνω, AAI3S, Constative) the physical sign (Acc. Dir. Obj.; distinguishing ritual mark in the case of Abraham) of circumcision (Gen. Apposition, Explanation), a confirming seal (Acc. Appos. & Definition; correlation of articles - not *the* confirming seal, because in subsequent dispensations, the seal or distinguishing ritual mark is in the soul) of righteousness (Descr. Gen.) by faith (Abl. Means) in the status of uncircumcision (Loc. Sph. & Time; Gentile status), so that (purpose conj.) this same one (Subj. Nom.; Abraham) might be (εἰμί, PAInf., Static, Purpose) the pattern (Nom. App.; father) of all (Gen. Spec.) those (Obj. Gen.) who believe (πιστεύω, PAPtc.GPM, Perfective, Substantival) while in the state of uncircumcision (Loc. Time, Sphere, Atten. Circum.; Gentile status), so that (purpose conj.) righteousness (Subj. Nom.) is imputed (λογίζομαι, APInf., Gnostic, Purpose, Deponent; reckoned, credited) to them (Dat. Adv.; Gentiles) as well (Pleonastic Adv.; also, in the same manner),

^{WHO} **Romans 4:11** καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι ἀκροβυστίας εἰς τὸ λογισθῆναι αὐτοῖς [τὴν] δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 4:11** et signum accepit circumcisionis signaculum iustitiae fidei quae est in praepotio ut sit pater omnium credentium per praepotium ut reputetur et illis ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:12** **And the pattern [father] of circumcision [spiritual: by faith] not only to those from circumcision [physical: by race], but also to those advancing in rank [following his footsteps] according to faith, like our ancestor Abraham in the state of uncircumcision [while in Gentile status].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:12** And the father of circumcision to these who are not of the circumcision only but to those who walk in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham when he was in uncircumcision.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:12** And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham was the pattern or father to both Jews and Gentiles, those in the state of circumcision and uncircumcision. The pattern in both cases is justification by grace through faith, not by ritual circumcision. Paul uses a military metaphor representing soldiers marching in rank (Customary Present tense) to portray the future justification of Gentiles by faith. Because Abraham was a Gentile when he was justified by faith, he is the ancestor or father of all Gentiles who would likewise be justified by faith. Gentile believers march in rank, following Abraham's footsteps, when they believe in Jesus Christ and are justified by faith.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is not one way for Jews to be saved and another for Gentiles, but all have Abraham as their father, who is the prototype of saving faith. God did not institute salvation by law in the first covenant and salvation through Christ in the second covenant, but salvation by faith in both covenants. Justification by faith is not a late idea, not an emergency measure instituted when a crisis developed in the original plan, but the oldest and truest idea of redemption, conceived by God in love before the foundation of the world, exemplified by Abraham of old, and consummated by Jesus in the fullness of time. (J. Edwards)

Abraham's circumcision did not confer righteousness upon him, and was not a token that he was obliged henceforth to keep the law in order to be justified, but confirmed by a

visible sign the fact that he had already been justified by faith. Thus, like the whole paragraph, this parenthesis inverts the argument of Paul's Jewish objector. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 4:12 and (continuative conj.) the pattern (Subj. Nom.; father) of circumcision (Descr. Gen.; obtaining God's righteousness by grace through faith) not only (Acc. Gen. Ref.; hyperbation, when the adverb appears to be in the wrong place) to those (Dat. Adv.) from circumcision (Prep. Abl.; Jews), but (contrast conj.) also (adjunctive) to those (Subj. Nom.) advancing (στοιχέω, PAI3P, Customary; following, military term for marching in file) in rank (Loc. Sph.; footsteps) according to faith (Abl. Means), like our (Abl. Comparison) ancestor (Acc. Gen. Ref.; father) Abraham (Nom. Appellation) in the state of uncircumcision (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:12** καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἴχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ

^{VUL} **Romans 4:12** et sit pater circumcisionis non his tantum qui sunt ex circumcissione sed et his qui sectantur vestigia quae est in praepitio fidei patris nostri Abrahae

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:13** **For the promise to Abraham concerning his seed [Jewish believers only], to be heir of the world [blessings from the Abrahamic covenant], was not through the law [Abraham lived 430 years before the law was given], but through the [imputed] righteousness of faith [unconditional covenant].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:13** For not through the law was the promise made to Abraham or to his offspring that he should be the heir of the world, but through a righteousness which pertains to faith.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:13** For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The unconditional promise to Abraham concerning his seed (Jewish believers only) was not through the law. The law was not given until 430 years after Abraham died. This should be a common sense conclusion, but evidently it was not a doctrine taught by Jewish spiritual leaders on a regular basis. The Abrahamic covenant was unconditional, and it was given through the righteousness of faith. The mechanics of imputation, therefore, was through faith, not by keeping the law.

Abraham will become heir of the world (Futuristic Present tense) through faith. The blessings from this Abrahamic covenant were obtained (Historical Present tense) through faith, not the law. One seed of Abraham, Jewish believers, will inherit vast territories of the Middle East as well as spiritual life with the Lord, according to this covenant.

Another seed of Abraham, specifically Gentile believers, will live spiritually for the Lord, but will not share in the land grants promised to Abraham.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God did not choose Abraham because there was anything whatsoever in him that could have recommended him above his fellows, but only because it pleased God in His sovereign grace to appear to Abraham and call him out for His own eternal purpose. (D.G. Barnhouse) This passage demonstrates that the Lord God has a definite desire for a redeemed people who shall be a spiritual people and live for Him spiritually, but it also demonstrates that God wants a physical nation, the Jews, and that he has given them promises, and intends to keep them separated from the world so that He may fulfill His purposes through Him. Of both these groups Abraham is the father. (ibid)

Because legalism induces a false conception of our relationship to God, it fosters a false attitude to ourselves and to others. It hides the seriousness of sin, and persuades people that their ills can be removed by such expedients as they themselves devise. Inevitably it produces a superior attitude toward others. Those who act differently deserve condemnation and contempt, and superiority strangles charity. Moreover, all outside the favored circle are abandoned as beyond hope. (J. Knox) Paul makes his case for the exclusion of the law from God's dealings with Abraham on the basis of simple chronology – the law, given 430 years after the promise, cannot annul or substantially alter this previous agreement between God and Abraham. (D. Moo)

Paul employs the keywords of his gospel (grace, promise, faith) and arrays them against the current Jewish theology (merit, works, law). (A.T. Robertson) God had declared him righteous before the giving of the law, thus demonstrating that righteousness was prior to and independent of the law. Abraham was an heir not by virtue of family lineage or works, but through the righteousness that comes by faith, that is, by grace. The God who issues the promise is fully able to fulfill it because He brings the dead to life, and He creates from nothing. Since the law cannot impart life, it is therefore subordinate to faith. (J. Edwards) If the law was of such crucial importance, how could Abraham have kept it when he lived centuries before it was given? (J. Knox)

As further developed in Galatians, the law was not given till hundreds of years after Abraham was counted righteous. The promises he received in connection with it were unconditional, depending only on God's faithfulness. They were given without any reference to the law and do not depend on any legal observance for fulfillment. When the law did come it did not confirm these promises. It was brought in to show how impotent their own efforts were when they sought to attain to Abraham's divinely given righteousness by the keeping of the law. The law hindered rather than helped. Instead of making them just, it drew down God's indignation for their failure to live up to it. (A.E. Knoch)

Rom. 4:13 For (explanatory conj.) the promise (Subj. Nom.) to Abraham (Dat. Adv.) concerning his (Poss. Gen.) seed

(Poss. Dat.; combination of his physical and spiritual seeds - Jewish believers only), **to be** (εἰμί, PAInf., Historical, Futuristic, Inf. as Modifier) **heir** (Pred. Acc.; inheritor) **of the world** (Gen. Adv.; blessings from the Abrahamic covenant), **was** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **not** (neg. adv.) **through the law** (Abl. Means; conditional covenant; Abraham lived 430 years before the law was even given), **but** (contrast conj.) **through the righteousness** (Abl. Means; the mechanics of imputation) **of faith** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; unconditional covenant).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:13** Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου ἀλλὰ διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 4:13** non enim per legem promissio Abrahae aut semini eius ut heres esset mundi sed per iustitiam fidei

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:14** For if they [Abraham's seed] are heirs through the law, that faith has been voided with the result that it is permanently invalidated [justification by faith is destroyed] and that promise [unconditional elements of the Abrahamic covenant] is cancelled.

^{KW} **Rom. 4:14** For, assuming that those who are of the law are heirs, the aforementioned faith has been voided with the result that it is permanently invalidated, and the aforementioned promise has been rendered inoperative with the result that it is in a state of permanent inoperation.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:14** For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses debater's technique in the form of a protasis of a 1st class condition: assume this statement is true. We know the next theory is false, but we are to assume it is legitimate for the time being so Paul can make an important point. If Abraham's seed are heirs (Latin: heredity) through the law, then two conclusions must be true. First, justification by faith is permanently destroyed (Intensive Perfect tense), and second, the unconditional elements of the Abrahamic covenant are abolished. The Greek word "kenoo" means faith would be completely emptied of meaning. The law would cancel (Consummative Perfect tense) all grace blessings from God, including the grace gift of saving faith.

Fortunately for us all, the law is not the instrument for righteousness, so neither of these two hypothetical situations is true. Church Age believers were never given the law, were never under the law, and never will be under the law. Israel was under the law, but not as a means to obtain justification, but as a standard to prove how exceedingly sinful they truly were. Justification by

faith was the means of salvation in Abraham's day, as it remains today. Justification by faith and the unconditional elements of the Abrahamic covenant (Latin: promises) remain intact.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christians have no place in the law; we are aliens from the covenant and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. (D.G. Barnhouse) If legalists are heirs of the Messianic promise to Abraham, then faith is emptied of all meaning and the promise to Abraham is made permanently idle. (A.T. Robertson) A promise falls within the sphere of gift, that is, of grace. (C.K. Barrett)

Paul brings up the key-words of his own system Faith, Promise, Grace, and marshals them in array over against the leading points in the current theology of the Jews – Law, Works, or performance of Law, Merit. Because the working of this latter system had been so disastrous, ending only in condemnation, it was a relief to find that it was not what God had really intended, but that the true principles of things held out a prospect so much brighter and more hopeful, and one which furnished such abundant justification for all that seemed new in Christianity. (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 4:14 For (explanatory conj.) if (Debater's 1st class condition, "assume it's true", protasis) they (Subj. Nom.; Abraham's seed) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) heirs (Pred. Nom.) through the law (Abl. Means), that (apodosis) faith (Subj. Nom.) has been voided with the result that it is permanently invalidated (κενόω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive & Dramatic; emptied, destroyed) and (continuative conj.) that (Descr. Nom.) promise (Subj. Nom.; unconditional elements of the Abrahamic Covenant) is cancelled (καταργέω, Perf.PI3S, Consummative; abolished, ineffective, nullified, abrogated; legalism cancels all grace blessings from God),

^{WHO} **Romans 4:14** εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι κεκένωται ἡ πίστις καὶ κατήργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία·

^{VUL} **Romans 4:14** si enim qui ex lege heredes sunt exinanita est fides abolita est promissio

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:15** **For the law brings about wrath [divine punishment]; but where there is no law [among Gentiles], there is no distortion of the law [transformation of law into a system of self-righteousness].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:15** For the law results in divine wrath. Now, where there is not law, neither is there transgression.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:15** Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an *aetiologia*, or a rendering of a reason for what he has just claimed. The law inflicts (Progressive Present tense) wrath from God, not righteousness. But where there is no law (Static Present tense), meaning among Gentile nations, there is no distortion of the law. The law was never meant to become a system of self-righteousness. The law was never meant to be a way of justification. The law was meant to be a convicter of sin and transgression. As a rule, Gentiles did not transform the law into a deviant system of legalism and works righteousness; Judaism however, often did, and this was a distortion of the purpose and meaning of the law.

Fortunately for Gentiles, who never received the law in the first place, it was never an issue and there has been little historical confusion about its purpose until recent years. The Greek word “parabasis” means transgression or distortion. If there is no law, then it follows that there is no transgression or distortion of the law. Gentiles, therefore, are for the most part innocent of transgression or distortion of the law. Jews who ignore justification by faith and who have transformed the law into a system of self-righteous effort, are guilty of gross distortion. The true purpose of the law is to execute wrath, a *metonym* for divine punishment upon transgression.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “katargazomai” (brings) clearly implies that the law not merely reveals sin, but that it *produces* sin. There is a cause-and-effect relationship between law and sin. The law is more than an impartial standard of justice, for it *incites* sin. Paul suggests that the prohibition of something actually produces a desire for it. In prohibiting theft, adultery, covetousness and so forth, the law subtly creates a desire for the things it condemns. For this reason the law brings wrath. (J. Edwards)

The Mosaic Law “produces” even more wrath; rather than rescuing people from the sentence of condemnation, it confirms their condemnation. For by stating clearly, and in great detail, exactly what God requires of people, the law renders people even more accountable to God than they were without the law. (D. Moo) There is no responsibility for the violation of a non-existent law. (A.T. Robertson)

Rom. 4:15 **For** (*aetiologia*, rendering a reason for what is said or done) **the law** (Subj. Nom.) **brings about** (κατεργάζομαι, PMI3S, Progressive, Deponent; executes, inflicts, works, creates) **wrath** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; *metonymy* for punishments, penalties, destruction); **but** (adversative conj.) **where** (Adv. Place) **there is** (εἰμί, PAI3P, Static) **no** (neg. adv.) **law** (Pred. Nom.; among the Gentile nations), **there is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **no** (neg. adv.) **distortion of the law** (Pred. Nom.; transformation of the law into a system of self-righteousness).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:15** ὁ γὰρ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται· οὐ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος οὐδὲ παράβασις

^{VUL} **Romans 4:15** *lex enim iram operatur ubi enim non est lex nec praevaricatio*

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:16** **For this reason, it [the promise] is out of faith [as opposed to the law], so that it [the promise] is according to grace [as opposed to works], so that in the end the promise might be secure [permanent & reliable] to all [both Jew & Gentile] the seed, not only to those from the law [Jews], but also to those [Gentiles] from the faith of Abraham, who is the pattern [father] of us all,**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:16** On account of this it is by faith, in order that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be something realized by all the offspring, not by that which is of the law only, but also by that which is of the faith of Abraham who is the father of all of us;

^{KJV} **Romans 4:16** Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

For this reason, the imputation of God's righteousness is out of faith as opposed to the law. Justification is by grace through the instrument of faith, which is a gift from God, and therefore excludes human effort. Justification by the law would imply individual human merit and a debt owed by God to man; this is totally disallowed by divine decree. Justification is out of faith so that it remains totally by sovereign grace and not by human works. In the end the promise is completely reliable, permanent and therefore firm (Gnomic Present tense) because righteousness is imputed according to grace.

The promise is also secure not only for Jews, but also for Gentiles. Abraham's seed, as represented by a *synecdoche* of the Whole, contains elements that pertain to both distinguished groups. The seed of Abraham, therefore, not only applies to the Jews under the Mosaic Law, but also to Gentiles out from the faith of Abraham. As stated before, Abraham is the pattern or father of us all, both Jews and Gentiles.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is also by faith because faith alone guarantees the comprehensive character of the promise of salvation ... the only way to include Gentiles as well as Jews - the uncircumcision as well as the circumcision - those who never had the Law and those who were under the Law. This makes Him the father of "all" those who believe, whether they be Gentiles or Jews, Barbarians, Scythian, bond or free, male or female. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) God has made His plan of salvation to depend, on man's side, not on fulfillment of the law but solely on faith, in order that, on His side, it might be a matter of grace. A literal translation of this part of the verse would run, "Therefore of faith, in order that by grace." (C.K. Barrett)

To law, wrath, and transgression Paul contrasts faith, grace, and promise. Grace is God's sovereign and gratuitous decision to redeem rebellious and estranged creation. Salvation must depend on grace and not on works, for if salvation comes by grace then it depends on God and is therefore certain; but if it depends on works or law, then it is as unreliable as the human heart and will. (J. Edwards) Faith is the simplest, easiest, freest channel God could choose to convey His righteousness to us. Let us exult in His explanation that it is of faith that it may accord with grace. (A.E. Knoch) This will be realized when the seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, sits on the throne of David during the Millennium and rules the world with a rod of iron. (W. Kroll)

Mankind in general is constantly trying to arrogate the finished work of redemption to themselves. The proponent of unlimited atonement takes the finished work of Christ ("It is finished") and adds a stipulation to the end of it, demanding that man participate before the issue is closed. He tries to exalt the grace of God by bringing salvation to all men, but what he does is actually cheapen it by showing that it didn't of itself accomplish anything. Unlimited atonement leaves God a failure, leaves His Son divested of His glory, and leaves the Spirit of God embarrassed when He reports back that: "I did all that I could, but I just couldn't break that sinner's heart." (J. Reisinger)

You cannot mix works and grace or law and faith anymore than you can mix black and white. The way of faith alone guarantees that it should be entirely of grace, and that therefore the glory should be altogether God's and His alone. There is nothing for man to boast of, not even his faith. If you boast about your faith, about the fact that you have believed while someone else has not, it is no longer grace; and it is no longer to God's glory, but the credit goes to your belief. If you take credit even for your faith, you are turning your faith into works, and you are taking from the glory of God. Faith is the only way grace can work. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones)

The law was only given to the Jew, and if salvation could have been given on the basis of works, only the Jew could be saved, for the Gentile was never given the law. Abraham was saved before the ordinance of circumcision was given and thus before the Mosaic Law was instituted. Thus, he becomes the spiritual father of both Jew and Gentile in that both are saved exactly like he - by pure faith without the necessity of works as a preliminary requirement. (K. Wuest) Faith and grace are correlative terms. When from God's side comes a merciful favor which we have done nothing to deserve, the only possible response on our part is a humble trust which accepts in gratitude what God has done for us. So it is natural to conclude that if the promise is to rest on grace, the relationship which it envisages depends on faith. (J. Knox)

What God provides by His free grace can be appropriated by human beings only through faith. What, on the contrary, is earned by works (not faith) is bestowed as a matter of merit (not grace). (F.F. Bruce) It is remarkable that this work is done not for the seed of Adam (all men without exception) but for the "seed of Abraham," only those who will come to have the faith of Abraham. (T. Nettles) God's plan was made to rest upon faith

on man's side in order that on God's side it might be a matter of grace. (D. Moo) Grace selects its objects, and its only motive is God Himself. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 4:16 For this (Inferential idiom) reason (Acc. Purpose), it (the promise) is (ellipsis, verb) out of faith (Abl. Means, Medium; as opposed to "the law", which would imply individual merit), so that (purpose conj.) it (the promise) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) according to grace (Acc. Gen. Ref.; as opposed to "works"), so that (purpose conj.) in the end the promise (Subj. Nom.) might be (εἰμί, PAInf., Gnostic, Purpose & Result) secure (Compl. Acc.; firm, reliable, permanent, dependable, well established) to all (Dat. Measure; both Jew and Gentile; *synecdoche* or transfer of the Whole) the (Abraham's) seed (Dat. Adv.), not only (Neg. Adv.) to those (Dat. Ind. Obj.) from the law (Abl. Source; Jews under the Mosaic Law), but (contrast conj.) also (adjunctive) to those (Dat. Ind. Obj.; Gentiles) from (out of) the faith (Abl. Source) of Abraham (Descr. Gen.), who (Subj. Nom.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) the pattern (Nom. Appos.; father) of us (Gen. Rel.) all (Gen. Spec.; both Jews and Gentiles),

^{WHO} **Romans 4:16** διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως ἵνα κατὰ χάριν εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ ὃς ἐστὶν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 4:16** ideo ex fide ut secundum gratiam ut firma sit promissio omni semini non ei qui ex lege est solum sed et ei qui ex fide est Abrahae qui est pater omnium nostrum

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:17** Just as it stands written [in Genesis 17:5]: "I have appointed you a father of many nations," (in the midst of which [nations] he [Abraham] came to believe the God Who brings life [regenerated sexual apparatus] to the dead ones [dead phallus of Abraham and dead womb of Sarah], and Who designated [called] the things [sexual apparatus] which did not exist [inability to function properly] as though they existed [their sexual capabilities came back to life again during old age]),

^{KW} **Rom. 4:17** Even as it stands written, A father of many nations I have established you permanently, before Him whom he believed, before God who makes alive those who are dead and calls the things that are not in existence as being in existence;

^{KJV} **Romans 4:17** (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul quotes a perfect example of what he is now teaching about faith as opposed to law and grace as opposed to works. In Genesis 17:5, God appointed (Consummative Perfect tense) Abraham a father of many nations. In the midst of these inhospitable nations, Abraham came to believe (Ingressive Aorist tense) in God. In this case, the specific exercise of that faith was to believe a statement made to him by God. Abraham believed in the integrity of God Who promised to bring life (Historical Present tense) to the dead ones. What on earth does that mean? Is Paul talking about resurrection of the dead? Believe it or not, even though it is somewhat glossed-over in the King James, Paul is talking about the divine rejuvenation of Abraham's and Sarah's sexual apparatus.

Paul is talking about the regeneration of Abraham's and Sarah's sexual capability in old age. Their sexual apparatus was dead; Abraham did not have a properly functioning phallus and Sarah's womb was unable to bear children. But Abraham had walked with the Lord long enough that he knew God would perform some kind of miracle so he would indeed become a father of many nations. This "bringing to life" (Latin: vivification) refers to a revival of sexual prosperity for both Abraham and Sarah. Not only would they be able to have sexual relations again, but Sarah would be able to bear children as a result. Don't forget that up to this time, Sarah has never been able to have children.

Before the miracle was performed, God called (Historical Present tense) the sexual genitalia of both Abraham and Sarah "dead," meaning unable to function properly. The phrase "not existing as if it did exist" means God told them their sexual capability was restored before they realized anything miraculous had happened. This is an example of how faith was to perform, by believing in the reality of something before seeing it actually occur. God told Abraham and Sarah that their sexual apparatus was operational again; all they had to do was believe him and proceed on that assumption! This might not seem like a mighty miracle, but keep in mind that Sarah was 86 years old and Abraham was 99 years old. As we find out later, this was not a "one time" event; they continued to have a happy sexual life for years, in spite of their old age.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The recitative Greek "hoti" in Oratio Recta, used as a direct quotation rather than translated verbally, is an incorporation of the antecedent into the relative clause. (A.T. Robertson) I knew you'd want to know that. (LWB) The door was absolutely and forever closed so far as having offspring was concerned. (K. Wuest) "Summons the non-existing as existing"; Abraham's body was old and decrepit. God rejuvenated him and Sarah. (A.T. Robertson) God's call is not a mere invitation but a creative act that accomplishes what it purposes and promises. (J. Piper) From a commonsense standpoint there was not the slightest possibility that she would bear a child. This, however, did not cause Abraham to weaken in his faith. Faith goes beyond human potentiality. It acknowledges the existence of one who is not bound by the limitations of the created order. Where God is present, there is nothing that lies outside the realm of possibility. (R. Mounce)

The OT ritual of circumcision signified the blessing of restored procreational ability to supergrace Abraham at age ninety-nine, and guaranteed God's promise that the descendants of Abraham would become a great nation. Abraham trusted God in a hopeless situation to fulfill His promise of a legitimate heir and as a result, he became the original Jew and father of a new racial species. As a ritual symbol, circumcision confirmed and acknowledged Israel's covenant relationship with God, and was a continual physical reminder to every male Jew of the grace of God. However, ritual without reality is meaningless – the true Jew is one who is circumcised “of the heart,” after the pattern of Abraham's salvation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 4:17 just as (Adv. Comparison) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Dramatic & Intensive; Paul quotes his documentation from Genesis 17:5): "I have appointed (τίθημι, Perf.AI1S, Consummative; *synecdoche*, *appointed* or *decreed* is exchanged for *placed*) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) a father (Compl. Acc.) of many (Gen. Spec.) nations (Obj. Gen.)", [in the midst of (Fig. Adv.; before, right in front of) which (Adv. Place; the nations) he (Abraham) came to believe (πιστεύω, AA13S, Ingressive & Culminative; Abraham's faith became strong as he progressed in his usage of the Faith Rest Drill) the (absence of the article for emphasis) God (Obj. Gen.; a dative attracted into the genitive; emphasis on the integrity of God) Who brings life (ζωοποιέω, PAPtc.GSM, Historical, Substantival, Articular; quickens, revives, sexual prosperity given to Abraham) to the dead ones (Acc. Dir. Obj.; reference to the dead phallus of Abraham and the dead womb of Sarah), and (continuative conj.) Who (God) designated (καλέω, PAPtc.GSM, Historical, Substantival; called) the things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the sexual genitalia of Abraham and Sarah) which did not (neg. adv.) exist (εἶμι, PAPtc.APN, Retroactive, Attributive; sexual death) as though (Rel. Adv.) they existed (εἶμι, PAPtc.APN, Historical, Concessive; the ability of Abraham and Sarah to function sexually)] ,

^{WHO} **Romans 4:17** καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνῶν τέθεικά σε κατέναντι οὐ ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιούντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα·

^{VUL} **Romans 4:17** sicut scriptum est quia patrem multarum gentium posui te ante Deum cui credidit qui vivificat mortuos et vocat quae non sunt tamquam ea quae sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:18** Who [Abraham] beyond hope [unable to impregnate Sarah], believed in hope [trust in God's promise], in order that he might become father [the pattern] of many nations, according to that which was spoken [in Genesis 15:5]: “So shall your sperm [offspring] exist.”

κω **Rom. 4:18** Who, being beyond hope, upon the basis of hope believed, in order that he might become father of many nations, according to that which has been spoken with finality, In this manner will your offspring be.

KJV **Romans 4:18** Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham was in a position that we would call “beyond hope,” in that he was beyond the age in which he was able to impregnate Sarah so that (humanly speaking) the promise could be fulfilled. Nevertheless, he continued to believe (Culminative Aorist tense) the Lord would fulfill His promise. He remained in a state of hope and confidence in the Lord’s Word, preferring to believe in the reality of doctrine rather than the human perspective of impossibility. He continued to be occupied with the Person and Word of Jesus Christ.

Abraham believed in the Lord’s promise in Genesis 15:5 - that he might become (Constative Aorist tense) the pattern or father of many nations as promised. The Lord told (Dramatic Perfect tense) him in Genesis 15:5 and it stood the test of time: “So shall your seed exist.” The Predictive Future tense points to the advance notification of this promise. As we know, the Lord rejuvenated the sexual apparatus of both Abraham and Sarah; eventually a child was born that fulfilled God’s promise. In this verse, however, the Latin “semen” and the Greek “sperm” point particularly to the miraculous rejuvenation of Abraham’s sexual capability.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is a polyptoton in this verse, a repetition of nouns (hope) in a different case. (E.W. Bullinger) With the act of circumcision, Abraham became the original Jew, the father of the Jewish race. This ritual signified the blessings of restored sexual vigor through which God would multiply Abraham’s seed as the stars of the heavens. Abraham’s obedience demonstrated his spiritually mature confidence in God’s promises. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Abraham’s faith was based on the bare Word of God and on nothing else whatsoever. Faith is content with the bare Word of God, because He is God. (D.M.L. Jones)

We are not saved because we have a strong subjective faith (that would focus the matter on us), but because we believe the promises of God regarding salvation, promises made known to us in the pages of the Bible. In other words, Christian faith is a Bible faith. Or, to put it in still other words, we are saved not because of our faith but because of God’s promises. True faith is receiving these promises and believing them on the basis of God’s character. (J. Boice)

Rom. 4:18 who (Subj. Nom.; Abraham) beyond hope (Acc. Spec.; unable to have any kind of sexual prosperity), believed

(πιστεύω, AAI3S, Culminative) in hope (Loc. Sph.; Occupation with Christ, reality with doctrine), in order that (Acc. Gen. Ref.) he might become (γίνομαι, APInf., Constativ, Purpose, Deponent) father (Pred. Nom.; the pattern) of many (Gen. Spec.) nations (Obj. Gen.), according to that (Acc. Gen. Ref.) which was spoken (λέγω, Perf.PPtc.ASN, Dramatic, Attributive; in Genesis 15:5): "So (Adv. of what precedes) shall your (Poss. Gen.) sperm (Subj. Nom.) exist (είμι, FMI3S, Predictive)."

^{WHO} **Romans 4:18** ὃς παρ ἐλπίδα ἐπ ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνῶν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον· Οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου

^{VUL} **Romans 4:18** qui contra spem in spem credidit ut fieret pater multarum gentium secundum quod dictum est sic erit semen tuum

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:19** And so without becoming weak [fainthearted] in faith, he considered his own body [sexual apparatus] which was already as good as dead [unable to properly function], (now that he was approximately a hundred years old), and also the deadness of Sarah's womb [unable to bear children].

^{KW} **Rom. 4:19** And not being weak with respect to his faith, he attentively considered his own body permanently dead, he being about one hundred years old, also the deadness of Sarah's womb.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:19** And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham recognized (Constativ Aorist tense) that his own sexual apparatus was as good as dead (Aoristic Perfect tense), i.e., unable to properly function. After all, he was almost one hundred years old (Temporal Participle), and no man of that age was able to impregnate his wife. He was also cognizant that Sarah's womb was dead, meaning she was unable to bear children even if Abraham was miraculously able to impregnate her. A miracle was required on both sides of the child-producing equation. Nevertheless, Abraham did not become fainthearted (Ingressive Aorist tense) in spite of these humanly impossible conditions of old age.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul does not wish to imply that faith means closing one's eyes to reality, but that Abraham was so strong in faith as to be undaunted by every consideration. (B.M. Metzger) Abraham's sexual death had nothing to do with his old age. It was the result of his maladjustment to the justice of God 13 years earlier when he slept with Hagar. His

promiscuous behavior "hastened the day," so to speak. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Abraham considered his body dead, as it actually was for the purpose of reproduction. Yet in spite of that he believed that God could give him a son. (R. Earle)

Rom. 4:19 And so (Result clause) without (Concessive particle) becoming weak (ἀσθενέω, AAPtc.NSM, Ingressive, Predicative; fainthearted; he didn't even begin to falter) in faith (Loc. Sph.; *tapeinosis*, a lessening of a thing in order to increase it), he considered (κατανοέω, AAI3S, Constative; subsequent action; recognized, completely understood) his own (Poss. Gen.; reflexive pronoun) body (Acc. Dir. Obj.; his phallus) which was already as good as (Adv. Time; heightening the account; a compromise between external and internal manuscript evidence) dead (νεκρώω, Perf.PPtc.ASN, Aoristic, Attributive; unable to perform sexually), [now that he was (ὑπάρχω, PAPtc.NSM, Pictorial, Temporal & Telic) approximately (Local Enclitic Adv.; about) a hundred years old (Num. Adv., Gen. Spec.)], and also (Comparison; including, likewise) the deadness (Adv. Acc.) of Sarah's (Poss. Gen.) womb (Obj. Gen.; her inability to bear children).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:19** καὶ μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει κατενόησεν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα [ἤδη] νεκρωμένον ἑκατονταετῆς που ὑπάρχων καὶ τὴν νέκρωσιν τῆς μήτρας Σάρρας·

^{VUL} **Romans 4:19** et non infirmatus fide consideravit corpus suum emortuum cum fere centum annorum esset et emortuam vulvam Sarrae

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:20** Moreover, he [Abraham] did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief, but became strong through faith, giving glory to God,

^{KW} **Rom. 4:20** Moreover, in view of the promise of God, he did not vacillate in the sphere of unbelief between two mutually exclusive expectations, but was strengthened with respect to his faith, having given glory to God,

^{KJV} **Romans 4:20** He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham did not question (Constative Aorist tense) the promise of God through a malfunction of faith rest. There is no mention in Scripture that he had a mental struggle with the seeming impossibility of God's Word being fulfilled. He continued to believe God and to rest in the assurance that His Word would come to pass as planned. Abraham utilized the faith rest drill and became strong in his convictions (Ingressive Aorist tense)

every day. And because He realized the promise would require a miracle, he gave glory (Constativ Aorist tense) to God for the ultimate fulfillment of the promise.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Trusting in the promises of God and acting out of that trust (hope) glorifies the trustworthiness of God and His ability and wisdom and power to do what He promises. We glorify God when our service comes from faith in His strength, because the One Who gives the strength gets the glory ... God manifests His righteousness in keeping His promises to those who believe, for in this He displays the value of His glory by blessing those whose stance of faith renders His glory most conspicuous. (J. Piper) It is true that he fell to the ground in laughter at the idea of bearing a son at his age, but that did not qualify as a departure from faith. The idea struck Abraham as somewhat ridiculous, but he believed it anyway. He praised Him for Who He was and what He would do. (R. Mounce)

The foundational means of growing faith is Bible study. Why is that? Because of the very matter we are studying. True biblical faith is not something you and I are capable of working up ourselves, as if we could merely decide to be men and women of faith in the same way we might decide to take up aerobics or pursue degrees in higher education. Faith is only as strong as its object, and it is therefore created in us by God and built upon by God through our coming to know Him. But how do we do that? The only way we can come to know God is by coming to know His self-revelation in Scripture – and then applying what we learn to our own circumstances. Ours is not an age of great faith – even in evangelical churches. We are weak in faith, and the reason we are weak in faith is that we do not know the Bible’s God. Or if we do, we do not put what we know into practice. (J. Boice)

If you are anxious to know how to have strong faith, here is the method. It means thorough and deep knowledge of the Bible and of God through it; not suddenly taking up an idea and deciding to “go in” for faith. If you want to have strong faith, read your Bible; go through it from beginning to end. Concentrate on the revelation that God has given of Himself and of His character. Keep your eyes especially also on prophecy, and then watch His promises being fulfilled. That is the way to develop strong faith – be grounded in all this. Then read the historical portions of the Bible, and the stories of the great heroes. That is why the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives that gallery of portraits of these great saints in the 11th chapter. He says, Look at these men, who were men like yourselves. What was their secret? It was that they knew God, they gave glory to God and relied utterly upon Him and His Word. Turn that over in your mind, keep on speaking to yourself about it; meditate upon it ... Then, finally, you apply all that in practice to particular cases as they arise in your own life and experience. “He staggered not, but gave glory to God.” That is the secret of faith. It is our ignorance of God that constitutes our main trouble. (D.M.L. Jones)

Rom. 4:20 Moreover (continuative conj.), he did not (neg. adv.) doubt (διακρίνω, API3S, Constative; dispute, judge, waver, question, no mental struggle) the promise (τὴν accentuates the Acc. after the Dative disappeared) of God (Poss. Gen.; divine veracity) through unbelief (Instr. Means; malfunction of the Faith Rest Drill), but (contrast conj.) became strong (ἐνδυναμώω, API3S, Ingressive) through faith (Instr. Means), giving (δίδωμι, AAPtc.NSM, Constative, Modal, Simultaneous Action) glory (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to God (Dat. Adv.),

^{WHO} **Romans 4:20** εἰς δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει δοῦς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 4:20** in repromissione etiam Dei non haesitavit diffidentia sed confortatus est fide dans gloriam Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:21** While being fully convinced that what He [God] had promised, He was also able [and willing] to accomplish.

^{KW} **Rom. 4:21** And was fully persuaded that what He had promised with finality He was able also to do;

^{KJV} **Romans 4:21** And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham was fully convinced (Constative Aorist tense) from doctrine in his soul that what God had promised on more than one occasion (Iterative Perfect tense), He was also able to perform (Gnomic Aorist tense). In Abraham's estimation, God was both willing and able to fulfill his promise. Paul is speaking quite well of Abraham's steadfastness in these verses. The Lord reminded Abraham of His promise on more than one occasion; Paul says Abraham remembered these reiterations and was completely assured that it would be fulfilled.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The patriarch was strengthened in his faith. God, responding to Abraham's faith, empowered him and Sarah physically to generate the child of promise. (J. Witmer) Your confidence increases as you use Bible doctrine in your soul. Certain of God's steadfastness and secure in His care, you can genuinely rest, relax, and trust in Him for solutions. The faith-rest drill stabilizes your mentality, regains your ability to think under pressure, keeps your emotions in perspective, and reinforces your appreciation of the grace of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

When Abraham was no longer capable of procreation, and Sarah was beyond the age of childbearing, God intervened to make the impossible possible. Consequently, through divine rejuvenation of Abraham's and Sarah's ability to propagate, the Jewish race came into existence. Now if God brought about a miracle to usher in the Jewish people, why should anyone, particularly the Jews, reject the miraculous conception and birth of the Savior, Who was in His humanity a racial Jew? (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 4:21 while being fully convinced (πληροφορέω, APPTc.NSM, Constativē, Circumstantial; persuaded, assured, total confidence from doctrine in the soul) that (Declarative, causal particle) what (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) He (God) had promised (ἐπαγγέλλομαι, Perf.PI3S, Deponent, Iterative: on more than one occasion), He was (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) also (Adverbial) able (Pred. Nom.; Subsequent verbal action; denotes both *willingness* and *ability*) to accomplish (ποιέω, AAInf., Gnostic, Direct Obj. of Verb; perform).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:21** καὶ πληροφορηθεὶς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελται δυνατὸς ἐστὶν καὶ ποιῆσαι

^{VUL} **Romans 4:21** plenissime sciens quia quaecumque promisit potens est et facere

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:22** For this reason, therefore, it [faith] was credited to him [Abraham] because of [the imputation of Christ's] righteousness.

^{KW} **Rom. 4:22** Wherefore also it was put down in his account, resulting in righteousness.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:22** And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham's faith was credited to his account by God. However, first Abraham had to be regenerated; his will was transferred from the realm of slavery to Satan to the realm of slavery to the Lord. Saving faith was then imputed (Culminative Aorist tense) to him. Abraham exercised this newly acquired faith because the righteousness of God had previously been imputed to Him. Imputed righteousness preceded Abraham's faith.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Although saving faith is inseparably connected with God's appointment to eternal life, it is neither the cause nor the instrument of divine quickening. The cause of our justification before God is the Father's purpose in grace and His faith in that purpose. His assurance is revealed in the fact that He gave grace to all the elect in the eternal covenant before the beginning of time (2 Tim. 1:9). How could God the Father give grace to all the elect in the eternal covenant before the beginning of time if He did not have faith in His purpose? The Father had perfect confidence in the Son's work. Therefore, He gave the

elect grace in Christ before time began. What the Son did and what the Father purposed did not fail, is not failing, and will not fail. Furthermore, the instrumental work of the Holy Spirit in applying what the Father purposed and the Son provided cannot fail. Salvation is eternal with respect to its origin, and its experience applied in time is everlasting. (W.E. Best)

Note that it was not counted to him *as* righteousness, because man's faith is imperfect. Man is so corrupt that even his faith is not righteousness, but can only be *reckoned* to him *instead of* righteousness. (D.G. Barnhouse) The imputation of divine righteousness to the believer is the prerequisite for all blessings from the justice of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 4:22 For this reason (Adv. Purpose), therefore (inferential conjunction), it (faith in Christ) was credited (λογίζομαι, API3S, Culminative, Deponent) to him (Dat. Adv.) because of righteousness (Acc. Cause).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:22** διὸ [καὶ] ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 4:22** ideo et reputatum est illi ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:23** Now it was not written [by Moses] for him [Abraham] only: “It was imputed to him,”

^{KW} **Rom. 4:23** Now, it was not written for his sake alone, namely, that it was put to his account,

^{KJV} **Romans 4:23** Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Moses did not write (Dramatic Aorist tense) this doctrine for Abraham only, but for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ in every dispensation. The phrase “It was imputed (Culminative Aorist tense) to him” referred primarily to Abraham, but secondarily to all future believers as well.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is also written to us in the Bible. There is only one way to find righteousness and true holiness, and that is through the Word of God. No one was ever sanctified through attending a prayer meeting, even if he labored in prayer all night. There is no possible growth in Christian life apart from the deepening knowledge of this book. Also, the Holy Spirit never works in any man apart from the truth that is in the external Word. God will not communicate with a lost soul apart from the truth that is set down in the Bible. And the Lord will bring a child of God along the pilgrim way only by means of the Word of God. (D.G. Barnhouse)

We did not believe concerning our seed, as Abraham did, but concerning his Seed, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who actually died for our sins and was raised because the sin He bore was all gone, and we were vindicated. (A.E. Knoch) It is faith that is “reckoned,” a faith that is apart from works, apart from circumcision, apart from the law, apart from sight – and therefore a “reckoning” that is solely a matter of grace. (D. Moo)

Rom. 4:23 Now (transitional particle) it was not (neg. adv.) written (γράφω, API3S, Dramatic; by Moses) for him (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Abraham) only (Acc. Spec.): "it (righteousness) was imputed (λογίζομαι, API3S, Culminative, Deponent) to him (Dat. Adv.; Abraham)",

^{WHO} **Romans 4:23** Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι' αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 4:23** non est autem scriptum tantum propter ipsum quia reputatum est illi

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:24** But also for us [believers only], to whom it was destined [by divine decree] to be imputed when we believe on Him [God the Father] Who raised up Jesus [humanity of Christ] our Lord [deity of Christ] from deaths [Jesus died twice: first spiritually, then physically],

^{KW} **Rom. 4:24** But also for our sakes, to whose account it is to be put, to ours who place our faith upon the One who raised Jesus our Lord out from among the dead,

^{KJV} **Romans 4:24** But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Moses wrote about imputation not only for Abraham’s benefit, but also for the benefit of all future believers. The imputation of God’s righteousness to every believing sinner was destined (Historical Present tense) from eternity past and that imputation will occur (Futuristic Present tense) at some future time to every sinner who believes (Aoristic Present tense) according to his chosen time and place. There is no doubt that the imputation will occur; only the given moment for each believer is unknown to us.

There must be an object for that belief to focus on or the belief is ineffective. The one and only object is God the Father, the same One Who resurrected (Historical Present tense) Jesus our Lord from deaths. Paul reminds us of the hypostatic union by using the name “Jesus” and the title “Lord.” The name “Jesus” refers to His humanity; the title “Lord” refers to His deity. The plural “deaths” refers to His dying twice on the cross. First, He died spiritually; then He died physically.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some people have asked me what I think about Mel Gibson’s movie, “The Passion of the Christ.” My only problem with his movie is the relative down-playing of the resurrection compared to the cross. Perhaps these words will better explain my opinion of the movie. (LWB) It seems so strange that so many receive more comfort at the cross than they do at the empty grace of Christ, for Scripture itself hesitates not to say: “If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, you are yet in your sins” (1 Cor. 15:17). A dead Savior could not save; One Who was Himself vanquished by death would be powerless to deliver sin’s slaves. Here is one of the chief defects of Roman Catholicism – its deluded subjects are occupied with a lifeless Christ, worshippers of a crucifix. The glorious gospel is not fully preached until we proclaim a risen and victorious Redeemer. Christ’s resurrection sealed our justification; it provided a sure foundation for our faith and hope. (A.W. Pink)

Rom. 4:24 but (adversative conj.) also (adjunctive) for us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; reference to believers only), to whom (Dat. Adv.) it was destined (μέλλω, PAI3S, Historical; denoting an action that follows a divine decree) to be imputed (λογίζομαι, PMInf., Futuristic, Purpose & Result, Deponent) when we believe (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DPM, Aoristic, Temporal) on Him (Acc. Dir. Obj.; God the Father) Who raised up (ἐγείρω, AAPtc.ASM, Historical, Substantival, Articular; resurrection) Jesus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the humanity of Christ) our (Gen. Rel.) Lord (Compl. Acc.; the deity of Christ) from deaths (Abl. Sep.; plural: Jesus died twice - first spiritually, then physically),

^{WHO} **Romans 4:24** ἀλλὰ καὶ δι ἡμᾶς οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 4:24** sed et propter nos quibus reputabitur credentibus in eum qui suscitavit Iesum Dominum nostrum a mortuis

^{LWB} **Rom. 4:25** **Who was delivered over to judgment because of our transgressions [justification was accomplished by His death on the cross] and was raised because of our justification [salvation was accomplished by His resurrection life].**

^{KW} **Rom. 4:25** Who was delivered up because of our transgressions and was raised because of our justification.

^{KJV} **Romans 4:25** Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ was delivered over to judgment (Dramatic Aorist tense) on the cross because of our transgressions. He was subsequently resurrected (Dramatic Aorist tense) because of our justification. Justification, therefore, was completed at the cross and was not dependant upon the resurrection. Justification = death on the cross. Salvation =

resurrection life. It might sound like I'm splitting theological hairs, but there is a difference between the two; one is negative and the other is positive.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The resurrection was God's declaration that He had accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for human sin. The resurrection is not merely a victory over death (though it is that), but a proof that the atonement was a satisfactory atonement in the sight of the Father, and that death, the result of sin, is abolished on that basis. (J.M. Boice) He was raised, not merely that we might be justified, but because we had been justified by His vicarious death. (R.B. Kuiper) Christ consented to die because we were dead; He rose to life that we might be made alive by our acquittal. In His betrayal and death we die to sin; in His resurrection we rise to new life. Thus the two clauses represent the negative and the positive side of the same operations. (J.B. Lightfoot)

As it was necessary that the high priest, under the old economy, should not only slay the victim at the altar, but carry the blood into the most holy place, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, so it was necessary not only for our great High Priest to suffer in the outer court, but that He should pass into heaven, to present His righteousness before God for our justification. (C. Hodge) He was not raised from the dead in order to justify us, but because we were already justified by His blood. He bought and paid for our righteousness on the cross. Now, in His resurrection He has given to us His life. It is His blood that justifies us; it is His resurrection that saves us. (K. Lamb)

Once we were justified by His blood, Christ was raised again from the dead and was seated at the right hand of the Father in glory. Then, He sent forth the Holy Spirit. This progression brings us from justification by faith into the salvation of God. The OT saints knew what it was to be justified by faith. They knew what it was like to be established in righteousness, but we know what it is like to be established in the power of God, which is the salvation of God. The Kingdom of Heaven is righteousness brought about by justification; the Kingdom of God is salvation, brought about by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. (K. Lamb)

“Dia” with the accusative is primarily retrospective, translated “because of.” (Sanday & Headlam) The resurrection of Jesus is regarded as the consequence of our justification and justification is conceived of as complete prior to the resurrection. This interpretation would require us to construe the justification in this instance as equivalent to reconciliation and propitiation, belonging to the sphere of objective, historical, once-for-all accomplishment. It is not impossible to take justification in this sense. (R. Haldane)

Our resurrection comes as a result of justification. No resurrection is possible until everything related to justification is completed. That is why it says here that Christ “was raised because of our justification.” The preposition “dia” plus the accusative case is always “because of,” never “for” as in the King James Version. All the work for justification was completed on the cross. Although it follows His finished work on the cross, Christ’s resurrection is part of the salvation package, because it sets the stage for

us – already justified – to live on earth in the “newness of life” of spiritual maturity. His resurrection also becomes the precedent or “firstfruits” for our own resurrection at the Rapture of the Church. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This passage clearly asserts that those for whose offenses Christ died, for their justification He rose. If Christ died for all mankind, all must also be justified, or the Lord fails in His aim and design. It cannot be scripturally denied that those for whom Christ died are those who died to sin in Christ, and they are co-extensive with those for whom He rose. How can it be said that those for whom Christ died are not co-extensive with all those who are finally saved? It can only be hypothesized if you fail to comprehend fully the truth of the representative principle of Christ's headship in Romans 5:12-21. There is an indissoluble connection between the death and resurrection of Christ. The benefits accruing from the one can never be severed from those accruing from the other. Only a definite atonement can be consistent with this Scriptural truth. Christ's covenant relation was with "as many as the Father had given Him," and He justified them as their head and representative. (G.D. Long)

Rom. 4:25 Who (Subj. Nom.) was delivered over (passive obedience of Christ) to judgment (παραδίδομι, API3S, Dramatic; ellipsis: when the verb is wanting an infinitive, in this case "to die") because of our (Poss. Gen.) transgressions (Acc. Gen. Ref.) and was raised (ἐγείρω, API3S, Dramatic; resurrection) because of our (Poss. Gen.) justification (Acc. Cause; justification was completed at the cross - it was not accomplished by the resurrection).

^{WHO} **Romans 4:25** ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 4:25** qui traditus est propter delicta nostra et resurrexit propter iustificationem nostram

CHAPTER 5

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith [positional truth], may we [let us] keep on having spiritual prosperity [experiential truth] face-to-face with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KW} **Rom. 5:1** Having therefore been justified by faith, peace we are having with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KJV} **Romans 5:1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul takes us from our positional status as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to a resultant hope that we will live for Him in our Christian walk. Having been justified by faith (Culminative Aorist tense), let us keep on having spiritual prosperity (Iterative Present tense). The antecedent action of justification will hopefully lead to subsequent daily decisions to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The positional truth of justification will hopefully lead to a life of experiential sanctification. The positional element is circumstantial while the experiential element is tendential. The positional element was settled in heaven in eternity past; the experiential element depends on our positive volition to doctrine. "Spiritual prosperity" is a reference to peace and blessings with God through our daily occupation with Jesus Christ.

Please note that there is a difference between justification before God and justification by faith. Justifying faith before the human consciousness is not passive, but active. In justification before God, however, the sinner is passive. Justification before God was accomplished on the cross and is past tense, a historical fact. Justification by faith is accomplished by the regenerated person's faith and occurs in time. The elect were justified before God and reconciled to God at the cross; these are both forensic and Godward. The elect are justified by faith and reconciled to God in time when God-given faith comes to them as part of the new birth. In the latter case, we are justified by means of the faith God gave us when He regenerated us. Faith is not the ground, but the instrument. Because we are justified by the gift of faith in this verse (positional), we may have the peace of God by faith in the next verse (experiential). As John Murray said, "since we have it, let us have it."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Foreknowledge and predestination deal with prior determination by God. Calling, justification and glorification deal with the application of redemption directly to us. We know from Paul's teaching that justification presupposes faith, so we can insert faith before justification, but after regeneration. So in the final pattern we have: God's foreknowledge (forloving), predestination, His effectual call of us, regeneration, faith and repentance, justification, sanctification and glorification ... In Romans 8:28-30, foreknowledge and predestination deal with the prior determination by God. Calling, justification and glorification deal with the application of redemption directly to us. Before everything there stands God's eternal election. Where our personal experience is concerned, the first step is our spiritual regeneration. (J.M. Boice)

Justification is an act which proceeds from God's free grace. It is an act of God and of God alone. It might seem that this emphasis upon divine action would not only make it inappropriate, but inconsistent for any activity of which we are the agents, to be given any instrumentality or efficiency in connection with justification. But the Scripture makes it quite clear that activity on the part of the recipient is given its own place in relation to this act of God's grace. The activity on the part of the recipient is that of faith, and it is faith alone that is brought into this relationship to justification. (J. Murray) Being

justified by faith, as he has shown so fully and so persuasively in the preceding chapters, let us not omit the next step; let us have peace with God. Let the effect of Christ's sacrificial death have full scope, not stopping at justification or remission of sins, but including in our experience - peace with God - forgiveness in the deep sense of restoration to fellowship, reconciliation. (C. Scott)

The call of God does what the call of man can't. It raises the dead. It creates spiritual life. It is irresistible in the sense that it can overcome all resistance. It is infallibly effective according to God's purpose. The fall of God cannot fail in its intended effect. It irresistibly secures the faith that justified. We know that justification is by faith. So if all "the called" are infallibly justified, then the call itself must effect or guarantee the faith, since none can be justified without faith. Between God's act of predestination and justification there is a divine act of calling. Since justification is only by faith, the calling in view must be the act of God whereby He calls faith into being. And since it necessarily results in justification, it must be effectual or irresistible. None is called (in this sense) who is not justified. All of the called are justified. So the calling is the sovereign work of God which brings people to the faith by which they are justified. (J. Piper)

Faith is presupposed in justification, is the precondition of justification - not because we are justified on the ground of faith or for the reason that we are justified because of faith, but only for the reason that faith is God's appointed instrument through which He dispenses this grace. (J. Murray) There has been a curious failure of modern American scholars to understand the force of the Present tense linear action - "keep on enjoying peace". (A.T. Robertson) Is Paul stating a fact of justification (position, standing) or is he exhorting the reader to do something relating to his sanctification (condition, state). It depends on whether you take "ecko" as indicative or the subjunctive. A.T. Robertson says the manuscript evidence demands the "Let us have peace" reading. Denney says "the manuscript evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of it, so much so that Wescott & Hort notice no other reading. Tischendorf says "it cannot be rejected unless it is altogether inappropriate, and inappropriate it seemingly is not." (K. Wuest)

The "committee" held to the internal evidence because they believe Paul is "stating facts rather than exhorting," meaning they preferred the indicative over the subjunctive. "Since the difference in pronunciation between the "o" and "w" in the Hellenistic age was almost non-existent, when Paul dictated to his amanuensis, Tertius, "either letter could have been written." (LWB) If we take the verbs in these verses as in the imperative mood, they then contain a summons to all true Christians to appropriate the spiritual privileges secured to them by the Author of eternal salvation. (J. Barmby) The apostle now turned to a presentation of the experiential results of the believer's justification. Some of the important Greek manuscripts read, "Let us have peace with God." This seems to be the preferred reading. If so, the sense is, "Let us keep on having (in the sense of enjoying) peace with God." (J. Witmer)

Judicial peace does not necessarily mean that I experience peace personally and emotionally. Judicial peace is the result of justification; experiential peace is a possibility

accruing from salvation. What the church at Rome did not recognize was that, as a result of their standing with God and of the life of Jesus Christ that was imparted to them, they did not have to wait to live in the salvation of God. Most of us do not live in God's salvation. We do not live in the peace of God. (K. Lamb) The past, present, and future are portrayed in Romans 5:1-2. "Having been justified" is past. We are "having access" as we are "having peace" is present. The fruition of hope, which is the glory of God, is future. (W.E. Best) The very earliest manuscripts have "echomen" (with omega in the middle). This is the hortatory subjunctive, "let us have." But a later scribe changed the reading to an omicron in the middle, the simple indicative "we have." (R. Earle)

The person who has been justified by God before Divine justice will be justified by faith before his own consciousness. This justification is not before God. The faith of Romans 5:1 is on the basis of having been justified, but now we are justified before our own consciousness. This is the *result* of imparted righteousness, whereas the former is on the *basis* of imputed righteousness. We could never be justified by faith apart from imputed righteousness. The righteousness wrought by Jesus Christ on the cross was imparted to the elect person in regeneration, which is the act of the Holy Spirit. Having been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, we are justified by faith before our consciousness on the basis of imparted righteousness. Having been declared righteous by the sovereign God, justifying righteousness is revealed through faith. The justifying act of God is followed by an appropriating act of faith, which is the fruit of regeneration. (W.E. Best)

The Christian's standing in Jesus Christ is finished. He is positionally secure because he had nothing to do with his standing. His standing in Christ is wholly of God. Nevertheless, the Christian's condition of life is unfinished. His state is imperfect. Therefore, he must work out his own salvation; he must add to his faith, which is God's gift. The Holy Spirit, Who accomplishes regeneration within an individual, delivers him by sanctification from spiritual disease and moral blemish so that he may become conformed to the image of Christ. A person does not enjoy the peace of justification unless he has been healed from: (1) inattention and unconcern about the Word of God, (2) unbelief and ignorance of spiritual things, (3) love of the world, (4) love for sin and the commission of it, (5) self-indulgence and self-seeking, (6) an accusing conscience, and (7) a slavish fear of God. (W.E. Best)

The justified have peace with God, that is, His wrath no longer threatens them. They are accepted in Christ. (K. Wuest) But this could be read as an exhortation to enter into and enjoy the peace which justification brings. (Denney) There is a difference between having peace with God and having the peace of God in the heart. The first has to do with justification, the second with sanctification. The first is the result of a legal standing and is static, the second, the result of the work of the Holy Spirit [and the volition of man] and changes from hour to hour. The first, every Christian has, the second, every Christian may have. (K. Wuest) The progress of the new life is as much a part of God's grace as was Christ's death for the sinner in the first place. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 5:1 Therefore (illative), having been justified (δικαιόω, APPTc.NPM, Culminative, Circumstantial, Antecedent

Action) by faith (Abl. Occasion, Means; positional truth),
may we ("let us") keep on having (ἔχω, PASubj.1P,
Tendential, Iterative, Hortatory, Purpose with an Element of
Contingency) spiritual prosperity (Acc. Dir. Obj.;
synecdoche of Species used for peace, blessings;
experiential truth) face-to-face with God (Acc. Gen. Ref.)
through our (Poss. Gen.) Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Agency),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:1** Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 5:1** iustificati igitur ex fide pacem habeamus ad Deum per Dominum nostrum
Iesum Christum

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:2** **Through Whom we should also continue to obtain access [approach] by faith into this grace in which we stand [we should be attempting to bring our experiential state up to our positional standing], and so let us boast [*esprit de corps*] in the confidence of the glory of God [His purposes will stand].**

^{KW} **Rom. 5:2** Through whom also our entrée we have as a permanent possession into this unmerited favor in which we have been placed permanently, and rejoice upon the basis of hope of the glory of God.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:2** By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to point to our experiential sanctification through the Lord Jesus Christ. We should continue to obtain (Iterative Present tense) approach by faith into the grace of God in which we stand (Intensive Perfect tense). This movement from the positional into the experiential is an obligation upon all believers. We should be attempting to bring our experiential state up to the level or status of our positional standing. We stand eternally secure in the present and will always (Gnomic) be eternally secure positionally. What we should be doing as a result is to utilize the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine (faith) to grow to maturity.

Paul also says we should boast (Hortatory Subjunctive mood) in the confidence of the glory of God. This boasting is not in the form of bragging, but is rather a rejoicing together, developing an *esprit de corps* in the knowledge of His integrity. We know (beyond any shadow of a doubt) that whatever God purposes will occur. We know that God's ultimate plan, which encompasses all dispensations, is unfolding on schedule. Divine sovereignty and omnipotence have everything under control. As believers, we should have comfort and confidence (*esprit de corps*) in these facts. Indeed, confidence in the fruition of God's ultimate plan is the first stage of occupation with Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If the finished work of Christ is left contingent upon the will of man, then salvation is no more *by grace*, but it is *by faith*. But Scripture teaches that "salvation is *by grace, through the instrument of faith*." Proponents of unlimited atonement teach a heresy that is mixed with truth, just like the false teachers in II Peter 2:1. They take the aforementioned verse and read it back to you as "salvation *by faith, through the instrument of grace*." The sovereign grace of God which accomplishes salvation by utilizing a mere instrument of man's faith has now been changed to the faith of man accomplishing salvation by utilizing the mere instrument of God's sovereign grace! To me this is a scary conclusion, and it reminds me of how false teachers "infiltrate by flanking attacks and by underground tunnelings" (Calvin), propagating their peculiar twists on Scripture.

The Christian never finds his today to be a time of rest, but he is possessed with one incomparable advantage – his hope [confidence] will never make him ashamed. This hope renders duty delightful. It enlightens darkness. It alleviates sorrow and teaches contentment. Like the helmet of salvation, this hope guards the head in the day of battle. Like the anchor of the soul in Hebrews 6:18-20, it holds and secures in the day of storm. This hope, like a pleasing companion, travels with us throughout our wilderness journey. The object of this hope is Jesus Christ. Faith is the believer's logic; hope is his rhetoric. Faith's object is the Divine logos, the infallible Word of God; hope's object is the Person promised. Faith looks to the Word of the Promised; hope looks to the Promiser of the Word. (W.E. Best)

Grace is here present as a field into which we have all been introduced and where we *stand* and where we *should* enjoy all the privileges of this grace about us. (A.T. Robertson) Experiential truth is having heaven to go to heaven in. (K. Lamb) According to one view, this introduces a new and higher benefit than peace with God, as the consequence of our justification: "We have not only peace, but access." (C. Hodge) Prayer is the key privilege of adoption which we enjoy now. On the one hand, this is described as a consequence of our justification. "Access" means access to God. On the other hand, access is based on our adoption. Because of it we can approach God as "Father." And only through the Spirit of adoption can we be assured that God is our Father and that He indeed hears our prayers. (J. Boice)

We must guard against the notion that if we believe, our faith is the ground on which we are justified. It is hard, indeed, to see how such a notion could arise, in the face of all that the Scriptures teach against justification by works. For to make faith the ground of our justification – the *propter quod*, to use a legal phrase – is to put faith in the position of a meritorious work. And that such has no efficacy for justification has been abundantly shown. Faith is merely the means or instrument by which we lay hold on the justifying righteousness of Christ. We are justified by means of our faith, and not because of it. (C. Irwin) Peace and joy are twin blessings of the gospel: as an old preacher put it, "peace is joy resting; joy is peace dancing." (F.F. Bruce) Now don't turn into a holyroller on me!

Rom. 5:2 through Whom (Abl. Agency) we should also (adjunctive; as a result) continue to obtain (ἔχω, Perf.AI1P, Iterative, Potential Indicative Expressing Obligation) access (Acc. Dir. Obj.; approach) by faith (Instr. Means; evidence is equal for inclusion or exclusion of this Greek phrase) into this (Immediate demonstrative pronoun) grace (Acc. Gen. Ref.; we should be attempting to bring our *state* up to the level of our *standing*) in which (Loc. Sph.) we stand (ἵστημι, Perf.AI1P, Intensive & Gnostic; *heterosis*, in which the exact sense can be both in the past and in the present - "in which we stand" and "continue to stand", eternal security), and so (resultant) let us boast (καυχάομαι, PMSbj.1P, Descriptive, Hortatory, Deponent, Comparative Clause Where an Element of Contingency Exists; rejoicing, *esprit de corps*) in the confidence (Loc. Sph.; the integrity of God - we know beyond any shadow of a doubt that it will occur; hope) of the glory (Descr. Gen.; God's ultimate plan which encompasses all dispensations) of God (Poss. Gen.; 1st stage of Occupation with Christ).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:2** δι οὗ καὶ τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐσχήκαμεν [τῆ πίστει] εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ἣ ἐστήκαμεν καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐπ ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 5:2** per quem et accessum habemus fide in gratiam istam in qua stamus et gloriamur in spe gloriae filiorum Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:3** And not only this [boasting in the confidence of the glory of God], but also let us boast in pressures [*esprit de corps* during adversity], knowing that pressure [adversity testing] may bring about fortitude [spiritual self-esteem],

^{KW} **Rom. 5:3** And not only this, but we also are exulting in our tribulations, knowing that this tribulation produces endurance,

^{KJV} **Romans 5:3** And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only should we boast in the confidence of the glory of God, but we should (Contingency) also boast (Customary Present tense) during times of personal adversity (Latin: tribulation). We should continue to have *esprit de corps* (Latin: patience) even when times are tough. A mature believer is able to utilize doctrinal resources in his soul when adversity strikes. Outside adversity comes to everyone. "We have the choice whether to hold adversity at bay, or to allow these outside pressures in life to be converted into inside stress in the soul." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) We should use our spiritual problem-solving devices and meet adversity with endurance and steadfastness, unswerving from our purpose and loyalty to the Word of God.

We should also know (Gnomic Perfect tense) that outside pressure is able to produce (Tendential Present tense) fortitude. This fidelity to truth (doctrine) and duty under the severest trials is part of genuine humility. Facing adversity with Bible doctrine in the soul is the first sign of spiritual self-esteem, cracking the maturity barrier. Volition is the deciding factor. You make the decision whether to meet adversity head on with doctrine or to collapse under pressure and allow stress to enter your soul. Paul encourages us (Hortatory Subjunctive mood) to share the *esprit de corps* of supergrace believers and to rejoice during times of adversity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul did not exult because of the tribulations themselves, but because of their beneficial effect on his Christian life. They are assets that help develop Christian character. (K. Wuest) Every spiritual advance is tested by adversity, i.e. providential preventative suffering and momentum testing. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The first step of the ladder is tribulation. IN suffering, or in a position where it is necessary to contend with unreasonable men, or amidst many disappointments; there may be acquired a habit of self-command and self-restraint, which may both tend to personal happiness and may naturally increase influence over others. By patience here is to be understood something more than passive, quiet suffering; endurance and constancy are intended. The patient man is not he who lies down discouraged under difficulties, but the man who holds on to his way with cheerful resolution and perseverance. (J.R. Thompson)

Afflictions, which before were the expressions of God's displeasure, are now the benevolent and beneficent manifestations of His love. And instead of being inconsistent with our filial relation to Him, they serve to prove that he regards and loves us as His children. They come to the believer, in this case, as a matter of joy and thankfulness. (C. Hodge) There is no person who has ever lived to whom all things have happened as he would have wished. And with most persons life has been, in many respects, a long contradiction of their natural tastes and preferences. Whether in body or in mind, in circumstances or in relationships, in associations or employment, by bereavement or defections, all men are, and have ever been, in some way or other afflicted. This condition of our earthly pilgrimage is to many an occasion of annoyance, irritation, murmuring, and rebellion. Others, of a more reasonable habit of mind, submit, with a certain stolidity, to what they regard as inevitable evil. But true Christianity teaches a better way of accepting our lot. We are taught to expect tribulation, and we are not taught to regard piety as exempting from the common discipline. (J. Barmby)

There is a ladder, by the several steps of which the follower of Christ mounts from earthly trial to heavenly joy. The foot of the ladder may be upon the cold soil of the earth, but its top reaches to the clouds. Let us bear in mind, however, that it is not a natural and necessary result of tribulation, that the afflicted should profit by it. It depends upon the light in which the sufferer views it, the spirit in which he accepts it, whether affliction is or is not a discipline of good. It must be a fellowship with Christ to be serviceable to so

high an end; and the teaching must be that of the Spirit of God. Consider the steps of the process: (J.R. Thompson)

When *anadiplosis* is repeated in successive sentences, it is called *climax*, an ascent, or *gradation*, a gradual ladder going up in steps. For example:

hope makes not ashamed.

experience works **hope**, and

patience works **experience**, and

pressure works **patience**, and

We glory also in **pressures**, knowing that

This ladder is one of ascending order, in which each step progresses to the next step.

The most obvious category of suffering for a Christian is what we can call corrective suffering, that is, suffering that is meant to get us back onto the path of righteousness when we have strayed from it. We have an example from family life in the spankings given to young children when they disobey and do wrong. If a child needs a spanking, he should receive one, and if he has the right kind of father and mother, he does. Why? Is it because the parent likes to inflict pain? Are good parents all naturally sadists? Not at all! Rather, they understand that a child has to learn that he or she is not free to do whatever seems desirable irrespective of the needs or feelings of others, and that there are painful consequences whenever anyone persists in wrongdoing. It is the same in the case of the divine Father and those who are His spiritual children. The first thing we should do when suffering comes into our lives is ask God whether or not it is intended by Him for our correction. If it is, we need to confess our wrongdoing and return to the path of righteousness. And although when we suffer we should always ask God whether or not the suffering is for our correction, we should never blithely assume that this is necessarily what God is doing in the life of someone else. On the contrary, another person's suffering may be an evidence only of God's special favor to him or her. (J. Boice)

Rom. 5:3 **And** (connective conj.) **not** (neg. adv.) **only** (Acc. Spec.) **this** (ellipsis, "boasting in the confidence of the glory of God"; Dir. Obj. supplied), **but** (adversative conj.) **also** (pleonastic) **let us boast** (καυχάομαι, PMSubj.1P, Customary, Hortatory, Deponent, Comparative Clause Where an Element of Contingency Exists; rejoicing, *esprit de corps* in time of adversity) **in pressures** (Loc. Sph.; not converting the outside pressures of life into inside stress in the soul), **knowing** (οἶδα, Perf.APtC.NPM, Gnostic, Circumstantial) **that** (conj. as Dir. Obj.) **pressure** (Subj. Nom.; suffering, adversity, testing) **may bring about** (κατεργάζομαι, PMI3S, Tendentia, Deponent; equip, produce,

volition is the deciding factor) **fortitude** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; integrity, honor, courage, fidelity to truth and duty under the severest trials, genuine humility; Supergrace A: Spiritual Self Esteem, cracking the maturity barrier),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:3** οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν εἰδότες ὅτι ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται

^{VUL} **Romans 5:3** non solum autem sed et gloriamur in tribulationibus scientes quod tribulatio patientiam operatur

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:4** And fortitude [spiritual self-esteem] *may bring about* character [spiritual autonomy], and character *may bring about* confidence [spiritual maturity],

^{KW} **Rom. 5:4** And this endurance, approvedness, and this approvedness, hope.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:4** And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with the progression of experiential sanctification using the verb from the previous verse (may bring about) as an ellipsis. If the outside pressures of adversity (testing) are handled by doctrinal resources in the soul through the filling of the Spirit, the believer is able to move into fortitude or spiritual self-esteem. This stage in spiritual growth is demonstrated by honor, courage, and genuine humility. The Tendential Present tense from the prior verse means this spiritual growth is optional, not guaranteed; it depends on the believer's daily positive volition to the Word of God and continual fellowship with God through the filling of the Spirit.

Continuing with the progression, a positive believer may continue to meet adversity (testing) and move into character or spiritual autonomy. "Character" is demonstrated by integrity, a state of mind which has stood the test with doctrinal resources in the soul. The next stage, confidence or spiritual maturity, is demonstrated by fulfilled hopes and expectations due to blessings from God. This experiential progression was highlighted in the prior verse by an *anadiplosis*. I like the 3-fold teaching aid used by Colonel Thieme, in which a believer may advance from supergrace A to supergrace B to ultrasupergrace. These stages are also represented by the words (and their accompanying abbreviations) spiritual self-esteem (SGA), spiritual autonomy (SGB), and spiritual maturity (USG). If you don't like this terminology, by all means stick with fortitude, character and confidence ... but with one warning.

The Christian way of life is not something that can be done by an unbeliever. The Christian way of life requires the indwelling (standing) and filling (state) of the Spirit. When Paul talks about fortitude, character and confidence, he is not referring to a mere moral and ethical code. There are millions of unbelievers alive today who live according

to establishment principles and who exhibit a Stoicized version of fortitude, character and confidence. Honorable as these personal qualities may be, they are not at all what Paul is referring to. "If an unbeliever can do it, it is not the Christian way of life." The Christian way of life is supernatural, and requires the filling of the Spirit in order to be acceptable to divine standards. Nothing the unbeliever does, no matter how honorable in man's eyes, is acceptable by divine standards. The Christian way of life also requires the continual daily intake, metabolism and application of Bible doctrine in the filling of the Holy Spirit. There are no substitutes for this divine protocol.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Patience works experience and approval. The man who endures affliction is put to the proof, is tested. The good man is placed by a wise Providence in circumstances which bring out what there is in him, which give him occasion to call upon the Lord for help and guidance and deliverance. So far from calamity being a sign of God's displeasure, let the afflicted be reminded, for their consolation, that Scripture represents human trouble in a very different light. Paul himself led a life of labor, hardship, suffering, harassment, and sorrow; but by Divine grace he was thereby made strong for service, quick to sympathize. (J.R. Thompson) "Experience" is character which results from the process of trial, the temper of the veteran as opposed to that of the raw recruit ... a spiritual state which has shown itself proof after trial ... the best English equivalent of character. (R. Earle)

Probation or approval works hope. His expectation of direction, guardianship, and happiness, rest not upon the whisperings of fond imagination, or the promises of fallible fellow-men, but upon the Word of a faithful and unchanging God. Hope may be despised by the worldly-wise and sensual; but it is a Christian grace in which the Lord of our life takes pleasure, and by which He urges the traveler onwards upon the road which leads to the blessed vision of Himself. (J.R. Thompson) Fortitude is the spirit which does not passively endure but which actively overcomes the trials and tribulations of life ... being hammered on the anvil of trial without going to pieces. (R. Mounce) The fall of Adam duplicates the fall of Satan. The rebellion of Satan in the Garden of God resulted in the fall of angelic creatures; the disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden resulted in the fall of mankind. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This is more than mere Stoic endurance of troubles, even though endurance or steadfastness is the first result in a chain-reaction outgrowth from distress. This is spiritual glorying in afflictions because of having come to know that the end product of this chain reaction (that begins with distress) is hope. As believers suffer, they develop steadfastness; that quality deepens their character; and a deepened, tested character results in hope (i.e., confidence) that God will see them through. (J. Witmer) *Hope* is a synonym for the *integrity of God*. And by the time a believer has progressed in God's protocol plan to this point, his confidence will be great because his blessings from the justice of God will be great. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 5:4 And (continuative conj.) fortitude (Subj. Nom.; integrity, honor, courage, genuine humility, SGA: SSE) may

bring about (ellipsis, continuation of previous verb)
character (Acc. Dir. Obj.; demonstrated integrity, a state of mind which has stood the test, Supergrace B: Spiritual Autonomy), and (continuative conj.) character (Subj. Nom.; demonstrated integrity, SGB: SA) may bring about (ellipsis)
confidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fulfilled hopes and expectations due to blessings from the justice of God; UltraSupergrace, Spiritual Maturity),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:4** ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν ἢ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα

^{VUL} **Romans 5:4** patientia autem probationem probatio vero spem

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:5** And the confidence [spiritual maturity] never disappoints [is not illusory] as long as the love [mental process] for God is continually being poured out [consistent daily fellowship] in our hearts [mentality of the soul] by means of the Holy Spirit [Who converts application of doctrine to wisdom] Who was given to us.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:5** And this hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts and still floods them through the agency of the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:5** And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is an experiential verse, not a positional verse. “Confidence” comes from a relationship with the integrity of God, which fulfills our hopes, expectation and blessings when we attain spiritual maturity. “Confidence” in this context is not something you work-up on the spot by emotional activity. “Confidence” in this context is a state of spiritual maturity that has been obtained only after years of consistent study of Bible doctrine in the filling of the Holy Spirit. This confidence never humiliates, shames or dishonors (Gnomic Present tense) the mature believer regardless of outward circumstances. This confidence is not automatic. The Potential Indicative mood points to decisions on our part. Spiritual confidence is only maintained by making positive decisions for the truth.

This confidence is in tact as long as love for God is continually being poured out (Iterative Perfect tense) in the mentality of our soul. “Agape” love is not an emotional activity, but rather a mental process. “Agape” love requires a substantial amount of Bible doctrine in the soul. If you do not have a reasonably complete systematic theology in your soul, you are not occupied with Christ. If you are not occupied with Christ, you do not “agape” love God. The Iterative Perfect means you must renew your fellowship with the Lord (by confession of sin) on a consistent basis. The Potential Indicative mood means it is up to you to make daily decisions to walk with the Lord. How consistent must this walk be before you attain spiritual maturity? It takes years of daily decisions to (a) remain in fellowship, and (b) study the Bible under a qualified teacher.

The Greek word “kardia” is not a reference to the organ which pumps blood nor to an emotional state often associated with the heart. The “heart” is the right lobe or mentality of the soul, where doctrine is analyzed, stored and prepared for application in daily life. “Agape” love in the “heart” is a mental process, not an emotional activity. The Holy Spirit converts raw doctrinal precepts (gnosis) into spiritual principles which can be applied (epignosis) in daily life. The consistent application of true spiritual principles in life is converted by the Holy Spirit into wisdom (sophia), an attribute of a believer in spiritual maturity. The Holy Spirit was given to us (Dramatic Aorist tense) at the point of regeneration. He takes up residence in the believer’s soul (indwelling) and assists the positive believer in his growth in grace and knowledge.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The reality of confidence = Potential + Capacity. God fulfills His part when man fulfills his. The integrity of God is never the source of disappointment, only man produces disappointment. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This confidence is an example of *tapeinosis*, a lessening of a thing in order to increase it. Confidence *enables* us to rejoice. Therefore, it is not a false hope, but a great and eternal reality. (E.W. Bullinger) Hope makes not ashamed. Those who have hoped in the Lord, and trusted in His Word, shall never be ashamed or confounded, world without end. Not that hope fulfills itself, but that God, in His wisdom and love, fulfills it. The best and purest hopes of the follower of Jesus, those which He inspires and warrants, those which respect himself, shall all be realized. Such hopes as these will not unfit us for the common duties of life; they will assist us to discharge those duties with diligence and cheerfulness. Yet, being sons, we are heirs, and the blessedness of inheritance casts the radiant light of heaven upon our earthly lot. (J.R. Thompson)

This is also sometimes called the *Extensive Present Perfect*, both punctiliar and durative, where the completed act is followed by a state of greater or lesser duration. (A.T. Robertson) The *punctiliar* completed act represents the sovereignty of God, while the greater or lesser *duration* in time represents the will of man. The Ablative of Source would refer to God's sovereignty, while the Objective Genitive would refer to the will of man. (LWB) A man’s free will avails for nothing except to sin, if he knows not the way of truth; and even after his duty and his proper aim shall begin to become known to him, unless he also takes delight in and feels a love for it, he neither does his duty, nor sets about it, nor lives rightly. (J. Piper)

If we have followed the steps of the process of discipline described by Paul in these verses (the ladder), we must see that it is reasonable enough that he should admonish us to rejoice in those experiences of human life which Divine providence so wisely and graciously overrules for our spiritual and eternal good. The process of spiritual discipline which the apostle has described is not a process natural to men, but one supernatural and special to the sincere Christian. The tribulations of this life do not work the good of all who are visited by them; on the contrary, many are hardened by the trials which are sent to humble and soften and improve. But they profit by earthly discipline who cordially

receive the gospel of Christ, and whose spiritual nature is brought under the influence of the cross. For to such, God is a loving Father, and all things that happen to them are regarded as appointed by Him. (J.R. Thompson)

One who tells people who have not manifested that they are the children of God, that God loves them, assumes authority he does not possess. To tell a Christ rejecter that God loves him is to give him a sense of security in his sin. Furthermore, to tell people that God loves everybody is to tell them that God loves the Devil. There is no love of God outside of Christ Jesus; therefore, a person has to be in Christ before he experiences the love of God. God chose us in Christ, and He loves us in Christ. God's love is eternal. God loves His people, the elect ... In our social lives, we first know before we love; but in our spiritual lives, we love in order to know, because God's love is poured out into our hearts in regeneration. (W.E. Best)

This love is not the working of human affection; it is rather the direct manifestation of the "love of God" passing through the heart of the believer out from the indwelling Spirit. (L. Chafer) Since this genitive could be either subjective or objective, I don't have a substantial issue with Chafer's interpretation. I take the positional translation "love of God" as a given, a prerequisite, to the experiential "love for God." We cannot have "love for God" without the "love of God." Neither can we cannot have the filling (experiential) of the Holy Spirit without the indwelling (positional) of the Holy Spirit. The context of the rest of the passage is experiential. (LWB)

Rom. 5:5 And (continuative) the confidence (Subj. Nom.; relationship with the integrity of God as the basis for fulfilled hopes, expectations and blessings; USG: SM) never (neg. adv.) disappoints (καταισχύνω, PAI3S, Gnostic, Potential Indicative; humiliates, dishonors, shames) as long as (Conditional conj.; whenever) the love (Obj. Gen.; not emotional activity, but a mental process) for (from) God (Obj. Gen.) is continually being poured out (ἐκχέω, Perf.PI3S, Iterative, Consummative - as the Result of renewing our fellowship with Him on a consistent basis, Potential Indicative - daily maintenance; anthropopathism) in our (Poss. Gen.) hearts (Loc. Sph.; right lobes, capacity for love comes from Bible doctrine in the soul) by means of the Holy (Descr. Gen.) Spirit (Instr. Agency; Who converts gnosis into epignosis into sophia) Who was given (δίδωμι, APPTc.GSN, Dramatic, Substantival) to us (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:5** ἡ δὲ ἐλπίς οὐ καταισχύνει ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχεται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἀγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:5** spes autem non confundit quia caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis

LWB Rom. 5:6 Yet [even though I'm now emphasizing spiritual growth], in fact, while we were spiritually disabled [depraved & spiritually impotent], Christ still died at the appointed time as a substitute for the ungodly [He died for us even if we never grow spiritually].

KW Rom. 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in a strategic season Christ instead of and in behalf of those who do not have reverence for God and are devoid of piety died;

KJV Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even though Paul has been concentrating on experiential sanctification in the past few verses, he wants to make sure we don't forget there is a dividing line between positional and experiential truth. Positional truth is entirely the work of God on behalf of sinners. Experiential truth is the work of believers utilizing divinely provided assets, i.e., the filling of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Jesus Christ died (Dramatic Aorist tense) on the cross at the divinely appointed time as a substitute for ungodly sinners. In other words, He died for us while we were totally depraved, not when we attain a certain level of spiritual growth.

His substitutionary death for us did not occur after we reached a minimum level of spiritual growth, but when we were totally without spiritual capability (Aoristic Present tense), totally without the ability to make a positive decision in His direction, and totally enslaved to sin. He did not look forward in time with His attribute of omniscience and decide to die only for those who would eventually attain spiritual maturity. He died for many believers who may never grow in grace and knowledge; He died for believers who will become spiritual heroes and for believers who will follow the course of their sin natures.

Many Calvinist commentators do not see the "experiential" ladder in the previous verses, so they restrict this verse to an entirely positional framework. Many Arminian commentators do not see the "positional" truth of total depravity and total inability highlighted by Paul, so they restrict this verse to an entirely experiential framework. I see Paul creating a bridge between the positional and the experiential in chapters 5 and 6 – a gradual transition, with both elements alternating and coalescing in his mind. Perhaps that may explain why the relevant opinions I have quoted are often both positional and experiential.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some translations use the word "sick" for those who were "dead in sin". This is called *tapeinosis*, or a lessening of a thing in order to increase it. (E.W. Bullinger) In this context, the lessening use of the word "sick" instead of "dead" is a heresy. (LWB) Deissmann takes "huper" to mean "as representative of" and adds that it "is not without bearing on the question of "huper" in the N.T." In the papyri and the ostraca "huper" often bore the sense of "instead of" ... the notion of substitution must be understood. (A.T. Robertson) The context clearly indicates that substitution is meant. (Dana &

Mantey) The meaning here of our being “without strength,” is that we were in a state of *passive helplessness* to deliver ourselves out of our perishing condition as sinners. (R. Jamieson) Man is now brought down into the very dust and made to feel that he is no more able to savingly believe in Christ than he can climb up to Heaven. (A.W. Pink)

The universal redemption theory states that Christ died conditionally for all men but absolutely for none. To say that Christ made only a conditional purchase of man’s salvation is a low view of redemption. It would leave man’s actual deliverance from his sins in his own hands. However, man does not have the strength to deliver himself. This view of Christ’s redemption only exalts the pride of the sinner. It would indicate that the sovereign God can do nothing until depraved man lets Him. The covenant of grace is not of two parties – God and man. The Word of God affirms that the covenant of grace is unilateral. God alone makes and sustains the covenant. (W.E. Best)

The elect, until they are regenerated, are fallen sons of Adam as are all others. They are ungodly. Hence the statement “Christ died for the ungodly” is perfectly true. Further, all the elect, until they are brought to faith in Christ, are enemies of God, walking in the rebellious ways of the world. Hence, saying Christ reconciled those who were enemies of God by His death is perfectly true and harmonious with the biblical teaching of particular redemption. There is NOTHING in the context that demands us to believe that the statement “Christ died for the ungodly” means “Christ died for every single ungodly person who has ever, or will ever, live.” Such simplistic arguments ignore the vast mountain of Reformation literature let alone the plain teaching of Hebrews 7-10 and Romans 8:31-34. (J.R. White)

The popular notion that the Calvinist cannot preach a full gospel for the reason that he cannot tell men that Christ died to save each and every one of them is utter folly. This is a mode of preaching the gospel never adopted by our Lord and His apostles. What the minister of the Gospel needs to tell men is that Christ died for the ungodly. What avails us to proclaim a “whosoever will” gospel in a world of universal won’t? Yet, if left to man to will, that is an accurate description of the world in which we live. One might as well proclaim to the dead in a cemetery: “Whosoever will may arise.” The Calvinist depends not on the will of natural man, but on the grace of God Almighty. He knows that in this world of otherwise universal won’t there are here and there and everywhere those who by the grace of God will. The crucified Christ of the Arminian has done no more than open the road to life eternal; the crucified Christ of the Calvinist has procured eternal life. Consequently, the Arminian preacher offers the sinner a so-called chance at salvation, while the Calvinist preacher offers him actual salvation. (R.B. Kuiper)

Rom. 5:6 **Yet** (Adv. Time; "even though I have just mentioned our spiritual growth"), **in fact** (continuation and contrast, "however"), **while we were** (εἰμί, PAPtc.GPM, Aoristic, Temporal, Genitive Absolute) **spiritually disabled** (Obj. Gen.; without inherent power, totally depraved, total inability), **Christ** (Subj. Nom.) **still** (Adv. Time) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic) **at the appointed** (appropriate)

time (Acc. Extent of Time) as a substitute for (prep.; on behalf of) the ungodly (Gen. Substitution).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:6** εἶ γε Χριστὸς ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν ἔτι κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:6** ut quid enim Christus cum adhuc infirmi essemus secundum tempus pro impiis mortuus est

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:7** For only rarely will a person die [perhaps on impulse] on behalf of a righteous man [scrupulously just]; indeed, perhaps someone might even have the courage to die on behalf of a good man [beneficent & kind],

^{KW} **Rom. 5:7** For, very rarely in behalf of one of those individuals who is legally exact and precise in his observance of the customs and rules of the society in which he lives will anyone die, yet perhaps in behalf of the one who is generous in heart, always doing good to others, a person would even dare to die.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now adds some explanation to his doctrine of substitution on behalf of sinners. Occasionally a person might die on an impulse (Dramatic Future tense) on behalf of a righteous man, one who is scrupulously just, perhaps of exceptional character. As a matter of fact, perhaps someone might even be brave enough (Tendential Present tense) to die (Dramatic Aorist tense) on behalf of a good man, one who is kind and a benefactor to society. These are hypothetical comparisons between two individuals: one is quite righteous and is highly respected, the other a good man whom everyone loves. The idea is that a person might give his life for a person of quality, but what if the person was a scoundrel?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As between *righteous* and *good*, Lightfoot notes "all the difference in the world," the *dikaios* man being "absolutely without sympathy" while the *agathos* man "is beneficent and kind." Even so in the case of the kindly sympathetic man, courage is called for to make the supreme sacrifice. (A.T. Robertson) The *righteous* man does what he *ought*, and gives everyone his due; the *good* man does as much as he ever can, always including a beneficent relationship to others, a communion or exchange of life. (Vincent) The *righteous* man commands *respect*, the *good* man commands *affection*. (Bengel)

Some difference is to be seen in the good and the righteous. The good (*agathos*) may be a more genial person than the righteous (*dikaios*) who would be known for his uprightness. (R. Mounce) The fact is that the righteous (*dikaios*) and the good (*agathos*) represent two

distinct types of character. The distinction between dikaios and agathos is very much the same as the Aristotelian distinction between the man who is scrupulously just, and the man who is prepared to make allowances. The agathos is full of sympathy and consideration for others. He is beneficent and kind. The dikaios puts out of sight the feelings of others, but adheres to the truth. Consequently, the agathos will be met with sympathy; others will be ready to do and to suffer for him in their turn; but the dikaios will evoke no such love, no willingness to make sacrifices in turn. (J.B. Lightfoot)

Rom. 5:7 For (explanatory conj.) only rarely (Adv. of Function; scarcely) will a person (Subj. Nom.) die (ἀποθνήσκω, FMI3S, Dramatic; occasionally this may happen as an impulse) on behalf of (in place of) a righteous man (Gen. Substitution; exceptional character); indeed (Affirmative Adv.), perhaps (Adv. of Probability, optative) someone (Subj. Nom.) might even (ascensive) have the courage (τολμάω, PASubj.3S, Tendential, Concessive; be brave enough) to die (ἀποθνήσκω, AAInf., Constatative, Direct Obj. of Verb, Conceived Result) on behalf of (in place of) a good man (Gen. Substitution; benefactor to society),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:7** μόλις γὰρ ὑπὲρ δικαίου τις ἀποθανέεται· ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τάχα τις καὶ τολμᾷ ἀποθανεῖν·

^{VUL} **Romans 5:7** vix enim pro iusto quis moritur nam pro bono forsitan quis et audeat mori

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:8** But God demonstrated His own love [distinguishing & redemptive] toward us [the elect], in that while we were yet sinners [rebels], Christ died as a substitute for us [His sheep].

^{KW} **Rom. 5:8** But God is constantly proving His own love to us, because while we were yet sinners, Christ in behalf of us died.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While there may be an occasion where a man may give his life for a righteous person, perhaps even for a good person, how many occasions are there when a man gives his life for a recalcitrant rebel? God demonstrated (Historical Present tense) His love toward us when we were (Aoristic Present tense) sinners. Our wills were subject to Satan and our own sin natures were out of control when Christ died (Dramatic Aorist tense) as a substitute for us. Divine standards are exceedingly higher than human standards.

Christ died for many believers who were once rebels, murderers and thieves. That is above and beyond what mere mortals are willing to sacrifice. His love was also

distinguishing and redemptive. It had a definite object in mind (His sheep, the elect) and it accomplished what it was intended to accomplish – redemption. God’s love is not indiscriminately cast about, but has specific recipients. Those recipients were marked out by Him in eternity past, not on the basis of their potential spiritual growth, or of any inherently good qualities, but according to His divine sovereignty.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In like manner, the only true motive for Christian life and service is the very motive which has actuated God in His service for us - love. (L.S. Chafer) The atonement flows from the love of God and is the expression of a love that is *distinguishing*. (J. Murray) The doctrine of election encourages love for God. If we have a part in salvation, then our love for God is diminished by just that amount. If it is all of God, then our love for Him must be boundless. We did not seek Him; He sought us. When He sought us, we ran from Him. When He came to us in the Person of His Son, we killed Him. Yet He still came; still He elected a great number of recalcitrant rebels to salvation. (J. Boice)

God’s intent to bring His elect to glory is grounded in His infinite love for them. If God will do all this (Rom. 5:6-10) for us when we were His enemies, He will surely do much more now that we are His friends. If He did the harder thing (die for us) when we were enemies, He will surely do the easier thing (save us from the coming wrath) now that we are His friends. Love has removed every barrier to eternal security which sin had erected, and the “much more” love will surely keep those whom He has chosen before the foundation of the world. (J. Dillow) *Hyperbation* is the placing of a word out of its usual order in a sentence. Here, the nominative is put last, and the verb first, to emphasize both. (E.W. Bullinger)

God loved His people before they had a historical existence, i.e. Jeremiah 31:3 "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." (A.W. Pink) God permitted a fall which He undoubtedly had the power to avert, because without that fall, there would never had been any knowledge of His lovingkindness, His tender mercy, His longsuffering, His free sovereign grace - doctrines of which Satan was seemingly in total ignorance. (D.G. Barnhouse) Christ died to put away sin’s penalty from the elect. He lives to put away sins from within the elect. Christ’s death on the cross destroyed sin’s penalty for believers. (W.E. Best) When we had no desire to be loved by Him, and when we were provoking Him to His face and displaying the fierce enmity of our unrenewed hearts, God loved us. (A.W. Pink)

Consistent with His *justice*, Scripture teaches that the atonement of Christ is ultimately traced to its source in the free, sovereign, *distinguishing love* of God. When the love of God is manifested towards His creatures in this *special* way, it is reflected only in those rational creatures whom He has loved with an *everlasting love*. This aspect of His love is redemptive. Therefore, it is referred to theologically as the *distinguishing* or *redemptive love* of God. It is this unalterable love of the triune God which adds warmth of personality and a *personal love* to the eternal purpose and plan of God. Christ died for the ungodly. The intent under this subheading is not to discuss the natural propensity of

general, non-redemptive love of God for His creatures as creatures, but to discuss the special discriminating love, a love that elects and predestinates some rational creatures unto eternal life according to the free and sovereign good pleasure of His infinitely wise and holy will. (G.D. Long)

Rom. 5:8 But (contrast conj.) God (Subj. Nom.) demonstrated (συνίστημι, PAI3S, Historical) His own (Poss. Gen.) love (Acc. Dir. Obj.; distinguishing & redemptive in purpose; not an *anthropopathism*, but a divine attribute) toward us (Prep. Acc.), in that (causal) while we were (εἰμί, PAPtc.GPM, Aoristic, Temporal) yet (Adv. Time) sinners (Gen. Absolute; recalcitrant rebels), Christ (Subj. Nom.) died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic) as a substitute for (on behalf of) us (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:8** συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἔτι ἀμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:8** commendat autem suam caritatem Deus in nos quoniam cum adhuc peccatores essemus

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:9** Much more [it follows *a fortiori*], therefore, being now justified [forensic] by means of His blood [representative analogy for the spiritual death of Christ on the cross], we shall be saved from the wrath [last judgment & the Lake of Fire] through Him.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:9** Much more therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved through Him from the wrath.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an adverb of degree and a superlative to compare the hypothetical death of a human for a fellow human and that of Christ for all believers throughout history. We are now justified (Constative Aorist tense) by means of His spiritual death on the cross. This positional and legal pronouncement is a given. The death of one human being for another only purchases an extended temporal life for the beneficiary. However, Christ's substitutionary death justified us before God and provides a qualitative eternal life.

It follows *a fortiori* that since we have been justified, we will also be saved from wrath. His substitutionary death for us guarantees that we will be saved (Predictive Future tense) from the wrath at the Great White Throne as well as an eternal life of torment in the Lake of Fire. The benefit of a man dying for another man is temporal; the benefit of Christ dying for another man is eternal. The difference in degree is enormous! The certainty of the former guarantees the latter. This is the first of five *a fortiori* statements.

Please note the following distinction between objective and subjective reconciliation. Objective reconciliation is Godward, while subjective reconciliation is manward. Objective reconciliation is related to propitiation and was accomplished by Jesus Christ in the past – on the cross; subjective reconciliation is related to regeneration and is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the present – when God provides the grace gift of faith to the helpless sinner. Both are forensic terms; both occur in the sphere of Divine action.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

You are justified by the death of Jesus Christ: (most Reformers understand this)

- going to heaven
- righteousness
- rending of the veil
- wilderness
- Kingdom of heaven
- positional truth (standing)
- absolute righteousness of God imputed to believer
- God's sovereignty

You are saved by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (most dispensationalists understand this)

- heaven to go to heaven in
- power
- Pentecost
- Canaan
- Kingdom of God
- experiential truth (state)
- relative righteousness of man attained by positive volition to Bible doctrine
- man's responsibility

You are not justified because you are saved, you are saved because you are justified. The salvation of God is something we 'appropriate' after we understand the justification from God. What God is trying to do is bring the quality of Jesus Christ in the heavens to the believer on the earth - that is salvation. (K. Lamb)

There are actually two causes that lie behind justification by faith: the meritorious cause and the instrumental cause. The meritorious cause is Jesus Christ - alone. The instrumental cause is our faith - alone. This is why Calvin called our faith an "instrument," a "kind of vessel," "something merely passive, bringing nothing of ours to the recovering of God's favor, but receiving from Christ that which we lack." (R.T. Kendall) It is a fact that all, including the elect, are enemies of Christ until the elect are regenerated by the Spirit of God. In God's all-seeing eye, all the elect were enemies when He chose us in Christ. Objective reconciliation presupposes an alienation which has

been satisfied by the death of Jesus Christ at Calvary. The reconciliation took place in the past when Jesus Christ died on behalf of those the Father gave to Him. Objective reconciliation is the propitiation of Jesus Christ by which He satisfied Divine justice and enabled the righteous God to look with favour upon the sinner. (W.E. Best)

Justification implies that there takes place, in the case of those who believe, a reversal of the sentence of condemnation. Those who were guilty before God are accepted; those who were judged by law are now received into favor. Reconciliation implies that a state of enmity has been replaced by a state of friendship and concord. Those who were in arms against God, and towards whom a righteous Ruler could not turn a look of complacency, are now pardoned, submissive, obedient, and at peace with Heaven. The means are described in one verse as the blood, in the other as the death, of Christ. The same thing is intended by the two expressions, the shedding of the blood being equivalent to the taking of life. The blood is the emblem of the life, and consequently the blood-shedding is emblematic. (J.R. Thompson)

There was very little actual shedding of Christ's blood as such. While there was a loss of blood when the crown of thorns was put on His head and when the nails were driven into His flesh, it was not until after He had died that blood (mixed with water) gushed forth. So the references to Christ's blood are not to His physical blood per se, but to His death as a sacrificial provision for our sins. (M. Erickson) His blood denotes His sacrificial death; by His blood here is parallel to by the death of His Son in verse 10. (F.F. Bruce) The blood of Christ is a memorial of the abiding efficacy of His death. (A.E. Knoch) Blood signifies Christ's death as a sacrifice for sins. (D. Moo)

There is no contradiction between Paul's doctrine of justification and his conception of the judgment of God, and being declared righteous so as to escape the wrath of God does not exempt us from rewards or punishment in the last day. In other words, there must be a righteous judgment *among the very ones* who have been arrayed in Christ's righteousness. (R.T. Kendall) Objective reconciliation (Godward) is finished. It was wrought once for all by the death of Jesus Christ. Objective reconciliation is a historical fact. It was perfected by Jesus Christ. Subjective reconciliation (manward) is effected by the Holy Spirit in regeneration when He removes the sinner's enmity against God. (W.E. Best) To understand what is happening we have to realize that "saved" is used in at least three different ways in the Bible, in three different tenses. Sometimes it refers to something past, at other times to something present, sometimes to things yet to come. (J. Boice)

The word "blood" is a *metalepsis*, when something more is meant and the word used is deficient; the full meaning has to be supplied entirely by the thought, rather than by the association or relation of words. The Latins called it a representative metaphor. "His blood" refers to the atonement. (E.W. Bullinger) The *blood of Jesus* refers to Jesus' violent, sacrificial death. (A. Stibbs, D.A. Carson) A fortiori (Latin: with stronger reason) means "when the greater benefit has been given, the less will not be withheld." The incredible came to us when we were enemies (justification), the self-evident comes to us

afterwards (avoidance of the Lake of Fire). The less (avoidance of the Lake of Fire) is not more difficult than the greater (justification). The easier thing is to deliver you, the greater thing is to justify you." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We must never say that it is our faith that saves us ... It is the Lord Jesus Christ Who saves you. If you say that your faith saves you, your faith has become a work, and you have something to boast about ... faith does not save us; it is through faith we are saved. Faith is only the instrument; it is not the cause of justification. (M.L. Jones) Are we not saved when reconciled? No. The one regards God, the other regard ourselves. The work of redemption is the procuring of the thing; the work of salvation is the applying of the thing. Reconciliation with God is an earnest of complete salvation. There is a contrast stated, though tacitly, between His death and His life. If we cannot look up to a risen and reigning Redeemer, then our preaching and faith are vain - we are yet in our sins. (J.S. Exell)

Rom. 5:9 Much (Adj. Degree) more (Comparative Adv.; to a greater degree; *a fortiori* of Deliverance from the Last Judgment; 1st of five "much mores"), therefore (Inferential particle), being now (Adv. of Time) justified (δικαιώω, APptc.NPM, Constative, Circumstantial; a legal pronouncement) by means of His (Poss. Gen.) blood (Instr. Means; representative analogy for His spiritual death on the Cross), we shall be saved (σώζω, FPIIP, Predictive) from the wrath (Abl. Sep.; last judgment and the Lake of Fire) through Him (Subj. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:9** πολλῶ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα διὰ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς

^{VUL} **Romans 5:9** Christus pro nobis mortuus est multo igitur magis iustificati nunc in sanguine ipsius salvi erimus ab ira per ipsum

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:10** For if while we were enemies [sinners estranged from God], we were reconciled to God by means of the death of His Son, much more [*a fortiori*], having been reconciled [now saints], we shall be saved [ultimate sanctification] by His life [resurrection].

^{KW} **Rom. 5:10** For though, while being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by the life He possesses.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:10** For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a protasis of a 1st class condition to affirm that we were enemies (Gnomic Present tense) of Christ when we were reconciled (Culminative Aorist tense). All of us were in a state of hostility, hatred and estrangement from God before the power of the Holy Spirit regenerated us. We were later reconciled to God by means of the spiritual death of His Son on the cross. Reconciliation is manward, bringing us back to God. God reconciles men to Himself. Propitiation is Godward, bridging the gap from God to us. Redemption is sinward, purchasing us out of the slave market of sin. We were justified while in the status of being sinners; we are being sanctified (experientially) and will ultimately be glorified (ultimate sanctification) in the status of being saints.

The second a fortiori statement says that because we were reconciled to God (Culminative Aorist tense), it naturally follows that we shall be saved (Predictive Future tense) by His life. Ultimate sanctification in eternity is guaranteed by His resurrection. We will receive resurrection bodies just like His. Notice the distinction between the outcome of Christ's spiritual death and His resurrection life. Had Christ died for us on the cross, but no resurrection followed, we would still be reconciled to God, but we would never receive a resurrection body or be sanctified in eternity. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are two important halves of a unified truth. We must recognize the benefits of each separately, but never break-up the complete package.

The passive voice places reconciliation and salvation entirely in God's hands, meaning something we passively receive. Romans 5:6 has just reminded us that we were helpless and godless when Christ died for us. The aorist tense also points to reconciliation as something accomplished at the cross. Reconciliation began with the offended Person, God the Father, not the offender, the sinner before God. Objective reconciliation is a finished work on the cross and one that is now demonstrated on those whom Christ died for – His sheep. All of His sheep were reconciled to God when Jesus Christ died on their behalf at Calvary.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Bible clearly teaches that the design and effect of the atoning work of Christ is not merely to make salvation possible, but to reconcile God and man, and to put men in actual possession of eternal salvation, a salvation which many fail to obtain. (L. Berkof) The verb means primarily *to exchange*, and hence to change the relation of hostile parties into a relation of peace, *to reconcile*. It is used of both mutual and one-sided enmity. (Vincent) The death of Christ is synonymous with the blood of Christ. (J. Murray) What was spoken of as the blood of Christ in the previous verse is here spoken of as His death. These varied terms are useful to express the idea of the actual death of His sacrifice. His blood is put, by a usual figure of speech, for His death. (R. Haldane)

Objective reconciliation guarantees the subjective reconciliation of the elect in time. Reconciliation is a wonderful truth, but it is greatly misunderstood. Its misunderstanding is evidenced in popular systematic theologies which state there is a reconciliation which of itself reconciles no one but which is the basis for the reconciliation of any and all who will believe. The idea that there is a reconciliation which of itself reconciles no one is erroneous. That is like saying the redemptive work of Jesus Christ did not really redeem

anyone. No one is reconciled to God when he believes. Every chosen person was reconciled to God when Jesus Christ died at Calvary, and his reconciliation, which was objective before the Father, guarantees his subjective reconciliation in time. Moreover, subjective reconciliation assures us of future salvation. (W.E. Best)

Romans 5:10 is the great transition point for Paul's thesis in this book. From this point on, Paul deals with issues that relate to the salvation of God and especially how we walk in that salvation. The new birth is a result of the New Covenant work of Christ and is experienced through the outpouring of the Person of the Holy Spirit. Since no one in the OT had experienced the new birth, Paul outlines the elements and process of the born-again experience. The opportunity for the new birth experience began on the Day of Pentecost. New birth is not forgiveness. New birth is resurrection life. (K. Lamb) If a dying Christ reconciled us, surely a living Redeemer will avert from us Divine wrath. If Christ endured the cross for the sake of His enemies, surely He will now save His friends. (S. Aldrige)

Scripture views the work of Christ as bringing about the effectuation of salvation. When it speaks of reconciliation, it implies that those who were estranged are actually brought back into a relationship of friendship and fellowship. What kind of reconciliation would there be where estrangement continues to exist and is even sealed for eternity? The explanation may lie in the failure of universal redemptionists to comprehend fully the truth of the representative headship in Romans 5:12-21. Only a definite atonement (and therefore reconciliation) can be consistent with this truth ... The results of soteric reconciliation wrought by Christ are twofold. First, God was reconciled by the death of His Son so that He might save from wrath those who are objectively and actually reconciled in this death, namely, His elect. Second, the elect are being subjectively and experientially reconciled to God in due season as the Spirit of God imparts to them the gift of repentance and faith through the miracle of the new birth. (G.D. Long)

How can a lost person savingly believe in Christ when, by nature, he is at enmity with God? Man can neither actually nor logically cause or contribute any efficacy to his salvation, because he is spiritually unable to do so, that is, totally depraved. So saving faith originates from a free gift of God ... Those for whom Christ died are now being "justified by His blood" and "shall be saved from wrath." Paul logically proceeds and states that these are the same ones who "were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, ... [and] shall be saved by His [resurrection] life. This is strong proof for definite atonement, namely, that the death of Christ is the basis and surety for the Father's giving "all things" in Romans 8:32 to those for whom Christ died. Anyone effectually called, justified and glorified must be saved, and this can refer only to those who truly believe, God's elect. (G.D. Long)

More is involved in reconciliation than the removal of enmity. God the Father must be satisfied. He is satisfied only in the redemptive work of His Son. The work of God the Father through the work of His Son has accomplished reconciliation. Therefore, the elect one stands reconciled before God because the Father has been satisfied by the Son paying

the supreme sacrifice. Reconciliation begins with God the Father and is received by the believer. Religionists reverse the order, believing they do something and afterward God reconciles them. However, the believers' understanding or receiving reconciliation is the fruit of the accomplishment of the sovereign God. Reconciliation does not refer to the subjective enmity in the heart of the person said to be reconciled. It denotes the alienation of the Person to whom the individual is said to be reconciled. The elect are reconciled to God. Therefore, attention is drawn not to the subjective realm of man's attitude toward God, but to the Divine attitude as it is demonstrated in the historical event of the death of the Savior. Reconciliation is received. It is the work of God. It is finished and cannot be repeated. (W.E. Best)

In other words, if greater benefit has been given (reconciliation), the less (deliverance by His life) will not be withheld. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Salvation is in three parts, *justification*, the removal of the guilt and penalty of sin and the bestowal of a righteous standing in Christ before God's law, which is given to us at the moment of believing; *sanctification*, the progressive work of the Holy Spirit during the Christian life; and *glorification*, the glorifying of our bodies at the Rapture. It is of the latter two Paul is speaking, since he is writing in a context of justification. "Being saved by His life" has no reference to our Lord's life on earth as an example of how a Christian should live, but rather His resurrection as the first fruit of our own resurrection. (K. Wuest)

Both everlasting and restorative forgiveness are taught in this verse. Everlasting forgiveness must be associated with reconciliation. The person who has been everlastingly forgiven has been reconciled to the Father and saved by Christ's life. The sinner is forgiven in justification. The saint is forgiven in sanctification. Nothing can hinder a Christian's standing in the Lord; his state, however, is imperfect, and fellowship must be maintained by confession of sins ... Christ's work as Redeemer, Savior, and Atoner finished. His work as Restorer and Sanctifier is unfinished. The elect are positionally sanctified at regeneration, progressively sanctified in their Christian lives, and shall be ultimately sanctified in the presence of Jesus Christ. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 5:10 **For** (explanatory conj.) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "yes, it's true") **while we were** (εἰμί, PAPtc.NPM, Durative, Temporal) **enemies** (Pred. Nom.; hostility or hatred for God, mutual estrangement), **we were reconciled** (καταλλάσσω, API1P, Culminative; reconciliation is manward, propitiation is Godward, redemption is sinward) **to God** (Dat. Adv.) **by means of the death** (Abl. Means) **of His** (Poss. Gen.) **Son** (Abl. Agency), **much** (Adj. Degree) **more** (Comparative Adv.; to a greater degree; a *fortiori* of Reconciliation apodosis), **having been reconciled** (καταλλάσσω, APptc.NPM, Culminative, Circumstantial), **we shall be saved** (σῶζω, FPI1P, Predictive; ultimate sanctification in eternity) **by** ("in" if Loc.) **His** (Poss. Gen.) **life** (Instr. Means; resurrection bodies just like His).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:10** εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ·

^{VUL} **Romans 5:10** si enim cum inimici essemus reconciliati sumus Deo per mortem Filii eius multo magis reconciliati salvi erimus in vita ipsius

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:11** **And not only this [being reconciled by His death and saved by His life], but we are also constantly boasting [*esprit de corps*] in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the reconciliation [as a gift from God].**

^{KW} **Rom. 5:11** And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom now we received the reconciliation.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:11** And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only were we reconciled by His death and saved by His life, but we received other blessings. We constantly boast (Iterative Present tense) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This boasting in God is not a negative thing, but is actually a form of spiritual *esprit de corps*, sometimes synonymous with *occupation with Christ*. We received (Constative Aorist tense) this reconciliation as a gift of God; man had nothing to do with it. There is a bond between all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ due to this reconciliation. Unfortunately, the KJV translates the word as “atonement” instead of “reconciliation.” The proper word to use is reconciliation, not atonement. In an atonement, sins are merely covered; in reconciliation, sins are canceled.

There is also a bond between those who have walked with the Lord for years, studying His Word and applying its Truth to daily life. *Occupation with Christ* is a technical term referring to a state of spiritual growth achieved only after years of studying the Word of God in the filling of the Spirit. Those who continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ develop a sense of strong *esprit de corps* in the Lord. This is a legitimate form of “boasting” in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

At this point, one of the great doctrinal sections of Romans is divided into two portions. Up to verse 11 the subject is "sins;" from verse 12 it is "sin;" Up to this point the subject is the products of the old sin nature; from this point it is the old sin nature itself. Up to verse 11 it is the fruits of the old tree; from verse 12 it is the tree itself. Up to this point we are considered as "not in the flesh," but the flesh is in us. (E. W. Bullinger) Looked at as a past realization, "now" is in contrast with the future consummation and a sure pledge and guarantee of it. (A.T. Robertson) Or, reconciliation = past, saved = future, boasting = present. (LWB)

The plan of salvation is composed of three real imputations and two judicial imputations:

- #1 Real Imputation of soul life to the format soul of a fetus at birth.
- #2 Real Imputation of Adam's sin to the genetically formed old sin nature at birth.
- #3 Judicial Imputation of Adam's original sin and our personal sins to Jesus Christ.
- #4 Judicial Imputation of Divine righteousness to the believing sinner.
- #5 Real Imputation of subsequent blessings to the righteousness of the believer.

Adam's original sin was completely foreign to our Lord and thus was not imputed to Him at birth; our personal sins likewise had no place in Him on the cross. Thus, when the justice of God imputed our sins to Him, it was a judicial imputation, because there was no "home" in Him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

By no stretch of the imagination, should we conclude that the imputation of the righteousness of God has no definite object or home in mind; the sperm (Word of God) has an object or home in the spore, i.e. the elect believer. There is a difference between not having an inherent home in the believer because of the nature of his depravity (which is true) and not having an object or person in His mind for its residence (His elect will receive the imputation as planned in eternity - no more, no less). In a way, the imputation of the righteousness of God is both judicial and real. (LWB) Man has no more part in his reconciliation than in his faith or his justification. He is only the recipient of reconciliation. Reconciliation is the work of grace. (W.E. Best) Reconciliation was effected while we were yet enemies, that is, were still objects of God's wrath. It is something subjective that we receive. It put men in actual possession of eternal salvation, a salvation which many fail to obtain. (L. Berkof)

The father elected from all eternity, but He elected in Christ. There was no election of the Father in eternity apart from Christ. And that means that those who will be saved were not even contemplated by the Father in the ultimate counsel of His predestinating love apart from union with Christ – they were chosen in Christ. He gave His life a ransom and redeemed them by His blood that salvation has been secured for them. We may never think of the work of redemption wrought once for all by Christ apart from the union with His people which was effected in the election of the Father before the foundation of the world. It is in Christ that they will be made alive when the last trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible. (J. Boice) People make up for the absence of joy with the presence of things. They buy, they travel, they collect, they network, they hook up, but they are desperate for joy. (W. Kroll)

Many who look on the atonement as something real, yet overturn it by making it universal. This is an error which at once opposes Scripture - and could be of no service, even were it true. If Christ's death pays the price of the sins of all men, all men must be saved. If His redemption be universal, then all are redeemed from the captivity of Satan and the guilt of sin, and delivered from wrath. For what can they be punished, if atonement has been made for their sins? A just God cannot punish a second time for the same offense. If Christ has paid the debt of all sinners, there is nothing remaining to pay in the case of any man. If Christ bore the sins of all men in His own body on the tree, shall any man bear them a second time? Had the sins of all men been imputed to Christ, in that case His sacrifice did not answer its end. It left the greater part of them for whom it was offered under the curse of the broken law. But God, in appointing Christ to

make atonement for sin, and Christ Himself, in undertaking to perform it, had in view from all eternity a certain select number of mankind, who were and still are known to God. For their salvation only was that atonement made, and for them it will be ultimately effectual. A Savior being provided for any of the lost children of Adam was an act of pure grace; and therefore the extent of this salvation depends solely on Him Who works all things according to the counsel of His own will. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 5:11 And (connective conj.) not (neg. adv.) only (Adj.) this (ellipsis, "being reconciled by His death and saved by His life" are not the only blessings), but (adversative) we are also (pleonastic) constantly boasting (καυχάομαι, PMPTc.NPM, Iterative, Deponent, Circumstantial; having *esprit de corps*, synonymous with *Occupation with Christ*) in God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) through our (Gen. Rel.) Lord (Descr. Gen.) Jesus Christ (Abl. Agency), through Whom (Abl. Agency) we have now (Adv. of Time) received (λαμβάνω, AAI1P, Constative) the reconciliation (Acc. Dir. Obj.; totally the work of God, man had nothing to do with it).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:11** οὐ μόνον δέ ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ [Χριστοῦ] δι οὗ νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:11** non solum autem sed et gloriamur in Deo per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum per quem nunc reconciliationem accepimus

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:12** For this reason, just as the [original] sin [of Adam] entered into the world [invaded humanity] through one man [1st Adam], and so the [spiritual] death by means of the sin nature, indeed, in this manner, the [spiritual] death spread to all mankind, because all have sinned [by genetic propagation] against Him,

^{KW} **Rom. 5:12** Wherefore, as through the intermediate agency of one man the aforementioned sin entered the world, and through this sin, death; and thus into and throughout all mankind death entered, because all sinned.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Summing up his argument in the first 11 verses of this chapter, Paul now explains how Adam's original sin entered (Ingressive Aorist tense) the world and brought with it both physical and spiritual death to all mankind (emphasis on spiritual death). Sin is personified as invading the world of humanity from the outside. And as the federal head of the human race, the first man Adam brought sin upon mankind genetically through the sin nature. Adam's sin is genetically transferred (Ingressive Aorist tense) to the rest of

the human race by physical birth, thereby implicating us all in his original sin. As his descendants, we inherit his transgression by imputation.

By genetic propagation, all men have sinned (Constative Aorist tense) against the Lord. And as a result of this genetically transmitted sin nature, all men have sinned against Him behaviorally, as exact imitators of their forefather, Adam the first. Some commentators see this not as an anacoluthon, but as a parenthesis that corresponds with verses 18 & 19: Verse 12 - By one man, sin: then death upon all. Verse 18 - By one man's offense, all men came under condemnation. Verse 19 - By one man's disobedient act, many were constituted sinners. Some people don't like the idea of Adam's sin being imputed to his posterity. Does that mean they don't like the idea of Christ's righteousness being imputed to His posterity as well?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is no Scriptural support for placing the sin of unbelief into a separate category from other sins. Sin is sin. Although the sin of rejecting Christ is certainly great and is what receives much emphasis in the NT, it is by no means the only way in which man can be justly condemned. Does not the Biblical fact that all mankind sinned in Adam serve as a just basis for God to condemn? (G.D. Long) The creation, fall and redemption of man were deliberate moves of divine strategy in the invisible war. Out of this creation and fall and out of the redemption which was to follow, there was to come the complete revelation of the depths of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Adam's original sin is acquired by *real imputation* and "enters the world" for each individual when imputed at birth. This sin is imputed into its home in the *genetically formed* old sin nature; the old sin nature (OSN) is therefore acquired *genetically* and is not an imputation. Both Adam's original sin and the old sin nature reside in the body of corruption, not in the soul. Thus, the formula holds true for every individual: Adam's original sin plus the old sin nature equals spiritual death. The first two imputations mean we are born physically alive, but spiritually dead. *Real imputations* must have a place to go, a target ready and waiting. The first two imputations, that of soul life and Adam's original sin, both have homes in the body - a format soul and an old sin nature. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It appears that the Colonel places the imputation of the righteousness of God in the category of a *judicial* imputation because he believes in unlimited atonement, meaning an unknown, indefinite group of people will receive its benefits based upon their free will - rather than a *judicial* imputation, which I believe is true because of a definite, particular atonement being applied to a settled, certain, and exact number of people based upon God's sovereign purpose in election in eternity past. [LWB]

Death "fanning out" to all men is reminiscent of World War II tanks "punching through a hole in the enemy lines." (R.A. Ward) Death is visited even upon those who have never exercised a personal and conscious choice. This passage implies that sin exists in the case of infants prior to moral consciousness. Since infants die, and therefore the effect of sin is present in their case, it is but natural to assume that the cause is also present. Scripture also teaches that all men are under condemnation and therefore need the redemption

which is in Christ Jesus. Children are never made an exception to this rule. (L. Berkof)
The entire passage from Romans 5:12 to the end of the chapter is elliptical. Paul is excited, stimulated; his genius is running full throttle. He wastes no words. When something is already understood in context, he leaves it out; when already comprehended, he brushes it aside. He breaks off sentences; he shortens them to the barest, most dramatic structures to focus on some of the most vital principles in the entire Bible. Driving straight to the point, he leaves as much as possible to implication. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul begins a comparison between the effect of Adam's sin and the effects of the redemptive work of Christ, but he does not give the second member of the comparison. Instead of that he discusses some problems about sin and death and starts over again in verse 15. It is important to note that Paul does not say that the whole human race receives the full benefit of Christ's atoning death, but only those who do. Christ is the head of all believers as Adam is the head of the human race. In this sense, Adam "is a figure of Him Who was to come." (A.T. Robertson) The words assumed to include all people – "all" and "world" – do not necessarily have that scope, either in our own speech or in the Bible. They often refer to all of a particular class, but not to all people universally. If someone at a meeting says, "Everyone is now free to go to lunch," "everyone" would obviously refer only to those who were at the meeting and not to everyone in the world. It is clear from the verse before us that the ones for whom Jesus bore iniquity are those who have been brought to a state of "peace" with God, that is, those who have been justified. (J. Boice)

When Adam sinned, we all sinned. Adam was the seminal head of the whole human race. One decision affected a whole lot of people. If we had been there, we would have done the same thing. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Sin and death come from the first Adam, and righteousness and life from the Last Adam. (K. Lamb) Temptation and sin are universal. Election and reprobation are particular. Jesus Christ paid the price of the sins for those the Father gave Him out of this state of sin. He did not pay the price for those the Father passed by. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 5:12 For this reason (Purpose conj.; summing up the argument in verses 1-11), just as (Comparative Adv.; *anacoluthon*, the sense is broken off and the apodosis is never supplied) the (original) sin (Subj. Nom.; Adam started the trend) entered (εἰσέρχομαι, AAI3S, Ingressive, Deponent; invaded) into the world (Prep. Acc.; sin is personified as coming from the outside into the world of humanity) through one (cardinal number) man (Abl. Agency; 1st Adam), and (continuative conj.) so (emphasis on result) the (spiritual) death (Subj. Nom.) by means of the sin nature (Abl. Means), indeed (ascensive), in this manner (correlative Adv.), the (spiritual) death (Subj. Nom.) spread (διέρχομαι, AAI3S, Ingressive, Deponent; came upon) to all (Gen. Spec.) mankind (Obj. Gen.; the transmission or imputation of Adam's sin to

the human race by physical birth), **because** (aspirated subordinate clause) **all** (Nom. Spec.; men) **have sinned** (ἀμαρτάνω, AAI3P, Constativē; speaks of genetic *propagation*, not behavioral *imitation*) **against Him** (Dat. Ind. Obj.),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:12** Διὰ τοῦτο ὡσπερ δι' ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἀμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος καὶ οὕτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διῆλθεν ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον·

^{VUL} **Romans 5:12** propterea sicut per unum hominem in hunc mundum peccatum intravit et per peccatum mors et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit in quo omnes peccaverunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:13** For until the law was given, [personal] sin was in the world, but [personal] sin was not imputed while there was no law.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:13** For until law, sin was in the world, but sin is not put to one's account, there being no law.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:13** (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Up to the arrival of the law, personal sin was (Descriptive Imperfect tense) indeed in the world, but personal sin was not imputed (Historical Present tense) when there was (Temporal Participle) no law. The law pronounced its judgment upon personal sin; that was its purpose.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Sin was there before the Mosaic law, for the Jews were like Gentiles who had the law of reason and conscience, but the coming of the law increased their responsibility and their guilt. (A.T. Robertson) The violation of the law of Moses will not account for the universality of death, because men died before that law was given. (C. Hodge) The Mosaic Law was not a restrainer of sin; it was merely the announcement of sin. Sin existed before the law even existed, so obviously the law saved nobody from Adam to Moses. Neither did the law save anybody from Moses to Christ. Keeping the law does not procure salvation. Sin in the singular refers to the *principle*, while sin in the plural refers to the *practice*. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Since death comes by means of sin, and those living between Adam and Moses had no sins charged to their account by reason of the non-existence of the written law, and yet in spite of that, died, logic leads us to conclude that their death came by reason of Adam's sin and that they sinned in him, their federal head. (Thayer) The point is not that all people sin, though they do, but rather that Adam stood for them so that, when he sinned, not only was Adam judged but they were judged, too. It is because Adam sinned that

death passed upon all. (J. Boice) Adam's sin is imputed to us in exactly the same way that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us. We inherit a sinful nature from Adam, but that is not what condemns us. What condemns us, and makes us subject to death, is the fact that we have all sinned in Adam, and that we are all held guilty of sin. It is our union with Adam that accounts for all our trouble. It is our corresponding union with Christ that accounts for our salvation. (D.M.L. Jones)

Rom 5:13 For (explanatory conj.) until (Adv. of Time; up to the arrival of) the (Mosaic) law (Obj. Gen.) was given (ellipsis, verb supplied), sin (Subj. Nom.; personal sin) was (εἰμί, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive) in the world (Loc. Sph.), but (adversative conj.) sin (Subj. Nom.; personal sin) was not (neg. adv.) imputed (ἐλλογέω, PPI3S, Historical; reckoned, charged to an account) while there was (εἰμί, PAptc.NSN, Historical, Temporal) no (neg. adv.) law (Gen. Absolute).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:13** ἄχρι γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία ἦν ἐν κόσμῳ ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογᾶται μὴ ὄντος νόμου

^{VUL} **Romans 5:13** usque ad legem enim peccatum erat in mundo peccatum autem non inputatur cum lex non est

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:14** Nevertheless, the [spiritual] death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of Adam's transgression [federal headship is the issue, not personal sin], who was a type of the One [Jesus Christ] Who was to come [at the 1st advent].

^{KW} **Rom. 5:14** But death reigned as king from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the One Who is to come.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:14** Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Nevertheless, even though the law had not yet arrived to convict man of his personal sin, spiritual death reigned (Constative Aorist tense) from Adam to Moses. Why the reference to Moses? The law which imputed personal sins to man was given to Moses. The span of time stretching from Adam's original sin to the giving of the Law was also included under federal headship. This included all those who had sinned (Constative Aorist tense) in the same manner as Adam did. This is not a reference to their personal sin as much as it is a reference to the federal headship of Adam and Christ. Adam was the federal head of all those for whom he represented, namely, all mankind who inherited his sin

genetically. This is what is meant by “according to the likeness of Adam’s transgression.”

In a similar manner, Jesus Christ is the federal head of all those for whom He represented on the cross, namely, His sheep. Adam was (Historical Present tense) a type or figure of Jesus Christ, the Last Adam. Jesus Christ is the One Who was to come at the 1st advent (Futuristic Present tense), the fulfillment of the type represented by Adam. All men died in the first man Adam, due to the imputation of his sin; the elect will rise with eternal life in the last Adam, due to the imputation of the righteousness of God. Sin is imputed to all men who are related to Adam. Righteousness is imputed to all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Ultimately, both the issue of imputed sin and imputed righteousness rests upon who you are related to. Sin is imputed to *every member of the human race* because we are all related to Adam. Righteousness is imputed to *every believer* because they are related to Jesus Christ. (K. Lamb) “Types” represent their fulfillments in certain great particulars, though not in all respects. We are not looking for a perfect correspondence between Adam and Jesus Christ. What we are looking for here are the important similarities. Both Adam and Christ were appointed by God to be representatives for other men. Both became heads of particular bodies of people, a race or descendants. Both had covenants made with them by God. Both passed on to others the effects of their disobedience or obedience. (J. Boice)

The cases are not completely parallel. In the 1st place, the former dispensation is much more mysterious than the latter. In the 2nd place, the benefits of the one dispensation far exceed the evils of the other. In the 3rd place, Christ not only saves us from death, that is, not only frees us from the evils consequent on our own and Adam's sin, but introduces us into a state of positive and eternal blessedness. (C. Hodge) Adam was a type of Christ in that both represented humanity; one as the representative and author of fallen, the other of restored, humanity. (J. Barmby) Adam was a type of Christ because of his representative character as the first man, and federal head of the race. (M. Terry) Adam imparted to those who were his that which belonged to him, so also Christ bestows on His beloved ones that which is His. (W.Hendriksen)

The apostle distinctly declares that death entered into our world through one man’s sin. The one man in his sin must, therefore, have been acting for the race; and it is for us to get a clear view of his representative position. As first parent, Adam was in the very nature of the case representative of the race. The unreasoning flippancy with which some object to their responsibility for the act of Adam, because they had no part in choosing him as their representative, shows singular want of thought and of discriminating observation of the settled order of God’s providence. The unity of the human race is His own immediate institution, and He appointed Adam its ancestor to be its representative and federal head. And in this case also He rendered an elective appointment by man

impossible, by the constitution which brought man into being in successive generations. It will be found that Adam's parental authority carries with it the idea of kingship; he was in a regal as well as a representative position; he had dominion not only over the creatures, but also over his own posterity. His acts were consequently of a regal and representative character. Carrying these necessary principles with us, we can see how his sin in eating the forbidden fruit was a representative act. Further, we can understand in some measure how a sin like Adam's affected his constitution, so that he became with his wife tainted, and so transmitted the sin to succeeding generations. Representative responsibility has been in operation from the first. (R. Edgar)

Rom. 5:14 Nevertheless (Adversative conj.), the (spiritual) death (Subj. Nom.) reigned (βασιλεύω, AAI3S, Constative) from Adam (indeclinable) to (Adv. Time) Moses (indeclinable), even (ascensive) over those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) who had not (neg. adv.) sinned (ἀμαρτάνω, AAPtc.APM, Constative, Substantival & Circumstantial) according to the likeness (Loc. Model, Instr. Manner; "in a manner similar to") of Adam's (Poss. Gen.; original) transgression (Obj. Gen.; violation; *federal headship* is the issue, not personal sin), who (Nom. Appos.; Adam) was (εἰμί, PAI3S, Historical) a type (Pred. Nom.; figure) of the One (Descr. Gen.; Jesus Christ) Who was to come (μέλλω, PAPtc.GSM, Futuristic & Historical, Substantival; 1st Advent).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:14** ἀλλὰ ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ θάνατος ἀπὸ Ἀδάμ μέχρι Μωϋσέως καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας ἐπὶ τῷ ὁμοιώματι τῆς παραβάσεως Ἀδάμ ὅς ἐστιν τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος

^{VUL} **Romans 5:14** sed regnavit mors ab Adam usque ad Mosen etiam in eos qui non peccaverunt in similitudinem praevaricationis Adae qui est forma futuri

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:15** Not like the [Adam's original] transgression is also the gracious gift [redemption]; for if by the sin of one man [Adam] many [the entire human race] have died, much more [to a greater degree] shall the grace of God, even the gift by grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abundantly flow out upon many [the elect].

^{KW} **Rom. 5:15** But not as the transgression, thus also is the gratuitous favor. For since by the transgression of the one many died, much more the grace of God and the gratuitous gift by grace which is of the one Man, Jesus Christ, to the many will abound.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:15** But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Adam's original transgression is nothing like the gracious gift of redemption. They are not only different by nature, one good and the other evil, but they are also different by degree. The difference is stated by using a 1st class conditional clause, but the basic comparison is one of extent. Adam sinned and the entire human race died (Culminative Aorist tense) with him. But salvation provides the believer with far more than what Adam lost. The comparative adverb, "to a greater degree," points to the grace of God as "much more" than the sin of man.

The *a fortiori* temporal blessing from the grace of God is such that it flows out from the source of God in superabundance upon those who believe. The gift of grace from the Lord Jesus Christ abundantly flowed (Culminative Aorist tense) upon all the elect when He died on the cross and was later resurrected. The recipients of this grace are Christ's sheep, His elect, "those that the Father has given Him." Sin came upon all men, but grace comes only to the elect. The quality of the gracious gift is obviously much greater than the sin they inherited from Adam.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As a God of love He delights *much more* in showing mercy and pardon than in giving just punishment. The gift surpasses the sin. (Lightfoot) If God provides the greater in justification (imputation of perfect righteousness), it follows, *a fortiori*, that the justice of God can provide the less, imputation of special blessings at maturity. These special blessings, sometimes called supergrace blessings, glorify God in time. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In contrast to the reign of death, something "much more" is available to the believer, a "reign in life." If all that was meant was regeneration or resurrection, then a mere balance with the reign of death would be referred to, and not something "much more." It is for this reason that many expositors interpret the reign in life not just with regenerate life, but with the rulership in the future age, the consummation of our redemption in the Messianic kingdom in the world to come. (J. Dillow)

We were not returned to what Adam had in the garden, but to something *greater* than what he had (i.e. 40 things given to us at salvation) while living in the devil's world (in effect, a double *a fortiori*). God's grace expands from less to greater. Man did his worst, so God did His best. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Romans 5:12-21 is the key passage which sets forth the representative principle involving the two headships in Adam and Christ. Nothing short of an unbiblical Arminianism or universalistic exegesis of this passage can prove that Christ died for all mankind. This passage develops the parallel between Adam and Christ, Adam as the federal head of his seed – the fallen race (all mankind), and Christ as the federal head of His seed – the redeemed race (God's elect). (G. Long)

Now the apostle shows us the glorious set-off to this inheritance of guilt and death. God has given a new Representative to the race, even Jesus Christ, His Son. By His obedience the representative principle is transmuted into an organ of grace instead of an organ of condemnation. While we were united to the first Adam by ordinary generation, we get united to the last Adam by regeneration. The whole race is not necessarily embraced in

Christ's vicarious work, simply because the whole race will not be. All will not come to Jesus that they may have life. Jesus proposes not only to counteract the sin, but also to secure a reign of grace unto eternal life. Thus is it that the representative principle provides the most magnificent compensation for all that it entails through our first parent's fall. The result is that the grace so abounds as to overmaster the sin and to raise us into that fellowship with God which is life eternal. (R. Edgar)

It is evident that "the many" include those connected with the two parties – the many descendants of Adam, and the many believers in Christ. And "the many" was adopted to form a contrast with the "one." The Apostle speaks of Adam and his posterity, and also of Christ and His people, for those "who receive abundance of grace," or "are made righteous;" and "the many" and the "all" are evidently those who belong to each separately. In no other way can the words with any consistency be understood. It is not possible to eviscerate such declarations as these, as to make them to contain nothing more than that the chance of salvation is offered to all men. This is indeed contrary to evident facts. Hence "the many" and the "all," as to Adam, are all his descendants – and "the many" and the "all," as to Christ, are those who believe. (J. Calvin, C. Hodge)

Rom. 5:15 Not (Adversative particle, contrast) like (Comparative Adv.) the (Adam's original) transgression (Acc. Gen. Ref.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) also (Adjunctive) the gracious gift (Acc. Gen. Ref.; redemption); for (explanatory conj.) if (1st class condition, rhetorical protasis) by the sin (Instr. Means) of one man (Abl. Agency; Adam) many (Subj. Nom.; the entire human race) have died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3P, Culminative), much (Adv. Degree; salvation provides believer with more than Adam lost) more (Comparative Adv.; to a greater degree; a *fortiori* of *Temporal Blessing* apodosis) shall the grace (Subj. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.), even (Ascensive) the gift (Acc. Gen. Ref.) by grace (Instr. Means) of the one (Gen. Spec.) man (Poss. Gen.) Jesus Christ (Subj. Gen.), abundantly flow out (περισσεύω, AAI3S, Culminative; superabundance provided) upon many (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the elect).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:15** Ἄλλ οὐχ ὡς τὸ παράπτωμα οὕτως [καὶ] τὸ χάρισμα· εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἢ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:15** sed non sicut delictum ita et donum si enim unius delicto multi mortui sunt multo magis gratia Dei et donum in gratiam unius hominis Iesu Christi in plures abundavit

LWB Rom. 5:16 In fact, the gift [justification] is not like [the type is not perfect] through the one [Adam] who sinned. On the one hand, the judicial verdict after one transgression [Adam's original sin] resulted in condemnation; but on the other hand, the gracious gift

[saving work of Christ on the cross] because of many transgressions [personal sins] resulted in justification.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:16** And not as through one who sinned, was the gift, for the judgment, on the one hand, was out of one transgression as a source, resulting in condemnation. But the gratuitous gift, on the other hand, was out of many transgressions as a source, resulting in justification.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:16** And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The gift of justification is not exactly like the curse of Adam when he sinned (Constativ Aorist tense). In other words, the type is not perfect. There are distinct differences between what Adam did and what Christ did, even though Adam was a type of Christ. For instance, Adam committed one original sin, and all mankind inherited this sin from him. The work of Christ on the cross, however, removed not only this one original sin, but also all the personal sins of the elect. A second difference is that Adam's sin brought a negative judicial verdict against the human race. But Christ's work on the cross brought a gracious gift to the elect.

A third difference was the result or extent between the two actions. Adam's sin brought condemnation upon the entire human race. Christ's work on the cross brought justification to all the elect. Perhaps the contrasts can be seen best in this manner:

Adam	Christ
One original sin	All personal sins
Judicial verdict	Gracious gift
Condemnation	Justification
Entire human race	The elect, His sheep

In a manner of speaking, the only thing truly important in history was the work of two men: Adam and Christ. The question for you is: Which one are you related to?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Adam brought the judgment of death by *one sin*. Christ, by bearing that judgment, brought life and pardon for *many sins*. (E.W. Bullinger) The gift by Christ grew out of manifold *sins* by Adam's progeny. (A.T. Robertson) Christ has done far more than remove the curse pronounced on us for the *one sin* of Adam; He procures our justification from our own *innumerable* offenses. (C. Hodge)

Just as the first Adam by his disobedience in his first sin represented all mankind as their covenant head, so by obedience in life and death the last Adam, Christ, represented all the redeemed race as their covenant head. By the one act of transgression of the first

Adam, all his seed are legally constituted as guilty sinners when they come into existence by virtue of their covenant union with him. By the obedience of the last Adam, all His seed are legally constituted as righteous at conversion by virtue of their covenant union with Him. (G. Long)

Rom. 5:16 In fact (Emphatic), the gift (Subj. Nom.; justification through Jesus Christ) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) not (contrast; the type is not perfect) like (Comparative Adv.) through the one (Abl. Agency; Adam) who sinned (ἀμαρτάνω, AAPtc.GSM, Constativē, Circumstantial, Substantival); for (Explanatory Conj.) on the one hand (μέν ... δέ, Correlative Adv.), the judicial verdict (Subj. Nom.) after one (Gen. Spec.) transgression (ellipsis, Abl. Means supplied; Adam's original sin) resulted (ellipsis, verb supplied, Result clause) in condemnation (Acc. Gen. Ref.); but (Adversative Conj.) on the other hand (contrast), the gracious gift (Subj. Nom.; the saving work of Christ on the cross) because of many (Gen. Spec.) transgressions (Abl. Cause; personal sins) resulted (ellipsis, verb supplied, Result clause) in justification (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:16** καὶ οὐχ ὡς δι' ἑνὸς ἀμαρτήσαντος τὸ δῶρημα· τὸ μὲν γὰρ κρίμα ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς κατάκριμα τὸ δὲ χάρισμα ἐκ πολλῶν παραπτωμάτων εἰς δικαίωμα

^{VUL} **Romans 5:16** et non sicut per unum peccantem ita et donum nam iudicium ex uno in condemnationem gratia autem ex multis delictis in iustificationem

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:17** For if by one man's transgression [Adam's original sin] the [spiritual] death ruled through the one [Adam], much more [to a greater degree] may those [supergrace believers] who receive in life the surplus from grace [abundant blessings] and the gift of righteousness [special award in eternity], rule [only mature believers will reign] through the One, Jesus Christ.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:17** For in view of the fact that by means of the transgression of the one death reigned as king through that one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, in life will reign as kings through the One, Jesus Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues the contrast between the first and Last Adam. The protasis of a 1st class condition means both of these comparisons are true. If by one man's original sin spiritual death ruled (Culminative Aorist tense) through Adam, and it's true. Then, to a greater

degree, those supergrace believers who receive (Pictorial Present tense) in life abundant blessings and the honorary gift of righteousness in eternity, will rule (Predictive Future tense) through the One, Christ Jesus. This gift (Latin: donation) of righteousness is a special award or decoration given at the Judgment Seat of Christ to winner believers. The surplus or abundance of grace are super blessings above and beyond those given at the point of salvation – reserved for those who grow to spiritual maturity in their experiential walk with the Lord.

In actuality, there is a double *a fortiori* in this verse. Adam's original sin brought spiritual death to all men – one sin, one universal death. The eternal blessing brought by Christ for His elect, however, is twofold. Winner believers, those who grow in grace and knowledge, receive an abundant surplus of blessings in addition to the “foundation” blessings imputed to all believers at the point of justification. The first *a fortiori* is temporal, occurring during life on earth. The second *a fortiori* occurs in eternity – winner believers receive an honorary gift of righteousness for a job well done. The “much more” in this verse goes well beyond the “basic blessings” imputed to all believers at the point of salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This sentiment expresses more than that this grace is manifested to them; all such do not reign in life. The phrase evidently implies the voluntary reception of the offered boon. (C. Hodge) Christ, by his work of redemption, made provision for this forgiveness not only of that one sin, but also of all those that followed from it. His sacrifice sufficed for them all, and in fact was efficacious for all the sins committed by those who, by sovereign grace, were to place their trust in Him. For them condemnation was replaced by justification. (W. Hendriksen)

The critical prepositional phrase "in life" is linked by many to the wrong verb. It does not go with the verb "to rule" but with the verb "to receive." Believers do not *rule* in life; this is Satan's kingdom. Instead, we *receive* in life the imputed righteousness of God plus the subsequent blessings of spiritual maturity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) On the contrary, believers may *reign victoriously* in life through delegated royal power. (W.R. Newell) "Reigning in life" represents an abundant life, a vibrant experience with Christ in time. (J. Dillow)

Blessings from God, or the surplus of grace, are *real imputations* from the justice of God, because the believer now has a "home" in his soul for these blessings - the imputed righteousness of God. The *judicial imputation* of righteousness is the basis for all subsequent *real imputations* of divine blessings. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This *imputation* of the righteousness of God to the believing sinner is both judicial and real: judicial because we have nothing to do with it on our part, and real because it has a definite people in mind as its recipients. [LWB] One of the few specifically stated eternal blessings for the royal family is that only mature believers will rule with Him during the Millennium; loser believers will be observers. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

If the justice of God provided the greater at spiritual maturity (the imputation of special blessings), it follows, *a fortiori*, that the justice of God will not withhold the less (eternal blessings and rewards) at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This superabundance of grace is available to every believer who cracks the maturity barrier. This potential becomes a reality in time when doctrine in the soul provides the capacity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Life in Christ must be more powerful than death in Adam. Life means here more than the present life in the flesh. It means the higher life imparted by the “last Adam,” Who became a quickening Spirit; eternal life with God, in the life of Christ risen, swallowing up mortality. Thus the “free gift” not only reverses the far-reaching effects of the original transgression, but even transcends what is intimated in Genesis as given to man in Paradise before his fall. (J. Barmby)

A righteousness wrought in us equips us for the enjoyment of eternal life, but it cannot be the ground of such a reward. (J. Murray) God imputes the “much more” surplus of grace, or supergrace (James 4:6), to any believer who exploits divine logistics. In any generation relatively few believers take advantage of their spiritual royalty, “grow by means of grace,” and live as true spiritual aristocrats. Only a few establish the correct scale of values with Bible doctrine as first priority, refuse to be distracted from the sphere of divine power, and maintain their momentum. In addition, the perfect, just pronouncement of the Lord Jesus Christ will be to parlay those wonderful blessings into still greater rewards in heaven, setting up motivation for the believer on earth which jumps from time to glorifying the Lord to the maximum throughout all eternity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 5:17 **For** (Explanatory conj.) **if** (1st class condition, "and it did", protasis) **by one man's** (Poss. Gen.; Adam's) **transgression** (Instr. Means; original sin) **the death** (Subj. Nom.; spiritual) **ruled** (βασιλεύω, AAI3S, Culminative) **through the one** (Abl. Agency; Adam), **much** (Adv. Degree) **more** (Comparative Adv.; to a greater degree; *a fortiori* of *Eternal Blessing* apodosis) **may those** (Subj. Nom.; the following clause restricts the gift to a chosen few) **who receive** (λαμβάνω, PAPtc.NPM, Pictorial, Substantival) **in life** (Loc. Time; on Earth) **the surplus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; abundance) **from grace** (Abl. Source; *potential* for supergrace blessings) **and** (connective conj.) **the gift** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of righteousness** (Descr. Gen.; the foundation or *capacity* for blessing), **rule** (βασιλεύω, FAI3P, Predictive & Deliberative; only mature believers will rule with Jesus Christ) **through the One** (Abl. Agency), **Jesus Christ** (Gen. Appos.)].

^{WHO} **Romans 5:17** εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι ὁ θάνατος ἐβασίλευσεν διὰ τοῦ ἑνός πολλῶ μᾶλλον οἱ τὴν περισσείαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ [τῆς δωρεᾶς] τῆς δικαιοσύνης λαμβάνοντες ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύσουσιν διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 5:17** si enim in unius delicto mors regnavit per unum multo magis abundantiam gratiae et donationis et iustitiae accipientes in vita regnabunt per unum Iesum Christum

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:18** So therefore, as through one transgression Adam's sin was imputed to all men whom he represented [representative union: the entire human race] resulting in condemnation, in this manner also, through one sentence of condemnation [righteous act: imputation of our sins to Christ on the cross] God's righteousness was imputed to all men whom he represented [representative union: God's elect] resulting in justification to life.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:18** So then, therefore, as through one act of transgression, to all men there resulted condemnation, thus also through one act of righteousness. To all men there resulted a righteous standing that had to do with life.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:18** Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues the contrast with a highly elliptical sentence which contains no verbs; they must be supplied by the context of the pericope. Within this elliptical comparison, there is also a spectacular presentation of the doctrine of *representative union*, a corollary of the doctrine of *federal headship*. Through one transgression Adam's original sin was imputed to all those for whom he represented – the entire human race. Through one act on the cross by Jesus Christ, justification was imputed to all those for whom He represented – God's elect. Both Adam and Christ are federal heads, representatives of those who are joined with them in union.

Adam's single act resulted in condemnation; Christ's single act resulted in justification. Adam's sin was imputed to his people; God's righteousness was imputed to His people. In between the two was an additional imputation – the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ on the cross. Federal headship, or the concept of representative union, is crucial to understanding the extent of redemption. Without the proper understanding of headship, the words "all" are completely lost in context. What do I mean? If the word "all" in both cases means "all men without exception," then the heresy of universal atonement is true – all men are going to heaven.

As we know, God's righteousness is not imputed to all men without exception. If it was, then all men without exception would be justified, all men would go to heaven, and the gospel as we know it is an absurdity. The truth is that only believers are justified, therefore only the sins of believers were imputed to Christ on the cross. Redemption, sometimes called the atonement, is accurately represented as being specific, definite, particular, effective, and a host of other terms. Arminians who translate the word "all" to mean "all men without exception" have a major problem with this verse. If they hold to their rigid rule, they are obliged to believe in universal salvation.

When this verse and others like it are studied with an open mind, there are three conclusions that could be drawn. Two of the conclusions are consistent and logical, one of the conclusions is inconsistent and illogical. (1) If the word “all” in both cases means “all men without exception,” then universal atonement is true. (2) If the word “all” in the first case means “all those for whom Adam represents,” and if the word “all” in the second case means “all those for whom Christ represents,” then the doctrine of definite (effective, limited) atonement is true. (3) The remaining position, which is called unlimited (ineffective, indefinite) atonement, is completely inconsistent and illogical. Universalists and Calvinists at least agree that both of their positions are consistent and logical. Those from the Unlimited school must force their inconsistent and illogical philosophy into the text by creative eisegesis.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In Adam, through his first sin, mankind was legally constituted a fallen and condemned race. As a result, Adam lost his freedom of will to do any good to satisfy God. Because of his headship over fallen mankind, each person comes into existence with a will totally adverse to God and with a total inability to savingly believe in Christ. It is a fact that fallen man must be divinely drawn to Christ; otherwise, he can never come to Christ. Interrogatively stated, the evangelical Arminian may be asked: “How can a lost person who is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, by his own innate ability (which he does not have) correctly understand and interpret spiritual truth? Man can neither actually nor logically cause or contribute any efficacy to his salvation because he is spiritually unable to do so, that is, totally depraved. (G.D. Long)

Nothing is more familiar to the readers of Scripture than that universal terms as "all" are to be limited by the nature of the subject or context. In a multitude of cases, the words "all" and "all things" mean the "all" spoken of in the context, and not "all without exception." This limitation is always implied when the Scriptures elsewhere speak of a necessary condition connected with the blessing to which all are said to attain. (C. Hodge) In many passages of the N.T. the words *any man*, *every man*, *all men*, most surely mean *any believing man*, *every believing man*, and *all believing men*. (D.G. Barnhouse) Obviously, the meaning of "all" in this passage is restricted by the context to those "who are Christ's." (R.B. Kuiper) The meaning of “all” must be determined by the context. The efficacy of Christ’s atonement is not more extensive than faith; and faith is not universal. (W. Shedd)

All men were in Adam when he disobeyed, but all men were not in Jesus Christ when He obeyed. All men fell in Adam; some men are redeemed by Christ. Union with Adam is natural – physical. Union in Christ is supernatural – spiritual. Union in Adam is universal; union in Christ is particular. Christ’s righteousness was imputed to all the elect when Jesus Christ died. It is imparted to each of them at the time God regenerates them. (W.E. Best) The context will demonstrate that the apostle is here dealing with the resurrection to life, with those who are Christ’s and will be raised at His coming. The

“all” of the second clause is therefore restrictive in a way that the “all” in the first clause is not. What the apostle is interested in showing is not the numerical extent of those who are justified as identical with the numerical extent of those condemned, but the parallel that obtains between the way of condemnation and the way of justification. It is the *modus operandi* that is in view. All who are condemned, and this includes the whole human race, are condemned because of the one trespass of Adam; all who are justified are justified because of the righteousness of Christ. (J. Murray)

Are we to suppose that justification came upon the whole human race, upon all men distributively and inclusively? This cannot be Paul's meaning. He is dealing with actual justification. And we cannot believe that such justification passed upon every member of the human race unless we believe that all men will ultimately be saved, something contrary to Paul's teaching elsewhere and to the teaching of Scripture in general. Consequently, though Paul uses the expression "all men" in the 1st part of the verse in the sense of all men universally, yet he must be using the same expression in the 2nd part of the verse in a much more restricted sense, namely, of all those who will be actually justified. Numerous other examples might be quoted to show that expressions like these, though universalistic in form, frequently bear a restricted reference and do not mean every person of the human race. So it will not do to quote a few texts from the Bible in which such words as "world" and "all" occur in connection with the death of Christ and forthwith conclude that the question is settled in favor of universal or unlimited atonement. (J. Murray)

In itself, this righteous standing is a purely legal matter and does not impart life nor change character. But it is accompanied by the life that God is, imparted to the believing sinner in regeneration. (K. Wuest) “All without distinction,” not “all without exception” - there is no universal redemption to be found anywhere in Scripture. Watch the use of “all” whenever you find it. (K. Lamb) Paul resumes the parallel between Adam and Christ which began in verse 12 and was interrupted by explanation (13f.) and contrast (15-17). The context usually tells you what elliptical verbs should be supplied. (A.T. Robertson) The absence of the verbs must be taken care of. (K. Wuest) Just as we came into the world under the first Adam and into his death, under the last Adam we come into His righteousness, life, and peace. We enter peace with God, peace from God, and the peace of God, which are progressions in our growth. (K. Lamb) One is to suppose that when Paul says “all men” he means “all men who are on Adam's side” and “all men who are on Christ's side.” (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 5:18 so therefore (Inferential illative particle; closes the parenthesis), as (Comparative particle) through one (Gen. Spec.) transgression (Abl. Means; Adam's original sin in the garden) Adam's sin was imputed (ellipsis, phrase supplied) to all (Acc. Spec.) men whom he represented (Acc. Dir. Obj.; representative union - the entire human race) resulting in condemnation (Acc. Result), in this manner (Comparative Adv.) also (pleonastic), through one sentence of condemnation (Abl. Means; righteous act; the imputation

of our sins to Christ on the Cross) **God's righteousness was imputed** (ellipsis, phrase supplied) **to all** (Acc. Spec.) **men whom He represented** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; *representative union* - God's elect) **resulting in justification** (Acc. Result) **to** ("which is", "in") **life** (Gen., Descriptive, Qualitative or Temporal).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:18** Ἄρα οὖν ὡς δι' ἑνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα οὕτως καὶ δι' ἑνὸς δικαιοῦματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς·

^{VUL} **Romans 5:18** igitur sicut per unius delictum in omnes homines in condemnationem sic et per unius iustitiam in omnes homines in iustificationem vitae

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:19** For just as through the disobedient act of one man [Adam] many [those whom he represented: the entire human race] were appointed sinners, in the same manner also [by judicial imputation], through the obedient act of One [Jesus Christ] many [those whom He represented: the elect] will be appointed righteous ones.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:19** For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, thus also through the obedience of One, the many will be constituted righteous.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues the contrast and comparison between Adam and Christ as federal heads over those whom they represented; in the case of Adam, he represented the entire human race; in the case of Christ Jesus, He represented those whom the Father gave Him, the elect, His sheep. The disobedient act of one man, Adam, is contrasted against the obedient act of One man, Jesus Christ. The entire human race was appointed (Constativ Aorist tense) sinners by the judicial imputation of Adam's original sin. The elect will be appointed (Predictive Future tense) righteous ones by the judicial imputation of divine righteousness to the believing sinner.

There are both parallels and contrasts between the two federal heads, Adam and Christ. They are contrasted by the use of a protasis and apodosis of a 1st class conditional clause. Adam's disobedient act and its imputation to the human race occurred in the past, as shown by the Aorist tense. The imputation of divine righteousness, however, occurs at the new birth, and for many believers this has not yet occurred; this explains the use of the Future tense. Christ is not the head of all mankind, but of the Church, His seed. Without a correct understanding of *representative union* in the use of the words "all" and "many," much confusion will be made of this verse and others like it.

The *aposiopesis* takes us back to several previous verses and demands that we fill in the contextual understanding of *representative union* in both uses of the word “many” here. An *aposiopesis* is a sudden silence in which certain necessary words are omitted from the original language. It is a rhetorical device most often used to cause the imagination to fill in the solemn modifiers. Rather than skimming over the doctrine of representative union, it actually calls our attention to the doctrine and impresses us with the contrasts and parallels conveyed in the other words of the sentence. If Paul would have explained in detail each use of “many” in this phrase, we might become “bogged-down” and overlook the contrasts and comparisons between Adam and Christ – his primary emphasis.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A fortiori compares a previous conclusion of doctrine with another conclusion of doctrine to understand and apply the inescapable certainty of God's grace policy in His perfect plan. *A fortiori* uses an inferential conclusion as being more conclusive or certain than another recognized fact or reasoned conclusion from the past. So this rationale relates certainty to certainty and dogma to dogma to give the believer confidence in the plan of God, and to cause the believer to conclude that the only security in life is what you carry in your thinking. In life, every time you apply doctrine in your soul to a situation, there is a decoration for you in heaven. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We are not made subjectively and morally righteous by the imputation of the obedience of Christ. It is a judicial benefit. (J. Murray) By the one act of Adam in disobeying God, the human race was constituted sinful, and this by the judicial act of God. Likewise, by the one act of obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, all who believe are constituted righteous, and this by the judicial act of God. (K. Wuest) Faith is the act of the person who had been made righteous in the righteousness of Christ. It is the fruit of imparted righteousness. Righteousness is what Christ purchased for the elect. Identifying faith with righteousness makes many passages of Scripture unintelligible. Righteousness is connected with faith, but to identify it as faith destroys the various meanings of some Greek prepositions used in connection with faith. (W.E. Best)

Paregmenon, or derivation, is the repetition of words from the same root. In this case, we have disobedience (*parakoes*) and obedience (*hupakoes*). They also function as an *antithesis*, in contrast with another. (E.W. Bullinger) This verse also contains *aposiopesis*, which is the elimination of verbs and other modifiers which have been used in previous verses; the reader supplies the missing words. Paul is so emotional that he knocks everything else out of the sentence except two prepositional phrases. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The effects of the prototype are applied to the lot: the many are acted upon by a force outside themselves. People do not fashion their fate as much as they like to think. It is rather they who are fashioned by the masters they serve. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 5:19 **For** (Explanatory Conj., protasis, 1st class condition) **just as** (Comparative Adv.) **through the disobedient act** (Abl. Means) **of one man** (Abl. Agency; Adam) **many** (Subj. Nom.; the entire human race) **were appointed**

(καθίστημι, API3P, Constative; judicial imputation of Adam's original sin) sinners (Pred. Nom.), in the same manner (Comparative Adv.) also (Pleonastic Conj., apodosis), through the obedient act (Abl. Means) of One (Abl. Agency; Jesus Christ) many (Subj. Nom.; the elect) will be appointed (καθίστημι, FPI3P, Predictive; judicial imputation of divine righteousness to the believing sinner) righteous ones (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:19** ὡςπερ γὰρ διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί οὕτως καὶ διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται οἱ πολλοί

^{VUL} **Romans 5:19** sicut enim per inoboedientiam unius hominis peccatores constituti sunt multi ita et per unius oboedientiam iusti constituentur multi

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:20** Moreover, the law came in as a side issue [it was never the center of God's plan or purpose], so that the transgression [Adam's original sin] might abound [become exceedingly sinful]. But where personal sin has abounded [on top of Adam's original sin], grace has superabounded [exists in greater abundance].

^{KW} **Rom. 5:20** Moreover, law entered in alongside in order that the transgression might be augmented. But where the sin was augmented, the grace superabounded with more added to that,

^{KJV} **Romans 5:20** Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds us that the law was never the center of God's plan or purpose. It was holy, perfect, and just in its own sphere, but that sphere was not to provide justification, but to make sin exceedingly sinful. "The law came in alongside of grace and faith, like a minor actor in a supporting role." (Thieme) It didn't sneak in, as the receiving of the Law by Moses was most dramatic. But in God's purpose, it was brought in at a later stage of history to aggravate sin and make it even worse (Constative Aorist tense: multiply, "bulked-up") than was assumed before divine standards were brought to bear.

The law multiplied sin, causing it to grow in frequency and intensity. Adam's original sin, therefore, was compounded or augmented (Culminative Aorist tense) by the personal sin of mankind. Fortunately for us, sovereign grace superabounded (Culminative Aorist tense) above and beyond the degrading influence of sin. The grace of God overflowed in greater abundance compared to the personal sins of man. It not only took care of sin, but there was grace left over. By comparison, the greater the sin the greater the grace required to eliminate that sin. In spite of man's eagerness to "sin like crazy," there is an endless supply of grace to overcome its reign.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The offense is multiplied because the law, encountering the flesh, evokes its natural antagonism to God, and so stimulates it into disobedience ... As the offense multiplied, the need of redemption, and the sense of that need were intensified. (Denney) It was God's purpose from the first that grace should in the end triumph over sin; but in the meantime law came in. For what end? Not in itself to accomplish the purpose, not to interfere with its accomplishment, but as an intervening dispensation to prepare for its accomplishment, by convincing of sin, and making it exceedingly sinful, and so establishing the need of, and exciting a craving for, redemption. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 5:20 Moreover (transitional particle), the law (Subj. Nom.; perfect, holy and just when in it's proper sphere) came in as a side issue (παρεισέρχομαι, AAI3S, Constative, Deponent; came in alongside of; a minor actor which has a supporting role in the Divine Drama; the notion of stealth is not necessarily present here), so that (Final clause, as in God's ultimate purpose) the transgression (Subj. Nom.; Adam's original sin) might abound (πλεονάζω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Potential; multiply, augment, grow in abundance and intensity, become exceedingly sinful; aggravates the triumph of reigning sin). But (contrast) where (Adv. Place, relative phrase) personal sin (Subj. Nom.) has abounded (πλεονάζω, AAI3S, Culminative; bulked-up, our personal sins augment or increase the extent of Adam's original sin), grace (Subj. Nom.) has super-abounded (ὑπερπερισσεύω, AAI3S, Culminative; present in greater abundance, overflowing),

^{WHO} **Romans 5:20** νόμος δὲ παρεισήλθεν ἵνα πλεονάσῃ τὸ παράπτωμα· οὐδὲ ἐπλέονασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑπερπερίσσευσεν ἢ χάρις

^{VUL} **Romans 5:20** lex autem subintravit ut abundaret delictum ubi autem abundavit delictum superabundavit gratia

^{LWB} **Rom. 5:21** So that just as the old sin nature has ruled unto [spiritual] death, in the same manner also, grace might rule [potential] through righteousness because of eternal life [we have the option of bringing our experience of life in time up to our position of life in eternity] through Jesus Christ our Lord.

^{KW} **Rom. 5:21** In order that just as the aforementioned sin reigned as king in the sphere of death, thus also the aforementioned grace might reign as king through righteousness, resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 5:21** That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The purpose of God and the goal for us through Christ is to bring our spiritual state up to the level of our spiritual standing. In other words, our goal is to bring our experiential spiritual condition up to the level of our perfect position of life in eternity. In another contrast and comparison, Paul reminds us how the old sin nature has ruled as a sovereign king (Culminative Aorist tense) over us unto spiritual death. In the same manner, the purpose of grace is to overrule the kingship of sin and to start ruling (Ingressive Aorist tense) over believers through an experiential righteous life. This is a verse contrasting our state and standing, our condition and position.

Justification seals our standing before God; it is a one-time event that changes our position from being a slave to sin to being a bondsman to Christ. Parlaying that change in position into a robust spiritual life is a distinct possibility, but only a potential one. It takes many correct decisions, daily ones, to accomplish that goal. Our purpose in life after we become Christians is to bring our state or condition of life in time (as we live on earth) up to that of our standing or position of life (in eternity). We were made members of the royal family of God positionally, so now we are to live like it experientially. We have eternal life positionally; we can live like it experientially. We will definitely go to heaven; we have the potential “to have heaven to go to heaven in.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Because of righteousness imputed at the point of salvation (our position), it is possible for grace to rule in our lives forever (capacity). The triumph of grace begins logistically at the point of salvation (as a result of our position), but supergrace blessings from grace only materialize (potential) when you crack the maturity barrier (capacity). Eternal life is both *absolute* (arrives at a point in time in the future) and *relative* (a quality of life which can be attained in time). *Because* we receive *absolute* eternal life at the point of salvation, we now have the opportunity (potential) to parlay that *absolute* blessing into reality in time, depending upon our positive volition (capacity) towards Bible doctrine. Imputed righteousness + Bible doctrine in the soul = Capacity for grace blessings in time; Potential + Capacity = Reality. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Physical death is not represented in Scripture as the natural result of the continuation of the original condition of man, due to his failure to rise to the height of immortality by the path of obedience; but as the result of his spiritual death. (L. Berkof) If this section (Romans chapter 5) does not teach that the whole race of Adam, standing in him as their federal head, sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression, we may despair of any intelligible exposition of it. (R. Jamieson) The greater the strength of the enemy, the greater the honor of the conqueror. As the reign of a tyrant and oppressor is a foil to set off the succeeding reign of a just and gentle prince and to make it the more illustrious, so does the reign of sin set off the reign of grace. (M. Henry)

Rom. 5:21 So that (Final clause, the purpose of God and the goal for us through Christ) just as (Adv. Comparison, protasis) the old sin nature (Subj. Nom.) has ruled (βασιλεύω, AAI3S, Culminative; as a sovereign king) unto death (Loc. Sph.; spiritual death), in the same manner (Adv. Comparison, apodosis) also (pleonastic), grace (Subj. Nom.) might (came for the purpose of ruling) rule (βασιλεύω, AASubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential, Purpose; triumph, emphasis on capacity) through righteousness (Abl. Means; emphasis on potential) because of eternal (Acc. Extent of Time) life (Acc. Cause; we have the option of bringing our state or condition of life in time up to our standing or position of life in eternity) through Jesus Christ (Abl. Agency) our (Poss. Gen.) Lord (Gen. Rel.).

^{WHO} **Romans 5:21** ἵνα ὡςπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ οὕτως καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 5:21** ut sicut regnavit peccatum in morte ita et gratia regnet per iustitiam in vitam aeternam per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum

CHAPTER 6

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:1** What then, shall we conclude? Shall we continue having cordial relations with sin [like we were still unbelievers], so that grace may abound?

^{KW} **Rom. 6:1** What then shall we say? Shall we habitually sustain an attitude of dependence upon, yieldedness so, and cordiality with the sinful nature in order that grace may abound?

^{KJV} **Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The absurdity of this question is only surpassed by the fact that many legalists, antinomians and other misguided believers actually think this way! Because Paul has so ably explained the difference between grace and faith, what should be our conclusion be (Deliberative Future tense) on the matter? As believers, shall we persist (Durative Present tense) in our amiable relations with sin? The deliberative subjunctive mood makes this way of life a distinct possibility, if we choose that path. The world is full of born-again Christians who are living under the sovereignty of the old sin nature, as opposed to the sovereignty of grace.

The hypothetical questioner not only thinks it is acceptable to live in habitual sin, but by his questioning he rationalizes that if he does, grace may (Potential Subjunctive mood) abound even more because of it. This person obviously misunderstands the entire purpose and means of grace. Grace does not mean we should “go and sin our brains out” so grace may abound upon us. The doctrines of grace are not a license for unbridled sin! Paul is simply drawing out the weirdos and flakes who are looking for any excuse to do as they please. Our conclusion from Paul’s teaching on justification by grace through faith precludes such a lifestyle of sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Debater's technique: "To what conclusion are we forced?" (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It should not astonish us that a hog should wish to wallow, since it is the nature of the hog to wallow. (D.G. Barnhouse) Paul is not discussing whether or not it is possible for a believer to continue in sin (as a perversion of the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints is stated), but whether or not such a lifestyle is logically derived from the premise that grace abounds where sin increases. He is refuting the notion that a life of sin is a logical outcome of the gospel of grace. (J.C. Dillow)

The most common but unfounded objection to the doctrine of justification by faith, is that it allows men to live in sin that grace may abound. This objection arises from ignorance of the doctrine in question, and of the nature and means of sanctification. It is so preposterous in the eyes of an enlightened believer, that Paul deals with it by exclamations at its absurdity, rather than with logical arguments. (C. Hodge) While the following argument is against persistence in sin, it confirms the sovereignty of grace. Let us not deny this marvelous doctrine. It will give us rich, exultant liberty, ridding us of the thralldom of sin, and giving us power to avoid the very sins which unnatural logic supposes we would eagerly follow. (A.E. Knoch)

The idea of habitual action comes from the use of the Present Subjunctive. The fundamental question, therefore, is not with regard to acts of sin, but with respect to the believer's relationship to the sinful nature ... whether he is yielded to it. (K. Wuest) The sin spoken of in Romans 6 is not an act, but a nature. This means this chapter deals with the *method* of living a Christian life, not with the kind of life one should live. It deals with the *mechanics* of the Spirit-filled life. See what a little attention to the use of the Greek article can do! (ibid) It would be a bad misinterpretation of Paul to think that the believer is thereby removed from all contact or influence with the old realm of sin. While belonging to a new realm, the believer brings with him into it many of the impulses, habits, and tendencies of the old life, a constant threat to putting into actual practice the realities of our new realm status. (D. Moo)

Paul uses a debater's phrase, seeing the possible perversion of this glorious grace. God's pardon does not give us liberty to sin without penalty. (A.T. Robertson) Sin is not the cause for the increase of grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Truth cannot lead to unholiness. (C. Hodge) The grace of God is not increased by our continuing in the sovereignty of the sin nature. It is increased when we develop capacity through doctrine so that the justice of God can convert the potentials of imputed righteousness and union with Christ into the

reality of blessings in an encapsulated environment. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This misrepresentation was by no means innocent. It was an intentional, wicked distortion, a heartless mockery. The distorters were guilty of lifting a few lines out of the totality of Paul's doctrine and basely twisting them. (W. Hendricksen)

No wonder that other Christians maintained that the only way to inculcate the principles of sound morality in sinful people was to require them to keep the law of Moses – indeed, to impose that law on them as a condition of salvation, over and above the requirement of faith in Christ. But Paul's own experience had taught him that all the law-keeping in the world could not bring the assurance of pardon and peace with God, whereas faith in Christ did so at once. He could never accept legalism as the remedy for libertinism; he knew a more excellent way. Paul trusted the Spirit of Christ in his converts, and in the long run his trust was vindicated, though he had to endure many heart-breaking disappointments in his spiritual children until at last he could see Christ formed in them. (J. Murray)

The apostle rebuts such antinomian conclusions by showing that they imply a total misunderstanding of the doctrine which was supposed to justify them; for that our partaking in the righteousness of God in Christ means our actually partaking in it – our being influenced by it, loving it and following it, not merely our having it imputed to us while we remain aloof from it. (J. Barmby) The key word in Romans 6 is “machinery.” Here we have the mechanics of the Spirit-filled life. We see the inner workings of the machinery set-up God brings into being when He saves a sinner, the power of indwelling sin broken and the divine nature implanted. (K. Wuest) Only a high-level outline of the mechanics is available here. The true “mechanics” of the Spirit-filled life could easily fill volumes. As mentioned in other places on this web site, R.B. Thieme, Jr. has taken the high-level outlines of the “mechanics” and has developed the topic beyond anything Dr. Wuest might have imagined. (LWB)

Paul was confronted with the charge of giving license to sin. Usually, people who are worried about sin are worried about someone else's sin. “I know God can look after me, but I am worried about that other fellow, so I am going to put him under the law so that he will walk straight.” Why not release him to the same Spirit that is in us? Maybe the Lord can look after him as well as He can you. Release him to the Lord. He has died. You are not releasing him to himself. The “self” in him is dead. You are releasing him to the Lord and God is able to make him stand. It is through the new man that we are motivated to righteousness. We have a new motivation through the indwelling Spirit. That is not to say we will not fail. But God has separated us from the sin that dwells within and He recovers us from the results of it. (K. Lamb)

Rom. 6:1 What (Interrog. pronoun) then (Inferential particle), shall we conclude (λέγω, FAI1P, Deliberative; Rhetorical Question taking the place of a Direct Assertion)? Shall we continue having cordial relations (ἐπιμένω, PASubj.1P, Durative, Deliberative; persist in, abide in) with sin (Instr. Assoc.; living under the sovereignty of the

old sin nature), **so that** (Final clause) **grace** (Subj. Nom.) **may abound** (πλεονάζω, AASubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential; multiply, increase; Paul is "drawing out" legalists, antinomians and other kooks by this line of questioning)?

^{WHO} **Romans 6:1** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν ἐπιμένωμεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:1** quid ergo dicemus permanebimus in peccato ut gratia abundet

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:2** **Definitely not! Since we have died to the sin nature [positionally], how can we still keep on living in it [experientially]?**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:2** May such a thing never occur. How is it possible for us, such persons as we are, who have been separated once for all from the sinful nature, any longer to live in its grip?

^{KJV} **Romans 6:2** God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul answers the hypothetical question with a Negative Wish in the Gnomic Aorist tense, an idiom for “Hell no!” or “God forbid!” Using debater’s technique, Paul expresses his astonishment that someone could actually twist his teaching on grace and faith in such a manner. He then answers the question with a simple reminder, in the form of a question. Since we have died (Culminative Aorist tense) positionally to the old sin nature, how can we keep on living (Progressive Future tense) in sin experientially as if nothing has happened to us? In other words, we were freed from sin positionally, so why do we continue to wallow in it experientially? Paul is actually surprised that some believers have chosen to live in sin’s deadly grip as opposed to living by grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The sense of this relative clause glides from mere explanation to ground or reason. (A.T. Robertson) To be *in* Christ is the source of the Christian's life; to be *like* Christ is the sum of his excellence; to be *with* Christ is the fullness of his joy. (C. Hodge) *Prolepsis*, or the answering of an argument by anticipating it before it is used. It is an *aperta*, or open prolepsis, because the objection is both stated and answered. (E.W. Bullinger) Paul is demonstrating the absolute incompatibility of principle between the life of sin and the Christian state. (C. Gore) “Living in sin” is best taken as describing a “lifestyle” of sin – a habitual practice of sin, such that one’s life could be said to be characterized by that sin rather than by the righteousness God requires. (D. Moo)

While God separated the believing sinner from the evil nature [OSN], He did not take it out of him, but left it in his inner being. It is not eradicated until the Christian dies or is glorified [after the rapture]. Any person who holds the theory that the sinful nature [OSN] is eradicated at a certain point in the Christian experience is only deceiving himself.

Others are not deceived, however, for they can see sin sticking out all over his life! In addition to this surgical separation from sin, the Holy Spirit has taken up His permanent residence in him to aid him in his battle against sin, and in his effort to live a Christian life. The evil nature [OSN] is a dethroned monarch, but it can still reign over your life if you yield to its power instead of the Holy Spirit. (K. Wuest)

This deliverance from the power of sin secured by union with Christ and from the defilement of sin secured by regeneration does not eliminate all sin from the heart and life of the believer. There is still indwelling sin. The believer is not yet so conformed to the image of Christ that he is holy, harmless and undefiled. Sanctification is concerned with precisely this fact. (J. Murray) It is as natural for a redeemed man to want to do righteously as it was for him, before redemption, to do unrighteously. What we want to do comes out of our spirit and is pleasing to God, but what we feel like doing comes out of our flesh and cannot please God. (K. Lamb)

Basically, the contrast between the two is this: justification deals with the penalty for sin; sanctification deals with the power of sin. Justification is a declarative act of God; sanctification is a progressive act of God. Both deal with the sinner: justification with the unsaved sinner; sanctification with the saved sinner. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 6:2 Definitely not! (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Gnostic, Voluntative Expressing a Negative Wish, Deponent; "May it never happen", an idiom for "God forbid!" or "Hell no!") Since (Relative pronoun which expresses astonishment, protasis) we have died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI1P, Culminative) to the sin nature (Dat. Adv.; positionally), how (Interrogative particle in a question indicating surprise, apodosis) can we still (Adv. Time) keep on living (ζάω, FAI1P, Progressive; functioning as a way of life, "wallowing in it") in it (Loc. Sph.; "in its' powerful grip")?

^{WHO} **Romans 6:2** μή γένοιτο οἷτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ πῶς ἔτι ζήσομεν ἐν αὐτῇ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:2** absit qui enim mortui sumus peccato quomodo adhuc vivemus in illo

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:3** Don't you understand that as many as were placed into vital union with Christ Jesus [elect in Him in eternity past] were placed into vital union with His spiritual death [His sheep were united with Him on the cross]?

^{KW} **Rom. 6:3** Do you not know that all we who were placed in Christ Jesus, in His death were placed?

^{KJV} **Romans 6:3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to answer the hypothetical question from the believer who thinks he can “sin his brains out” with impunity because this behavior will cause grace to abound. He answers it again with an incredulous sounding question. After all his teaching, are they so ignorant (Latin) of the basic truth (Perfective Present tense) that as many as were placed in vital union with Christ were placed into vital union (Constative Aorist tense) with His spiritual death? We were placed into vital union with Christ (Ingressive Aorist tense) in eternity past. At a point in time – the new birth – we became sons.

The phrase “as many as” is a reference to the elect only, His sheep. Christ did not die on the cross for an indiscriminate blob of humanity; He died for His sheep, those whom the Father had given Him, and those whom the Holy Spirit regenerates. The Greek word “baptizo” means to be identified with or to be in vital union with something or someone, in this case – Jesus Christ. Some translations use the word “baptize,” but that is a transliteration, not a translation. There is no water here! These uses of the word have absolutely nothing to do with water baptism. Shame on those teachers who throw water into this verse; it is a reference to union with Christ, a union enabled by the Spirit, not water.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Baptism” in this context is the introduction or placing of a person into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. It refers to the act of God introducing a believing sinner into vital union with Jesus Christ, in order that that believer might have the power of his sinful nature [OSN] broken and the divine nature implanted through his identification with Christ. The old environment was the 1st Adam in whom as our federal head we were made sinners and came under condemnation. In our new environment with the Last Adam, we have righteousness and life. Our *position* is changed from that of a sinner to that of a saint. (K. Wuest)

This is not referring to water baptism. Rather, it refers to our being identified with Christ. Scores of people have wrongly concluded that unless a person first believes in Christ and then is also immersed in water, he or she cannot be saved. But even the poorest Bible student knows that this is not true. A person is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. If baptism in water is necessary for salvation, then the believing thief who was crucified with Christ is lost. Once we get away from the mistaken idea that baptism always refers to water baptism, the verse becomes clear. A person needs to be identified with Him to be saved. (J. Boice) To say that the rite of water baptism actually gives spiritual life is to affirm a belief in magic, not religion. (R. Earle)

When all you theological bloodhounds get to Romans 6, be advised that there's no water there; it refers to the baptism of the Spirit by judicial imputation, not water baptism. This is the same baptism (placing into) that Paul speaks of in 1 Cor. 12:13. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are joined into Christ's death and burial, and then raised in His life. As

many as were baptized or “joined in union” with Jesus Christ, were “joined in union” with His death. Here begins the treatise on the new birth that is the foundation for the message which our Lord gave to this great apostle. (K. Lamb) The newness of life refers not to a new kind of life the believer is to live, but to a new source of ethical and spiritual energy imparted to him by God by which he is enabled to live the life to which Paul will exhort in chapters 12-16. (K. Wuest)

According to the Word of God, the baptism of the Holy Spirit took place when we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. This doctrine of election is probably the most hated of all Bible truths. Let a Christian assert that the Holy Spirit put certain people into Christ before the foundation of the world, and he will call forth virulent hatred. To say that *we* are sons of God, but not all men are, starts the fire. This is the offense of the cross. This unchained fury should not surprise us, since Christ warned in John 15:19, "I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." (D.G. Barnhouse) The spiritual values of baptism into the death and entombment with Christ, as shown in this chapter, indicate that Spirit baptism is in view here. (A.E. Knoch)

“Because the word ‘baptize’ usually has reference to the ceremony of water baptism, the English expositor will often interpret this passage as referring to water baptism. He never stops to think that the word is not native to the English language, and therefore has no meaning of its own; and, when appearing in the translation of the NT, the only legitimate meaning it can rightly have is that meaning in which the word in the Greek text has. He does not reflect that the word is not a translation, but a transliteration of the Greek word. But the expositor who uses his Greek text says, “I must make a study of this word in its usage in classical Greek, and in the LXX, the papyri, and the entire NT.” When this process is done, the translator will be led to the conclusion that this is a reference to Spirit baptism and not water baptism. The believing sinner is baptized into vital union with Jesus Christ. This is accomplished by the act of the Holy Spirit. No ceremony of water baptism ever did that. The entire context is supernatural in its character. The Greek word here should not be transliterated but translated, and the translation should read: “As many as were introduced (placed) into Christ Jesus, into His death were introduced.” Do not read water baptism into Romans 6. (K. Wuest)

In one sense, union with Christ is the whole of salvation. We see that union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity; the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of His glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end. (J.M. Boice) The regenerated died with Him on the cross. They live with Him in His resurrection. The death of believers with Christ did not occur when they were regenerated by the power of the Spirit or when they were converted, but when Jesus Christ died on the cross. They died in Christ and have been raised in Him. The regenerated do not live by Christ’s death, but by the life that flows to them through the redemptive work of Christ. The emphasis is on the living Christ and the living believer, not on a dead Christ

and the dead sinner. The believer lives by the power of the resurrected Christ who lives within him. (W.E. Best)

We may never think of redemption in abstraction from the mysterious arrangements of God's love and wisdom and grace by which Christ was united to His people and His people were united to Him when He died upon the accursed tree and rose again from the dead. (J. Murray) The first work performed by the Holy Spirit in our behalf was to elect us members of Christ's body. In His eternal decree God determined that He should not be solitary forever - that out of the multitude of sons of Adam a vast host would become sons of God, partakers of the divine nature. This company, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all, would become sons by the new birth, but members of the body by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Rom. 6:3 Don't you understand (ἀγνοέω, PAI2P, Perfective, Interrogative Ind.; "Are you ignorant of the fact") that (conj. as a Dir. Obj.) as many as (Subj. Nom., Correlative of Quantity: the elect only) were placed into vital union (βαπτίζω, API1P, Ingressive, Instantaneous; in eternity past) with Christ Jesus (Adv. Acc. Manner, with the notion of sphere and union) were placed into vital union (βαπτίζω, API1P, Constative) with His (Poss. Gen.; unique) spiritual death (Acc. Gen. Ref.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 6:3** ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν [Ἰησοῦν] εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν

^{VUL} **Romans 6:3** an ignoratis quia quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Iesu in morte ipsius baptizati sumus

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:4** Therefore, we [the elect] have been buried with Him [intimately united] through the vital union [baptism of the Spirit] into His physical death, so that just as Christ was raised [resurrection] from deaths [both spiritual & physical] by the glory [integrity & omnipotence] of the Father, in the same manner also [by the integrity & delegated omnipotence of God], we might walk [conduct ourselves] in newness of life [believers have the option of living a supernatural life here and now].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:4** We therefore were entombed with Him through this being placed in His death, in order that in the same manner as there was raised up Christ out from among those who are dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we by means of a new life imparted may order our behavior.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All believers have been intimately united to Christ (Constative Aorist tense) by being buried with Him through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is positional truth; we are positionally freed from the exercise of good and evil via our old sin nature. This baptism or vital identification with Christ is through His death on the cross. There is no reference to water here. Christ was resurrected from death (Culminative Aorist tense), a reference to both His spiritual and physical deaths. All of God's elect, His sheep, were united with Him on the cross. How was this accomplished? It was accomplished by the integrity and omnipotence of the Father. The first half of this verse is strictly positional, pointing to what we receive from the Lord by sovereign grace.

In the same manner, by the integrity and delegated power of the Lord, we now have the opportunity (Potential Subjunctive mood) to conduct ourselves (Culminative Aorist tense) in the sphere of His resurrection life. "Walking in newness of life" is an expression representing experiential sanctification. In other words, because of the positional truth we received in the first half of this verse, we now have the delegated power and opportunity to order our Christian life as if we were *already* resurrected with Him. This is not a given; it is only a possibility. Our volition is linked to the possibility of living this qualitative life that will express the extraordinary quality of our position in Christ. We have a choice. We can ignore the filling of the Spirit and Bible doctrine and never discover this newness of life.

"Newness" of life also points to the superabundance of grace offered to us, so that by the power of the indwelling and filling of the Spirit, we may conduct ourselves by means of Bible doctrine and not under slavery to law or works. The word "walk" is a reference to the Christian way of life, the life of progressive sanctification. This life is something quite extraordinary, supernatural, and qualitatively abundant compared to believers in prior dispensations. The indwelling and filling of the Spirit was not available to believers before the Church Age began. Church Age believers have a rare privilege to live this extraordinary spiritual life, if they choose to utilize delegated divine power (filling of the Spirit) and the Word of God in their daily life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is a sign of the apostate times in which we live that when believers see the word "baptism" they immediately think of water. Even farther off the track, when most believers come across the baptism *of the Holy Spirit*, all they can imagine is the ecstatic, mindless caterwauling of the tongues crowd. Neither water baptism nor the gift of tongues is involved in the baptism of the Spirit. In fact, both of those functions served limited purposes at the beginning of the Church Age and are no longer necessary today. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) That believers "walk" in newness of life indicates that the life is not conceived of as otiose possession, but as engaging the activity of the believer. (J. Murray)

The death of Christ in its specific character as atonement was for those and those only who are in due time the partakers of that new life of which Christ's resurrection is the pledge and pattern. This is another reminder that the death and resurrection of Christ are inseparable. Those for whom Christ died are those for whom He rose again and His heavenly saving activity is of equal extent with His once-for-all redemptive accomplishments. (J. Murray) The substitutionary work of Christ is not a work that takes place outside of us and which is *subsequently applied* to us. We ourselves die in and with Christ. (L. Morris) His dying implied, and to that extent was, our own dying. (G.C. Berkouwer)

We are instructed to walk in newness of life because the new spiritual species is designed to utilize total availability of the omnipotence of all three members of the Trinity. The omnipotence of God the Father (Eph. 1:3) created for every Church Age believer a portfolio of invisible assets which includes the sphere of divine power. The omnipotence of God the Son (Heb. 1:3) sustains the universe and perpetuates human history. The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) provides the function of the sphere of divine power. Furthermore, our bodies are indwelt by all three members of the Trinity. God the Father indwells us for the glorification of His protocol plan which He designed for us in eternity past (John 14:23; Eph. 1:3, 6, 12; 4:6; 2 John 9). God the Holy Spirit indwells us to create a temple for the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah Glory, to be a down payment of our royal inheritance, and to empower us in the execution of the Father's plan (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 1:14). God the Son indwells us as a sign or badge of the royal family (John 14:20), as a guarantee of the availability of divine power in time (Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:4-6), as a guarantee of life after death in the presence of God forever (Col. 1:27), as the depository of special blessings for time and eternity (Eph. 1:3), as the escrow officer who will deliver these blessings to the believer when he reaches spiritual adulthood (1 Cor. 3:13-14; 2 Cor. 5:10), as motivation for continued momentum when facing categories of suffering for blessing (Gal. 2:20), as the basis for assigning the highest priority to relationship with God over relationships with people, and to the use of divine power over the exercise of human power (1 John 2:24), and as the basis for the glorification of Christ, the Shekinah Glory, in the unique life of the Church Age believer in John 17:22-23, 26. Never before the Church Age did any member of the Trinity indwell any believer. But every Church Age believer is permanently indwelt by the entire Trinity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Hence all such are free from the dominion and condemnation of sin, and stand in the newness of resurrection life. All who are baptized by Him with the Holy Spirit are identified with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. (E.W. Bullinger) Definite atonement is also drawn from the fact that those for whom Christ died have themselves also died in Christ. There can be no doubt respecting the proposition that all for whom Christ died also died in Christ - a denotive equation. (J. Murray) "Zoe" is often used of an abundant quality of life beyond regeneration which is the possession of those who persevere in doing good (Romans 2:7). Therefore, not just a counter-balance to death is meant, i.e., regeneration, but an abundant life, a vibrant experience with Christ. It is "newness of life." (J. Dillow)

Just as human life was imputed at birth, so also was eternal life imputed at the second birth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Only partial utilization of God's omnipotence was made available to a few believers of previous dispensations, but the new spiritual species is designed to utilize total availability of the omnipotence of all three Members of the Trinity - with their very own portfolio of invisible assets. (ibid) Capacity + Potential = Reality: where Capacity = the Baptism of the Spirit and the imputation of Divine Righteousness, and Potential = Metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul. Each believer's life becomes a unique expression of the glory of God in both time and eternity, but only the *mature* believer glorifies God by receiving the highest and best that God has prepared for him. (ibid)

Antimereia, or an exchange of parts of speech, is present here; in this case, it is a noun for an adjective, i.e "a life-long newness." (E.W. Bullinger) The "oldness" of life is the computer program of good and evil which enslaves us to the old sin nature. Satan's plan also has a part in this programming, his ruling policy of good and evil inevitably works its way into the computer (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) like a virus! *Experiential sanctification* is residence, function, and spiritual momentum in the divine dynasphere (sphere of divine power) during the believer's life on earth. Living in the divine dynasphere, which the Holy Spirit energizes, fulfills the protocol plan of God. (ibid)

The Christian's will has been made absolutely free. Before salvation it was not free so far as choosing between good and evil is concerned. It was enslaved to the evil nature [OSN]. But now, it stands poised between the evil nature [OSN] and the divine nature, with the responsibility to reject the behests of the former and obey the exhortations of the latter. To constantly say NO to the former and YES to the latter becomes a habit, and then the victorious life has been reached. (K. Wuest) To walk requires effort. It is also a means of proceeding from one point to another, and it presupposes that we have a goal before us. It is neither effortless nor pointless. It requires voluntary exertion, and it is something that we must do for ourselves. Christianity, as one of the Cambridge Platonists reminds us, is "a way of walking, not a way of talking." (J. Knox)

Rom. 6:4 Therefore (Inferential conj.), we have been buried (συνθάπτω, API1P, Constative, Deponent; intimately united) with Him (Instr. Assoc.; positionally freed from good & evil, via the old sin nature) through the vital union (Adv. Acc.; baptism of the Spirit) into His (Poss. Gen.; Christ's) physical death (Adv. Acc. Manner), so that (Final clause) just as (Conj., protasis of a comparison) Christ (Subj. Nom.) was raised (ἐγείρω, API3S, Culminative; resurrection) from deaths (Abl. Separation, anarthrous; both spiritual & physical deaths) by the glory (Abl. Means; divine attribute of omnipotence) of the Father (Poss. Gen.), in the same (or a similar) manner (Correlative Adv., apodosis) also (pleonastic, adjunctive; by the integrity of God), we (Subj. Nom., personal pronoun) might walk (περιπατέω, AASubj.1P, Culminative, Potential, Purpose; live one day or step at a

time, conduct ourselves, order our behavior) **in newness** (Loc. Sph., with the connotation of something extraordinary, qualitatively abundant, i.e. *Operation Z*) **of life** (Descr. Attrib. Gen. which expresses quality; supernatural resurrection life which believers can be enjoying here and now).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:4** συνετάφημεν οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον ἵνα ὡσπερ ἠγέρθη Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πατρὸς οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν

^{VUL} **Romans 6:4** consepulti enim sumus cum illo per baptismum in mortem ut quomodo surrexit Christus a mortuis per gloriam Patris ita et nos in novitate vitae ambulemus

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:5** For if we have become intimately united [retroactive positional truth] to the likeness of His spiritual death, then we shall also be intimately united to the likeness of His resurrection [as we walk with Him in time and receive our resurrection body in the future].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:5** For in view of the fact that we are those who have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His death, certainly also we shall be those who as a logical result have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His resurrection,

^{KJV} **Romans 6:5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul explains that if we have become intimately united (Intensive Perfect tense) to the likeness of Christ's spiritual death, then we shall also become intimately united (Gnomic Future tense) to the likeness of His resurrection. This union with His spiritual death is a reference to retroactive positional truth, while His resurrection is a reference to current and future positional truth. The use of the 1st class conditional clause means our union with His spiritual death is an accomplished fact. The effects of His death and resurrection are joined together, like conjoined twins. If you have the benefits of one, you have the benefits of the other. The promise of resurrection life with Him is both current and future, as we walk in newness of life, and when we receive our own resurrection body.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The insertion of the preceding phrase is due to many elliptical factors: *aposiopesis*, where what is said is too wonderful, or solemn, or awful for words - left out to impress our minds with its importance; *brachylogia*, when certain connected words are omitted in the same member of a phrase for the sake of brevity or because the author is experiencing strong emotions; the opposite of a *pleonasm*, when more words are used than the grammar requires. (E.W. Bullinger) Our Lord's resurrection life is being lived in a new sphere [divine power sphere], and so is [should be] the Christian's. (K. Wuest)

In one sense “union with Christ” is the whole of salvation. We see that union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. The perspective of God’s people is not narrow; it is broad and long. It is not confined to space and time; it has the expanse of eternity. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of His glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end. (J. Boice) The future tense is used of participation in His resurrection, not as if the principal reference were to the future glory – for the resurrection of believers with Christ is expressly said to be a present reality – but because this is but partially realized in the present state. (R. Jamieson)

All for whom Christ died also died in Christ. All who died in Christ rose again with Christ. This rising again with Christ is a rising to newness of life after the likeness of Christ's resurrection. To die with Christ is, therefore, to die to sin and to rise with Him to the life of new obedience, to live not to ourselves, but to Him Who died for us and rose again. The inference is inevitable that those for whom Christ died are those and those only who die to sin and live to righteousness. Now it is a plain fact that not all die to sin and live in newness of life. Hence we cannot say that all men distributively died with Christ. And neither can we say that Christ died for all men, for the simple reason that all for whom Christ died also died in Christ. If we cannot say that Christ died for all men, neither can we say that the atonement is universal - it is the death of Christ for men that specifically constitutes the atonement. (J. Murray)

Rom. 6:5 **For** (Explanatory conj.) **if** (1st class condition, "and we have", protasis) **we have become** (γίνομαι, Perf.AI1P, Intensive, Deponent) **intimately united** (Nom. Assoc.; joined together like Siamese twins, congenital, inbred; retroactive positional truth) **to the likeness of** (Dat. Ind. Obj.) **His** (Poss. Gen.) **spiritual death** (Obj. Gen.), **then** (Inferential conj.; apodosis) **we shall also** (Ascensive) **be** (εἶμι, FMI1P, Gnostic, Logical Result) **intimately united to the likeness of His** (ellipsis, repetition of preceding clause) **resurrection** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; current positional truth).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:5** εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσόμεθα·

^{VUL} **Romans 6:5** si enim conplantati facti sumus similitudini mortis eius simul et resurrectionis erimus

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:6** **Be knowing this [by comprehension of doctrine]: Our old man [sin nature] has been crucified together with Him, so that the human body of sin [the sin nature dwelling in every cell of the physical body] might be rendered powerless, so that we might stop serving our sin nature like a slave.**

κω **Rom. 6:6** Knowing this experientially, that our old [unregenerate] self was crucified once for all with Him in order that the physical body [heretofore] dominated by the sin nature might be rendered inoperative [in that respect],

κJV **Romans 6:6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands us (Imperatival Participle) to utilize a doctrine that we have heard before (Perfective Present tense). Our old man, that bastard called the old sin nature, was crucified with Christ (Culminative Aorist tense) on the cross. The purpose for being crucified with Him is so the old sin nature which lives in every cell of our body, might be rendered inactive (Culminative Aorist tense). The Potential Subjunctive mood means this purpose depends on our personal decisions. Experiential sanctification is not a guaranteed result.

The sin nature is positionally crucified with Christ, but it is ever active in our experiential life on earth. It only becomes powerless over us when we walk in the Spirit and stop serving it (Perfective Present tense) like a slave. Volition is the issue, as is shown by the use of the word “might” in two places in this verse. We have been released from association with our old sin nature, but if we don’t follow divine protocol, we end up a slave to sin again. We make daily decisions to walk in the Spirit or to walk in the flesh. It is up to each one of us to bring our experiential *state* up to the honored status of our positional *standing* before God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Our "old man" is not a man really, but our “old nature” derived from Adam: our old self with its desires and qualities and conditions. This is called a *metonymy*, a figure by which one name or noun is used instead of another, to which it stands in a certain relation. (E.W. Bullinger) Being separated from the indwelling sin nature, the believer is not compelled to sin anymore; he has been permanently delivered from its power, when at the same time that nature is left in him permanently. And at the same time, God has imparted the divine nature, which gives both the desire and the power to do God's will. (K. Wuest) We must differentiate between what is true of our position as a fact and our experience. (D.M.L. Jones) By position, we mean what a Christian is as a new man. The crucifixion of the old man like the creation of the new man is not experiential knowledge. (J. Dillow) It is much simpler and more sensible to take “the body of sin” as meaning the sinful nature or carnality. (R. Earle)

In a divorce, even though both parties are still alive, neither has any claim on the other. In the same way, we are "dead and buried" to the old sin nature, though experientially our "ex" is very much alive. Like an ex-husband or ex-wife with no personal integrity, the old sin nature keeps hanging around, continually calling us up, inviting us to come over for a

little social life - "just for old times sake." We are constantly faced with his/her advances, to which we can say yes or no. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) We have been delivered from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life which plagued us from within. This deliverance comes as the old man is crucified with Christ. (K. Lamb)

The sin of all those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world was placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ by God the Father Who then put the Savior to death. (D.G. Barnhouse) The Christian is exhorted to maintain that relationship of disconnection which God has brought about between him and the indwelling sinful nature. If he does not, God also sends suffering and chastening into his life as a curb to sin. (K. Wuest) *Synonymia*, or different aspects of the same thing, can be seen in this verse by the words *old man*, *body of sin* and *sin nature*. The "old man" expresses the origin in Adam. By reason of its powers and operations it is called "the body of sin," or sinful body. And lastly, its very nature and character is expressed by the name "sin nature." (E.W. Bullinger) Paul uses the word "soma" to refer to the whole person. (D. Moo)

Positionally, the power of the old sin nature has been broken; experientially, the former ruler is reduced to begging. He must wait for you to throw him a few crumbs of negative volition. When you ignore rebound and the intake of Bible doctrine and instead follow the thinking of good and evil, *you* are the culprit. *You* have placed a beggar on the throne of your life! The believer's soul is the battleground in the angelic conflict, and the believer's own volition determines which side wins in his life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The word translated "old" is related to usefulness. It has nothing to do with age. The "old man" is old because he is no longer useful. He can no longer do anything for us. He has been crucified in Christ. (K. Lamb)

The command in Ephesians 4 to put off the old man does not contradict Paul's affirmation here that the old man was crucified. The old man, any man in his unregenerate condition, is dominated by the flesh and is no partaker of the Spirit. When the Spirit regenerates and indwells a person, the flesh may begin to undergo a gradual process of being subdued. Thus dies the old man, and his deeds are gradually replaced with those of the new man – after true righteousness and holiness in accordance with proper knowledge. As that occurs, the proper relationship between one's affections, will, and mind is restored. The renewing of the mind gradually transforms the rest of the life unto the image of the Creator, the very purpose for which God initiated salvation. (T. Nettles)

Rom. 6:6 Be knowing (γινώσκω, PAPtc.NPM, Perfective, Imperativ; intelligent comprehension of Bible doctrine learned in the past) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.; retroactive positional truth): "Our (Poss. Gen. with conj. used as quotation marks) old (Adj., unregenerate) man (Subj. Nom.; "the old bastard," old sin nature) has been crucified together with (συσταυρώω, API3S, Culminative, Deponent) Him (ellipsis, Dat. Ind. Obj. supplied), so that (Final clause, Purpose conj.) the human body (Subj. Nom.; the OSN dwells in

every cell of the physical body, *not* in the soul) of sin (Attrib. Gen.; "the sin-possessed body", "the body marked by sin") might be rendered powerless (καταργέω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential Purpose; inoperative, inactive, idle, exhausted, abolished, be released from association with), so that (Epexegetic of a "hina" purpose clause, used especially by Thucydides) we might (volition is the big issue) stop (Neg. Adv.; no longer) servicing (δουλεύω, PAInf., Perfective, Purpose, Articular) our (Poss. Gen.) sin nature (Dat. Ind. Obj.) like a slave".

^{WHO} **Romans 6:6** τοῦτο γινώσκοντες ὅτι ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος συνεσταυρώθη ἵνα καταργηθῇ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ·

^{VUL} **Romans 6:6** hoc scientes quia vetus homo noster simul crucifixus est ut destruat corpus peccati ut ultra non serviamus peccato

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:7** Consequently, the one who has died to the old man [retroactive positional truth] has been set free [positional sanctification] from the power of the sin nature.

^{KW} **Rom. 6:7** With the result that no longer are we rendering a slave's habitual obedience to the sinful nature,

^{KJV} **Romans 6:7** For he that is dead is freed from sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Summarizing his earlier comments, Paul says the person who has died (Constative Aorist tense) to the old man has been set free (Consummative Perfect tense) from the power of the sin nature. "Dying to the old man" is a reference to being united with Christ in His death on the cross. "Being set free from the power of the sin nature" is a reference to our positional sanctification, as well as our being acquitted or justified. In both cases, sovereign grace bestowed the gift to the believer. We receive the gifts due to the One Whom we are related to, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The baptism of the Spirit is retroactive positional truth; being set free from the power of the sin nature is current positional truth; living the Christian life in the filling of the Spirit is experiential truth. God does the first two by sovereign grace without our assistance; we live the last item by the filling of the Spirit and positive volition to Bible doctrine. The old man has been done away with positionally; we should honor the cessation of his existence and sever all future ties to Him in our daily life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Retroactive positional truth is the believer's identification with the spiritual death, physical death and burial of Jesus Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Christian name pledges

us to the Christian law of living by dying, progress by conversion. You cannot refuse the dying without repudiating the Name. 'Die and re-exist,' said Goethe, 'for so long as this is not accomplished you are but a troubled guest upon an earth of gloom.' (C. Gore) Justification, here, is a forensic (positional truth) and not a *real in experience* (experiential truth) term. Death to sin is real in our position, but not necessarily real in life. (J.C. Dillow)

It's better to tell everyone to 'go do as you please,' because that will end up manifesting who and what they really are. It will, of course, raise the hackles on the back of the necks of legalists! But this comes from a misunderstanding of what love is. Love fulfills the law. So if the believer loves God, he is already doing all that he can, and he is a son who can be trusted (safe) to 'go out and do as he pleases.' God is only concerned where your heart is. All of your sins have been nailed to the Cross and are a non-issue as long as you confess (I John 1:9) them. (K. Lamb) The minute a Christian sins, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and that makes the believer decidedly uncomfortable, spiritually. God also sends suffering and chastening into his life as a curb to sin. (K. Wuest)

What would you prefer to pursue? A set of laws, rules or regulations? Or the person of Jesus Christ? The legalist embraces the law because he does not know Jesus Christ, and because keeping some law gives others the impression that he is holy and righteous. Mixing law with grace when you are living in the sphere of grace is spiritual adultery. The law only enables you to fool other people into thinking you are a spiritual person, when, in fact, you are a spiritual adulterer. The 'old man' is never active this side of the Cross. It was killed at the Cross, so don't bring something back to life that God killed. It is the flesh we are struggling with. (K. Lamb)

Christian life is life between the times and between two worlds: it is not yet free from the old nature, and not fully at home in the new. If it is subjected to the fierce jealousy of the old life, it is worked upon even more by the upward pull of the new. In earthly existence the believer cannot fully escape the old Adam or inherit completely the new life in Christ. Paul himself knew this tension. (J. Edwards)

This believer has been set completely free from the sinful nature, with the present result that he is in a state of permanent freedom from it, permanent in the sense that God has set him free permanently from it, but it is his responsibility to maintain that freedom from it moment by moment. (K. Wuest) Instead of living under the rulership of the ex-husband, the old sin nature, we are now in a position to live unto God. Positional truth demands a new way of life, compatible with the exalted relationship between the resurrected humanity of Christ and God the Father, at Whose right hand He sits. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 6:7 **Consequently** (Result conj., "in other words"), **the one** (Subj. Nom.) **who has died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAPTc.NSM, Constativ, Subst. Circumstantial, "discharged from the former way of life") **to the old man** (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied from prior verse; baptism of the Spirit and *retroactive positional truth* by virtue of being identified

with Christ in His death on the cross) has been set free from the power of (δικαιόω, Perf.PI3S, Consummative; acquitted, justified, *positional sanctification*) the sin nature (Abl. Separation).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:7** ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας

^{VUL} **Romans 6:7** qui enim mortuus est iustificatus est a peccato

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:8** Now since we have died together with Christ [retroactive positional truth], we should also understand that we will live in association with [derive our spiritual life from] Him [current positional truth],

^{KW} **Rom. 6:8** Now, in view of the fact that we died once for all with Christ, we believe that we shall also live by means of Him,

^{KJV} **Romans 6:8** Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Drawing from his summary in the prior verse, Paul adds that since we have died (Constativ Aorist tense) together with Christ, we should also understand (Tendential Present tense) that we will live (Predictive Future tense) in association with Him. Those who died together with Christ are defined in many other passages of Scripture as His sheep, the elect, and those that the Father has given to Him. These same individuals, and only those individuals, will also live with Him. Our retroactive positional truth is the basis for our current positional truth which supplies the base of operation for our experiential walk. “Living in association with Him” means we derive our spiritual life from Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Since "those who live" do not embrace the whole human race, neither can the "all" verses embrace the entire human family. The death and resurrection of Christ are conjoined and the analogy of Paul's teaching in similar contexts is to the effect that those who are the beneficiaries of Christ's death are also of His resurrection and therefore of His resurrection life. (J. Murray) *Current positional truth* is the believer's identification with the resurrection, ascension and session of Jesus Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The future tense, “we shall live” does not refer exclusively to the future resurrection state, but points to the certainty of participation in the resurrection life of Christ here and now; it is the life of Spiritual, mystical union. No doubt the resurrection of the body is the ultimate fruition of this union. But we may not restrict the thought to that hope. (J. Murray) The reader will notice how often Paul repeated himself in this section. As a good teacher he knew that truth once stated is not necessarily absorbed. (R. Mounce)

Rom. 6:8 **Now** (Transitional particle) **since** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and we have"; Causal, "in view of the fact that") **we have died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI1P, Constative) **together with** (Prep. Accompaniment) **Christ** (Instr. Assoc.; retroactive positional truth), **we should also** (pleonastic, apodosis) **understand** (πιστεύω, PAI1P, Tendential; believe, faith perception) **that** (Epexegetical conj.) **we will live in association with** (συζάω, FAI1P, Predictive, Subordinate Clause; "derive our spiritual life from") **Him** (Instr. Assoc.; current positional truth related to the royal family),

^{WHO} **Romans 6:8** εἰ δὲ ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ πιστεύομεν ὅτι καὶ συζήσομεν αὐτῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:8** si autem mortui sumus cum Christo credimus quia simul etiam vivemus cum Christo

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:9** **Knowing that Christ, having been raised from deaths [both spiritual & physical deaths], can never die again, death no longer ruling [having dominion over] Him.**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:9** Knowing that Christ, having been raised up from among those who are dead, no longer dies. Death over Him no longer exercises lordship.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:9** Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds us that we all know for certain (Gnomic Perfect tense) that Christ was resurrected (Constative Aorist tense) from deaths (plural), both spiritual and physical. Because of His resurrection, He will never, ever die again. Death no longer rules (Gnomic Present tense) over Him (Latin: dominates). "This verse contains a complete refutation of the 'sacrificial' character of the 'mass.'" (A.T. Robertson) The mass asserts that the actual body of Christ is sacrificed again and again and is present in the wafer. This damnable heresy is refuted here by the unequivocal statement that Christ is no longer subject to death and will never die again.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Death functions here as a *personification*, ascribing human characteristics and actions (ruling) to other objects or humans. (R.B. Zuck) Christ, Who now vivifies the faithful by His Spirit, or breathes His own life into them by His secret power from heaven, was freed from the dominion of death when He arose, that by virtue of the same dominion He might render free all His people. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 6:9 knowing (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NPM, Gnostic, Circumstantial) that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) Christ (Subj. Nom.), having been raised (ἐγείρω, APpTc.NSM, Constative, Circumstantial; resurrection) from deaths (Abl. Separation; both spiritual and physical deaths), can never (Adv. Time) die (ἀποθνήσκω, PAI3S, Futuristic) again, death (Subj. Nom.) no longer (Adv. Time) ruling (κυριεύω, PAI3S, Gnostic; having dominion over) Him (Obj. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:9** εἰδότες ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν οὐκέτι ἀποθνήσκει θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει

^{VUL} **Romans 6:9** scientes quod Christus surgens ex mortuis iam non moritur mors illi ultra non dominabitur

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:10** For the [spiritual] death He died [retroactive positional truth], He died for sin once and for all [one time only, never again]; but the [resurrection] life He lives [in hypostatic union], He lives [current positional truth] for God.

^{KW} **Rom. 6:10** For the death He died, He died with respect to our sinful nature once for all. But the life He lives, He lives with respect to God.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:10** For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ died (Constative Aorist tense) both spiritually and physically on the cross. At that time, He died (Culminative Aorist tense) once and for all. The adverb used (once and for all) has no quantitative reference as to who He died for. It refers to the one time event – He died once and will never die spiritually or physically again. The Culminative Aorist tense adds to this sense of finality. He conquered death and it no longer has a grip on Him. This event is classified as retroactive positional truth. Note the use of the adverb "once and for all" for His death, but not used again for His life. Similarly, we are all appointed to die once - and then: judgment for the unbeliever, eternal life for the believer.

By contrast, the resurrection life that He now lives (Durative Present tense) in hypostatic union, He will continue to live (Durative Present tense) for God forever. This continuation of resurrection life is classified as current positional truth. Both elements in this verse are positional, one historical and the other ongoing. The historical event of His death happened at a point in time (Culminative); the current life He lives will go on forever (Durative). He died for sin, He lives for God. Positionally, we died to sin and live for God in Him. Experientially, we are supposed to *keep on* dying to sin and living for God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Because the law has been perfectly satisfied, there is no more penalty to inflict. (C. Hodge) Our Lord's death not only paid the penalty of human sin, but it was used of God to break the power of indwelling sin in the believer's life. (K. Wuest) By the one offering of Himself, He has forever perfected them that are sanctified. The apostle, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, while arguing to show the necessity of the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, argues also to show that such was the *efficacy* of that sacrifice, it need not, and cannot be repeated. (C. Hodge)

Some exegetes translate the verbs in this verse as Cognate Accusatives, still retaining the idea of the verb. (A.T. Robertson) Death must be followed by life; the one is in order to the other. (C. Hodge) Also, as believers, we have died to sin, i.e. *retroactive positional truth*, with the result that we live our life to God, i.e. *current positional truth*. Paul will soon take up this point of current *positional truth* and expand it into the potential for current *experiential truth*, a supernatural way of life which depends entirely on supernatural means. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The eternal God is the means by which He lives, the sphere in which He lives, the end for which He lives. All His powers are taken up into God, all His consecration is to God, all His fellowship is with God. (J. Knox)

Rom. 6:10 For (Explanatory conj.) the death (Cognate Acc., relative pronoun; spiritual death) He died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Constativ), He died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Culminative; *retroactive positional truth*) for sin (Dat. Ref.) once and for all (Adv. Spec.; one time, once and only once; He can never die again); but (contrast conj.) the life (Cognate Acc., relative pronoun; resurrection life) He lives (ζάω, PAI3S, Durative; in hypostatic union), He lives (ζάω, PAI3S, Durative; *current positional truth*) for God (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:10** ὁ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ἀπέθανεν ἐφάπαξ· ὁ δὲ ζῆν ζῆν τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:10** quod enim mortuus est peccato mortuus est semel quod autem vivit vivit Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:11** Likewise, you also consider yourselves on the one hand to be dead to the sin nature [mortification], but on the other hand, continually living for God [vivification] in the Person of Christ Jesus.

^{KW} **Rom. 6:11** Thus, also, as for you, you be constantly counting upon the fact that, on the one hand, you are those who have been separated from the sinful nature, and, on the other hand, that you are living ones with respect to God in Christ Jesus.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:11** Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul makes a comparison between the death and resurrection life of Jesus Christ and our death and resurrection life. In the same manner, we are to recognize (Aoristic Present tense) that we are dead to the sin nature, but we are also to continue living (Iterative present tense) for God in Christ Jesus. We are to consider our positional victory over sin, and parlay that position experientially into spiritual life for God. We stand positionally in Christ, free from the sin nature, but we must keep on freeing ourselves from the influence of the sin nature and live experientially up to the level of our standing.

Paul contrasts and compares our standing and state, our position and condition, over-and-over again as a means of pointing us to who we are in Christ, and where we should be headed in the Christian way of life. This is cleverly done by using the debater’s technique of “on the one hand” (correlative), but “on the other hand” (contrast). In other words, we are dead to sin positionally, so start acting like it. Likewise, we are alive to God in Christ Jesus, so start living like it. There are two parts to this equation. The first part (dead to sin, alive to God) is positional, but with the goal of making it experiential as well (dying to sin, living for Christ).

It is not enough to realize we are dead to the sin nature and to avoid sinning. We must also realize that we are free to live for God and start living that spiritual life. In a manner of speaking, there is a negative side (stop sinning) and a positive side (start living for God). Using Reformation theological terms, this refers to mortification (Latin: mortuos) and vivification (Latin: vivendi). Mortification is the process of dying to sin in our daily life. Vivification is the process of growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ by the intake, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If the death of the believer in Christ in verse 10 is "actual," meaning cessation of existence, then what is meant in verse 11 when Paul urges believers to reckon themselves dead to sin? Sanctification does not inevitably follow justification in the experiential realm. Verse 11 promises success if we apply the God-appointed means, not as a statement of reality irrespective of those means. The text does not say that sin does not have dominion. It says sin will not have dominion (Future tense) IF we reckon it so and become obedient to a new principle. (J.C. Dillow)

We appropriate the benefits of *redemption* from sin by *reckoning* that we are truly free from sin. We appropriate the benefits of *reconciliation* by *walking* in the light, *confessing* our sin so as to remain in constant fellowship, i.e. I John 1:9. (J.C. Dillow)

<i>Work</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>How Obtained</i>
Propitiation	To free God to accept those who believe	Believe
Redemption	To purchase us out of the slave market of sin	Reckon

Reconciliation To establish friendship between former enemies Confess

The believer must adhere to this method of "living" if he expects the best results from this inner change God wrought in him. Both acts of reckoning bring inner spiritual machinery into operation. A Christian who fails to count upon the fact that the power of the sinful nature is broken in his life, fails to get consistent victory over it, with the result that he lives a mediocre Christian life. He reckoned himself where he was not. The Christian who counts upon this break knows that he does not have to obey the sinful nature, and that he has the power to say NO to it, and he turns his back on it and does what is right. (K. Wuest)

We are baptized into Christ's death in two ways. First, when Jesus died on the cross God regarded us as having died with Him as far as our sin was concerned. God the Father put God the Son to death, and since all who believe were united to Him by the Holy Spirit from before the foundation of the world, they too were put to death. Their sin was punished, and they may now stand boldly in God's presence as His justified people. Second, there is a sense in which our union with Christ in His death refers to our life here and now. Through our identification with Christ in His death the power of sin over us is broken and we are set free to serve God. (J. Boice) "En Christo" represents a mystic indwelling. (A. Deissmann)

Rom. 6:11 Likewise (Correlative Adv.), you (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) consider (λογίζομαι, PMI2P, Aoristic, Deponent) yourselves (Obj. Gen.) on the one hand (Affirmative particle μέν) to be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Command) dead (Pred. Acc.) to the sin nature (Dat. Adv.; positional victory over sin), but on the other hand (Contrast particle δέ), continually living (ζάω, PAPtc.APM, Iterative, Modal) for God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) in the Person of Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:11** οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς λογίζεσθε ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:11** ita et vos existimate vos mortuos quidem esse peccato viventes autem Deo in Christo Iesu

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:12** Therefore, stop allowing [emphasis on your volition] the sin nature to rule in your mortal body [old sin nature in the cell structure of your body], so that as a result you obey it [the sin nature in the cell structure of your body] with its trends [lust patterns].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:12** Stop therefore allowing the sinful nature to reign as king in your mortal body with a view to obeying it [the body] in its passionate cravings.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:12** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul introduces once again the potential for living an experiential victory over sin because of the death to sin that we obtained positionally from Christ Jesus. He commands us to stop (Imperative of Prohibition) allowing the sin nature to rule (Progressive Present tense) over us. The sin nature once held a kingly or tyrannical position over us, but Jesus Christ removed that king from its throne and placed Himself in its place. It is now up to us to make daily decisions to live for the new King, Jesus Christ, as opposed to the old king, the sin nature. Note Kenneth Wuest's comments on whether "it" is the sin nature or the body. In my opinion, the sin nature resident in the body is what Paul is referencing.

The words "mortal body" refers to the sin nature living in the cell structure of our bodies. This is part of the imputation of Adam's sin to the human race discussed in previous verses. The sin nature still lives in our body, but we are no longer required to serve it as king. We are to cease obeying it in our daily life (Iterative Present tense) because its authority over us has been broken. We no longer have to submit to the lust pattern of the sin nature. The polarized trends (passionate cravings) of legalism versus antinomianism, and asceticism versus lasciviousness, no longer rule over us, unless we give them permission.

The sin nature has polarized trends or cravings arranged somewhat like the four directions on a compass. Depending on your personality traits, you have one or more tendencies to sin in a particular direction on this compass. If your personality tends to like rules and regulations, your sins head in the direction of legalism and self-righteousness. If your personality tends to reject authority and over-emphasizes freedom without responsibility, your sins tend towards the direction of antinomianism. Likewise, if your personality tends toward religious activities and other forms of self-sacrifice, your sins head in the direction of asceticism. If your personality tends to be a "party animal," your sins head in the direction of lasciviousness.

The trends or lust patterns of the sin nature can change as often as your personality changes. It is quite possible to alternate from one of these four directions to another. It is not an "either/or" representation of the lust pattern. In my opinion, the lust patterns of antinomianism and lasciviousness have received almost exclusive treatment in pulpits across America. There has been little or no treatment of legalism and asceticism in most churches. Why is that? In my opinion, most pastors and teachers do not know what the Christian way of life is, so they have substituted these two lust patterns of the sin nature (asceticism and legalism) for what the legitimate Christian way of life is supposed to be!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Self-indulgence is inconsistent with trust in the vicarious atonement. (A.T. Robertson)
What are some of the principles of sanctification? (1) Sin is not dead in Christians, even in the most mature and pious Christians, but rather is something always to be struggled

against. (2) Sin's hold on us is in or through our bodies. (3) Sin can reign in or dominate our bodies. (4) Although sin can reign in or dominate our bodies, it does not need to. (5) As Christians, we can now offer the parts of our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness. (J. Boice)

Logic would lead us to relate the pronoun to the sin nature, but Greek grammar refers it back to the body, since the pronoun is neuter - the word "sin" is feminine, and the word "body" is neuter. The pronoun in Greek agrees with its antecedent in gender. So is Paul referring to obedience to the lusts of sin or to those of the body? The gender, number and case point to the lusts of the body concerning which Paul is speaking. (K. Wuest)
Sanctification, as springing from a living faith, and as the fruit of God's love to us, admits of degrees, and may be more or less earnestly cultivated ... determining the measure of future blessedness. (C. Hodge)

Regeneration is not regarded as having changed our nature, or eradicated all our evil propensities, but as having introduced into us a higher power, the power of His resurrection, in virtue of which we may resist the attempted domination of sin. But it still rests with us whether we will give our allegiance to sin or to Christ. (J. Barmby) How does sin reign? Sin reigns through the law and through the condemnation of the law, which sin brings. Paul is not referring here to what we do, as he is to how we react to what we do. We are brought into bondage by the condemnation of sin. If we remain under condemnation, then peace is gone and guilt comes. When guilt comes, so does all manner of problems. (K. Lamb)

Though sin dwells in us, it is inconsistent that it should be so vigorous as to exercise its reigning power; for the power of sanctification ought to be superior to it, so that our life may testify that we are really the members of Christ. The word "body" is not to be taken for flesh, and skin, and bones, but, so to speak, for the whole of what man is. This may undoubtedly be inferred from the passage. (J. Calvin) The imperative construction forbids the continuance of an action already going on. The sinful nature is a dethroned monarch. The believer is well able to keep sin from mounting the throne of his heart. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 6:12 **Therefore** (Influential particle; introduces the potential for *experiential* victory over sin), **stop** (neg. adv.) **allowing** (permitting; emphasizing the volitional aspect) **the sin nature** (Subj. Nom.) **to rule** (βασιλεύω, PAImp.3S, Progressive, Prohibition; kick this undeserving occupant off its noble throne) **in your** (Poss. Gen.) **mortal** (Dat. Ref.) **body** (Loc. Sph.; the OSN in the cell structure of your body), **so that** (Purpose clause) **as a result you obey** (ὑπακούω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose & Result, Articular) **it** (Dat. Disadv.; the OSN in your mortal body) **with its** (Poss. Gen.) **trends** (Attrib. Gen. Sph., passionate cravings, lust pattern of the OSN).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:12** Μὴ οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:12** non ergo regnet peccatum in vestro mortali corpore ut oboediatis concupiscentiis eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:13** Stop placing your members [faculties of the body & soul] as weapons of wickedness [good & evil] under the orders of [yielding to] the sin nature, but place yourself completely under orders [yielding] to God as those who are alive [retroactive positional truth] from deaths [identified with Christ in His spiritual & physical deaths], and your members [faculties of the body & soul] as weapons of righteousness to God [our positional victory gives us the potential for experiential victory],

^{KW} **Rom. 6:13** Moreover, stop putting your members at the disposal of the sinful nature as weapons of unrighteousness, but by a once-for-all act and at once, put yourselves at the disposal of God as those who are actively alive out from among the dead, and put your members as weapons of righteousness at the disposal of God,

^{KJV} **Romans 6:13** Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a military metaphor to command believers to stop taking orders (Imperative of Prohibition) from the sin nature and to start taking orders (Imperative of Command) from God. The weapons (Latin: armaments) of our body and soul are to wage war for God, not for sin. We should not wield the weapons of our body and soul for wickedness, but for righteousness. In the invisible war of the angelic conflict, we are indeed soldiers under orders. The angelic conflict is strictly experiential, centered on each believer and how that believer lives his life after salvation. At any point in time, we choose which commanding general we want to fight for: either the sin nature or God.

Our daily decisions determine whom or what we surrender our fighting ability to in the angelic conflict. If we choose to obey the sin nature, we place our body and soul at the command of sin and our course of action follows. If we choose to obey God, we place our body and soul at the command of righteousness and that course of action follows. Both commanding generals are spheres of operation. In our daily life, we are always operating in one sphere or the other. When we are in fellowship and are filled with the Spirit, we are fighting in God's sphere of operations. When we are out of fellowship and are in sin, we are fighting in the sin nature's sphere of operation.

Our position in Christ gives us the potential to cease fighting for "the bad guys" and to begin fighting for "the good guys." The Greek word "paristimi" means we obey one commanding general or the other in this conflict. There is no such thing as sitting on the

sidelines or retiring to a place of R&R where we are not in operation. The invisible conflict of which we are part does not “take a break” when we are tired or confused. The battle continues to be fought whether we like it or not. Our “members,” referring to the powers and faculties of our soul, are our weapons in this constant warfare. Our decisions from one moment to another are the execution of one battle plan or the other – either an attack for good and evil, or an attack for righteousness.

There is a Durative element in this verb, which represents continuous action, every day - not a one-shot decision. You may have also noticed that I place both “good and evil” under the concept of wickedness. In the prior verse, I mentioned the lust patterns of the sin nature. All believers would readily acknowledge that antinomianism and lasciviousness are evil, part of “wickedness.” Most believers cringe when I categorize asceticism and legalism as part of “wickedness,” because they assume these are “good” things. They are not good things; they are patterns of the sin nature and they are opposed to righteousness.

Let me elaborate on Paul’s military metaphor to better explain this concept. Go into most churches and ask these two questions: Are antinomian (lawless, anti-authority) believers serving the sin nature as weapons of wickedness? Are lascivious (party-time) believers serving the sin nature as weapons of wickedness? I dare say you will receive a resounding, “Yes!” answer to these questions. Now ask these two questions: Are legalistic believers serving the sin nature as weapons of wickedness? Are ascetic (religious, do-gooder) believers serving the sin nature as weapons of wickedness? I dare say you will make a lot of people nervous, and I doubt you’ll win a popularity contest.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The saint is able to keep watch over the members of his body - what his eyes look at, his ears listen to, his mind thinks about, his hands do, and where his feet carry him. (K. Wuest) Our giving ourselves to God is something done once for all; our yielding our members as instruments of sin is a succession of acts of yielding. (J. Barmby) Paul shows us in Romans 6:12-13 that the body is where sin resides. It works in our members, or our appetites, which work through this “earthly house.” Throughout Romans 6 and 7, Paul warns of the body’s propensity to sin and our spirit’s desire for righteousness. (K. Lamb)

Romans 6 is the classic biblical text on the importance of relating the “indicative” of what God has done for us with the “imperative” of what we are to do. Paul stresses that we must actualize in daily experience the freedom from sin’s lordship that is ours in Christ Jesus. State is to become reality; we are to become what we are. Balance on this point is essential. “Indicative” and “imperative” must be neither divided nor confused. If divided, with “justification” and “sanctification” put into separate compartments, we can forget that true holiness of life comes only as the outworking and realization of the life of Christ in us. This leads to a “moralism” or “legalism” in which the believer “goes it on his own,” thinking that holiness will be attained through sheer effort, or more elaborate programs, or ever-increasing numbers of rules. But if indicative and imperative are

confused, with justification and sanctification collapsed together into one, we can neglect the fact that the outworking of the life of Christ in us is made our responsibility. This neglect leads to an unconcern with holiness of life, or to a “God-does-it-all” attitude in which the believer thinks to become holy through a kind of spiritual osmosis. Paul makes it clear that we can live a holy life only as we appropriate the benefits of our union with Christ. But he also makes it clear, because there is a sequence, that living the holy life is distinct from (but not separate from) what we have attained by our union with Christ and that holiness of life can be stifled if we fail continually to appropriate and put to work the new life God has given us. (D. Moo)

The imperative mood provides scriptural grounds for a service where Christians are exhorted to dedicate themselves to God and His service. Such practical distinctions are lost to the student of the English Bible, but readily available to the student of the Greek NT. A pastor, whom the writer had the privilege of tutoring in Greek, said one day, “My conscience hurts me if I do not use the Greek text in my preparation of messages.” Surely, the Christian worker who has access to the Greek text cannot afford to neglect it. He does so at the expense of his own spiritual development and his efficiency in his service for the Lord Jesus. The pastor and teacher should live his life every day, moment by moment, with the consciousness of that fact in his mind. (K. Wuest) By our “members” seem to be meant, not merely the several parts of our bodily frame – eye, tongue, hand, foot, etc. – but generally all the parts or constituents of our present human nature, which sin may use as its instruments, but which ought to be devoted to God. (J. Barmby)

Sin is regarded as a sovereign who demands the military service of subjects, levies their quota of arms, and gives them their soldier’s pay of death. (J.B. Lightfoot) Christians have a spiritual life, of which they were by nature entirely destitute, and of which unbelievers are not only altogether destitute, but which they cannot even comprehend. (R. Haldane) Placing the members of your physical body under orders to God includes reprogramming your mind. By the intake of Bible doctrine, new information is fed into your mind, so that it is programmed in accordance with the plan of God for your life. Only doctrine in the soul can fulfill experientially what was accomplished positionally at the moment of salvation. Through perception of doctrine, you can be free from both rulers under which you were born. Doctrine makes all the difference. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Bible pictures man as dead, not merely as sick, and the remedy is not just a continuation and improvement of our present spiritual life, but a resurrection from the dead, a new life completely. The reason unregenerate man cannot possibly seek God or repent of his sins is that he is dead, and a dead man cannot do anything. (G. Clark) When Paul says that we are now a new creation in Christ, he is not saying that we have been experientially transformed and will inevitably manifest a life of good works. In fact, he repeatedly asks us to act like who we really are. His meaning is that we are to be in experience what we already are in Christ. If it is automatic and inevitable that this will happen, why command it? More to the point, nowhere does the Bible assert that, just

because a man is a new creation, he will act like who he is in Christ to the final hour.
(J.C. Dillow)

Placing the members of your physical body under orders to God includes reprogramming your brain. For the first time, your soul is in a position to break free from the influence of the corrupted physical computer. By the intake of Bible doctrine, new information is fed into your brain, so that it is programmed in accordance with the plan of God for your life. Only doctrine in the soul can fulfill *experientially* what was accomplished *positionally* at the moment of salvation. Works will not reprogram the brain. Witnessing, prayer, giving money to the church - none of these will do the job. They are legitimate ... but they do not change the computer. There is only one way to change the computer so that it becomes a weapon of righteousness to God, and that is by feeding it something greater than Satan's policy and the sin nature's modus operandi. You must consistently feed it new information - Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 6:13 Stop (negative disjunctive particle) placing your (Poss. Gen.) members (Acc. Dir. Obj.; bodily parts, powers and faculties of the soul) as weapons (Acc. Appos.; shop tools, weapons of a Greek foot soldier, light infantry) of wickedness (Acc. Gen. Ref., good and evil) under the orders of (παρίστημι, PAImp.2P, Progressive, Prohibition; surrender to military authority, put at its disposal, yielding; the habit of sin is forbidden, i.e. course of action) the sin nature (Dat. Ind. Obj.), but (adversative conj.) place yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj., reflexive pronoun) completely under orders (παρίστημι, AAImp.2P, Constative-Entirety, Command; surrender to military authority, put at its disposal, yielding; instant surrender to God, i.e. at once and for all) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) as (comparative particle) those who are alive (ζάω, PAPtc.AMP, Descriptive, Substantival, retroactive positional truth) from deaths (Abl. Separation, identified with Christ in His spiritual and physical deaths), and (connective conj.) your (Poss. Gen.) members (Acc. Dir. Obj.; bodily parts, powers and faculties of the soul) as weapons (Acc. Appos., tools) of righteousness (Descr. Gen.) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the positional victory gives us the possibility for experiential victory),

^{WHO} **Romans 6:13** μηδὲ παριστάνετε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὄπλα ἀδικίας τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ἀλλὰ παραστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ὡσεὶ ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας καὶ τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὄπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:13** sed neque exhibeatis membra vestra arma iniquitatis peccato sed exhibete vos Deo tamquam ex mortuis viventes et membra vestra arma iustitiae Deo

LWB Rom. 6:14 For the sin nature must not be allowed to rule over you, because you are not under the authority of the precepts of the law [pertinent to Israel only], but under the authority of the principles of grace [plan of God for the Church Age].

κω Rom. 6:14 For [then] the sinful nature will not exercise lordship over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

KJV Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul again reminds the Roman believers that they were not and never would be (Gnomic Present tense) under the authority of the Mosaic law, since the law only pertained to the nation Israel. Instead, they are under the authority of grace, the plan of God for the Church Age. Notice that law operates on precepts, while grace operates on principles. And since the Roman believers are not under the authority of the law, they must not allow (Imperative Future tense) the sin nature to rule over them. Church Age believers live by grace principles, not legal precepts. Grace principles encourage spiritual growth; legal precepts encourage sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Practical deliverance is not found by fighting with the old master, sin in the flesh, but by the daily recognition of truth. (H. Ironside) Christians are not under the law. The law was never given to the Gentiles. The Mosaic covenant of the law was made with the nation Israel only. (C.C. Ryrie) We know the legalists and the pretenders to human righteousness will cry out at this, but God says the law has nothing to say to a believer. (W.R. Newell) If we do not reckon and yield, then sin can have dominion in the life of a believer. The fact that we have died to sin does not automatically mean we will reckon and yield. It means that, if we do reckon and yield, we will be successful. (J. Dillow)

God, if we respond to His grace, will not let sin have dominion over us; we shall, in fact, if we are willing, be enabled to resist it. (J. Barmby) Law is no longer the criterion used to judge you. Grace is the criterion that judges you. Grace, then, is an imputation to you of what you do not have. Mercy is God not giving you what you deserve, but giving you what you do not deserve. (K. Lamb) Law, as we shall see in the next chapter, not only cannot deliver from sin, but actually forges the fetters of sin, and makes sin's bondage more cruel and galling. (A.E. Knoch)

The avowals of the single method of salvation by dispensationalists do not satisfy the nondispensationalists. The reason is simple: the nondispensationalist cannot reconcile such statements with the dispensationalist's distinction between law and grace. The problem partly goes back to the designations "law" and "grace" which are entirely Biblical. But it also stems from many antithetical statements which dispensationalists

make concerning the distinctions between the two economies which are, for better or worse, designated “law” and “grace.” One can see how important this matter of designation is by noting the different reaction and impression one receives by simply renaming the two economies the dispensation of Moses and the dispensation of Christ. (C. Ryrie)

Rom. 6:14 for (explanatory conj.) the sin nature (Subj. Nom.) must not (neg. adv.) be allowed to rule (κυριεύω, FAI3S, Imperative, Potential Indicative Expressing Obligation, have dominion over) over you (Gen. of Taking Charge Over), because (causal conj.) you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Gnostic) not (neg. adv.) under the authority of the precepts of the law (Prep. Acc., the Mosaic Law which is pertinent only to Israel), but (contrast conj.) under the authority of the principles of grace (Prep. Acc.; the plan of God for the Church).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:14** ἁμαρτία γὰρ ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει· οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν

^{VUL} **Romans 6:14** peccatum enim vobis non dominabitur non enim sub lege estis sed sub gratia

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:15** **What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the authority of the precepts of the law, but under the authority of the principles of grace? May it never happen!**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:15** What then? Shall we sin occasionally, because we are not under law but under grace? Away with the thought.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:15** What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks a rhetorical question: Shall we sin (Constative Aorist tense) because we are (Descriptive Present tense) not under the law, but under grace? From the previous verse, we are not under legal precepts, but are under grace principles. Paul anticipates someone will think this means we should sin because we are under grace. This is not only absurd, which Paul says with the idiom, “Hell no!” or “God forbid,” but the exact opposite of what happens. The law instigates the desire to sin. If there is any “bad mouthing” going on, it should be against the law and for grace, not the other way around. The deliberative subjunctive mood is not a question of Paul’s uncertainty or of thoughtful deliberation. It is a rhetorical device (debater’s technique) used to draw readers into his argument.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Surely, the objector says, we may take a night off now and then and sin a little bit "since we are under grace." (A.T. Robertson) Such has been the objection to the doctrines of grace in all ages. (C. Hodge) To the legalist, grace always exists as an excuse *to* sin. To the antinomian, grace always exists as an excuse *for* sin. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul's hypothetical man asks: "May we then live a life of planned, occasional sin, since we are not under the uncompromising rule of law, but under the lenient scepter of grace?" This man simply does not know grace. Law is uncompromising, but grace is never lenient. (K. Wuest)

Grace, not law, has power to deter us from sinning. The offender against law flies in the face of law. Its austere threats do not hinder him. But the offender against grace feels the heinousness of his offense and flies from it. (A.E. Knoch) "Love God and do as you please" is a maxim which, in those who have God's love poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit, can only result in their doing those things which please God. (F.F. Bruce) There is no such thing as absolute freedom for anyone. No human is free to do everything he or she may want to do. There is one being in the universe who is totally free, of course. That is God. But all others are limited by or enslaved by someone or something. As a result, the only meaningful question in this area is: Who or what are you serving? (J. Boice)

The Mosaic Law does not define the Christian's way of life. But the end of the Mosaic Law does not leave believers or unbelievers lawless. A new code of divine mandates, which also expresses the essence of God, now defines the believer's way of life. God's protocol plan for the Church has a different *objective*: to glorify the victorious Christ to the maximum. The protocol plan of God has a different *thrust*: greater responsibility placed upon each believer to think and apply Bible doctrine for himself in the privacy of his own priesthood. The protocol plan of God also has a different array of *blessings* for the believer: escrow blessings for time and eternity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 6:15 What (interrog. pronoun) then (inferential particle)? Shall we sin (ἁμαρτάνω, AASubj.1P, Constatative, Deliberative; occasional acts of sin as opposed to the life of sin in verse 1) because (Causal conj.) we are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) under the authority of the precepts of the law (Prep. Acc.), but (contrast conj.) under the authority of the principles of grace (Prep. Acc.)? May it never (neg. adv.) happen (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Constatative, Tendentia, Deponent; idiom for "God forbid", "Hell no")!

^{WHO} **Romans 6:15** Τί οὖν ἁμαρτήσωμεν ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμέν ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν μὴ γένοιτο

^{VUL} **Romans 6:15** quid ergo peccavimus quoniam non sumus sub lege sed sub gratia absit

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:16** Don't you know that to whom [sin nature or God] you place yourselves under orders to as slaves by way of obedience, you are slaves to the one whom you

habitually obey: either to the sin nature resulting in [spiritual] death or obedience [to God] resulting in righteousness?

kw **Rom. 6:16** Do you not know that to whom you put yourselves at the disposal of as slaves resulting as obedience, slaves you are to whom you render habitual obedience, whether slaves of the sinful nature resulting in death, or obedient slaves [of Christ] resulting in righteousness?

KJV **Romans 6:16** Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Don't you know (Tendential Present tense) that you are (Pictorial Present tense) slaves to the one you place yourselves under (Constative Aorist tense) by way of obedience? Paul assumes the answer is, "Yes." You are slaves to the one whom you habitually (Iterative Present tense) obey. If you obey the sin nature, the result is death in your spiritual life. If you obey God, the result is righteousness in your spiritual life. This is an experiential sanctification verse, not a positional verse. If you obey the sin nature, the result will be warning discipline, intensive discipline, or dying discipline. The level or intensity of divine discipline depends on how long you continue obeying the sin nature.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The fact that a man may not reckon and yield is proven by the existence of the commands to do so. If obedience is automatic and "real," then there is no more need to command it than there is to say, "Be human." Forensic righteousness comes by faith alone; this righteousness comes by works of obedience. This righteousness is a product of experiential sanctification. It is not automatic that they will keep on presenting themselves as slaves. (J.C. Dillow) Unless the vacuum left by sin is filled with righteousness, the heart is vulnerable for a more violent takeover. The point is obvious. The human experience does not offer us a state of limbo. Deliverance from evil does not leave one in a neutral zone. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 6:16 Don't (neg. adv.) you know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Tendential, Interrogative; "yes" answer assumed) that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) to whom (Dat. Ind. Obj.) you place (παρίστημι, AAI2P, Constative) yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj., reflexive pronoun) under orders to (submit to the authority of) as slaves (Acc. Gen. Ref.) by way of obedience (Acc. Rel.), you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Pictorial) slaves (Pred. Nom.) to the one whom (Dat. Ind. Obj.) you habitually obey (ὑπακούω, PAI2P, Iterative): either (disjunctive particle) to the sin nature (Obj. Gen.) resulting in death (Acc. Result; the sin unto death - warning, intensive, then dying discipline) or (disjunctive particle) obedience (Obj. Gen.) resulting in (imputed) righteousness (Acc. Gen. Ref.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 6:16** οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ᾧ παριστάνετε ἑαυτοὺς δούλους εἰς ὑπακοήν δοῦλοί ἐστε ᾧ ὑπακούετε ἦτοι ἁμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον ἢ ὑπακοῆς εἰς δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 6:16** nescitis quoniam cui exhibetis vos servos ad oboediendum servi estis eius cui oboeditis sive peccati sive oboeditionis ad iustitiam

LWB Rom. 6:17 Now thanks [gratitude] belongs to God, that you used to be habitual slaves to the sin nature, but you have begun to obey from the mentality of your soul the system of doctrine into which you were handed over.

κω Rom. 6:17 But God be thanked, that [whereas] you were slaves of the evil nature, you obeyed out from the heart as a source a type of teaching into which you were handed over.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:17** But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has changed masters from the sin nature to Bible doctrine. As unbelievers, we were habitual slaves (Iterative Imperfect tense) to the sin nature. We owe a debt of gratitude to God that this relationship was terminated on our behalf. Now we are designed to be slaves to Bible doctrine. We have been delivered over (Constative Aorist tense) to a system of doctrine, which combined with the power of the Holy Spirit, enables us not only to fight the battle against sin, but also enables us to grow in grace and knowledge. Paul is encouraged that the Roman believers have begun to obey Bible doctrine (Ingressive Aorist tense) from the mentality of their soul. This obedience to doctrine is supposed to be the center of our spiritual activity during the Church Age.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Your 1st husband is alive and is hanging around making all the right noises. You can't help but to want to relive or remember the "old times" with him, but you have to tell him to get lost in order to move on. He will always be trying to get back with you for a spell. But you can't be married to one man and then keep going back to the old husband. There is always rejection and separation in a divorce, and you have been divorced from your former husband. The new husband is pleased by a completely different set of things. You reject your 1st husband - the old sin nature, and you please your new husband - righteousness, by the same procedure: the daily function of the grace apparatus for perception (GAP). The Holy Spirit will help you by being your marriage counselor. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We are not to thank God that we were the servants of sin, but that, *though* we were, we are so no longer. (E.W. Bullinger) Paul is not grateful that they were once servants of sin, but only that, though they once were, they turned from that state. (A.T. Robertson)

Doctrinal teaching is not a vague, formless impression of truth; it is a definite body of teaching, a hard mold of truth, into which the Christian is to be melted and poured until he takes on its shape, which is the Lord Jesus Christ living in him and controlling him. Let us remember that God Himself is technical about spiritual truth. (D.G. Barnhouse) If the use of the mind is important in sanctification, as I maintain it is, and if we lack “a Christian mind” in our day, is it any wonder that so many Christians today are for the most part indistinguishable from the non-Christians around them? Here is a simple goal for you in this area. For every secular book you read, make it your goal to read one good Christian book, a book that can stretch your mind spiritually. (J. Boice)

It is important to understand that men are judged by the truth, and not the truth by them. The opinion of men will not change the quality of Rembrandt's paintings. Likewise, the truth which God has set forth, as unchangeable as Himself, is not delivered into the hands of men; rather, men are delivered to it. If they reject it, they are still in its power and will be judged by it. If they submit to it from the heart, they are saved. Those who sneer at Christian doctrine label it "dogma," as though it were an imperious or arrogant declaration of opinion instead of the counsel of the faithful, loving and true God. A man may reach God without dogmas, but he can never reach God without doctrine. (D.G. Barnhouse) These Roman Christians had not only received the righteousness of Christ through faith alone, but in addition, they had submitted themselves to the lordship of Christ subsequent to saving faith and had become obedient from the heart. (J. Dillow)

You were not delivered to a system of works, good deeds, or any other form of pseudo-activity with a Christian garb; you were handed over to a system of doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In salvation, God constituted the believer according to this chapter (verses 1-14) inwardly so that he would react to the doctrines of grace by nature (the divine nature) in such a way as to receive and obey them. We were delivered into the teaching (doctrine, “didache”) in that we were constituted in salvation so that we would obey it. Paul thanks God that whereas before salvation we were slaves of the evil nature, we were in salvation delivered (handed over) to the teachings of grace so that we become slaves of righteousness. (K. Wuest) Other acceptable readings are “the standard of teaching to which you were committed,” “the creed you were taught,” or “instructions and guidelines.” (R.P. Martin)

If God indeed is the author of a genuine revelation from Himself to mortals, it is natural for us to think that the Scriptures are capable of being used for doctrinal and theological teaching. In fact, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 lists “doctrine” as the first of a list of profits that will come from Scripture. Be careful to maintain sound doctrine. The emphasis on doctrine and teaching is not a late invention of some evangelical movement, for the same emphasis on teaching marked our Lord’s own ministry. The doctrinal use of the Bible cannot be set aside lightly or played down. It is, instead, that which gives substance and form to the whole of the Christian faith. Doctrine is possible only because God has spoken in the Scriptures. But always keep in mind that the system comes second and the exegesis of the Bible comes first. Give priority to exegesis. (W. Kaiser, M. Silva)

Have you ever carefully thought through that what you do with you mind will determine a great deal of what you will become as a Christian? If you fill your mind with the products of our secular culture, you will remain secular and sinful. If you fill your head with trashy “pop” novels, you will begin to live like the trashy heroes and heroines whose illicit romances you read about. If you do nothing but watch television, you will begin to think like the scoundrels you see. And you will act like them, too. On the other hand, if you feed your mind on the Bible and Christian publications, train it by godly conversation, and discipline it to critique what you see and hear elsewhere by applying biblical truths to those ideas, you will grow in godliness and become increasingly useful to God. Your mind will become an instrument for righteousness. (J. Boice)

Rom. 6:17 Now (transitional particle) thanks (Interjectional Nom. as an Exclamation; gratitude) belongs (ellipsis, verb supplied) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.), that (demonstrative conj.; 1st marriage) you used to be habitual (είμι, Imperf.AI2P, Iterative) slaves (Pred. Nom.; the believer has changed masters) to the sin nature (Acc. Gen. Ref.), but (contrast conj.; 2nd marriage) you have begun to obey (ὑπακούω, AAI2P, Ingressive) from the mentality of your soul (Abl. Source, heart) the system (Acc. Dir. Obj.; category, form, contents, substance) of doctrine (Gen. Content) into which (Acc. Appos., Incorporation of the Antecedent) you were handed over (παραδίδωμι, API2P, Constative; delivered, committed),

^{WHO} **Romans 6:17** χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δοῦλοι τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδασκαλίας

^{VUL} **Romans 6:17** gratias autem Deo quod fuistis servi peccati oboedistis autem ex corde in eam formam doctrinae in qua traditi estis

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:18** **And after being freed [liberated] from the sin nature [positional sanctification], you have begun to become slaves to righteousness [experiential sanctification].**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:18** And having been set free once for all from the sinful nature, you were constituted slaves to righteousness.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:18** Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The sovereignty of God freed (Dramatic Aorist tense) us from the enslaving power of the old sin nature. This is retroactive positional truth. Paul is now pleased that the Roman believers have begun to be slaves (Ingressive Aorist tense) to righteousness. This is current experiential freedom through man’s volition. The Roman believers were starting

to parlay their standing in Christ into a state of spirituality in the Christian life. Some commentators present our freedom from the sin nature as a divorce from our 1st husband, Adam, while our new life as slaves to righteousness a result of our marriage to our 2nd husband, Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It was not a license to sin, but a change of masters, that they had experienced. And a manumitted slave does not continue to be subject to his former master. (C. Hodge) Far from annulling human freedom, total divine sovereignty alone makes such freedom meaningful. Because only in God do we have our being, freedom outside of His will is inconceivable. In light of slavery to sin, it would be illusory to think that salvation can in any way depend on our effort or will. Biblical narrative nowhere suggests that the divine plan has been frustrated by historical accidents or human obstinacy. While free agency and responsibility are clearly assumed, these human realities are pictured as coordinate with – indeed, subsumed under – God’s will for His people. A world in which anything at all happens outside of God’s will is a world inevitably ruled by contingency, that is, radical uncertainty. If God knows for certain what will take place in the future (the fundamental doctrine of foreknowledge), then everything that takes place must take place. If, however, events are not “determined” in this sense, the God cannot know what will take place, which means that anything could take place and God would be quite limited as to what He could do about it. (W. Kaiser, M. Silva)

Rom. 6:18 and (connective conj.) after being freed (ἐλευθερώω, APpTc.NPM, Dramatic, Temporal; liberated, retroactive *positional* freedom through the sovereignty of God, current *experiential* freedom through man's volition) from the sin nature (Abl. Separation; divorced from your 1st husband), you have begun to become slaves (δουλόω, API2P, Ingressive) to righteousness (Dat. Ind. Obj.; 2nd husband).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:18** ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:18** liberati autem a peccato servi facti estis iustitiae

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:19** I am speaking with a human illustration [slavery] because of the weakness of your flesh [the sin nature still has a firm grip on them]: for just as you put your members [faculties of the body & soul] under orders as slaves to impurity [trend towards sin] and to transgressions [trend towards human good] resulting in lawlessness [trend towards evil], in the same manner, now begin putting your members [faculties of the body & soul] under orders as slaves to the righteousness [by metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine] resulting in sanctification [execution of the spiritual life].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:19** I am using an illustration drawn from human affairs because of the frailties of your humanity. For just as you placed your members as slaves at the disposal of uncleanness and

lawlessness, thus now place your members as slaves at the disposal of righteousness resulting in holiness.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:19** I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul speaks to the Roman believers (Static Present tense) with the human illustration of slavery because the sin nature still had a grip on many of them and they still lacked advanced knowledge of how to deal with the problem. The sin nature still dominated their minds, which is what Paul calls “weakness.” He tells them that just as they placed (Constative Aorist tense) their members (faculties of the body & soul) under orders as slaves to impurity and transgressions resulting in lawlessness, now they are to place their members (faculties of the body & soul) under orders as slaves to righteousness. Impurity is a lust pattern that trends towards sin; transgressions are a lust pattern that trends toward human good; lawlessness is a lust pattern that trends toward evil.

He now tells them that it is time to start placing their members under orders (Ingressive Aorist tense) as slaves to righteousness. “The righteousness” is a reference to God’s protocol plan for our spiritual life: the intake, metabolism, and application of Bible doctrine. If followed on a consistent, daily basis, this divine protocol leads us to increasing levels of experiential sanctification, i.e., spiritual maturity. Again, using another metaphor from human life, we are divorced from the 1st husband, Adam, and we are married to the 2nd husband, Jesus Christ. The sin nature ruled under the 1st husband; righteousness rules under the 2nd husband. We are no longer married to the 1st husband, so why don’t we start living like it!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Free moral agency: Free - we are all slaves to sin; Moral - only Adam qualified for this distinction, that is, before the Fall; Agent - someone who acts on behalf of another. (K. Lamb) The slave is bound to serve his master; the obedience of the believer to God is no less certain. The one is slavery, because the obedience is independent of the will, and coerced; the other is perfect freedom, because rendered from the heart, and with full consent of the will. (C. Hodge) Sanctification is a life process of consecration, not an instantaneous act. (A.T. Robertson) This of course, refers to *experiential* sanctification, not to *positional* sanctification - which is an instantaneous act. (LWB) The new life is not an outward pattern of behavior, thoughtlessly adopted by the convert. The depth of the new allegiance proves how genuine it is; we have become obedient, says Paul, from the heart (mind). The Christian is committed to a certain standard of teaching, and this too is an occasion for gratitude. (J. Knox)

I require of you no more than is possible for your frail humanity; for I call on you only to render to righteousness the same allegiance you once rendered to sin. (J. Barmby)
“Hagiosmos” is used in the NT both of a process – the inauguration and maintenance of

the life of fellowship with God, and of the resultant state of sanctification. As in verse 22, it appears that sanctification contemplates a further result (everlasting life); it is perhaps better to understand it as the process. Yield your members to righteousness in order to carry on the progressive work of sanctification, (1 Cor. 7:1) perfecting holiness. (M. Vincent) Paul employs a comparison: just as you presented ... so now present. He thus makes clear that Christians should serve righteousness with all the single-minded dedication that characterized their pre-Christian service of such idols as self, money, lust, pleasure, and power. (D. Moo)

Rom. 6:19 I am speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) with a human illustration (Acc. Manner; slavery used as an example in human terms) because of the weakness (Acc. Cause; lack of advanced knowledge) of your (Poss. Gen.) flesh (Adv. Gen. Purpose; the OSN still dominates their minds): for (explanatory conj.) just as (Comparative particle, protasis) you put (παρίστημι, AAI2P, Constative; placed at something's disposal) your (Poss. Gen.) members (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in the 1st marriage) under orders as slaves (Adv. Acc.) to impurity (Dat. Ind. Obj.; trend of the OSN to sin) and (connective conj.) to transgressions (Dat. Ind. Obj.; trend of the OSN to human good) resulting in lawlessness (Acc. Gen. Ref.; trend of the OSN to evil), in the same manner (Comparative particle, apodosis), now (Temporal particle) begin putting (παρίστημι, AAI2P, Ingressive; tactical disposition) your (Poss. Gen.) members (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in the 2nd marriage) under orders as slaves (Adv. Acc.) to the righteousness (Dat. Ind. Obj.; through the function of GAP in verse 17) resulting in sanctification (Acc. Gen. Ref., experiential).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:19** ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν ὡσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ [εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν] οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν

^{VUL} **Romans 6:19** humanum dico propter infirmitatem carnis vestrae sicut enim exhibuistis membra vestra servire inmunditiae et iniquitati ad iniquitatem ita nunc exhibete membra vestra servire iustitiae in sanctificationem

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:20** For as long as you were slaves to the sin nature, you were free from righteousness [no potential for spiritual growth].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:20** For, when you were slaves of the sinful nature, you were those who were free with respect to righteousness.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:20** For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul tells the Roman believers that as long as they were (Descriptive Imperfect tense) slaves to the sin nature, they were (Durative Imperfect tense) free from righteousness. This means that while they were enslaved to sin, there was no chance for spiritual growth and no potential for receiving blessings from God. Our marriage to our 1st husband, Adam, represents our enslavement to the sin nature. Our marriage to our 2nd husband, Jesus Christ, represents our freedom in grace to be righteous. We give thanks to God that our 1st marriage has been broken.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul once again states that slavery to sin and to righteousness are mutually exclusive. (J. Witmer) The natural man does as he pleases, but he pleases himself only in one direction – selfward and downward, never Godward and upward. In all his sinning man acts as a free agent, for he is forced neither by God nor by Satan. When he breaks the law he does so by his own option, and not by coercion from another. In so doing he is freely acting out his own fallen nature. (A.W. Pink) “Hagiasmos” is sanctification, primarily as an act or process, eventually as a result. It is unreal to ask whether the process or the result is meant here; they have no meaning apart. (W.R. Nicoll)

These two things, sin and righteousness, are so contrary, that he who devotes himself to the one, necessarily departs from the other. And he thus represents both, that by viewing them apart we may see more clearly what is to be expected from each; for to set things thus apart enables us to understand better their distinctive character. He then sets sin on one side, and righteousness on the other; and having stated this distinction, he afterwards shows what results from each of them. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 6:20 For (explanatory conj.) as long as (Temporal particle) you were (εἰμί, Imperf.AI2P, Descriptive) slaves (Pred. Nom.; in your 1st marriage) to the sin nature (Gen. Rel.; that SOB 1st husband), you were (εἰμί, Imperf.AI2P, Durative) free (Pred. Nom.; excluded) from righteousness (Dat. Assoc.; no potential for receiving blessings from God).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:20** ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 6:20** cum enim servi essetis peccati liberi fuistis iustitiae

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:21** **What benefit, therefore, did you have at that time [when you were a slave to the sin nature] over which you are now ashamed [ashes in your teeth]? For the end of those things [benefits from the lust pattern of the sin nature] is spiritual death.**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:21** Therefore, what fruit were you having then, upon the basis of which things now you are ashamed? For the consummation of these things is death.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:21** What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks what advantage did we have (Durative Imperfect tense) of lasting value during the time when we were slaves to the sin nature. What true benefit did our 1st husband give us? Now that our 1st marriage has been broken and we are no longer slaves to the sin nature, we are ashamed (Descriptive Present tense) of our former life of sin. The benefits we derived from our former life are now ashes in our teeth. No matter how well we thought of them in the past, the end result of sin's benefits was spiritual death. This spiritual death is not a reference to loss of salvation, but to the loss of experiential righteousness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When we become slaves of sin, we cease being our own masters. We lose the dignity of our nature; we lose self-command; we lose will-power and decision of character. Our bodies become the instruments of unrighteousness, and the lusts of the flesh are obeyed. The reign of sin only tends to torment. The soul that sells itself to such a tyrant is a fool. He is beside himself, like the prodigal, when he does so. He comes to himself when he renounces the tyranny and transfers his allegiance. (J. Barmby) Paul commended the Romans for being ashamed of sin, but the multitude of Christians are now ashamed of sanctification. How little things change! (J. Edwards)

Notice the comparisons between Romans 6:21-22 (D. Moo):

Verse 21 - Status: Then, slaves of sin, free from righteousness. Means: a wage earned. Result: fruit bringing shame. Outcome: death.

Verse 22 – Status: Now, free from sin, slaves of God. Means: a gift received. Result: fruit bringing sanctification. Outcome: eternal life

Rom. 6:21 what (interrogative pronoun) benefit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fruit, advantage), therefore (inferential particle), did you have (έχω, Imperf.AI2P, Durative) at that time (Correlative Adv. Time; during your 1st marriage) over which (Loc. without Antecedent) you are now (Adv. Time) ashamed (έπαισχύνομαι, PMI2P, Descriptive, Deponent; now ashes in your teeth)? For (explanatory conj.) the end (Subj. Nom.; conclusion) of those things (Descr. Gen., remote demonstrative pronoun; benefits of the OSN's trends) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) spiritual death (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:21** τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἶχετε τότε ἐφ' οἷς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων θάνατος

^{VUL} **Romans 6:21** quem ergo fructum habuistis tunc in quibus nunc erubescitis nam finis illorum mors est

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:22** But now, having been freed from the sovereignty of the sin nature and having become slaves to God, you have the opportunity to produce your fruit with respect to [experiential] sanctification, and toward the goal of eternal life [supergrace life here on earth].

^{KW} **Rom. 6:22** But now, having been set free from the sinful nature and having been made bondslaves of God, you are having your fruit resulting in holiness, and the consummation, life eternal.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:22** But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds the Roman believers that they have been freed from the ruling power of the sin nature (Dramatic Aorist tense), and are now slaves (Dramatic Aorist tense) to God. And now that they are slaves to God, they have the opportunity to produce (Tendential Present tense) their fruit with respect to sanctification, as opposed to producing the fruit of spiritual death. This spiritual fruit will be the result of their experiential walk - cracking the maturity barrier by metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine.

All believers have been positionally freed from the tyrannical control of the sin nature. All believers have also been positionally sanctified. Now as believers we have the opportunity to live the spiritual life. Not only may we produce spiritual fruit, but we also have the opportunity to reach the goal of living a *qualitative* eternal life here on earth. The reference in this verse is not to a future, positional eternal life, because they already obtained that when they believed in Jesus Christ. This is a reference to attaining spiritual maturity in this lifetime, otherwise known as living the supergrace life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Eternal life is both a gift to faith and a reward in the future. In this verse it is the reward to sanctification and obedience in the future. In the next verse, however, it is the inception of eternal life, the gift to saving faith. Eternal life in verse 22 is a *reward* for *progressive* (experiential) sanctification, while eternal life in verse 23 is a free *gift* based on *positional* sanctification. (J.C. Dillow) In effect, the maturing believer is receiving a *double portion* of grace, a gift and a reward; and the reward in time guarantees a reward in eternity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The failures we have in trying to live a holy life are due almost entirely to our failure to realize Bible truths or to our laziness or sin in failing to apply them to our conduct. Do

you remember Jesus' words about sanctification? "Sanctify them by the Truth; your Word is Truth." This is identical doctrine to what we have in Paul's writings. It is truth for today. (J. Boice) These things, unless we are beyond measure stupid, ought to generate in our minds a hatred and horror of sin, and also a love and desire for righteousness. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 6:22 But (Contrast conj.) now (Temporal particle), having been freed from the sovereignty (ἐλευθερώω, APPTc.NPM, Dramatic, Temporal; *positional freedom*) of the sin nature (Abl. Separation) and (connective conj.) having become slaves (δουλόω, APPTc.NPM, Dramatic, Predicative) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.), you have the opportunity to produce (ἔχω, PAI2P, Tential) your (Poss. Gen.) fruit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; benefit, reward) with respect to sanctification (Acc. Gen. Ref., *experiential*, cracking the maturity barrier), and (connective conj.) toward the goal (Acc. Dir. Obj.; end, outcome) of eternal (Compl. Acc.; qualitative) life (Acc. Gen. Ref.; supergrace life on earth).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:22** νυνὶ δὲ ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἀγιασμόν τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν αἰώνιον

^{VUL} **Romans 6:22** nunc vero liberati a peccato servi autem facti Deo habetis fructum vestrum in sanctificationem finem vero vitam aeternam

^{LWB} **Rom. 6:23** **Certainly the subsistence allowance [base pay] from the sin nature is spiritual death, but the grace benefit from God is [positional & future] eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

^{KW} **Rom. 6:23** For the subsistence pay which the sinful nature doles out is death. But the free gift of God is life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The ration or wages (Latin: stipend) paid to the believer by the sin nature results in spiritual death. The grace benefit from God to the believer is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. The sin nature renders payment, while God offers a gift. God cannot cancel the penalty for sin, so spiritual death remains. But to those who believe in Christ Jesus, He gives spiritual birth. "Grace benefit" means this is a positional sanctification verse, as opposed to experiential sanctification in the prior verse. We earn a qualitative eternal life in the prior verse by obedience to God's protocol plan; we receive the promise of a future eternal life in this verse as a gift.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Sin separates man from God, and that means spiritual death, for it is only in communion with the living God that man can truly live. Spiritual death means not only guilt, but also pollution. Sin is always a corrupting influence in life, and this is part of our death. Sin is always active within us like a poisoned fountain polluting the streams of life. And if it were not for the restraining influence of the common grace of God, it would render social life impossible. (L. Berkof) Eternal life is a container for blessings in time and eternity. The absolute minimum is a resurrection body minus the OSN, but the maximum is infinite blessings which stagger the imagination. Eternal life is not to be put on the shelf after salvation and admired ... it is to be *participated in*. (R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death. There is nothing in this passage that speaks of “free choice” in the context of creaturely autonomy. Salvation is surely the free gift of God’s grace, but it is a long leap to assume that the nature of the “gift” indicates autonomy of the recipient. Life was a gift given to Lazarus, but the giving of the gift did not in any way indicate ability on the part of the one who received it. The Bible is very clear that God in His sovereign mercy frees men from bondage and sin and raises them to spiritual life. He does so not because the sinner does something to “allow” Him so to act, but solely on the basis of His sovereign power. This is not dehumanizing man, but freeing man. (J. White) Paul’s point is that, like wages, death is a fitting return, a just recompense for what we have done. (M. Erickson)

Sin covers its deepest intentions while it masquerades as good. The goal of every sin is to deceive, and sin’s penalty is death. There are three kinds of death: physical, spiritual, and eternal. The element of separation is common to all three. Physical death is separation of the soul from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God. Eternal death is the separation of both soul and body from God throughout eternity. (W.E. Best) Justification is something completely undeserved. It is not an achievement. It is an obtainment, not an attainment. Even faith is not some good work which God must reward with salvation. It is God’s gift. It is not the cause of our salvation, but the means by which we receive it. And, contrary to the thinking of some, it has always been the means of salvation. (M. Erickson)

Rom. 6:23 **Certainly** (inferential conj.) **the subsistence allowance** (Subj. Nom.; stipend, rations, compensation paid to soldiers, wages) **from the sin nature** (Abl. Source) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **spiritual death** (Pred. Nom.; God cannot cancel the penalty for sin), **but** (contrast conj.) **the grace benefit** (Subj. Nom., gift as opposed to payment) **from God** (Abl. Source) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **eternal** (Acc. Extent of Time) **life** (Pred. Nom.; spiritual birth) **in Christ Jesus** (Loc. Sph.) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **Lord** (Dat. Ref.).

^{WHO} **Romans 6:23** τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἀμαρτίας θάνατος τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 6:23** stipendia enim peccati mors gratia autem Dei vita aeterna in Christo Iesu Domino nostro

CHAPTER 7

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:1** Or are you ignorant [yes, they are], brethren, (for I am communicating to those [legalists] who know [are misapplying] the law), that the law lords it over mankind [rules as an additional, illegitimate authority] for as long a time as he lives?

^{KW} **Rom. 7:1** Or, are you ignorant, brethren, for I am speaking to those who have an experiential knowledge of law. That the law exercises lordship over the individual as long as he lives?

^{KJV} **Romans 7:1** Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sarcastically asks the Roman believers if they are ignorant (Latin: agnostic)? He is primarily addressing this question to those who are misusing the law, so the answer is: Yes, they are ignorant of what they are doing. Paul is communicating (Static Present tense) with Jews and Gentile legalists who claim they know the law (Descriptive Present tense), but who don't know they are misapplying it. They are treating the law as if it was their marriage counselor, something to help them along in times of need. Unfortunately, that is not what the law is for; that is an illegitimate application. The believer is supposed to grow in grace, not law. You cannot do both, because law and grace are mutually exclusive.

Rather than helping man out, the law lords it over (Durative Present tense), even bullies, the believer who should be growing in grace. The believer who places himself under the authority of the law is bullied by the law for as long as he lives (Durative Present tense). He never grows; he is never free to live by grace; he never comes to know (experientially) the Lord Jesus Christ. By placing himself under a secondary authority, the misinformed believer destroys his potential for a legitimate spiritual life. The authority over all believers is supposed to be grace mechanics. By introducing the law as an additional authority, the believer cancels grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When Paul uses this expression concerning the saints, it often turns out that they are ignorant! Compare Romans 6:3, 11:25; I Thess. 4:13. (W.R. Newell) The Romans, whether Jews or Gentiles, knew the principle of law. (A.T. Robertson) A Christian who puts himself under law and thus fails to avail himself of the resources of grace is a defeated Christian. (K. Wuest) Law,

in making sin known to man, subjects him to its guilt, and consequently to its condemnation. But this is all it does; it is all that, in itself, it can do. It can remove neither the guilt nor the dominion of sin. Its principle is simply to exact entire obedience to its requirements, and there it leaves the sinner. (J. Barmby) The law is from God, but it has nevertheless become the unwitting tool of sin, being used to confirm and imprison in death. Despite its divine origin, the law can neither justify nor sanctify. (D. Moo)

The believer is not under the law of God because he has been joined to Christ in His resurrection. Like an inexperienced swimmer, the average Christian stands in terror of such deep water as complete abandonment to the grace of God. He fears to be borne along on the will of God in his daily life - to cast himself completely on the direction of the Holy Spirit. But once he gets over the panic of such self-abandonment, he finds that the grace of God sustains, carries, cradles, and calms him - and he lives eternity in time. This is the purpose of Romans 7 - to help the willing believer to cast himself into the depths of grace. The greatest theological battle of the 1st century was waged by Paul to free believers from the law and to introduce them to the depths of grace. (D.G. Barnhouse)

We have died in our spiritual experience out of our old relation; that state is past. It is most important that we should see that legalism can exercise no sanctifying power. Its only fruit is pride and death. There is no hope for the soul but surrendering its legalism, and betaking itself through death and resurrection to a better union and a happier life. (R. Edgar) The law makes us aware of sin, it reveals transgressions and thus brings God's wrath, and most disturbingly, the law has a dangerous liaison with sin. Apart from the law, sin was not even reckoned as sin, but now the law actually incites and triggers it. This crescendo of indictments severely qualified the role of the Jewish law in the Christian scheme of things. (J. Edwards)

Paul's purpose now is to press home the point that the believer is not under law (vv. 1-6), that a Christian putting himself under law and thus failing to avail himself of the resources of grace is a defeated Christian, his own experience before he came into the knowledge of Romans 6 (vv. 7-13), and that while the law incites this Christian to more sin, yet the law is not responsible for that sin, but the evil nature, which only can be conquered as the believer cries "who shall deliver me?" and thus looks away from himself and self-dependence (vv. 14-25) to the Lord Jesus. (K. Wuest) Most commentators are agreed that "the law" referred to in Romans 7 is law in general and not the OT law specifically. (J. Boice)

Rom. 7:1 Or (Interrogative disjunctive particle) are you ignorant (*ἀγνοέω*, PAI2P, Descriptive; stupid), brethren (Vocative; yes, they are ignorant), [for (Causal Conj.; after all) I am communicating (*λαλέω*, PAI1S, Static) to those (Dat. Ind. Obj.; sanctified sarcasm addressed to those who are misapplying the law) who know (*γινώσκω*, PAPtc.DPM, Descriptive, Substantival, Dir. Obj. of Verb) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Mosaic Law as their marriage counselor)], that (conj. as Dir. Obj.; ignorance is dramatized to point out correct information) the law (Subj. Nom.; Mosaic Law)

lords it over (κυριεύω, PAI3S, Durative; rules as a secondary authority) **mankind** (Obj. Gen., generic usage) **for as long** (Correlative Duration of Time) **a time as** (Acc. Incorporation) **he lives** (ζάω, PAI3S, Durative; restraint under the law)?

^{WHO} **Romans 7:1** Ἡ ἀγνοεῖτε ἀδελφοί γινώσκουσιν γὰρ νόμον λαλῶ ὅτι ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῆ

^{VUL} **Romans 7:1** an ignoratis fratres scientibus enim legem loquor quia lex in homine dominatur quanto tempore vivit

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:2** For a wife under the authority of her husband [old sin nature] stands permanently bound by the law [as marriage counselor] to her husband as long as he is living. But if the husband [old sin nature] should die [by divorce or physical death], she is released by the law [marriage counselor] from the husband.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:2** For the woman subject to a husband is permanently bound by law to her husband during his lifetime. But if her husband dies she is released from the law of her husband.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:2** For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

A wife (literally: married woman) is under subjection to her husband and stands permanently bound (Gnomic Present tense) to her husband by the law as long as he is still alive (Static Present tense). This sounds like a teaching on marriage and submission, paralleled many times in the OT, but this verse is about law and grace, sin and life, not marriage *per se*. The wife represents the believer, the husband represents the old sin nature, and the law represents a marriage counselor. The believer is under submission to the old sin nature for as long as the sin nature is alive. The law acts as a marriage counselor which keeps the believer and the sin nature together as long as possible.

But if the husband should die (Culminative Aorist tense), she is released (Dramatic Perfect tense) by the law from her husband. Following the parallel, the 3rd class conditional clause points to the possibility that her husband may die. This death may be physical death or a divorce decree; the idea is separation. Therefore the rejection of the sin nature as the 1st husband and the embracing of Jesus Christ as the 2nd husband fulfills the picture. When a believer embraces Christ, they are no longer under submission to the 1st husband, the sin nature, but under the 2nd husband, Christ. As Dr. Newell reminds us below, the law never dies, nor is the believer ever married to the law. So don't confuse the law and the sin nature in this analogy.

Physical death or a divorce also frees the believer from the law as marriage counselor. There is no longer a marriage to the 1st husband, the old sin nature; therefore there is no longer a need for the law (as counselor) to keep the marriage together. The believer is released or discharged from the 1st husband, the old sin nature. The 3rd class condition, "maybe yes, maybe no," points to the conditional element in this scenario. The believer should reject the old sin nature and embrace life in Christ, but if the believer continues to embrace the old sin nature, the relationship with the 2nd husband is not going to work. This would also imply that there is still a job for the law as marriage counselor.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Inasmuch as the endeavor is widely made to make the Law "the first husband," it seems well to urge the fact that this would be to depart from the illustration entirely. The illustration is one of a woman bound *by law* to a husband: not *to the Law* as a husband. The law was seen only as governing a relationship, between husband and wife. But if we make the Law the husband, what law would be over *that* Law? Furthermore, it is said: "if the husband dies." This word excludes all idea of the Law being a husband: for God's Law does not die. (W.R. Newell)

With whom were we first connected except Adam the first? All our standing and our responsibilities were in him. We died to our whole position in Adam, and to our obligations connected with him. Let those expositors who regard the Law as the 1st husband at least *confine the Mosaic economy where God confined it - to Israel*. Let Israel's deliverance therefore be to the Gentile believer a glorious illustration of his own blessed position - not under the law as a principle, but under grace. (W.R. Newell) The first husband is the sin nature; we are enslaved to it. According to the analogy, when we believe in Christ we divorce the sin nature and marry the Lord Jesus Christ. The divorce involves Christ's spiritual death, physical death, and burial; the remarriage is based on His resurrection, ascension, and session. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This passage is not a treatise on marriage and divorce. It is an illustrative analogy on life which interprets everything in Romans 6-8. (ibid)

Rom. 7:2 **For** (explanatory conj.) **a wife** (Subj. Nom.; married woman) **under the authority of** (in subjection to) **her** (implied) **husband** (Acc. Rel.; the OSN as the 1st husband) **stands permanently bound** (δέω, Perf.PI3S, Gnostic) **by the law** (Instr. Means; the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor) **to her** (implied) **husband** (Dat. Adv.; the OSN as the 1st husband) **as long as he is living** (ζάω, PAPtc.DSM, Static, Temporal; literally, to "the living husband"). **But** (contrast conj.) **if** (3rd class condition, "maybe he will, maybe he won't," protasis) **the husband** (Subj. Nom.; the OSN as the 1st husband) **should die** (ἀποθνήσκω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Conditional, Probable Future; through either divorce or physical death; rejection of the OSN as the 1st husband by embracing Jesus Christ as the 2nd husband), **she is released**

(καταργέω, Perf.PI3S, Dramatic, apodosis; discharged, rendered null and void) **by the law** (Abl. Source; the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor) **from the husband** (Gen. Rel.; the OSN as the 1st husband).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:2** ἡ γὰρ ὑπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδεται νόμῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ κατήργηται ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός

^{VUL} **Romans 7:2** nam quae sub viro est mulier vivente viro alligata est legi si autem mortuus fuerit vir soluta est a lege viri

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:3** Consequently, therefore, while her husband [old sin nature] is living, she will be classified as an adulteress [out from her proper authority and underneath somebody else], if she has become [intimate with] another of a different kind of man [illegitimacy]; but if her husband [old sin nature] has died [through divorce or physical death], she is free from the law [as marriage counselor], so that that same one is not an adulteress, even though she has become [married to] another husband [Jesus Christ as her 2nd husband] of a different kind [spiritual as opposed to carnal].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:3** So then, while her husband is living, an adulteress she will be called if she is married to another man. But if her husband is dead, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though being married to another man.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:3** So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's sense of humor shines through this literary redundancy, and in order to complete the thought of the contrast, he has left two verbs "become" rather incomplete. We must complete the elliptical "tongue in cheek" with appropriate verbs. Here's what I mean. While (Temporal Participle) her 1st husband, the old sin nature, is living (Static Present tense), she will be classified (Gnomic Present tense) as an adulteress if she has become "intimate with" another man. The words "intimate with" are not in the Greek, but must be supplied by ellipsis in order to complete the picture Paul is trying to communicate.

This half of the verse requires some additional work. She would be called an adulteress because as a believer in Jesus Christ, He is her proper authority, not her 1st husband, the old sin nature. In this picture, she has abandoned her 2nd husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and has placed herself back under her 1st husband, the old sin nature. This is a completely illegitimate relationship, and deserves the classification "adulteress." The 3rd class conditional clause means maybe she does this, and maybe she doesn't. She has the ability to stay with her 2nd husband, Jesus Christ, in the sphere of grace. Or she may turn her

back on His legitimate authority and return to the arms of her 1st husband, the old sin nature.

There is also a relationship to the law if she returns to her 1st husband, the old sin nature. If her 1st husband, the old sin nature, has died (Culminative Aorist tense) to her through divorce or physical death, then she is free (Static Present tense) from the law as her marriage counselor. The 3rd class conditional clause again leaves this decision to her. She may be free from the law as her marriage counselor to her 1st husband, or she may reject her 1st husband and have no need for the law as a marriage counselor. She only needs this marriage counselor (the law) if she intends to stay married to the old sin nature (her 1st husband) instead of Jesus Christ (her 2nd husband). Being married to Christ requires a change in marriage counselor: from the law to the Spirit.

But if her 1st husband, the old sin nature, has died (Culminative Aorist tense) to her by divorce or physical death, then she is not classified as an adulteress, even though she has become “married to” another of a different kind of husband. This part of the verse also needs additional explanation, since “married to” is not in the Greek, but must be added elliptically to complete the contrast Paul is trying to make. Becoming a believer in Jesus Christ (Constative Aorist tense) means there is a divorce or physical death to her 1st husband, the old sin nature. Being married to Jesus Christ, therefore, does not make her an adulteress, because marriage to Him automatically ends marriage to the old sin nature.

Her 2nd husband, Jesus Christ, is “another of a different kind of husband.” He is spiritual, while her 1st husband, the old sin nature, was carnal. Marriage to a carnal husband (old sin nature) requires the assistance of a marriage counselor, the law. Marriage to a spiritual husband, Jesus Christ, requires the assistance of a new marriage counselor – the Holy Spirit. The law as marriage counselor has absolutely nothing of value to offer to a believer who is now married to the Lord Jesus Christ. The law does nothing for a believer positionally, nor does the law do anything for a believer experientially. All the law ever did (as marriage counselor) was tell you what a bad marriage you had to the old sin nature.

The two Greek verbs “become” are tied elliptically to the 1st and 2nd husband. How do we know what needs to be added to Paul’s comparison in order to complete the contrasting picture? As a believer, her legitimate husband is Jesus Christ and her illegitimate husband is the old sin nature. The relationship to her legitimate husband is by “marriage.” The relationship to her 1st husband, which would brand her with the title “adulteress,” implies an illegitimate, intimate relationship with him. The contrast is between the spiritual and the carnal, the legitimate and the illegitimate, a marriage and an adulterous relationship.

As a believer you cannot be married to two husbands; you cannot have an intimate relationship with the old sin nature and the Lord Jesus Christ. They are mutually exclusive relationships. Likewise, whenever you ask the law for its service as a marriage counselor, you are turning your back on your spiritual life in Jesus Christ and are chasing after your carnal 1st husband, the old sin nature. Whenever you live your life in the sphere

of the old sin nature, and whenever you call upon the law for its services, you are rejecting your marriage to Jesus Christ and are a spiritual adulteress. Do not listen to the “siren song” of your 1st husband, the old sin nature.

It’s not hard for most believers to understand that living under the authority of their sin nature is committing spiritual adultery. What’s hard for many believers to understand is that when they try to use the law to further their spiritual life, they are also committing spiritual adultery. The law is tied to the 1st husband, the old sin nature, and has absolutely nothing to do with the 2nd husband. The 2nd husband, Jesus Christ, is tied to the power of the Holy Spirit in grace. You cannot use the law in conjunction with the power of the Holy Spirit. You cannot mix law and grace; they are antithetical spheres of operation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The death or divorce of the 1st husband (the OSN) also represents retroactive positional truth, while the 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) represents current positional truth. The 1st husband (the OSN) will do everything in his power to woo her back, but she should submit to the authority of her 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) for soul protection. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The actors in this play are:

The wife	Church Age believer
1 st husband	Old sin nature
1 st marriage counselor	The law
2 nd husband	Jesus Christ
2 nd marriage counselor	Holy Spirit

Rom. 7:3 **Consequently** (inferential particle), **therefore** (illative particle; Paul is laughing through this literary redundancy), **while her** (Poss. Gen.) **husband** (Gen. Absolute; the OSN as the 1st husband) **is living** (ζάω, PAPtc.GSM, Static, Conditional & Temporal, Articular), **she will be classified as** (χρηματίζω, FAI3S, Gnomic, apodosis; named) **an adulteress** (Independent Nom.; *independent* because she is *out from under* her proper authority and is *underneath* somebody else), **if** (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe yes, maybe no") **she has become intimate with** (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Constativ, Conditional, Deponent) **another of a different kind of** (Dat. Disadv.) **man** (Acc. Rel.; points to illegitimacy); **but** (contrast conj.) **if** (3rd class condition, protasis, "maybe yes, maybe no") **her husband** (Subj. Nom.; the OSN as the 1st husband) **has died** (ἀποθνήσκω, APSubj.3S,

Culminative, Conditional; either through divorce or physical death), she is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static, apodosis) free (Pred. Nom.; independent, not bound to) from the law (Abl. Separation; the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor), so that (hypothetically) that same one (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Intensive pronoun) is (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Conceived Result, Epexegetic Inf. as a Dir. Obj.) not (neg. adv.) an adulteress (Pred. Nom.), even though she has become married to (γίνομαι, APpTc.ASF, Constativ, Concessive, Deponent) another husband (Acc. Rel.; having Jesus Christ as her 2nd husband does not make her an adulteress) of a different kind (Dat. Adv.; transfer of masters: spiritual, as opposed to carnal).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:3** ἄρα οὖν ζῶντος τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μοιχαλῖς χρηματίσει ἐὰν γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐλευθέρα ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 7:3** igitur vivente viro vocabitur adultera si fuerit cum alio viro si autem mortuus fuerit vir eius liberata est a lege ut non sit adultera si fuerit cum alio viro

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:4** Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die [through the baptism of the Spirit] to the law [as the marriage counselor] through the person of Christ [2nd husband], so that you might belong [at the point of salvation] to another of a different kind [spiritual as opposed to carnal husband], to Him [Jesus Christ] Who was raised up [resurrected] from deaths [both spiritual & physical], so that we might bear fruit [spiritual production from the 2nd marriage] unto God.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:4** So that, my brethren, as for you, you also were put to death with reference to the law through the intermediate agency of the body of Christ, resulting in your being married to another, to the One who was raised up from among the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:4** Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Whenever Paul addresses “the brethren,” he is always speaking to believers in Jesus Christ. And in many cases, he addresses them in this kind manner when he has just taught them (or is about to teach them) something he thinks might offend them. In this case, he takes his portrait of the wife who has entered into her 2nd marriage, and applies it to the Roman believers. You also, just like the wife I’ve been talking about, were made to die (Constativ Aorist tense) to your former husband, the old sin nature. This death, to both

the 1st husband, and by way of indirect relationship, the law as marriage counselor, came about through the Person of Christ.

At a specific point in time, when you were regenerated by the Holy Spirit and subsequently believed in Christ, you became united (Ingressive Aorist tense) to a different kind of husband – a spiritual husband (Jesus Christ) as opposed to a carnal husband (the old sin nature). As a Christian, you now belong to Jesus Christ, Who was resurrected (Dramatic Aorist tense) from both spiritual and physical deaths. The purpose of this positional union with Christ, is so that we might ultimately (Culminative Aorist tense) bear fruit (Potential Subjunctive mood) unto God. Bearing fruit (Latin: fructify) under the 1st husband is carnality from the old sin nature; bearing fruit under the 2nd husband is spiritual production by means of the Holy Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The mind and will of God for the believer under grace is infinitely more impossible to human strength than the law of Moses. So much the more are we found to be wretched men when attempting our present conflict in the arm of the flesh. The "law" of God, as referred to in the N.T., sometimes means His present will for His people rather than simply the "law of Moses." The "new law" of life in Christ Jesus has replaced the "old Mosaic law," and that "new law" is produced *in* the believer by the *Spirit*. (L.S. Chafer)

Rules are exchanged for principles. Not the definite limiting letter governs the service, but a code of action which leaves much to be ascertained and applied by the enlightened judgment. It is the obedience of the instructed manhood, not the strict and rigid enforcement of precepts on children in their pupilage. The law lay as a burden on men's souls; the gospel is a reasonable service, clarifying the vision and guiding men as with the eye of God. (J. Barmby) The law has a limited role; it is a minor actor that entered the stage to play a minor part (Rom. 5:20). In the role of a marriage counselor, it tells us in no uncertain terms that we have a "bad marriage" to the tyrannical sin nature. It points the way to "divorce" and to "remarriage" to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith at salvation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Sanctification is the process by which God molds the justified man to the image of the risen Christ. To mingle legalism with sanctification is to deny this truth. To hold the believer to any code of law is to turn Christian living into effort of character rather than fruit of grace. Here are two believers living side by side. One strives to live by the law, but before God his Bible reading and devotions are unacceptable. The other flings himself on the grace of God, and his feeblest success in living by grace alone is of great worth in the eyes of God. (D.G. Barnhouse) One would suppose from the whole preceding discussion that the husband in verses 1-3 stands for sin. (J. Knox) For to be "dead to the law," as we have seen, means to be delivered from the "power sphere" of the law. (D. Moo)

There can be no true holiness unless we are free from the law. Fruit is produced only in our new relation to Christ, by His free grace. (D.G. Barnhouse) If the apostle did not

show this, he would leave the Christian man in bondage, not for salvation, but for sanctification and service, struggling in a hard, legal way to please God, instead of finding his source and spring of joyous service in union with Christ. This instruction about the law is therefore necessary, because of the danger to believers being in bondage to the law, and not enjoying the liberty of grace. (W.H. Griffith Thomas)

Rom. 7:4 Therefore (inferential conj., independent clause), my (Gen. Rel.) brethren (Vocative), you (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) were made to die (θανατώω, API2P, Constativē; through the baptism of the Spirit) to the law (Dat. Ind. Obj., the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor) through the person (Abl. Agency & Means; human body on the cross) of Christ (Descr. Gen.), so that you might belong (γίνομαι, APInf., Ingressive, Purpose, Deponent; at a specific point in time at salvation) to another of a different kind (Dat. Ind. Obj.; spiritual as opposed to carnal), to Him (Dat. Ref.; Jesus Christ) who was raised up (ἐγείρω, APpTc.DSM, Dramatic, Substantival; resurrection) from deaths (Abl. Separation; both physical & spiritual), so that (Purpose conj.) we might bear fruit (καρποφορέω, AASubj.1P, Culminative, Potential; production, children of the 2nd marriage) unto God (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:4** ὥστε ἀδελφοί μου καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 7:4** itaque fratres mei et vos mortificati estis legi per corpus Christi ut sitis alterius qui ex mortuis resurrexit ut fructificaremus Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:5** For while we [as believers] were in the flesh, the passions [impulses, trends] of sin, which were through the law [as marriage counselor], operated in our members [both internal & external parts of the body] so that we produced fruit associated with spiritual death [carnal production from our 1st marriage].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:5** For when we were in the sphere of the sinful nature, the impulses of the sins which were through the law were operative in our members, resulting in the production of fruit with respect to death.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:5** For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While we were (Durative Imperfect tense) living in the sphere of the flesh as believers, the lusts and trends of the sin nature operated (Durative Imperfect tense) in the internal and external parts of our body. The passions of sin are the lust patterns and trends of our

old sin nature. These sinful passions were actually heightened and brought full-bore into our daily life by the law acting as marriage counselor to our 1st husband, the old sin nature. The old sin nature and the law operate together; it's as if they are bosom buddies. When we submit ourselves to our 1st husband instead of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ, we are bringing in the law as marriage counselor through the back door.

You've no doubt heard the expression, "love me, love my dog." This is what our relationship to our 1st husband is like; "love me, love my marriage counselor." You cannot place yourself under the authority of the old sin nature and not have the law close behind, condemning you for ignoring his "holy and just" marital advice. Every time you sin, the law steps in as marriage counselor and condemns you. This is a life of constant, never ending (Durative) sin and condemnation. The Imperfect tense points to the hopeless, sub-standard way of life this is. The Greek word "energeo" means the use of the law actually "energizes" the sinful passions in your members. The law offers you appealing advice, but it is deceptive because it cannot be followed in the energy of the flesh; its advice only condemns you and energizes further sin.

The legalistic believer will insist that she is producing fruit. Where did this notion come from? The law as a marriage counselor gives good advice in how to deal with your 1st husband, the old sin nature. There is nothing in Paul's metaphor that says the law is a bad marriage counselor. The law is a holy, righteous, and good marriage counselor, with complete understanding of how the 1st husband, the old sin nature, operates. The problem with advice from the law serving as marriage counselor, is that the law first condemns you, and then offers you legal advice that can only be attempted in the flesh. The result of any and all attempts to take the law's advice (Infinitive of Result) is spiritual death.

The fruit produced (Constative Aorist tense) by the tag-team of the 1st husband (the old sin nature) and his marriage counselor (the law) is always spiritual death. This tag-team operates as a dynamic duo and is impossible to defeat by your own power. The 1st husband is always tempting you to "come back" (let's renew our carnal relationship), and his marriage counselor (the law) is always telling you everything will be alright if only you follow his mandates. You cannot produce offspring (fruit) from your 1st husband that is acceptable to God. All fruit from the sin nature and the application of the law falls short of divine norms and standards and is rejected by the Supreme Court in heaven.

The Christian way of life (divine protocol) tells you to sever all former relationships with the old sin nature (1st husband) and the law (his marriage counselor), and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ (2nd husband) by the filling of the Spirit (grace mechanics). The offspring from this new marriage is accepted by divine norms and standards. Following the analogy of offspring produced by marriage (courtesy of R.B. Thieme, Jr.), the offspring from the 1st husband (old sin nature) are pigs, while the offspring from the 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) are lambs. Unless you are an Arkansas Razorback, you should readily understand that God wants lambs, not pigs.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Flesh refers to more than the physical body; it includes in its meaning the whole of the regenerate person - spirit, soul and body. (L.S. Chafer) You cannot produce lambs while consorting with a pig in a mud hole. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Flesh and spirit are two realms, two authorities under which we may live. Flesh is the fallen nature, humanity apart from grace, which is descriptive of the condition of Adam in 5:12. It is a gravitational force-field determined by the pull of sin and death. The law, it might be hoped, would have arrested our fall into this perilous vortex, but it was of no help. Indeed, it made matters worse, for the sinful passions were aroused by the law. (J. Edwards)

Dying, He has died unto the dispensation of Moses; He is now no longer the Jew; the law has no authority over Him. He is now only the divine man; He has risen into all the spiritual freedom and power of the life of God. No narrow, prohibitive law is the law of His risen life; but the perfect, quickening law of God. And are not we dead, in Him, to all the limitations and restraints of the law? Our very union with Him, by faith, releases us now from all its claims. It is as though we were dead. The unhappy marriage bond is broken. (J. Barmby) Paul pictures “sarx” as another “power” of the old age, set in opposition to the Spirit. Flesh, in this sense, is not part of the person, nor even exactly an impulse or nature within the person, but a “power sphere” in which a person lives. Existence in the domain of the flesh is determined by the three other “powers” of the old age: sin, the law, and death. (D. Moo)

For centuries men had tried to regulate their lives by rules, and the result had been consistent failure. The old way has had its chance. There is a significant difference between an inward and dynamic control and an external and mechanical one. Regulations have always failed to inspire the moral life and they always will. So long as they attempt to govern from outside, they cannot provide the motive power which is capable of translating any ethical ideal into action. The secret of the gospel is that it offers an indwelling Spirit who both directs and inspires. (J. Knox)

Rom. 7:5 **For** (explanatory conj.) **while** (temporal conj.) **we were** (εἰμί, Imperf.AI1P, Durative) **in the flesh** (Loc. Sph.; as believers), **the passions** (Subj. Nom.; trends, impulses, sufferings) **of sin** (Adv. Gen. Ref.), **which** (Nom. Appos., relative pronoun) **were** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **through the law** (Abl. Means; the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor), **operated** (ἐνεργέω, Imperf.MI3P, Durative; worked) **in our members** (Poss. Gen.) (Loc. Sph.; all parts of the body, internal and external) **so that we produced fruit** (καρποφορέω, AAInf., Constativ, Result, Articular; children of the 1st marriage, i.e. sin, human good and evil) **associated with spiritual death** (Instr. Assoc. & Dat. Disadv.).

WHO **Romans 7:5** ὅτε γὰρ ἡμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ·

^{VUL} **Romans 7:5** cum enim essemus in carne passiones peccatorum quae per legem erant operabantur in membris nostris ut fructificarent morti

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:6** But now we have been released [by divorce or physical death] from the law, having died to that [1st marriage] by which we were bound [under the authority of the old sin nature], so that we might serve Him [Jesus Christ as our 2nd husband] as slaves with a new Spirit [the Holy Spirit as our new marriage counselor] and not with the old letter [the law as our old marriage counselor].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:6** But now we were discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were constantly being held down, insomuch that we are rendering habitually a slave's obedience in a sphere new in quality, that of the Spirit, and not in a sphere outworn as to usefulness, in a sphere of that which was put in writing.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:6** But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In our new condition as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been released (Culminative Aorist tense) by divorce or physical death from the law as our 1st marriage counselor. We have been released from the law as our 1st marriage counselor because we have died (Culminative Aorist tense) to our 1st husband, the old sin nature. We were bound (Durative Imperfect tense) to our 1st husband while he was alive, but now that he has died (or we have died to him), we have remarried to Jesus Christ. Once the 1st husband, the old sin nature, dies, we obviously don't need the marriage counselor (the law) that kept us bound together.

Now that we have married our 2nd husband, Jesus Christ, our purpose is to serve (Customary Present tense) Him as slaves. This servitude, however, is not based on the unbending and unyielding taskmaster of the law, but is based on a new Spirit – the Holy Spirit as our new marriage counselor. Just as the 1st husband (the old sin nature) had his marriage counselor (the law), our 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) has his marriage counselor (the Holy Spirit). Our relationship with the old marriage and the old marriage counselor has now been terminated. We now have a new marriage and a new marriage counselor.

Paul is not addressing the training of new believers in this verse, but there are many well-meaning, but misguided believers, who use the law when “discipling” other believers. It's amazing to me to observe believers who have grown over the years under the filling of the Spirit, but who think they can “help” new believers by placing them under the law. They seem to think that once a believer is united in marriage to their 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) and are listening to their new marriage counselor (the Holy Spirit), that the old marriage counselor (the law) still has something valuable to offer in experiential

sanctification. If you ask them if the law would have assisted them in their growth in grace, the answer is, “No!” So why do they think everybody else needs the law?

It’s also amazing to see believers in leadership positions trying to use the law as a means of instructing other believers on how to exercise their spiritual gifts. I’ve observed, especially in the sphere of spiritual gifts such as pastor, teacher, and evangelist, a remarkable and yet unexplainable tendency to “straight-jacket” certain requirements they believe are inherent in the exercise of a particular spiritual gift. For example, an evangelist *must* go to some faraway geographical location (in some remote jungle) in order to be fulfilling his spiritual gift. A teacher must also be a pastor, due to a highly questionable linguistic “rule” developed by Granville Sharp.

Another example is the requirement that a pastor *must* have programs or specialized ministries for children, teens, singles, marrieds, divorcees, old folks, etc. And a pastor *must* perform all the wedding and funeral services in his church as “required” by the exercise of his spiritual gift. Finally, as the story by Dr. Barnhouse below attests, a teacher is not allowed to miss prayer meetings, Sunday services, or any other “traditional functions” associated with the teaching gift. Please, I beseech you: It was grace that saved us, so why don’t we let grace (and grace alone) sanctify us in our daily walk and be the guide for exercising our spiritual gifts, too?!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some years ago, at a luncheon of ministers, someone remarked on the frigidity of a certain denomination, and how little its ministers seemed to accomplish. I told of a scholar who went through theological seminary and was ordained. He seldom preached, never went to prayer meeting, and absented himself from church services for many weeks at a time. He spent his days in his library and indulged in habits which were considered unchristian and intemperate [drinking adult beverages and smoking cigars]. He lived this way for more than twenty years. I asked, "What is your opinion of such a minister?" My luncheon companions agreed that he was no credit to the Christian ministry.

I then turned the talk toward study helps, and after several books had been mentioned, I inquired which they thought was the best concordance. They were unanimous in preferring Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, with its Hebrew and Greek lexicons and comparative word lists, and regarded it as their most valuable tool. It saved them hundreds of hours of work, and was a blessing to thousands of ministers and Bible students. When they had finished, I remarked, "That man whom you said was no credit to the Christian ministry was James Strong, author of this concordance which you all find so valuable." My friends saw the point - the Lord assigns many kinds of work to His servants, just as He has assigned different functions to different parts of the body. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Where there is a knowledge of the Truth which has been wrought in the heart by the Spirit, there is an experimental knowledge of the same, a sensible consciousness, a

persuasive and comforting perception of their reality, an assurance which nothing can shake. The Truth then possesses a sweetness, a preciousness. No inducement can cause the soul to part with it. (A.W. Pink) The apostle never tires of contrasting the Sinaitic with the gospel dispensation, to the exaltation of the latter. He thinks of the former as a thralldom. (J. Barmby) Much outward conformity to the law may be attained from the pride of self-righteousness, without any principle better than that of a selfish, slavish, mercenary, carnal disposition, influenced only by fear of punishment and hope of reward. Serving then, in the oldness of the letter, is serving in a cold, constrained, and wholly external manner. Such service is essentially defective, proceeding from a carnal, unrenewed heart, destitute of holiness. (R. Haldane)

The law abrogated at the Cross, is looked upon as outworn, useless, so that it has been set aside. Now, spirit and law are contrasted here. The believer now serves in the power of the Holy Spirit, under a new energy and control, rather than an attempt to obey an objective law. (K. Wuest) When Paul speaks of sin as beguiling or deceiving him, there is an echo of Eve's complaint: The serpent beguiled me, and I ate (Gen. 3:13). But Paul would not have re-told the fall story in the first person singular had he not recognized it as an authentic record of his own experience, as well as of the experience of humanity. (F.F. Bruce) Romans 7 is not a description of Paul before his salvation, but describes the continuing struggle of the believer with the power of sin. It may reflect an early part of his life, even those mature years as a Christian, but most appropriately refers to the early years in his Christian experience when he was wrestling with how to reconcile his newfound faith with his rabbinical training. Or it may reflect those times of weakness when he struggled to give the Holy Spirit complete control over his life. Whichever, it certainly relates to his experience after salvation. (W. Kroll)

The two states of slavery are again contrasted in the phrases "the new life of the Spirit" and "the old written code," and they represent the state of grace and the state of law and describe the antithesis between spirit and letter. (R. Martin) I am a divided being. In my innermost self, the thinking and reasoning part of me, I respond joyfully to the law of God. But then I see a different law dominating this bodily organism of mine, and making me do its behests. This other law takes the field in arms against the law of reason and conscience, and drags me away captive in the fetters of sin, the power which has such a fatal grip upon my body. Unhappy man that I am, torn with a conflict from which there seems to be no issue! (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 7:6 But (contrast conj.) now (Adv. Time; in our new condition), we have been released (καταργέω, APIIP, Culminative; made ineffective, powerless; by either divorce or physical death) from the law (Abl. Separation; the Mosaic Law as the old marriage counselor), having died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAPtc.NPM, Culminative, Modal; retroactive positional truth; divorced from the power of the 1st husband, the OSN) to that (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the 1st marriage) by which (Instr. Means; τ οὐτω is implied) we were bound (κατέχω, Imperf.PIIP,

Durative, Deponent), so that (dependent clause) we might serve (δουλεύω, PAInf., Customary, blending of Purpose) Him as slaves (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) with a new (Loc. State; new marriage) Spirit (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the Holy Spirit as the new marriage counselor) and (connective conj.) not (Negative Adv.) with the old (Loc. State; old marriage) letter (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the Mosaic Law as the old marriage counselor).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:6** νυνὶ δὲ κατηγορήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα ὥστε δουλεύειν [ἡμᾶς] ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος

^{VUL} **Romans 7:6** nunc autem soluti sumus a lege morientes in quo detinebamur ita ut serviamus in novitate spiritus et non in vetustate litterae

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:7** What, then, shall we say? Is the law sin? May it not be so [definitely not]! On the contrary, I was not cognizant of the sin nature except through the law [the law as our marriage counselor demonstrated the failure of our 1st marriage to the old sin nature]. For instance, I would not have recognized the lust pattern [trend of the old sin nature] except the law kept on saying, “You shall not lust.”

^{KW} **Rom. 7:7** What therefore shall we say? The law, is it sin? Away with the thought. Certainly I did not come into an experiential knowledge of sin except through the instrumentality of the law, for I had not known evil desire except that the law kept on saying, You shall not desire evil.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:7** What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a rhetorical question to sum up what he has been saying, but this question is patently absurd in order to prove a point. What, then, shall we conclude (Deliberative Future tense)? The straw man then asks, “Is the law sin?” Paul answers, “Definitely not!” The person asking this question obviously wasn’t paying attention, because Paul has been contrasting the 1st husband (old sin nature) from his marriage counselor (the law). If there is a contrast between the two, they obviously aren’t one and the same. Law and sin are related, but they are not identical.

The law served a legitimate function. Without the law, Paul would not have been aware of (Constative Aorist tense) the activities of his sin nature. The law, functioning as the old marriage counselor, demonstrated to him many failures in his 1st marriage to the old sin nature. If the law had not been present, he might have continued in his 1st marriage to the old sin nature without knowing there was a problem in his soul. For example, he would not have recognized (Consummative Pluperfect tense) the lust pattern of the old sin nature if the law had not been there, telling him (Durative Imperfect tense): You shall

not (Imperative of Prohibition) lust. The law is like a psychiatrist: it condemns us and tells us what we should do, but gives us no effective means to fulfill its commands.

The lust patterns or trends of the old sin nature are the strongest motivators to carnality in life. We don't have to learn them; they are active at birth. To an extent, they operate "invisibly" in our soul until the law comes in and tells us we are all fouled-up. So while the law condemns us, and offers us advice that is impotent to help us, it nevertheless alerts us to sin and may in the end lead us to Christ. By pointing out to us how twisted our 1st marriage is to the old sin nature, the law as our 1st marriage counselor indirectly introduces us to Jesus Christ, our 2nd husband. As long as we were living in a fool's paradise, thinking nothing about sin, we did not realize the predicament we were in.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The absence of the article here is on purpose and essential to the true idea. The subject and predicate are not identical. "God" and "love" are not convertible terms any more than "law" and "sin." (A.T. Robertson) Sin does not consist exclusively in overt acts, but also in sinful habits and in a sinful condition of the soul. These three are related to one another as follows: the sinful state is the basis of sinful habits, and these manifest themselves in sinful deeds. Thoughts and affections of the natural man, called "flesh" in Scripture, should also be regarded as sin. (L. Berkhof) The first nine commandments forbid actions, but the tenth forbids desires. The 10th commandment penetrates behind evil deeds to the evil intentions which motivate them as the wellsprings of behavior and the command center of living. (J. Edwards)

Legalistic systems cannot help the believer who has a heart for the Lord. They can only hinder him. If you know a man who wants to walk in righteousness, telling him what not to do is totally unnecessary. As a matter of fact, it may only make the situation worse because it aggravates his faults. It does not heal any of them. When God added the law, He gave it to a people who had ceased to hunger after Him. (K. Lamb) Paul uses "ego" simply because he is depicting his own experience. He describes his experience not because it is unique, but because it is typical – the experience of every person. (D. Moo) This is a passage of marvelous psychological insight in which Paul describes this condition of misery which the law discloses and can do nothing to relieve. (R. Mounce)

What! Does the law bring forth such fruit? Is the law sin? Nay, that cannot be. On the contrary, we all acknowledge it, without dispute, as holy, and every separate commandment which it gives as "holy, righteous, and good." Nevertheless, even the holy law has peculiar relations to the development of sin; and they are these: the law reveals sin; the law becomes, to a sinful man, an excitant to further sin. (J. Barmby) The law which seemed to be given to regulate, only roused it. Sin is dormant or dead until law comes and gives it life. The law which should have given the sinner life, gave life to sin. It should have been the death blow of sin, but it became the death of the sinner. All this shows how futile it is to try to reform or regulate or conquer sin. It not only acts in darkness and ignorance but transforms the very light into an agent of death. (A.E. Knoch)

This is an example of *aperta*, or a substitution by stealth, because not only is the objection anticipated, but it is stated, and the answer also is given. We take our opponent's objection, and substitute it for our own. (E.W. Bullinger) The law is given to strip away the hypocrisy of the human heart, which constantly imagines that it is right before God, and to show its depravity. It reveals sin as sin and the sinner as a sinner. (J.M. Boice) The OSN is Satan's inside agent for distracting us from God's game plan. The OSN is the source of temptation, but our volition is the source of sin. When the OSN tempts us to commit a sin, we can resist the temptation and remain filled with the Spirit inside the divine dynasphere. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Law precipitates rebellion, not because it is sinful, but because man is. (R. Lopez)

This is an apodosis of conditions of the 2nd class (negatory) without the use of "an," an unusual construction. It also has an element of an unfulfilled clause, a mixed condition (protasis in 4th class) where the apodosis is itself a relative clause; "me" in the protasis, "ou" in the apodosis (A.T. Robertson) The law prescribes a holy walk, but furnishes no power whatever for it. (W.R. Newell) Paul presents to us a vivid picture of a man supposed at first to be without law, and therefore unconscious of sin; but then, through law coming in, acquiring a sense of it, and yet unable to avoid it. The man assents in his conscience to the good, but is dragged down by the infection of his nature to the evil. He seems to have, as it were, two contrary laws within himself, distracting him. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 7:7 What (interrogative pronoun), then (inferential particle), shall we say (λέγω, FAI1P, Deliberative; idiom for "to what conclusion are we forced?")? Is (ellipsis, verb supplied) the law (Subj. Nom.) sin (Pred. Nom.; false conclusion, straw man)? May it not (neg. adv.) be so (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative, Wishing; idiom for "God forbid" or "Hell no")! On the contrary (adversative conj.), I was not (neg. adv.) cognizant of (γινώσκω, AAI1S, Constative; aware of) the sin nature (Acc. Dir. Obj.) except (combination of conditional & negative particles, "if not") through the law (Abl. Means; the Mosaic Law, functioning as the old marriage counselor, demonstrates the failure of our 1st marriage to the OSN). For instance (explanatory conj.), I would not (negative particle) have recognized (οἶδα, Plupf.AI1S, Consummative, Potential Ind.; understood) the lust pattern (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trends, impulses) except (combination of conditional & negative particles, "if not") the law (Subj. Nom.) kept on saying (λέγω, Imperf.AI3S, Durative): "You shall not (negative particle) lust" (ἐπιθυμέω, FAImp.2P, Predictive, Prohibition; the lust trends of the OSN are the strongest motivators in life).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:7** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνωμεν εἰ μὴ διὰ νόμου· τὴν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ἤδμεν εἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος ἔλεγεν Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις

^{VUL} **Romans 7:7** quid ergo dicemus lex peccatum est absit sed peccatum non cognovi nisi per legem nam concupiscentiam nesciebam nisi lex diceret non concupisces

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:8** But the sin nature, by holding a base of operations [seizing the opportunity] through the [10th] commandment, produced every category of lust in me, because without the law, the sin nature was dead.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:8** But the sinful nature, using the commandment as a fulcrum, brought about in me every kind of evil craving. For without the law, the sinful nature was dead.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:8** But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The sin nature seized the opportunity through the 10th commandment to produce (Culminative Aorist tense) every category of lust in me. The sin nature used the 10th commandment, “You shall not lust,” as a starting point for an expedition (Dramatic Aorist tense) in the soul. The sin nature used the commandment as a fulcrum to pry the lust pattern free from its inactivity into restored activity. Isn’t it just like the sin nature to start with something holy, just and good (the law) and turn it into command headquarters for a carnal life? Without the law, the sin nature was dead; with the entrance of the law, the dormant sin nature comes alive again in all its fury.

Here is a perfect example of the use of the Greek word “pas” and its variety of meanings. This Greek word should be translated according to its context. In most cases, the KJV translates it as “all” and leaves it up to the reader to understand the contextual meaning. In this instance, however, even the KJV translators knew better than to leave it as “all,” knowing that your average reader would think Paul had experienced every possible craving (without exception) imaginable. This would be patently absurd. The KJV translators render it “all manner of,” Dr. Wuest translated it “every kind of,” and I used “every category of.”

The contextual idea is not that Paul experienced every known lust or craving imaginable, but that he experienced a great number of *representative samples*. Why is the use of the word “all” so contextually important? Because in other verses, such as 1 John 2:2, some translators have rejected context entirely and leave the word “all” by itself in the translation, knowing full well that the average believer will think this means “all without exception.” This is how the heresy of unlimited atonement began, and in spite of facts to the contrary, how it is still defended by many. In nearly every use of the word “all” as it points to humans, it means “all manner of” or “all types” or “every category of;” it rarely means “all without exception.”

The use of the word “all” does not mean “every known lust or craving” known to man. Likewise, in 1 John 2:2, the use of the word “all” is not all-inclusive, representing every

member of mankind, but all types of men, such as Jews and Gentiles, male and female, free and slave, or married and single. The context in 1 John 2:2 is not that Christ died for every sin of every human being who ever lived, otherwise, every human being will be saved. Unbelief, which is a terrible sin, would also have been covered on the cross; this would mean there is nothing man is ultimately responsible for, including his unbelief, and therefore all men must be admitted to heaven. This is not only heretical, but blasphemous! The “all” in 1 John 2:2 is determined by other verses, and correctly refers to “all those whom the Father has given to me,” meaning His elect, His sheep.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The 10th commandment is selected as a particular instance of law. The prohibition against coveting brings to light the perversity of human nature, which rebels against the idea of a thing forbidden, and longs to do the action reprobated. We know not the existence of the current till we put some barrier in the way; then the stream rages to overcome the obstacle. A precept provokes into activity the dormant selfishness; sin revives. Apart from a law, we had sinned without realizing that it was sin. (J. Barmby) By nature, people have only a dim awareness of their sinfulness. To be sure, they are often deeply conscious of the other person’s guilt. At times they even reprimand the other person while at the same time committing the very sin they condemn. (W. Hendriksen)

Commandments have their place, but it is strictly limited. They stab us awake when carelessness lulls us asleep; but having done that, they have exhausted their powers. Their real peril appears when they are erected into a moral system, with the professed purpose of governing our spiritual life and regulating our relations with God. This was precisely what orthodox Pharisaism had done, and because of it man’s whole religious outlook had become distorted. It required its adherents to serve partial ends in stultifying ways. Having awakened the conscience (its true function), it could not provide the spiritual power which would satisfy the demands of conscience. Good men were left in a desolating impasse, and bad men were allowed to grow callous in their pride. (J. Knox)

Sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, creates a surge of rebellion in our hearts. The rebellion had been there all along, of course. That is what it means to be a sinner. It means to rebel against God. But when the law comes, this dormant rebellion is aroused from its slumber, as it were, and we discover what we are at heart. In telling us not to do something, the law actually sets us to thinking about it, and because we are sinful people we soon find ourselves wanting to do that very thing. (J. Boice) To some extent, the old adage about “forbidden fruits” can explain what Paul means: people, told not to do something, immediately conclude that there must be something “fun” about it and are motivated all the more, or even perhaps for the first time, to do it. (D. Moo)

The command not to lust made me lust more. Sin in reality was there in a dormant state. (A.T. Robertson) Paul undoubtedly draws on his own past experience; recollections of the struggle he had himself gone through gleam evidently throughout the picture; he paints so vividly because he has felt so keenly. (J. Barmby) To desire the good is only to realize more intensely the utter subjection to evil. Man’s spirit is enslaved to the flesh,

and through the flesh, to sin. (ibid) What he has said does not mean that the law was sin, or brought sin, but that the law when revealed to Paul woke up the sin that already existed in his heart. Law was not the cause, but the occasion of sin. (W.G. Thomas)

Generally, resources are a means of war or capital in business. Here the law is represented as furnishing sin with the material or ground of assault, the fulcrum for the energy of the evil principle. Sin took the law as a base of operations. Without the incitement produced by the law, the evil nature was relatively dormant. A fulcrum is an instrument in the form of a pole or long stick, which when applied beneath an object, will pry that object loose from its position. Just so, the sinful nature uses the law as a fulcrum by which to pry itself loose from its relative inactivity into activity. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 7:8 But (adversative conj.) the sin nature (Subj. Nom.), by holding (λαμβάνω, AAPtc.NSF, Dramatic, Circumstantial) a base of operations (Acc. Dir. Obj.; starting point for an expedition or business venture, commercial capital; a fulcrum used to pry something loose from relative inactivity unto restored activity; "having seized the opportunity") through the commandment (Abl. Agency; 10th), produced (κατεργάζομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent) every category of (Acc. Spec.; not "all without exception" as is used elsewhere by Arminians) lust (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trends, impulses) in me (Loc. Sph.), because (causal conj.) without (Adv. Separation; apart from) the law (Abl. Separation), the sin nature (Subj. Nom.) was (ellipsis, verb supplied) dead (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:8** ἀφορμὴν δὲ λαβοῦσα ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατεργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν· χωρὶς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά

^{VUL} **Romans 7:8** occasione autem accepta peccatum per mandatum operatum est in me omnem concupiscentiam sine lege enim peccatum mortuum erat

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:9** Now at one time I lived without the law [totally ignorant about the old sin nature and its marriage counselor], but when the commandment appeared [entered the conscience for the 1st time], the sin nature became invigorated, and I died [spiritually],

^{KW} **Rom. 7:9** But I was alive without law aforesaid. But the commandment having come, the sinful nature regained its strength and vigor, and I died.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:9** For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

At one time, Paul lived (Durative Imperfect tense) without the law. Paul uses himself as an example, knowing full well that the following incidents were true for all of us as well. He was totally ignorant about the old sin nature and had not heard of the law functioning as his marriage counselor. The imperfect tense points to a “less than desirable stage” in Paul’s life. But when the 10th commandment appeared on the scene (Ingressive Aorist tense), the knowledge of his sinful lusts entered his conscience for the 1st time. His sin nature became alive again with great power (Culminative Aorist tense), more active than ever before. His state of blissful ignorance was now over.

When he became cognizant of his true state, he realized he had died spiritually (Culminative Aorist tense). The often heard phrase, “ignorance is bliss,” came from this verse. Until the law comes and condemns a man of sin, that man is ignorant of sin and is living in a fool’s paradise. Everything seems to be fine, until the law tells him otherwise. Now that state of blissful ignorance is replaced by condemnation, guilt, and shame. The convicted sinner may wish that he could go back to his state of ignorant bliss, but knowledge of sin has replaced ignorance of sin and he has reached the point of no return.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If by sin being dead means it is lying unnoticed and unknown, then by being alive, Paul must mean that state of security and comparative exemption from the turbulence or manifestation of sin in his heart, which he then experienced. He fancied himself in a happy and desirable condition. He had no dread of punishment, no painful consciousness of sin. But when the commandment came, sin revived, it was roused from its torpor. As by being alive was meant being at ease in a fancied state of security and goodness, being dead must mean just the opposite: a state of misery arising from a sense of danger and the consciousness of guilt. (C. Hodge)

When the commandment's power was declared in revealing my impotence to obey it, I, in my experience, suffered its penalty – spiritual death. (E.W. Bullinger) The law came to us before from without and commanded flesh to perform in a spiritual way. Since it could not, the law brought us down in judgment and we died. But God has now given us a new character and potential that has removed us from the flesh and servanthood and has brought us into the position of sons. This is another result of the new birth. (K. Lamb)
The sin nature was roused like a monster. (R. Earle)

If believers persist on following the Law, Paul warns that it will result in a defeated Christian experience. Normally people view the Law as a means of sanctification. However, the Law is like a mirror. It can show what is wrong, but cannot correct it ... Continual focus on prohibitions does not lead to holiness but to more sin that results in an experience of death. (R. Lopez)

Rom. 7:9 **Now** (transitional particle) **at one time** (enclitic particle; once) **I** (Subj. Nom.) **lived** (ζῶω, Imperf.AI1S, Durative) **without** (Adv. Separation; apart from) **the law** (Abl. Separation; totally ignorant about the OSN and without

the Mosaic Law as the 1st marriage counselor), **but** (contrast conj.) **when the** (10th) **commandment** (Subj. Nom.) **appeared** (έρχομαι, AAPtc.GSF, Ingressive, Temporal, Gen. Absolute, Deponent; entered his conscience for the 1st time), **the sin nature** (Subj. Nom.) **became invigorated** (ἀναζάω, AAI2P, Culminative; came alive again with great power, became much more active; the blissful state of ignorance was over), **and** (connective particle) **I** (Subj. Nom.) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI1S, Culminative; Paul became cognizant of his real state: "and I realized I had died spiritually"),

^{WHO} **Romans 7:9** ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ· ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον

^{VUL} **Romans 7:9** ego autem vivebam sine lege aliquando sed cum venisset mandatum peccatum revixit

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:10** Because that commandment which was being examined for life [the law promises an elusive form of abundant life], the same resulted in [spiritual] death for me.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:10** And the commandmen which was to life, this I found to be to death.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:10** And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul had been examining (Constative Aorist tense) the Mosaic Law because it promised abundant life to those who lived by it. But what he discovered was that it did not give him life, but rather spiritual death. In a manner of speaking, he had been tricked. The law did not minister life, but death. Somebody had told him that he would have a marvelous, happy, sanctified life if he would obey the law. Whoever told him that did not understand the purpose of the law (to convict a person of sin) and did not understand its limitations (it could not provide sanctification).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Men can be moral and godless. Godliness will produce morality, let there be no doubt about that, but morality will never produce godliness. Living a straight life in order to keep from invalidating our salvation is also not godliness. (R.T. Kendall) There can be no true sanctification unless we are free from the law. Legality is the great enemy to sanctification. Any sanctification measured by a set of rules is a bastard sanctification. Holiness produced by the flesh, no matter what its form, is hateful to God. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Rom. 7:10 **because** (causal conj.) **that commandment** (Subj. Nom.; Mosaic Law) **which** (Nom. Appos.) **was being examined**

(εὐρίσκω, API3S, Constativē; discovered, proved, found, points to) **for life** (Adv. Acc. Ref.; abundant life, not regeneration or heaven), **the same** (Subj. Nom., attributive; Mosaic Law) **resulted in death** (Acc. Result; spiritual death) **for me** (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:10** καὶ εὐρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολὴ ἣ εἰς ζωὴν αὕτη εἰς θάνατον·

^{VUL} **Romans 7:10** ego autem mortuus sum et inventum est mihi mandatum quod erat ad vitam hoc esse ad mortem

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:11** For the sin nature [1st husband], having seized the opportunity through the commandment [marriage counselor quoting the 10th commandment], deceived me [used the old sin nature to arouse corruption], and through the same [10th commandment: You shall not lust] killed me [spiritual death in the soul].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:11** For the sinful nature, using the commandment as a fulcrum, beguiled me and through it killed me.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:11** For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's 1st husband, the old sin nature, seized the opportunity (Dramatic Aorist tense; Latin: occasion) to deceive him (Constativē Aorist tense). The 1st marriage counselor, the law, quoted the 10th commandment to Paul: You shall not lust. But instead of assisting Paul in his struggle, the quoting of the 10th commandment beguiled him, creating spiritual death in his soul. Before the commandment was spoken, he hadn't thought of breaking the 10th commandment. Once it was heard, it aroused corruption in his soul and he died spiritually (Culminative Aorist tense). The marriage counselor, the law, tried to help, but only made things worse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The normal believer finds his weaknesses and shortcomings in Scripture through teachings on *hamartiology* and applies doctrine to the problem. The OSN, or 1st husband, actually uses the law, or marriage counselor, to goad the believer into flaunting his sovereignty over a divine mandate. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul was using himself as an illustration - he did not have problems of his own. (ibid) The law, so far from giving life, is the source of death, spiritual and penal. By leading the apostle to expect one thing, he experienced another. He expected life from the law, but found death. He expected happiness, but found misery; he looked for holiness, but found increased corruption. He first turned to the law, to his own righteousness and strength, but he soon found that all the law can do is to aggravate his guilt and misery. (C. Hodge)

Men in their cleverness and sophistication no longer believe in sin. Using psychological terms, they explain it away, saying it is non-existent. They confidently claim they can easily train and teach people how to behave in a decent manner, and yet they are failing so badly that their own servants are saying so in public. Many psychiatrists in treating their patients actually encourage them to do things which are prohibited in the Bible. They tell them that their trouble is due to the fact they have repressed their personality as the result of accepting the biblical doctrine of sin. Sin in its subtlety thus deceives people by praising them, and by getting them to express themselves and their innate evil powers. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones)

Rom. 7:11 For (explanatory conj.) the sin nature (Subj. Nom.; the 1st husband as the real culprit), having seized (λαμβάνω, AAPtc.NSF, Dramatic, Circumstantial; grasped) the opportunity (Acc. Dir. Obj.; took occasion, business capital) through the commandment (Abl. Means; the 10th commandment: "You shall not lust"; the 1st marriage counselor), deceived (ἐξαπατάω, AAI3S, Constative; beguiled, made a clean job of it) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the OSN used the law to arouse corruption), and (connective conj.) through the same (Abl. Means, attributive; 10th commandment) killed (ἀποκτείνω, AAI3S, Culminative; made a clean job of it) me (Dir. Obj. implied; spiritual death in the soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:11** ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν

^{VUL} **Romans 7:11** nam peccatum occasione accepta per mandatum seduxit me et per illud occidit

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:12** As a matter of fact, therefore, the law [as marriage counselor] is holy [perfect integrity]; also the [10th] commandment is holy and righteous [just] and absolute good.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:12** So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:12** Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Should we be angry at the marriage counselor (the law) for giving us good advice? Not at all. The law, in its function as the perfect marriage counselor, is holy. What does "holy" mean? It means perfect integrity. And the 10th commandment that Paul has been referring to in the past few verses, is also holy. The command, "You shall not lust," also represents perfect integrity. This command is also righteous (just) and good by divine norms and standards. In other words, it is not the law's fault that its advice encourages us to sin. It is not the law's fault that we have a sin nature that is activated by the law's good advice.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law is not the sponsor of sin. It is merely the instrument of communication. There is nothing wrong with the marriage counselor pointing out a bad marriage. Man is sinful because he has possessed the OSN since birth, not because the law says he is sinful. The law fulfills its purpose perfectly in that it exposes sin. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The law may restrain man's practice, but grace gives him a new disposition. The Jews made the law faulty by turning that which was meant to be an aid to God's people into a means of salvation. (W.E. Best)

Sin ridicules its victims. It persuades us that we are wise and tolerant; then, when its end is accomplished, reveals us to ourselves as perfect fools. (J. Knox) I am ultimately at fault, certainly not the law, not even sin. It is me and my carnality, my helplessness under sin, that enables sin to do what it does. Sin has invaded my existence and made me a divided person, willing to do what God wants, but failing to do it. (D. Moo) It is holy, in opposition to whatever is sinful, embodying the perfect rule of what is right and comfortable to the character of God; it is just, because God prohibits it, and we should not desire what is forbidden; it is good, because it attempts to maintain perfect order, and hopes to establish happiness in all who are under its authority. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 7:12 As a matter of fact (independent clause), therefore (continuative particle), the law (Subj. Nom.; functioning as a perfect marriage counselor) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) holy (Pred. Nom.; perfect integrity); also (adjunctive) the (10th) commandment (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) holy (Pred. Nom.; perfect integrity) and righteous (Pred. Nom.; just) and absolute good (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:12** ὥστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἀγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή

^{VUL} **Romans 7:12** itaque lex quidem sancta et mandatum sanctum et iustum et bonum

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:13** **Therefore, did the absolute good [10th commandment] become [spiritual] death to me? May it not come to pass! But the sin nature [the 1st husband is the real culprit], in order that sin might be revealed through the absolute good [10th commandment], made [spiritual] death a reality to me, so that through the [10th commandment] the sin nature might become utterly [beyond measure] sinful.**

^{KW} **Rom. 7:13** Therefore, that which is good, to me did it become death? Away with the thought. But the sinful nature [its impulses and workings] through the intermediate agency of the commandment may become exceedingly sinful.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:13** Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Using debater's technique, Paul asks the rhetorical question: Did the divine standard of the 10th commandment become (Ingressive Aorist tense) spiritual death to him? Of course not! Emphatically not! The 10th commandment did not create spiritual death. The sin nature in Paul created spiritual death. The sin nature as the 1st husband is the real culprit. The law as marriage counselor is just the messenger of good advice. Don't shoot the messenger! The sin nature made (Culminative Aorist tense) spiritual death a reality by participating in the sinful act that was revealed (Culminative Aorist tense) by the commandment.

The purpose of the commandment is to reveal sin against divine norms and standards, and in this example, the 10th commandment did its job. It made Paul guilty of sin and communicated the reality of his spiritual death to him. The 10th commandment, "You shall not lust," revealed the divine standard so that the sin nature might become (Ingressive Aorist tense) exceedingly sinful. Paul's eyes were closed to his sin until the 10th commandment came forth and opened his eyes to his sinful condition. The problematic marriage to the 1st husband, the old sin nature, was made known by the righteous standards of the marriage counselor, the law.

The law, in its function as a marriage counselor, tells the wife (believer) that her marriage to her 1st husband (old sin nature) is a failure. The marriage counselor (the law) did not create this bad marriage; the marriage counselor only states the obvious from divine perspective. The failed marriage is ultimately the responsibility of the wife (believer), who has the option to ignore the 1st husband (old sin nature) and to live according to the wishes of her 2nd husband (Jesus Christ). When the wife (believer) lives according to the desires of her 2nd husband (Jesus Christ) and the inner promptings of His marriage counselor (Holy Spirit), she becomes experientially sanctified. When the wife (believer) lives according to the demands of her 1st husband (old sin nature) and against the good advice of the 1st marriage counselor (the law), she becomes experientially carnal.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The wife was a culprit in the 1st marriage along with the 1st husband, and she remained a culprit in the 2nd marriage to Jesus Christ because she still enjoyed some things with her former husband, the OSN. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) *Antanaclasis*, or word clashing, is used here; it is a repetition of the same word in a different sense. In the former place, sin is used of the old nature; while, in the latter it is used of its real sinful nature and character. (E.W. Bullinger) It was not the law which produced death, but sin, misusing law. The real law and apparent functions of the law are very different. (A.E. Knoch) Legality is the great enemy to sanctification. Happy, therefore, is that man who has come to the end of

himself, his own ideas, his own efforts, his own determination to be saved by his own obedience, and has acknowledged his utter sinfulness, his hopeless inability, and has accepted Christ as the end of the law for righteousness. (W.G. Thomas)

The difficulty with sin is to recognize it for what it is. Sin is deceitful, sin is very clever, sin is like a fisherman who hides himself and conceals the bait. But sin is not too clever for the Law, because being spiritual, the Law exposes sin for what it is. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) I see the better things and approve them; I follow the worse. "We strive ever after what is forbidden, and desire the things denied to us." So spake the heathen in the ancient world. And is not this our experience still? (J. Barmby) The apparent object of the law was to give life to all who consistently and constantly kept it. As it never gave life to anyone, for no one was able to fulfill its demands, it appears as if the law has failed of its primary object. But the primary object of the law was to reveal the inordinate sinfulness of sin, and in this it was most successful. (A.E. Knoch)

In the lifetimes of many of us, Menninger argued, sin has been redefined: first, as crime – that is, as transgression of the law of man rather than transgression of the law of God – and second, as symptoms. Since "symptoms" are caused by things external to the individual, they are seen as effects for which the offender is not responsible. Thus it happened that sin against God has been redefined (and dismissed) as the unfortunate effects of bad circumstances. And no one is to blame. (J. Boice) Paul has allowed us to take a look into his own diary. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 7:13 **Therefore** (inferential particle), **did the absolute good** (Subj. Nom.; the 10th commandment) **become** (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Ingressive, Interrogative, Deponent) **death** (Pred. Nom.; spiritual) **to me** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; rhetorical question, debaters technique)? **May it not** (neg. adv.) **come to pass** (γίνομαι, AAOpt.3S, Gnostic, Voluntative, Deponent; idiom for "God forbid" or "Hell no", "Emphatically not")! **But** (adversative contrast conj.) **the sin nature** (Subj. Nom.; the 1st husband is the real culprit), **in order that** (Final conj.) **sin** (Subj. Nom.) **might be revealed** (φαίνω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; exposed) **through the absolute good** (Abl. Means; the 10th commandment), **made death** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; temporal, spiritual) **a reality** (κατεργάζομαι, PMPTc.NSF, Gnostic, Circumstantial, Modal, Deponent; apparent) **to me** (Dat. Ind. Obj.), **so that** (Purpose conj.) **through the** (10th) **commandment** (Abl. Means) **the sin nature** (Subj. Nom.) **might become** (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential, Deponent) **utterly** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; exceedingly, beyond measure and proportion) **sinful** (Uncompl. Acc.; only then do some people get their eyes opened).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:13** Τὸ οὖν ἀγαθὸν ἐμοὶ ἐγένετο θάνατος μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἵνα φανῇ ἁμαρτία διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ μοι κατεργαζομένη θάνατον ἵνα γένηται καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς

^{VUL} **Romans 7:13** quod ergo bonum est mihi factum est mors absit sed peccatum ut appareat peccatum per bonum mihi operatum est mortem ut fiat supra modum peccans peccatum per mandatum

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:14** Certainly we know that the law is spiritual [according to divine norms & standards], but I am carnal [controlled by the sin nature], when I have been led astray [sold into slavery] under the authority of the sin nature [when we go chasing after our 1st husband].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:14** For we know that the law is spiritual. But as for myself, I am fleshly [being dominated by the sinful nature], permanently sold under the sinful nature.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:14** For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Certainly we all know (Gnomic Perfect tense) that the law is a representation of divine norms and standards and is spiritual when its purpose is properly understood. Unfortunately, however, we are carnal (Tendential Present tense) when we are controlled by the sin nature. The sin nature belongs to the realm of the flesh, in that it is contained in our cell structure due to the imputation of sin from Adam. This is positional truth, however, while this verse is part of a treatise on experiential truth. Daily decisions (Tendential Present tense) determine whether we are spiritual or carnal.

Mature believers make more consistent decisions to live according the wishes of their 2nd husband, Jesus Christ. Immature believers make more consistent decisions to live according to the lusts of their 1st husband, the old sin nature. A believer is spiritual when she lives with her 2nd husband; a believer is carnal when she lives with her 1st husband. A believer is carnal when (Temporal Participle) she allows herself to be led astray (Consummative Perfect tense) by her 1st husband. The 1st husband has the power to capture us and lead us astray in sin at every moment. We can either fight against his lures, or we can acquiesce and become his slave.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The non-spiritual view of the Law regards it as concerned only with external actions. But the spiritual view of the Law knows that it is as much concerned about motives, desires, imaginations, and feelings as it is about actions. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) Some Christians are said to be carnal because they can receive only the milk of the Word, in contrast to strong meat; they yield to envy, strife, and divisions, and are walking as men, while the true child of God is expected to walk in the Spirit. Though saved, carnal Christians are

walking according to the course of this world. They are carnal because the flesh is dominating them. The carnal man, being so little occupied with true spiritual meat, yields to envy and strife which lead to divisions among believers. The carnal Christian is also characterized by a walk that is on the same plane as that of the natural man. (L.S. Chafer)

The presence of sin in the believer involves conflict in his heart and life. If there is remaining, indwelling sin, there must be the conflict which Paul describes here. It is futile to argue that this conflict is not normal. If there is still sin to any degree in one who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, then there is tension, yes, contradiction, within the heart of that person. Indeed, the more sanctified the person is, the more conformed he is to the image of his Savior, the more he must recoil against every lack of conformity to the holiness of God. The deeper his apprehension of the majesty of God, the greater the intensity of his love to God, the more persistent his yearning for the attainment of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, the more conscious will he be of the gravity of the sin which remains and the more poignant will be his detestation of it. It is one thing for sin to live in us: it is another for us to live in sin. It is one thing for the enemy to occupy the capital: it is another for his defeated hosts to harass the garrisons of the kingdom. (J. Murray)

“Sarx,” though it may, in accordance with its original meaning, sometimes denote our mere bodily organization, is usually used to express our whole present human constitution, mental as well as bodily. (J. Barmby) It is clear that Paul is recounting his experience as a saved man. He desires to do good and hates sin. No unsaved man does that. The failure to achieve his purpose is found in the fact that he is attempting in his own strength that which can only be accomplished in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. (K. Wuest) He is like a person living simultaneously on two planes, eagerly longing to lead a life in keeping with the higher plane, but sadly aware of the strength of indwelling sin that keeps on pulling him down to the lower plane. (F.F. Bruce)

The flesh does not roll over dead at conversion; neither does it die easily thereafter. When threatened it fights for its life. (J. Edwards) Paul is speaking of himself. And the question is: Of what stage in his life is he speaking? If we are Christians, we will never get anywhere by assuming that the 7th chapter of Romans is written about someone other than ourselves. (J. Boice) The apostle reaches now the very core of his bitter experience. He confesses that he sees the better way, and approves thereof; but he follows the worse. (R. Martin) All Christians, the best on the earth not excepted, are always carnal. They are so when compared with the spiritual law of God. They have an evil principle in their hearts or nature. While in this world, Adam lives in them, called the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 7:14 **Certainly** (emphatic conj.) **we know** (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Gnostic) **that** (conj. as Dir. Obj.) **the law** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **spiritual** (Pred. Nom.; when it is properly understood), **but** (adversative conj.) **I** (Subj. Nom.) **am** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Tential; what is inclined to occur to Christians after being born again) **carnal** (Pred.

Nom.; controlled by the OSN, belonging to the realm of the flesh; immature Christians), **when I have been led astray** (πιπράσκω, Perf.PPtc.NSM, Consummative, Temporal; sold as a slave) **under the authority of the sin nature** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; our 1st husband captured and led us astray).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:14** οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν

^{VUL} **Romans 7:14** scimus enim quod lex spiritalis est ego autem carnalis sum venundatus sub peccato

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:15** For what I accomplish [under the control of the old sin nature], I do not understand [my spiritual perception is dulled by sin], because I am not practicing the things [mechanics of the spiritual life] which I desire, but I keep doing the very things [pattern of sinning] which I utterly detest.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:15** For that which I do, I do not understand. For that which I desire, this I do not practice. But that which I hate, this I am doing.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:15** For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul illustrates the split personality that he and all believers live as they struggle against sin to live the Christian way of life. We all live a dual life, to one extent or the other. Sometimes we are in fellowship (hopefully) and sometimes we are out of fellowship. Sometimes we live in the sphere of divine power (hopefully) and sometimes we live in the sphere of the flesh and the world. Believers who know what the Christian way of life is (perhaps 5% of born-again believers), and are trying to live it, know exactly what Paul is talking about here. They desire to execute the Christian way of life by divine protocol, but are hindered from doing so by the old sin nature.

The Tential Present tense means we have the option to live the Christian way of life. This is a moment-by-moment possibility, not a guarantee. Some believers are born-again, but never desire to live the spiritual life. Some believers are out of fellowship virtually their entire life. They do not confess their personal sins to the Lord (1 John 1:9) until divine discipline becomes so great that they cry out in agony for forgiveness. They are not those who “desire” to live the Christian way of life. They have virtually no life of experiential sanctification whatsoever. Although the phrase is not perfect, to some extent it is appropriate; they are “saved, sanctified, and stupefied.”

In Paul’s personal testimony, he desires to live the Christian way of life, but he nevertheless keeps on doing (Iterative Present tense) the very sinful things which he

utterly detests (Pictorial Present tense). Paul hates sin. He hates what it does to his soul. He hates what his personality becomes when he sins. He loves the Word of God and loves building a structure of Bible doctrine in His soul. He understands that Bible doctrine is the mind of Christ, and He wants to think like Christ. When he is overcome by sin, and the Bible doctrine in his soul is gradually “chipped away,” he is grieved inside. He does not like the split personality he experiences as he bounces in-and-out of fellowship with the Lord.

When his spiritual perception has become dull and he is blinded by sin, Paul does not understand (Static Present tense) why he is once again under the control of the sin nature. On the one hand, he desires to live the spiritual life; on the other hand, what he has accomplished (Aoristic Present tense) is quite often degenerate. He knows how to execute the daily function of the grace apparatus for perception: studying, metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine. He knows about the various stages of experiential growth which lead to cracking the maturity barrier. He knows how to apply the Word of God as a solution to the problems in his daily life. But so often he seems to be losing the spiritual battle, and has been forced into retreat by the sin nature.

Using the metaphor of the believer as the troubled wife, Paul knows he is dead to his 1st husband, the old sin nature. He knows the advice of his 1st marriage counselor, the law, is good; but he also knows this advice will not help him overcome the beckonings of his 1st husband, the old sin nature. Paul knows he is now remarried to his 2nd husband, the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows he has a new marriage counselor, the Holy Spirit, which *does* have the power to assist him in overcoming the influence of his 1st husband, the old sin nature. The issue in this verse is that even when knowing all these things, he still succumbs to the pull of his 1st husband, the old sin nature, on occasions.

All believers who are attempting to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ experience this continual tug-of-war in the soul. It should be encouraging to know that the greatest apostle who ever lived, the apostle Paul, had the same struggle in his Christian life. He agonized along the way just like we do. He exercised the same spiritual problem-solving devices in the Word of God that we do. He made the same daily decisions to walk in fellowship with the Lord or to wallow in one form of sin or the other just like we do. He experienced the same split personality, alternating from walking in the power of the Spirit to walking in the power of the flesh, as we do.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The ex-husband's attack has succeeded. She is more attracted to him than she is to her 2nd husband. The culprit is the wife (believer) who exercises volition. She has rejected both rebound and Bible doctrine, and yet that is the only way to escape the clutches of her 1st husband. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It was only when Paul began to "delight in the law of God in the inward man" that this deeper conflict was experienced. (L.S. Chafer) Here is a picture of life under the law, without the aid of the Spirit, portrayed from the perspective of one who has now experienced the liberating power of life in the Spirit. (F.F. Bruce)

The Holy Spirit and the OSN compete for control of the soul. The believer's volition decides the issue: to sin or to resist temptation, to remain in a state of carnality after committing a sin or to rebound back into the divine dynasphere. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The dual life pictured here by Paul finds an echo in us all, the struggle after the highest in us (what I really wish) and the slipping into doing (what I really hate) and yet sometimes do. (A.T. Robertson) Paul continues in a classical picture of divided consciousness to sketch his inner conflict between what psychologists term the “organized” and “disorganized” self. The real self centers in an ideal, in Paul’s case, Christ, or the good and holy law. Sin, personified in the graphic and emotional portrait, is the disorganized self and definitely not Paul as he longs to be. (R. Martin)

He lived a Jekyll and Hyde existence, with Mr. Hyde as the dominant self. He gave full theoretical assent to the law, but was forced to act against his better judgment by sin which was squatting in his flesh. In his case it was not merely that he knew God’s will and approved what is excellent, yet did not do it. He knew and approved and intended to do it, but could not. In so far as he regards himself as his better self, he had since adolescence become mere putty in the hand of sin which controlled him completely. In so far as his identity was that of his lower self, he was bad through and through. (L. Allen)

This is the experience of one who does not realize his death to sin and the law, but who is endeavoring to keep the letter of the law. He finds that the law of sin in his members is far more potent than the law of God which appeals to his mind. He wants to do good, but cannot. He does things which he hates to do, hence charges his misery to the indwelling sin which has taken possession of his body. He is a wretched captive. This will be the experience of all who make an earnest effort to please God by obeying the letter of that law which was broken even before it reached the people. (A.E. Knoch)

The believer does have an enemy within, whether it is called the old nature or something else. This is why there are struggles, conflicts between good and evil, within the child of God. Regeneration does not remove the compulsion to sin. The flesh, or old man, remains unchanged in the believer. It is just as wicked as it ever was. It has not been altered in any way and is capable of the same corrupt deeds. (R. Lightner) The Holy Spirit and the old sin nature compete for control of the soul. The believer’s volition decides the issue: to sin or to resist temptation, to remain in a state of carnality after committing a sin or to rebound back into the divine dynasphere. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 7:15 **For** (explanatory conj.) **what** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; that which) **I accomplish** (κατεργάζομαι, PMI1S, Aoristic, Deponent; under the *Old Sin Nature* control of the soul in Christian degeneracy), **I do not understand** (γινώσκω, PAI1S, Static; my spiritual perceptions are dulled and blinded by sin), **because** (causal conj.) **I am not practicing** (πράσσω, PAI1S, Tendentia, Potential Ind.; accomplishing) **the things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; daily function of GAP, cracking the maturity

barrier, applying the problem-solving devices) **which I desire** (θέλω, PAI1Subj., Tendential, Substantival; which is to execute the Christian Way of Life), **but** (adversative conj.) **I keep doing** (ποιέω, PAI1S, Iterative; pattern of sinning) **the very things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; living a dual life) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **I utterly detest** (μισέω, PAI1S, Pictorial, hate; believers who are entering into a psychotic or neurotic condition, having a split personality - their reality of Bible doctrine is gone).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:15** ὃ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω· οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ

^{VUL} **Romans 7:15** quod enim operor non intellego non enim quod volo hoc ago sed quod odi illud facio

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:16** Now if I keep on doing this thing [continual pattern of sinning] which I do not desire to do [against my better judgment], I agree with the law [its divine norms & standards] that it is good.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:16** In view of the fact then what I do not desire, this I do, I am in agreement with the law that it is good.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:16** If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a 1st class conditional clause (meaning it's true) to tell us that he keeps on doing (Iterative Present tense) the very pattern of sinful activity that he does not want (Gnomic Present tense) to do. He wants to live in the sphere of divine power, in fellowship with the Lord. But he keeps on sinning and finds himself in the sphere of his flesh and the world, i.e., the cosmic system. By continually falling into sin, he inadvertently agrees (Gnomic Present tense) with his 1st marriage counselor (the law) that its conclusions are holy, just and good. The law continues to be a representation of divine norms and standards, even when Paul is enslaved to the power of sin. Since he desires to live up to divine standards, in that respect he agrees that the law performs a needed function.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

My wanting to do the opposite of what I do proves my acceptance of God's law as good. The *wishing* is the better self, the *doing not* the lower self. (A.T. Robertson) Paul is revealing with considerable candor his difficulty in meeting the radical demands of the Christian faith. At the same time, he was using his own experience to describe the inevitability of spiritual defeat whenever a believer fails to appropriate the Spirit of God for victory. Sanctification is a gradual process that repeatedly takes the believer through

this recurring sequence of failure through dependency upon self to triumph through the indwelling Spirit. (R. Mounce)

If an individual can convince himself that sin is something different from *anything* he ever does, or is inclined to do, beyond *anything* he ever thinks, feels or undertakes, he can doubtless convince himself that he has not sinned. If, in his own mind, one can modify the character of sin, he can, by that process, relieve himself from the *consciousness* of sin. There are not a few such people in the world today. Truth can not stand when based upon a human experience. It must be based upon revelation. (L.S. Chafer)

Rom. 7:16 Now (transitional particle) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and I do") I keep doing (ποιέω, PAI1S, Iterative) this thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which I do not (neg. adv.) desire to do (θέλω, PAI1Subj., Gnostic, Substantival; which is to live in the cosmic system), I agree (σύμφημι, PAI1S, Gnostic, apodosis; consent, *hapax legomena*) with the law (Instr. Assoc.; as a standard) that (demonstrative conj.) it (the Mosaic Law as the marriage counselor) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) noble (Pred. Nom.; good, advantageous, worthy).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:16** εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός

^{VUL} **Romans 7:16** si autem quod nolo illud facio consentio legi quoniam bona

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:17** But as the case stands, I [using better judgment in the filling of the Spirit] am no longer performing the same, but the sin nature [following the bad judgment of the 1st husband] which keeps on dwelling in me.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:17** And since the case stands thus, no longer is it I who do it, but the sinful nature which indwells me.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:17** Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Paul still succumbs to the 1st husband, the old sin nature. As the case stands, he has gone quite some time without confessing sin to the Lord, and has subsequently lost the filling of the Spirit. He is no longer performing (Descriptive Present tense) spiritual deeds, but carnal deeds. The spiritual Paul, the one married to Jesus Christ, is not in control of his life. Instead, the 1st husband, the old sin nature which continues to indwell (Iterative Present tense) him, is in control. Both sin and the Holy Spirit indwell him, but he is allowing the sin nature to rule over him at this point

in time. When he is filled with the Spirit, he has an integrated soul; when he relinquishes control to the old sin nature, he loses his cohesive, integrated soul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When the Greek article is used with more than one word, it "brackets" everything following it inclusive of the word(s) it modifies, i.e. "n" - [the dwelling-in-me sin]. (W.G. MacDonald) When I sin, God has already separated me from the sin and said that I did not do it. When I do what I do not want to do, I must immediately agree with God, "Lord, it was not me who did it. It was sin dwelling in me." To understand God in this matter is to know you are released from condemnation. To be released from condemnation is to be released from the guilt that destroys. The believer who fails to understand this vital part of Paul's gospel has arrested his spiritual growth and may walk in despair. We will only be able to grow as we mature in the liberty we find in Christ. When there is a legal restraint placed on us, there will be no liberty and therefore, no growth. This is the bottom line of Paul's gospel. (K. Lamb)

The world and the heart of the believer are in a confederacy against the good in his soul, so that he can neither eat nor drink, work nor sleep in safety, because of enemies without and treacherous lusts within. The Christian has a stack of dry tinder ready to ignite as soon as the sparks of temptation light upon them. The policy and power, the strength and prevalency, the nearness and treachery of indwelling sin, is not only in us, but is part and parcel of us. It dwells there ever seeking our overthrow. Such is our native depravity that it is capable of transmuting blessings into cursing, making things lawful into snares and entangling us with everything we meet with. (A.W. Pink)

Rom. 7:17 But (adversative conj.) as the case stands (Adv. Time, now; idiomatic), I (Subj. Nom.) am (ellipsis, verb supplied) no longer (Adv. Time) performing (κατεργάζομαι, PMI1S, Descriptive, Deponent) the same (Acc. Dir. Obj., attributive use; he has gone so long without using *Rebound* that the OSN has control of his soul and he has now become, through dissociative splitting, the *Psycho Believer*), but (adversative conj.) the sin nature (Subj. Nom.; the ex-husband as the culprit) which keeps on dwelling (ἐνοικέω, PAPtc.NSF, Iterative, Attributive) in me (Loc. Sph.; there is no longer a cohesive, integrated soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:17** νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ ἐνοικοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία

^{VUL} **Romans 7:17** nunc autem iam non ego operor illud sed quod habitat in me peccatum

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:18** In fact, I know that nothing of intrinsic value [meeting divine norms & standards] resides in me, that is, in my flesh [home of the sin nature], for to will [desire] is present in me, but to perform the noble [divine production] is not present.

κω Rom. 7:18 For I know positively that there does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh, good; for the being desirous is constantly with me; but the doing of the good, not;

κJV Romans 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows (Static Present tense) that nothing of intrinsic value, nothing that meets divine norms and standards, dwells (Pictorial Present tense) in his soul. He realizes that there is something terribly wrong inside of him, and that something is the old sin nature. When he says "in me," he is referring to his flesh, the headquarters of the sin nature. The sin nature lives in the DNA of every cell in his body. He is referring to his natural, physical condition; he is not contradicting the simultaneous indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Paul also recognizes that the desire to do good (Tendential Present tense) is present (Gnomic Present tense) in him, a desire prompted by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit never ceases (Gnomic), but the filling and leadership of the Holy Spirit (Tendential) is conditioned on his positive volition. And even though the indwelling is constant, and the filling is periodic, he also realizes that in his flesh the ability to actually perform (Static Present tense) the promptings of the Holy Spirit without the assistance of the Holy Spirit is not present. The flesh, on its own power, is unable to fulfill the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

The flesh neither desires nor has the inherent ability to meet divine standards. In most believers, the flesh (old sin nature) is in control the vast majority of their life. This is not the plan of God for the Church Age believer, but it is the sad reality of our times. Using a psychological metaphor, instead of the host personality being in control (under the filling of the Spirit), the alter personality (old sin nature) is too often in control. A.W. Pink has an interesting analogy below, followed by a true positional concept, but please note that this is an experiential sanctification verse, not a justification (salvation) verse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The heart of a sinner is as naturally indisposed for loving and appropriating the things of God, as the wood which Elijah laid on the altar was to ignite, when he had poured so much water upon it, as not only to saturate the wood, but also to fill the trench round about it (I Kings 18:33); a miracle is required for the one as much as it was for the other. The fact is that if souls were left to themselves - to their own "free will" - after they had been truly convicted of sin, *none* would ever savingly come to Christ. A further and distinct operation of the Spirit is still needed to actually "draw" the heart close with Christ Himself. Thus, from start to finish, "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9); salvation is of the Father in ordaining it, of the Son in purchasing it, and of the Spirit in applying it. (A.W. Pink) Isn't it refreshing to find someone as honest as Paul? Don't

make the mistake of sweeping your struggle with sin under the proverbial carpet. (W. Kroll)

The wishing is the better self, the “doing not” the lower self. (A.T. Robertson) Do we agree with this statement that Paul makes? Not really. We want to believe that there is still some good thing in us, so we try to prove it by making it happen. The problem that God has with us is not our sin. We want to rid ourselves of our sins. It is our righteousness that gets in the way. As long as I can recommend myself to God in any area, I am unacceptable for the purposes of God. But when I finally decide to agree with God and confess that no good thing is in me, then I am in a position for God to do something for me and through me. (K. Lamb) Here, again, we have the “double self” of the renewed man. “In me dwells no good,” but this corrupt self is not my “true self.” It is but sin dwelling in my “real self,” as a renewed man. (R. Jamieson)

Rom. 7:18 In fact (inferential conj.), I know (οἶδα, PAI1S, Static) that (demonstrative conj.) nothing (Nom. Spec.) of intrinsic value (Subj. Nom.) resides (οἰκέω, PAI3S, Pictorial; lives, dwells) in me (Loc. Sph.; realizes that something is terribly wrong in his soul), that (Loc. Idea) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Pictorial), in my (Poss. Gen.) flesh (Loc. Sph.; headquarters of the OSN), for (explanatory conj.) to will (θέλω, PAInf., Tendential, Inf. as Subj. Nom. of Verb; desire, resolve) is present (παράκειμαι, PMI3S, Gnostic; ready, at hand) in me (Loc. Sph.), but (adversative conj.) to perform (κατεργάζομαι, PMInf., Static, Inf. as Subj. Nom. of Verb, Articular, Deponent) the noble (Acc. Dir. Obj.; excellent, good, honorable purpose) is (ellipsis, verb implied) not present (Obj. Neg. Adv.; the altered personality is in control; some manuscripts read "not to be found").

^{WHO} **Romans 7:18** οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί τοῦτ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου ἀγαθόν· τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παρὰκεῖταιί μοι τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὔ·

^{VUL} **Romans 7:18** scio enim quia non habitat in me hoc est in carne mea bonum nam velle adiacet mihi perficere autem bonum non invenio

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:19** For I do not consistently perform the intrinsic good which I desire, but I keep practicing the evil which I do not desire.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:19** For that which I desire, good, I do not; but that which I do not desire, evil, this I practice.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:19** For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sums up the split condition of his soul in the simplest manner yet. On the one hand, the divine production that he wants (Gnomic Present tense) to do, he does not consistently (Iterative Present tense) perform. On the other hand, the evil production that he doesn't want (Gnomic Present tense) to do, he keeps on practicing (Iterative Present tense) anyway. This is a frustrating condition and experience that all believers who are on the road to spiritual maturity can relate to, at one time or another. But a growing believer should not continue to live in this "split" existence indefinitely.

When we reach a stage where we have a solid structure of doctrine in our souls, the tide should turn in God's favor. The excruciatingly frustrating battle against the world, the flesh and the devil never ends, but our victory over this struggle should become increasingly ours under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Jekyll and Hyde existence Paul is describing here is one experienced from spiritual childhood to spiritual adolescence. Paul was not immune to this struggle; he had to build the same doctrinal structure in his soul, and pass the same type of application tests that all believers pass, in order to advance to spiritual maturity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is of the utmost importance clearly to see that the great struggle of the latter part of Romans 7 is neither a purely Jewish one, nor a normal Christian walk, nor a necessary Christian experience. Doubtless we will often see other Christians having a Romans 7 struggle, and shall easily find ourselves falling into such a struggle. But as our faith [doctrine] becomes strong, and our reliance upon the Holy Spirit becomes more constant, we shall walk as Paul did - triumph in Christ. (W.R. Newell) Paul speaks of a contrast between inclination and act. (W.G. Thomas)

This is the dilemma of the believer who has only a "little" doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul knew that Christians in general live in two worlds, with the tension that this involves. Temporally they live in this world; as men and women of flesh and blood they are subject to the conditions of mortal life. Spiritually, however, they have passed from death to life, from the realm of darkness to the kingdom of light. (F.F. Bruce) Evil is often mistaken for good (2 Cor. 11:14-15). Sincere do-gooders practice evil. Even legitimate good can be mutilated or distorted into evil. The more involved a believer becomes in whitewashing the devil's world through human good crusades (Matt. 23:27), the more that evil is intensified. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 7:19 For (explanatory conj.) I do not (neg. adv.) consistently perform (ποιέω, PAI1S, Durative & Iterative) the intrinsic good (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref., relative pronoun) I desire (θέλω, PAI1S, Gnomic; purpose, resolve), but (adversative conj.) I keep practicing (πράσσω, PAI1S, Iterative, Potential Ind. of Impulse) the evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref., relative pronoun) I do not desire (θέλω, PAI1S, Gnomic; here is the split soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:19** οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν ἀλλὰ ὃ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω

^{VUL} **Romans 7:19** non enim quod volo bonum hoc facio sed quod nolo malum hoc ago

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:20** Now if I am habitually practicing what I do not desire [pattern of the reversionist], I am no longer the one performing it [my primary personality is out of control], but the sin nature [1st husband] which continues to reside inside of me [my secondary personality is in control].

^{KW} **Rom. 7:20** But in view of the fact that that which I do not desire, this I do, no longer is it I who do it, but the sinful nature which indwells me does it.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:20** Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to explain the nature of a believer's struggle to overcome the sin nature by living in filling of the Holy Spirit. At this stage in his spiritual development, Paul experienced two personalities or forces fighting within his soul: the old sin nature and Jesus Christ, the former husband and current husband. When Paul habitually practices (Iterative Present tense) the evil production that he does not want (Gnomic Present tense) to do, he is in effect out of fellowship and is in a state of carnality or reversionism. At first it sounds like Paul is making excuses for this bad behavior, by concluding that it is no longer Paul who is executing (Iterative Present tense) the evil pattern of life.

It should come as no surprise that Paul is not trying to absolve himself from responsibility for his actions! What he is explaining to us is that he realizes his position as a new spiritual species. He knows that when he is in fellowship with the Lord, he is living the life that he truly desires to live for the Lord. This is his "normal" *modus vivendi*. Unfortunately, when he cooperates with the 1st husband, the old sin nature, he becomes somebody else entirely. His primary, normal personality that operates according to the filling of the Holy Spirit surrenders control of his soul to his secondary, abnormal personality that operates according to the sin nature that resides (Durative Present tense) inside of him.

So on the one hand, it is Paul that is living in a pattern of carnality, but on the other hand, it is not Paul that is living in this pattern. The Paul that he knows, loves and respects, is the Paul that is continually filled with the Spirit. The Paul that he despises is the Paul that is controlled by the old sin nature that lives in the cell structure of his body. Even though the old sin nature is the culprit, it is Paul's daily decisions to allow the old sin nature to take control of his soul. In the end, Paul is still responsible for his sinful activity; his volition determines whether his primary or secondary personality is in control.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Yet there is responsibility and guilt for the struggle goes on. There is no surcease for the stings of conscience. (A.T. Robertson) Paul had known the distress of bitter conflict which racked him and tore him apart. In his integrated life there were two laws or governing principles at war. His faculties and powers were enemy-occupied territory. Sin had invaded them and was fighting to stamp out every attempt at resistance – and succeeding again and again. (L. Allen)

When doing what he does not approve he declares it is no longer I that do it, but sin, identified here with his lower or disorganized self. (R. Martin) This expresses the “real Paul” who in the deep recesses of his heart delighted in the law of God, in contrast to the “other Paul” who so readily did the sin of which the “real Paul” did not approve. (R. Mounce) When your soul is controlled by the sin nature, you are carnal and powerless to live the spiritual life. Rebound (confession of sin) is the only solution to carnality and the only problem-solving device that functions in the state of sin. How do you recover from carnality? Simply name your personal sins privately (1 John 1:9) to God the Father. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 7:20 Now (adversative conj.) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and I am") I (Subj. Nom.) am habitually practicing (ποιέω, PAI1S, Iterative) what (Acc. Dir. Obj.) I do not (neg. adv.) desire (θέλω, PAI1S, Gnostic; pattern of the reversionist), I (Subj. Nom.) am no longer (Adv. Time) the one (Pred. Nom., personal pronoun) performing (κατεργάζομαι, PAI1S, Iterative, Deponent) it (Acc. Dir. Obj., intensive pronoun; my primary normal personality is out of control), but (adversative conj.) the sin nature (Subj. Nom.; cooperating with the ex-husband) which continues to reside (οικέω, PAPtc.NSF, Durative, Attributive) inside of me (Loc. Sph.; the split personality is under control and he is divorced from reality).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:20** εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποίω οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία

^{VUL} **Romans 7:20** si autem quod nolo illud facio non ego operor illud sed quod habitat in me peccatum

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:21** Consequently, I discovered this principle: that when I desire to do the honorable thing [from the filling of the Spirit], the principle of evil [old sin nature] resides in me.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:21** I find therefore the law, that to me, always desirous of doing the good, to me, the evil is always present.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:21** I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul discovered (Historical Present tense) a strange and unexpected thing in the early stages of his Christian walk. He found two opposing principles residing (Durative Present tense) in him at the same time. Positionally, he is unable to dispose of either the Lord Jesus Christ or the old sin nature; both husbands are present within him. But he is able to ignore one and live by the dictates of the other at any time. He cannot do anything about the coexistence of the two, but he can utilize the rebound technique (confession of sin in 1 John 1:9) and Bible doctrine to obey the Lord and ignore the sin nature.

Paul is highly cognizant that whenever he desires (Customary Present tense) to do (Iterative Present tense) the honorable thing by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, he nevertheless meets the pernicious principle of the old sin nature head-on. If he allows the sin nature to rule over his soul, he injures his spiritual life and “splits” his personality. When this occurs, he is living a self-contradictory life. He knows who and what he truly is positionally, but in this stage of his life, the struggle is great and his personal victories are few and hard to come by.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Romans 7 is a classic example of the conflict that exists in the believer’s life when sin is present. It is futile to argue that this conflict is not normal. If there is still sin to any degree in one who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, then there is tension, yes, contradiction, within the heart of that person. Indeed, the more sanctified the person is, the more conformed he is to the image of his Savior, the more he must recoil against every lack of conformity to the holiness of God. The deeper his apprehension of the majesty of God, the greater the intensity of his love to God, the more persistent his yearning for the attainment of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, the more conscious will he be of the gravity of the sin which remains and the more poignant will be his detestation of it. The more closely he comes to the holiest of all, the more he apprehends the sinfulness that is his. (J. Boice)

Paul is ever conscious of a moral contradiction and conflict within, a desire to do good and yet an evil always present. (W.G. Thomas) “Emoi, emoi” is repeated for the sake of emphasis, meaning my better self, my true personality. It is to be compared to “the inner man” in the next verse, also translated as the hidden man, my very self, or my true personality. It denotes that part of me which holds communication with the divine, which is immortal and free from the accidents of external circumstances. (J. Lightfoot) Self-attempts to rid our members of the tyranny of indwelling sin cause the frustration that underlies this passage. No one knew that better than the apostle Paul. As long as that principle of sin remained within him, Paul would struggle with the flesh. What’s true for the apostle is true for you and me, too. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 7:21 Consequently (inferential illative particle; something unexpected and strange has happened), I discovered (εὕρισκω, PAI1S, Historical) this (demonstrative pronoun; doctrinal) principle (Acc. Dir. Obj.; rule, tension, self-contradiction; the coexistence of doctrine from the new husband and evil from the ex-husband): that (conj. indirect discourse, dependent clause) when I desire (θέλω, PAPtc.DSM, Customary, Temporal; resolve, wish) to do (ποιέω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Intended Result) the honorable thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.), the principle of evil (Subj. Nom.; injurious, pernicious, split personality due to the OSN) resides (παράκειμαι, PMI3S, Durative; is present, ready, at hand) in me (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:21** Εὕρισκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλὸν ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται.

^{VUL} **Romans 7:21** invenio igitur legem volenti mihi facere bonum quoniam mihi malum adiacet

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:22** By all means, I joyfully concur with the law of God [Bible doctrine] with reference to the inner man [my primary, spiritual personality],

^{KW} **Rom. 7:22** For I rejoice in the law of God according to the inward man.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The primary, spiritual personality of Paul delights in (Customary Present tense) the law or the precepts and principles of Bible doctrine. The real Paul, the Paul who is in fellowship (filled with the Spirit), is what is on the inside. The filling of the Spirit is not what you necessarily see exhibited on the outside. You can't "see" the filling of the Spirit. A person can do honorable things on the outside, but those honorable activities may or may not be a result of the filling of the Spirit. We cannot see the conflict going on in a believer's soul. Only the person doing these activities can know whether they are being done in fellowship or in carnality. But if a believer loves the Word of God and is consistently metabolizing and applying it, you can be sure the inner man is often filled with the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Notice that there is a progression in the statements made about the Law. Paul began in verse 14 by saying, "We know that the Law is spiritual." In verse 16, "I consent to the Law that it is good." But now he goes beyond that, and says "I delight in it." (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) Naturally, only a regenerate person has an inward nature enslaved, so to speak, to the law of God. Only one who is born again can truly delight in the law of God

according to the inward man. Paul's words in Romans 7 cannot possibly describe an unregenerate person dead in trespasses and sins. What they do describe is the astounding enigma of Christian experience. The believer in Jesus is alive in spirit, while still inhabiting a physical house which is as dead to God's life as it can possibly be. (Z. Hodges)

He takes pleasure in the Divine Word, although it reveals to him the sinfulness of his own heart. He delights in the law of God, because it shows to him his Father's will. He delights in the law of God, because it shows to him the ideal of human character, the standard of good to which he desires to attain. When we delight in the law of God after the inward man, making it our constant study; when we humbly, but with earnest resolution, set ourselves to obey its precepts; this is evidence of the renewed nature and the regenerate spirit. (J. Barmby) It is difficult to view the speaker here as other than a believer. (F.F. Bruce) As Satan's inside agent the sin nature within man executes the devil's sinister policy of hatred and antagonism. Acquired by Adam at the Fall, the old sin nature exists genetically in the human body, "waging war against the principle of the mind" where Bible doctrine, "the law from God," is received, retained, and recalled. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

"When wisdom enters into your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion shall preserve you, understanding shall keep you." (Prov. 2:10-11) For wisdom to enter into our hearts means that the things of God have such an influence upon us as to dominate our affections and move our wills. For knowledge to be pleasant to our souls signifies that we delight in the law of God after the inward man, that submission to God's will is not irksome but desirable. Where such is the case, the individual possesses a discernment which enables him to penetrate Satan's disguises and perceive the barb beneath the bait, and is endowed with a discretion which makes him prudent and cautious, so that he shuns those places where alluring temptations abound and avoids the company of evil men and women. Thereby is he delivered from danger and secured from making shipwreck of the faith. (A.W. Pink)

Rom. 7:22 By all means (inferential particle; certainly), I joyfully concur with (συνήδομαι, PMI1S, Customary, Deponent; delight in) the law (Instr. Assoc., Bible doctrine) of God (Abl. Source) with reference to the inner (Adv. Place; the "man inside") man (Acc Gen. Ref.; the *real* you is not what you see on the outside, but what goes on in the inside; the mind or soul as the battleground for the angelic conflict),

^{WHO} **Romans 7:22** συνήδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον

^{VUL} **Romans 7:22** condelector enim legi Dei secundum interiorem hominem

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:23** But [after studying the matter] I see another principle of a different kind [carnal as opposed to spiritual] in my members [the sin nature in the cell structure of the body], constantly fighting [carrying on an aggressive campaign] against the principle of my

mind [the old sin nature wages war against Bible doctrine in the soul], and so constantly making me a prisoner [POW] to the principle of the sin nature which is in [takes captive of] my members.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:23** But I see a different kind of a law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind, making me a prisoner of war to the law of the sinful nature which is in my members.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

After applying some of the doctrine he had been learning, the apostle Paul saw (Aoristic Present tense) a different kind of principle in his body which was constantly waging war (Latin: pugnacious) against (Iterative Present tense) the principle of his mind. The carnal forces from the old sin nature were carrying on a military campaign against the spiritual forces of the doctrine and Spirit in his soul. The doctrinal content of the “nous” or left lobe of his mentality was under attack by the sin nature. When he was filled with the Spirit and utilizing the doctrine in his soul, his personality was spiritually “integrated.” When he was overcome by sin and was not utilizing the doctrine in his soul, his personality was “split,” perhaps even psychotic (like King Saul).

On many occasions, Paul tried to remain in fellowship and apply doctrinal rationales to the problem at hand. But the old sin nature repeatedly (Iterative Present tense) captivated him, holding him as a prisoner-of-war. This didn’t happen just a couple of times; this stage in Paul’s spiritual growth, like our own, might have continued for years. When the sin nature takes captives, it holds them tight and cuts off all means of escape ... except one: confession of sin followed by the filling of the Spirit and metabolism of Bible doctrine. The sin nature resides (Gnomic Present tense) in the cell structure of the body and is actively engaged in an assault on doctrine in your soul. Although it never leaves or gives up, you always have the ability (power of the Holy Spirit and a constant supply of doctrine) to defend yourself and refuse its temptations.

The old sin nature frequently takes prisoners (Latin: captives), turning spiritual believers into carnal believers, and carnal believers into reversionists. It holds us at gun point, or if you prefer an historical analogy from Paul’s time, a pointed spear or sharp sword at our throat. Satan uses the old sin nature as his undercover, secret agent. The old sin nature hides in the shadows, luring us into ambushes of the flesh and the world whenever possible. The Lord has provided us with an escape from sin’s clutches, however, if we continue to use his delegated divine resources to flee our 1st husband. Paul studied this phenomenon in great detail, and before the epistle to the Romans is over, he will provide us with an excellent battle plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Nous” here, means "principle," as opposed to “law,” and is indeterminate. (A.T. Robertson) As Satan's inside agent, the OSN within man executes the devil's sinister policy of hatred and antagonism. Acquired by Adam at the Fall, the OSN exists

genetically in the human body ... inherently distorting human life and continually opposing the divine plan for blessing man. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul does not see in his nature two normal modes in which certain forces operate: he sees two authorities saying to him, Do this, and the higher succumbing to the lower. As the lower prevails, it leads him captive to the law of sin which is in his members, or in other words, to itself. (K. Wuest)

There is a dualism in man; the lower appetites strive to subjugate the higher and nobler desires. Sin struggles hard; the spirit may be willing to comply with the Divine dictate, but the flesh is weak unto good, and often refuses to follow the lead of the spirit. Recall the temptation and conflict of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane. The law of the members, our corporeal frame, often pleads speciously for the indulgence of a longing legitimate enough at another time or place, and this fact augments the severity of the warfare. (S. Aldridge) The relative strength of the two opposing principles is different in different Christians. While some come so low, through iniquities prevailing against them, that the law of the mind can at times be scarce felt at all; others habitually walking in the Spirit crucify the flesh so that the law of sin is practically dead. (R. Jamieson)

This verse contains an antanaclasis, or the repetition of the same word (law) in a different sense. There are three uses of the word "law" in this verse. In the first and third places, the word "law" refers to the old nature, which is indwelling sin, because it once lorded it over him, though now it only struggles to usurp again; in the second it refers to the divine law (i.e. the new nature) implanted in him, which is contrary to the former, and contests its claims. (E.W. Bullinger) Paul's discussion of the struggle in Romans 7 must be understood as that of a Christian. He wants to do good; a lost man loves evil. He delights in God's law; the lost man is hostile to God and does not submit to God's law. (T. Nettles)

Rom. 7:23 but (adversative conj.) I see (βλέπω, PA1IS, Aoristic; beginning to apply some of the doctrine he had been learning) another principle (Acc. Dir. Obj.; or law) of a different kind (Acc. Gen. Ref.; carnal, the enemy) in my (Poss. Gen.) members (Loc. Sph.; the OSN in the body), constantly fighting against (ἀντιστρατεύω, PMPTc.ASM, Iterative, Modal, Deponent; waging a war with, carrying on a campaign against) the principle (Dat. Ind. Obj.; or law) of my (Poss. Gen.) mind (Adv. Gen. Ref.; reflective intelligence; the split personality or psychotic condition is at war with the integrated personality; battle in the "nous" between Bible doctrine and the OSN), and so (connective conj.) constantly making me (Dat. Ind. Obj.) a prisoner (αἰχμαλωτίζω, PAPtc.ASM, Iterative, Modal; POW, captive; holding its spear or sword point to my body) to the principle (Dat. Ind. Obj.) of the sin nature (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the OSN frequently takes captives) which is (εἰμί, PAPtc.DSM, Gnomical, Attributive, Articular) in my (Poss.

Gen.) **members** (Loc. Sph.; the OSN is in the cell structure of the body and remains there unless you succumb to its' temptations).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:23** βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με [ἐν] τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου

^{VUL} **Romans 7:23** video autem aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae et captivantem me in lege peccati quae est in membris meis

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:24** I am a stressed-out [tormented, anguished] person! Who will rescue me from the body of this death [old sin nature control]?

^{KW} **Rom. 7:24** Wretched man, I. Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?

^{KJV} **Romans 7:24** O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In his tormented and anguished state, Paul cries out: I am (Descriptive Present tense) a stressed-out person! Paul penned the word “talaiporos” in a condition of being miserable, wretched and wearied from internal conflict. It could easily be used as a catch-all phrase for many categories of mental disorder. Paul was tired of constantly fighting against the power of the old sin nature. His agonizing cry was one of anguish and hopelessness, typical of a believer in reversionism. A believer who refuses to confess sin and who ignores Bible doctrine will inevitably have mental and emotional problems of one sort or the other.

The wages of sin is spiritual death; a life of continued carnality is one of continued divine discipline. At this point in his spiritual walk, Paul was out of fellowship and was tired of the spiritual battle and the discipline he was receiving. There seemed to be no way out of his predicament. He continues his cry for help by asking for someone, anyone, to rescue (Deliberative Future tense) him from his body of spiritual death (Latin: liberate). The conflict between the old sin nature and the few doctrinal resources he had at that time was overwhelming. He was failing the test and was out of fellowship. A cry for help is typical of all believers who remain in carnality for an extended period of time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

I sincerely doubt whether there was ever a time during the last 19 centuries when there were such multitudes of men and women whose lives belied their lips, and whose walk repudiated their talk. Not only are there millions of professing Christians who rarely if ever read the Scriptures for themselves, and who are in total ignorance of its most elementary teachings, but it is greatly to be feared that many, very many of those who are regular attendees at preaching services, are nevertheless, deceived souls. If a man has no

love for spiritual things ... if he is thoroughly wrapped up in the things of this world, then his eyes must be closed to the glories of Heaven. (D.G. Barnhouse) His sin-dominated personality is enduring a living death. (L. Allen) The emotional expression of this inner conflict and divided consciousness culminates in a cry of distress or despair. (R. Martin)

The phrase "body of this death" is an antimereia, or a substitute of a noun for an adjective, i.e. this dying body or this mortal body. Not until this mortal body shall die, or be changed and glorified, shall the saints be delivered from their conflict between the old and new natures. It cannot be accomplished by vows or resolutions, or by discipline, which is the fond idea and aim of all who are ignorant of this teaching, from Rome to Keswick. (E.W. Bullinger) This was Paul's cry during the spiritual experience he describes of himself in this chapter, ignorant of the delivering power of the Holy Spirit, concerning Whom he has so much to say in the next chapter. (K. Wuest)

Believers are perfect as to their justification, but their sanctification has only begun. It is a progressive work. When they believed in Christ, they knew but very little of the fountain of corruption that dwells in them. When Christ made Himself known to them as their Saviour, and the Beloved of their souls, the carnal mind seemed to be dead, but they found out afterwards that it was not dead. So some have experienced more soul trials after their conversion than when they were awakened to a sense of their lost condition. (F.F. Bruce) The flesh, that principle of seeking pleasure from the created order without primary allegiance to the glory of God and obedience to God, is no friend to the Spirit or to the process of sanctification. (T. Nettles)

Inquire more closely into the ground of this exclamation. What is it of which such grievous complaint is made? He appeals for aid against a strong foe whose grasp is on his throat. The eyes of the warrior grow dim, his heart is faint, and fearful of utter defeat, he cries, "Who will deliver me?" (S. Aldridge) The words "this death" refer to the miserable condition of the Christian who is yet dominated more or less by the evil nature which all the while he is desiring to gain victory over. Paul is not crying out for egress from his body but for deliverance from the condition of defeat which his residence in his physical body makes a possibility, and his lack of spiritual knowledge up to that moment, resulted in. (K. Wuest) Paul is speaking of human nature, which has inherited guilt and sin from Adam. Paul knows there hangs over his life a cloud of guilt and death imputed with sin. (W. Kroll)

This verse expresses the continuous experience of every true child of God, who understands the conflict between the two natures - the old man and the new man, the flesh and the spirit, the old nature and the Divine nature implanted within him by the Holy Spirit. This conflict is the one thing of which a merely *religious* person is destitute. It is the one thing that cannot be imitated by the hypocrite. He never has an abiding sense of inward corruption and of the conflict with it; because he has not the new nature by which alone it is manifested and brought to light. He has no standard within him to detect it, or by which to try it. Until the truth of the abiding conflict between the two natures is seen no spiritual peace can be enjoyed. (E.W. Bullinger)

Rom. 7:24 I am (ἐγώ, PA11S, Descriptive, Exclamatory) a stressed-out (Interjectional Nom.; ταλαίπωρος, Paul penned this word for *mental disorders*, not just wretched, tormented, ruinous, ill-omened or miserable) person (Pred. Nom., *aposiopesis*; tired of constantly striving against the power of the OSN; the reversionistic cry of anguish and hopelessness)! Who (interrogative pronoun) will rescue (ῥύομαι, FMI3S, Deliberative, Deponent; deliver, liberate, drag from danger, "get me out of this jam") me (Dat. Ind. Obj., the reversionist) from the body (Abl. Separation) of this death (Attrib. Gen.; the conflict between the OSN and Bible doctrine has placed you out of fellowship)?

^{WHO} **Romans 7:24** ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου

^{VUL} **Romans 7:24** infelix ego homo quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius

^{LWB} **Rom. 7:25** Thanks be to God [Who delivers me] through Jesus Christ our Lord. Consequently, therefore, on the one hand, I myself serve the law [principles & objectives] of God with my mind, but on the other hand, with my flesh the law [dictates] of the sin nature.

^{KW} **Rom. 7:25** Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, I myself with my mind serve the law of God but with my flesh the law of sin.

^{KJV} **Romans 7:25** I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God will deliver Paul from his torment through Jesus Christ our Lord, and Paul thanks Him for this deliverance in advance. Because of the Lord's provision, Paul will be able to continue the battle with supernatural power, i.e. the ministry of the Holy Spirit. So with the Lord's help, he serves (Static Present tense) the objectives and principles of God with his mind. But with his flesh, he serves the dictates of the old sin nature. This is the nature of the spiritual battle, the angelic conflict in the believer's soul. It never ceases, but the mature believer is able to win battle after battle when he utilizes divine assets.

The Greek word "nous" refers to the mind, that part of the soul which stores Bible doctrine for future application. The Greek word "sarx" refers to the flesh, in which the sin nature dwells. Each operates in its own sphere, and each fights against each other for the state of a believer's soul. The eternal destiny of every man is determined by God and is unquestionable, but the believer's walk towards that destiny is left to each person and his obedience to the Word of God and the command to be filled with the Spirit. It is these

two “ingredients,” the filling of the Spirit and Bible doctrine, that enable Paul (and us) to be victorious in the battle. It is the provision of these things that Paul is thanking God for through Christ Jesus.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Two Western readings pedantically provide a direct answer to the question in verse 24, thus eliminating the particle “de.” The absence of “de” seems to represent a natural development in the light of liturgical usage; the reading “eucharisto to theo” in the *Byz Lect* seems to have arisen through transcriptional error involving the doubling of several letters. (B. Metzger) The secondary self always exhibits “weakened integrity” and a lack of inhibitions compared to the primary self. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The old sin nature resides in the flesh (body) and not the soul, or mind. (C. Hodge) Paul is not in the market for a self-help program. He is not hoping for a lucky break or turning over a new leaf. He is a drowning man crying out for rescue! (J. Edwards)

The old man tries to strangle the new man, and, unlike the infant Hercules, the Christian is in danger of being overcome by the snakes that attack his feebleness. How afflicting to one who loves God and desires to do His will, to find himself thwarted at every turn, and that to succeed means a desperate conflict! Attainments in the Divine life are not reached without a struggle, and non-success is not simply imperfection; it is failure, defeat, sin gaining the mastery. This evil is grievous because it is so near and so constant. The man is chained to a dead body. Where we go our enemy accompanies us, ever ready to assault us, especially when we are at a disadvantage from fatigue or delusive security. (S. Aldridge)

The old heart is not changed or taken away, but a new heart is given, and these two are contrary the one to the other. They remain together, and must remain until God shall deliver us from the burden of this sinful flesh - this mortal body - by a glorious resurrection like unto Christ's. (E.W. Bullinger) We are not exhorted to reckon the *sin nature* to be dead, but we are exhorted to reckon *ourselves* to be dead unto it. The “old man” will remain active apart from sufficient control. The union with Christ has provided a *possible* deliverance, but it must be entered into and claimed by such human acts of faith as are expressed in the word “reckon.” We have limitless encouragement to enter into His plan and purpose for our deliverance. (L.S. Chafer)

Rom. 7:25 **Thanks** (Subj. Nom.; grace) **be** (ellipsis, verb implied) **to God** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; He will deliver me) **through Jesus Christ** (Abl. Agency) **our** (Gen. Rel.) **Lord** (Descr. Gen.). **Consequently** (illative inferential particle), **therefore** (transitional inferential particle), **on the one hand** (μέν, correlative particle, concessive clause), **I** (Subj. Nom.) **myself** (Nom. Appos., intensive pronoun) **serve** (δουλεύω, PAI1S, Static, Potential Ind.) **the law** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the objectives and principles of God) **of God** (Poss. Gen.) **with my** (use of the article as a possessive pronoun)

mind (Instr. Means; that part of the soul which holds Bible doctrine), but (contrast particle), on the other hand (δέ, adversative particle, contrast clause), with my (use of the article as a possessive pronoun) flesh (Instr. Means) the law (Dat. Ind. Obj.; dictate, principle) of the sin nature (Descr. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 7:25** χάρις [δὲ] τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῦ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας

^{VUL} **Romans 7:25** gratia Dei per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum igitur ego ipse mente servio legi Dei carne autem legi peccati

CHAPTER 8

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:1** Therefore, there is now no condemnation [penal servitude to sin] to those in Christ Jesus.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:1** Therefore, now, there is not even one bit of condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:1** *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There is now no guilty verdict (Latin: damnation) upon those in Christ Jesus. All those who believe in Jesus Christ will be evaluated for rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but they will not face eternal judgment at the Great White Throne. All believers will reside in heaven with the Lord, as opposed to enduring eternal torment in the Lake of Fire. Throughout this portion of Romans, Paul weaves positional truth with experiential truth. Our relationship with Christ begins with positional truth, and hopefully continues with experiential practice. The Holy Spirit is the agent of our regeneration (effective power) and our assistant in experiential sanctification (available power and mentorship). “No condemnation” refers primarily to freedom from guilt and the enslaving power of the sin nature, an experiential sanctification concept, but there is a “hint” of positional truth behind it as well; believers will not be indicted at the Great White Throne.

The additional phrase “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” in the KJV is a scribal error, passed on by the Latin Vulgate. When added to this verse, it makes it sound like our eternal destiny is determined by our experiential walk in the Spirit, which is a heretical concept. Our eternal destiny was settled by the counsel of the Godhead in eternity past and has nothing to

do with our experiential walk. Nevertheless, there are some commentators (slaves to the KJV: Textus Receptus) who leave the phrase in, and attempt to make eternal security dependent upon the performance of the believer rather than the sovereignty of God. The context, however, is about sanctification rather than expiation or perseverance.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We are all, without exception, "condemned" at birth due to the imputation of Adam's sin, but for believers, this condemnation is cancelled ... we are pardoned through Christ Jesus. We are free from judgment at the Lake of Fire for the same reason, a sure sign of our eternal security. Also, there would be no "new life" if some form of judgment or condemnation was still hanging around to get us. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Free of all arrears of public assessments of all kinds, including taxes upon a parcel of land. (A. Deissmann) There is an interpolation in some manuscripts of a phrase from verse 4: "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (B. Metzger) The scribe looked up, looked down, lost his place, and copied part of another verse onto the end of this one. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) These additional words in the Textus Receptus have but slight support, having probably been supplied from verse 4. They are out of place here. (J. Barmby)

In Romans 7:14-25 Paul has summarized his experience as a mature Christian. He battles daily with the flesh. The message of this chapter is that the flesh is weak and is unable to win. How then can he be victorious in the daily struggle? In 7:25 he bursts forth in praise that God has provided a means for practical victory. That victory is the subject of Romans 8. The word "condemnation" in 8:1 is best rendered "penal servitude." It is quite unlikely that the reference is to justification, for that stage of the argument has already been reached in 3:21. Rather, the "therefore" casts us back to the preceding verse, "Thank God." Paul has thanked God that deliverance from the penal servitude to sin is available. (J. Dillow) The general subject of the Epistle to the Romans is, the certainty of eternal life to those justified by faith in the righteousness of another. But there are passages in it which assert the bearing of the believer's present actions upon his future destiny. The first part of the 8th chapter of that epistle is one of the most remarkable places ... But this freedom from eternal condemnation is not here made to depend upon their present holy walk. (R. Govett)

The preposition "in" denotes an altered state, men no longer reckoning themselves according to their genealogy from Adam, but as grafted into the stock of Christ. It is not merely hearing the gospel, but being vitally united to its Author, deriving life from Him, as the branches in the vine are nourished by its sap. It is impossible for God to condemn those who are thus united to His Son. This would mean severing Himself from the Son of His love. (T. Lockyer) Love is, in its very nature, particular and personal. The great theme of Romans 8 is the love of the sovereign God manifested toward the elect. God's love shall be perfected in all for whom it was intended. It has been said that sovereignty holds the scale of love; justice holds the other scale. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 8:1 **Therefore** (inferential illative particle), **there is** (ellipsis) **now** (Adv. Time) **no** (neg. adj.) **condemnation**

(Pred. Nom., penal servitude to sin, guilty verdict; eternal judgment at the Lake of Fire has been cancelled) **to those** (Dat. Adv.) **in Christ Jesus** (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:1** Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ·

^{VUL} **Romans 8:1** nihil ergo nunc damnationis est his qui sunt in Christo Iesu qui non secundum carnem ambulant

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:2** For the principle of the Spirit [the new marriage counselor] Who is the source of eternal life [by imputation] has set you free in Christ Jesus [the 2nd husband] from the law [the old marriage counselor] of the sin nature [the 1st husband] and the spiritual death.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:2** For the law of the Spirit, that of the life in Christ Jesus, freed you once for all from the law of the sinful nature and of death.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's summary in this verse is most excellent. The principle of the Spirit as the new marriage counselor is contrasted with the law as the old marriage counselor. Our 2nd marriage to Jesus Christ is contrasted with our 1st marriage to the old sin nature. At the point of regeneration, the Holy Spirit conducted the divorce proceeding between the believer and his old sin nature. He liberated us (Constative Aorist tense) from our bad marriage to the old sin nature and then performed the marriage ceremony between us and our new husband, Jesus Christ.

Paul also contrasts our eternal life that was imputed to us when we were born again (2nd birth) to our spiritual death which was imputed to us at our physical (1st) birth. The baptism of the Spirit was also accomplished at the moment of regeneration, when we were united to Christ, our new husband and master. Our new identity with Christ provided us with a new name, Mr./Mrs. Christian, as opposed to our old name, Mr./Mrs. Old Sin Nature. Our union with Christ also dissolved our prior relationship to the law as our 1st marriage counselor.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law here is not a written law but a *regulative principle* which exercises a control over the life of the believer. This control of the believer by the Holy Spirit is in the form of the energy given the believer both to desire and to do God's will, this energy coming from the life that God is, which in the believer is given him by reason of his position in Christ Jesus. (K. Wuest) Context demands that *nomos* mean "a principle." (D.P. Fuller) The

word “law” again means not commandment, but “pattern” or “principle” or “system” or “rule.” The principle or rule of the Spirit, of the life in Christ Jesus, has set me free. He is identifying the Spirit with the life in Christ, or with the principle of that life. (J. Knox)

In the Church Age the operative divine law is not the Mosaic Law but the “law of Christ.” This also is called “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” which I designate the protocol plan of God or life in the divine dynasphere. Christ fulfilled the entire Mosaic Law in the power of the Holy Spirit in the prototype divine dynasphere. The Church Age believer obeys the new “law of Christ” by following His precedent: filled with the Spirit in the operational divine dynasphere. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Christian lives under a new law initially announced by Christ and executed in the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as the humanity of Christ matured under the powerful system of divine assets (Luke 2:40, 52), Church Age believers also have an extraordinary opportunity to advance spiritually. (ibid)

This deliverance comes by means of a new and higher principle which Paul calls the “law of the Spirit of life.” This higher law has set him free from the lower one, the law of sin and death. The problem was not with the law, but with the flesh. It was too weak to obey. So God solved this problem by releasing the flesh from its sin master. (J. Dillow) The law, while thus exposing and exciting sin and splitting the self, is still in its purpose holy and good. (R.P. Martin) *Antimereia*, where the former noun is used as an adjective: "the spiritual law of life." Also a *metonymy*, where the person is used for the thing done: The word Spirit is used for His life-giving work in the New nature created within us, for His quickening, regenerating and sanctifying work in man, in creating the New nature with its spiritual desires and powers. (E.W. Bullinger)

There is a new principle or power reigning over us and in us. The gospel has set us free; we are under "the law of liberty" and "the reign of grace" in Christ Jesus. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) The law here is not a written law, but a regulative principle which exercises a control over the life of the believer. This regulative control over his life is exercised by the Holy Spirit. This control is in the form of the energy given the believer both to desire and to do God’s will, this energy coming from the life that God is, which in the believer is given him by reason of his position in Christ Jesus. (K. Wuest) Romans 8:2-15 is a long *parembole*, or parenthetical independent addition (insertion), setting forth the further relation between flesh and spirit, i.e. the Old man and the New man, the Old nature and the New divine and spiritual nature, the *pneumatosis* which is given to all who are in Christ. Consequently the "s" in spirit could be a small "s" and instead of a capital letter. (E.W. Bullinger)

“Nomos” is here again used in a sense different from its usual one, the law. The designation of this new law is in marked opposition to that in which the “ego” was before said to be held; we have life in opposition to death, and the Spirit in opposition to the flesh, as well as freedom in opposition to captivity. (J. Barmby) “Nomos” in both parts of the verse have a figurative meaning, contrasting the “principle,” “authority,” or “power” of sin and death with that of the Spirit. “Nomos” can mean “binding authority” or

“power,” so this translation is lexically acceptable. Paul is using a “liberation symbolism” that employs the notion of a change in power structures. And this interpretation is clearly preferable to the first. (D. Moo)

We lose the battle only when we engage the enemy without the resources supplied by the Spirit. God never intended us to go it on our own. The difficulties of the Romans 7 experience are self-imposed. They show the natural outcome of failing to appropriate the Spirit of God. The victory of Romans 8 results from living in vital union with Christ Jesus, sustained and empowered by the Spirit of God. (R. Mounce) The “Spirit of life” confers life both in the present – through liberating the believer from both the penalty (justification) and power (sanctification) of sin – and in the future – by raising the mortal body from the dead. Yet this life is not attained without the believer’s active participation in the Spirit’s progressive work. It is only by “being in the Spirit” and “walking according to the Spirit” that life and peace may be had. (D. Moo)

Rom. 8:2 For (explanatory conj.) the principle (Subj. Nom.) of the Spirit (Descr. Gen.; the new marriage counselor Who guides the believer in his new marriage to Christ) Who is (ellipsis) the source of eternal life (Abl. Source; by imputation) has set you (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) free (ἐλευθερώω, AAI3S, Constative; liberated you, i.e. divorced from a bad marriage to the OSN) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.; baptism of the Spirit has placed you into union with Christ, your new husband, your new master) from the law (Abl. Separation; the Mosaic Law as the old marriage counselor) of the sin nature (Descr. Gen.; your 1st husband) and (conn. conj.) the (resultant) spiritual death (Descr. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:2** ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσέν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου

^{VUL} **Romans 8:2** lex enim Spiritus vitae in Christo Iesu liberavit me a lege peccati et mortis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:3** For what was impossible from the law [the 1st marriage counselor was not an instrument of salvation or spiritual growth], in that it was weak [disabled] through the flesh [due to the indwelling sin nature], God, when He sent His Own Son [deity of Christ] in the likeness [in the form of flesh, but not sinful flesh] of sinful flesh [humanity of Christ], for the purpose of taking away sin, judged the sin nature [1st husband] in the flesh,

^{KW} **Rom. 8:3** For that which is an impossibility for the law, because it was weak through the sinful nature, God having sent His Son in likeness of flesh of sin, and concerning sin, condemned sin in the sinful nature,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:3** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It was impossible for the law (as the 1st marriage counselor) to be an instrument of justification-salvation or spiritual growth (sanctification-salvation). It did not have the purpose or the power to provide either the positional or the experiential element of salvation. Those who are unwilling to recognize this fact, ask “Why?” First of all, it NEVER had the purpose to provide justification or sanctification; if it were possible for the law to contribute anything towards positional or experiential growth, it would have been “infused” with such operational power from heaven.

The law was weak, disabled, ineffective, and powerless to provide anything other than a divine standard by which to condemn men. The Imperfect tense points to this inherent inability to provide that which so many misguided men have tried in vain to produce, whether positional or experiential righteousness. The law is not only weak with reference to providing justification and sanctification, but it is also weak precisely because man is indwelt by the old sin nature. The flesh is unable to perform the dictates of the law, notwithstanding self-righteous claims from the legalist. As Paul has said previously, the law does NOT minister righteousness; the law ministers death.

This should come as no surprise to the believer in Jesus Christ, because it was never God’s plan for the law to do more than hold up a divine standard that was unattainable by any man, and thereby pronounce condemnation upon any person who tried to live up to its impossible dictates. The law made sin exceedingly sinful; the law is powerless to take away sin. The legalist then asks, “If not the law, then what was the divine plan for taking away sin?” Have we so soon forgotten what Jesus Christ came into this world to accomplish? God sent (Constativ Aorist tense) His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh for the purpose of taking away sin.

The phrase “His Own Son” points to the deity of Christ; the phrase “in the likeness of sinful flesh” points to the humanity of Christ. The hypostatic union is once again affirmed in this short phrase. The preposition “likeness” is added not to detract from His taking on the form of humanity (as some heretics assert), but as a limitation on the extent of His taking on the “sinfulness” of the flesh. Jesus Christ came to earth in the flesh, but He did not come to the earth in “sinful flesh.” He remained without sin during the duration of His life on earth, conquering sin on the cross. He lives “in the flesh” in His humanity, but He never lives in “sinful” flesh.

Now go back to the Ablative of Purpose. It was God’s design to send Jesus Christ to earth to die on the cross for our sins. It was God’s design to send the Holy Spirit to all believers as their new marriage counselor. Believers are united to their new husband, Jesus Christ, and they are to live the Christian way of life according to the power and recommendations of their new marriage counselor, the Holy Spirit. As Paul said so eloquently in chapter 7, those believers who turn their back on Jesus Christ (their 2nd husband), and who live as if they were once again married to their 1st husband (the old

sin nature), are committing spiritual adultery. The sphere of the Spirit and the sphere of the law are mutually exclusive, like oil and vinegar. You cannot mix the two together and get any cooperation in the Christian way of life.

Likewise, those believers who try to live according to the dictates of their 1st marriage counselor (the law) in the weakness of their sinful flesh, instead of by the power and recommendations of their 2nd marriage counselor (the Holy Spirit), are also committing spiritual adultery. Jesus Christ condemned (Culminative Aorist tense) the 1st husband, the old sin nature, on the cross. By way of association, he also condemned any future use of our 1st marriage counselor, the law. The sin nature and the law are intimately connected. The law remains “holy, just and good” because it contains divine norms and standards. But the use of the law in an attempt to grow spiritually is strictly forbidden. Those who do so are classified as spiritual adulterers.

Those who maintain that we must live by the law are in effect “thumbing their nose” at the Father’s grace provision, their new husband Jesus Christ, and their new marriage counselor, the Holy Spirit. Those who maintain that the law was impotent in obtaining justification, but that insist that we should still regulate our spiritual lives by its dictates, are completely ignorant of the Christian way of life. You cannot live in the sphere of the Holy Spirit and in the sphere of the law at the same time; one cancels out the other. If you live in the sphere (filling) of the Spirit, you are operating according to divine protocol. If you live in the sphere of the law, you are operating out of bounds and NOTHING you do while in that sphere will be accepted at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This last sentence is EXTREMELY important. If you insist on living by the law in the weakness of your flesh instead of by the power of the Holy Spirit, everything you do will be rejected as wood, hay, and stubble at the Judgment Seat. I don’t care if you pastored a church for 50 years or traveled the world as an evangelist. If you lived the bulk of your life living by the law instead of the Spirit, your shame before Christ in that day will be monumental. Other believers may listen to your teaching, and perhaps thousands of unbelievers come to Christ as the result of your evangelistic message, but YOUR reward will be forfeited because you rejected God’s grace provision of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in favor of the weak and beggarly elements of the law.

I’m going to give the reader some crucial advice and end my “preaching” on this note. If you find yourself in a church where the local pastor or teacher insists that a believer must live his Christian life under the law, get the hell out of that church now! Leave this church quietly, not making a scene, but depart and find a ministry where the law is given its proper sphere of operation. A pastor or teacher who lives by the law instead of by the Spirit, or who erroneously thinks the two opposing principles (like oil & vinegar) can operate together, is completely outside of God’s protocol for the Church Age believer and is destroying his own spiritual life. And if you, the well-meaning but misguided believer, continue to sit under such a legalistic ministry, your spiritual life will also be destroyed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What is it that the Law could not do? The Law could not see to it that the righteousness which it demanded should be fulfilled in us. It could not deliver me from guilt nor justify me, neither could it give me positive righteousness, nor give me life and the ability to stand in the presence of God. But what God has done in Christ accomplishes both. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) All of the problems caused by the law come from its misuse, which always arises from some distortion of its purpose. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In the power of the prototype divine dynasphere, Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law, rendering it obsolete. In the power of the operational divine dynasphere, the Church Age believer advances spiritually and acquires the virtues of the humanity of Christ. (ibid)

Sad to note, yet typical of our day, many succumb and blindly accept man-made gimmicks and false gospels while readily rejecting the truths of the Word of God. The pernicious effects are evident in the subjective thinking of the present generation. The fact remains that no one can walk with one foot in the Law and the other in grace. To know the difference, the Scriptures must be exegeted in the light of dispensational truths and in the context in which they were written. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The law is weak, ineffective, and without sufficient force, which is why it is so impotent in regulating conduct. (A.C. Custance)

Here is an *anacoluthon*, or non-sequence, as a breaking off from the sequence of thought. Its purpose is to catch and fix the attention of the reader. Here the argument breaks off to speak of what God has done: "by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering for* (taking away) sin." This thing was impossible for the law to do, because it was weak through the flesh, i.e. man, owing to the corruption of his nature, could not keep the Law; and the Law was powerless, because it could neither pardon the transgressor, nor alter his nature. The defect was overcome by God, Who condemned sin in the death of His Son (Who was the sin-offering personified). His people, therefore, having died with Him, are discharged from the claims of the Law; and being now "in Christ," fulfill in Him all its righteous requirements. (E.W. Bullinger)

In order to save man the Son had to become man. And he suffered fatigue, tiredness, weariness, pain, sorrow, grief, disappointment, and the capacity to weep, but He did not sin. He had to bear the punishment of the law as our representative, but He never fell Himself. And since He fully satisfied the demands of the Law, both in the keeping of its precepts and in the bearing of the punishment that it had pronounced, we can say that we are 'dead to the law' and 'dead to sin,' making it possible to 'bear fruit unto God'. (D.M. Lloyd-Jones) God pronounced the doom of sin, and brought its claims and authority over man to an end. (Denney) Christ appeared in a body which was like that of other men insofar as it consisted of flesh, and was unlike insofar as the flesh was not flesh of sin. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 8:3 **For** (explanatory conj.) **what was** (ellipsis) **impossible** (Nom. Apposition; inability, lacking the power) **from the law** (Abl. Source; the purpose of the 1st marriage counselor was not to be an instrument of salvation or

spiritual growth), in that (Prep. Loc., relative pronoun; because) it was weak (ἀσθενέω, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive; powerless, disabled, sick, feeble; it was not designed to take away sin) through the flesh (Prep. Gen.; due to the indwelling of the OSN), God (Subj. Nom.), [(parenthetical) when He sent (πέμπω, AAPtc.NSM, Constative, Temporal) His Own (Poss. Gen., possessive pronoun; the Son of Himself) Son (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the diety of Jesus Christ) in the likeness (Prep. Loc.; form, appearance, similitude or image of sinful flesh, but not actual sinful flesh) of sinful (Descr. Gen.) flesh (Adv. Gen. Ref.; antimereia, "sinful flesh's likeness"; the humanity of Jesus Christ), for the purpose of taking away (substantive with prep.) sin (Abl. Purpose; from the LXX - "for a sin-offering")], judged (κατακρίνω, AAI3S, Culminative; guilty verdict, condemned) the sin nature (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the 1st husband) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.),

WHO **Romans 8:3** τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκὸς ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί

VUL **Romans 8:3** nam quod impossibile erat legis in quo infirmabatur per carnem Deus Filium suum mittens in similitudinem carnis peccati et de peccato damnavit peccatum in carne

LWB **Rom. 8:4** So that the legal requirement of the law might be filled up [completed] in us, who keep walking [experiential sanctification] not according to the flesh [old sin nature], but according to the Spirit.

KW **Rom. 8:4** In order that the righteous requirement of the law may be brought to completion in us who, not as dominated by the sinful nature are ordering our behavior but as dominated by the Spirit.

KJV **Romans 8:4** That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If a believer walks according to the Spirit in his daily life (Iterative Present tense), the legal requirements of the law that could not be met by walking according to the flesh will be fulfilled (Culminative Aorist tense). The legalist who tries to live the Christian way of life by following the law fails to achieve his objective because the old sin nature corrupts any activity that appears to be forward momentum in the spiritual life. The believer who is filled with the Spirit and lives the Christian way of life by the intake, metabolism and application of Bible doctrine will achieve the divine objective.

The legal demands of the law are completed (made pregnant) by the Spirit-filled life. The legal demands of the law are never met by trying to follow the dictates of the law in the flesh. The believer is to walk in the proper sphere of operation in order to be experientially sanctified: the Spirit as opposed to the Law. The Subjunctive mood points to this goal or purpose as optional; it depends on the believer's daily decisions. You are allowed to make the choice: walk in the Spirit or walk in the flesh, live by doctrinal principles or live by legal restraints, maintain your marriage to Jesus Christ or return to your previous marriage to the old sin nature.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The passive voice is used to show that the work is not ours, but that of God by His grace. (Alford) The "Spirit of life" must so dominate over the flesh in ourselves that the Law may forfeit its claims over us. The sinful propensities of the flesh remain in us still, but the Spirit that is in us is strong enough to overcome them now. By actual and progressive holiness we are to show that our union with Christ is real. (J. Barmby) The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us in two ways. The righteousness of Christ is *imputed* to us - positional sanctification, but thank God, the righteousness of Christ is also *imparted* to us - for progressive or experiential sanctification. (D.M.Lloyd-Jones) Meeting the legal requirements of the law in this dispensation means "filling up our deficiency" with Bible doctrine - everything it takes to reach *spiritual maturity* and to receive blessings from God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The law offers a proper diagnosis of the disease, but no cure. (J. Edwards) It is important to note that the requirement of the law is to be fulfilled "in us" and not "to us" or "on our behalf." This freedom is a legal release from penal servitude to the Sin Master. (J. Dillow) So long as they endeavor to rely on their own resources, they fight a losing battle; when they avail themselves of the resources of life and power that are theirs in Christ Jesus, they are more than conquerors. There is therefore no reason why they should go on in a life of penal servitude, bound to carry out the dictates of the tyrannical law of sin and death. Christ dwells in them by His Spirit, and His Spirit infuses into them a new principle - the law of life - which is stronger than indwelling sin and sets them free from its tyranny. (F.F. Bruce) Here then, our walk comes into view. What is its new principle? It is a walk according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh ... The Spirit has entered into the hearts of the regenerate, making them anew. He has imparted a new nature, inclined to holiness. According to this they are to live. The obedience rendered by persons thus renewed is a fulfilling of the righteous conduct required by the law. For the temper produced by the Holy Spirit that dwells within the believer is love. (R. Govett)

Virtue from executing the *protocol plan of God* meets and exceeds any demand for *morality* found in the Law. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It is not necessary for a man to live a gross, vicious, sinful life to live after the flesh. There are the elegancies of the flesh as well as its grossness; there is the educated flesh, as well as the uneducated; the moral, as well as the immoral. And men may be living according to their conscience and yet be walking after the flesh, both practically and spiritually. If the conscience is not

enlightened by the Holy Spirit, it is a blind guide. (M. Rainsford) God's commands have now become God's enablings, because the law's exactions, now placed within the Christian as his guide and mentor, are matched by the promise of the new spirit which loves to do God's will, and by the indwelling Spirit is enabled to do it. (R.P. Martin)

Rom. 8:4 so that (purpose conj.) the legal requirement (Subj. Nom.; ordinance, the justice of God) of (demanded by) the law (Abl. Source) might be filled up (πληρώω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; completed, enriched, made pregnant) in us (Loc. Sph., relative pronoun), who keep walking (περιπατέω, PAPtc.DPM, Iterative, Substantival; conduct ourselves, order our behavior: experiential sanctification) not (Neg. Adv.) according to the flesh (Prep. Acc.; the OSN), but (adversative particle) according to the Spirit (Prep. Acc.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:4** ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῆ ἐν ἡμῖν τοῖς μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεῦμα

^{VUL} **Romans 8:4** ut iustificatio legis impleretur in nobis qui non secundum carnem ambulamus sed secundum Spiritum

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:5** For those who are dominated by the flesh [old sin nature] keep thinking about the things [sin, human good, evil] of the flesh [human viewpoint], but those dominated by the Spirit the things [Bible doctrines] of the Spirit [divine viewpoint].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:5** For those who are habitually dominated by the sinful nature put their minds on the things of the sinful nature, but those who are habitually dominated by the Spirit put their minds on the things of the Spirit.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:5** For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ walks in one sphere or the other depending on whether he is in fellowship. If he is in fellowship, he walks according to the Spirit; if he is out of fellowship, he walks according to the flesh. A believer who walks in the Spirit is dominated by the Spirit, and a believer who walks in the flesh is dominated by the old sin nature. Depending on which sphere of operation he is in from moment to moment, the believer keeps thinking about (Iterative Present tense) the things inherent to that sphere of power. "Walking" is an analogy for experiential sanctification, the Christian way of life.

If you are in the Spirit, your mind will be delighted to study the Word of God. The intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine will be your highest priority in life.

Your thinking will be dominated by divine viewpoint. If you are in the flesh, your mind will be occupied with sin, some form of self-effort human good, or an evil deed. You will not be interested in the Word of God, because its authority over your life has been supplanted by one distraction or another. Your thinking will be dominated by human viewpoint, some cosmic panacea that does not align itself with Bible doctrine.

Each one of us “logs” time every day in one sphere of power or the other. We spend so many hours in the Spirit and so many hours in the flesh. The primary criteria for our evaluation at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be how many hours we logged in the Spirit. All our works and deeds will be evaluated according to which sphere of operation we were in when they were performed. If we were in the Spirit, our production will be rewarded by degree (gold, silver, precious stones); if we were in the flesh, our production will be burned by degree (wood, hay, stubble).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Mental attitude dynamics: you are what you think. The soul is the battleground of the angelic conflict, (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) but only *after* salvation. Many wrong concepts have been introduced into popular thought through Dante's *Inferno*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Goethe's *Faust*! The principal error is that Satan and God are struggling for man's soul, and that man has the deciding voice in his destiny. Anyone who has been born again knows, if he is honest with his own experience, that the primary decision to believe God's Word about man's own condition and about God's satisfaction with the death of the Lord Jesus Christ came when God entered the Adamic nature of the sinner, making him alive with a life that was capable of believing. It is a great error to think that faith precedes life; the clear teaching of the Bible is that life precedes faith. Man does not like to believe this because it takes the credit away from man and gives all the glory to God, Who has said, "I am Jehovah: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another ..." Isaiah 42:8. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Paul was following the dictates of his conscience as much when he stoned Stephen as when afterwards he preached Christ. Conscience will only tell you what you *think* is right, but you must bring your conscience to the standard of God's Word to judge if what you think *is* right. There are many in our congregations over whom our hearts yearn. Alas! They are in a dangerous state; rocked asleep in Satan's cradle, conscience at rest, undisturbed, slumbering, unquickened, unspiritualized - insensible to the things of the Spirit of God, or their condition before God. (M. Rainsford) The Spirit works with the Word, bringing it home with power to the heart of the hearer, at once giving energy to the Truth itself and to the appeal of the heavenly message, and enlightenment and grace to the nature of the hearer. The Word alone is lifeless; the soul alone is dead; but the Spirit imparts efficacy to the Word and vitality to the soul. (J. Thomson)

Antithesis, the setting of one phrase in contrast with another, is used here to make the contrast more striking. (E.W. Bullinger) The thought pattern of the carnal believer who *minds earthly things* is not necessarily referring to gross things, but just the little things

of every day, the latest news, the next ball, the trifles, vanities, mere emptiness, etc ... A corpse, though decked with flowers, is a corpse still. (M. Rainsford) The lust of the flesh with its antagonism to the Law of God, and its deadly tendency, remains even in the regenerate, and hence we are still in danger of succumbing to it. (J. Barmby) A Christian can have his mind set either upon what the flesh desires or upon what the Spirit desires. Therefore two types of Christians are contrasted in this verse. (J. Dillow) If the mind is not Christ-centered and our interest is constantly on carnal things, the results are the symptoms of spiritual death. However, if the interests of the mind are placed on things of the Spirit of God, we have a peace in life that passes all understanding. (W. Kroll)

The reason why the mind dominated by the evil nature represents a state of death in the person so constituted, and results in final death, is that it is at enmity against God. Such a mind is not marshaled under the command of God, but of Satan. Consequently, those who are within the sphere of the evil nature, are not able to please God. (K. Wuest) Spirit and flesh are two exclusive realms, two authorities or governing powers. One is either in the Spirit or in the flesh, but not in both at the same time. (J. Edwards) "Flesh" implies the entire unrenewed life lived apart from God; and it should be carefully observed that this does not necessarily mean a gross, vicious life, for the flesh as unrenewed may be educated, refined, and cultured. Indeed, there is even a religion of the flesh that consists in outward ceremonial observances, asceticism, and self-denial, which, however, does not touch the springs of the heart and provide acceptable worship. (W.G. Thomas)

Christian holiness is not a matter of painstaking conformity to the specific precepts of an external law-code; it is rather a question of the Holy Spirit's producing His fruit in one's life, reproducing those graces which were seen in perfection in the life of Christ. The law prescribed a life of holiness, but it was powerless to produce such a life, because of the inadequacy of the human material on which it had to work. But what the law was powerless to do has been done by God. All that the law required by way of conformity to the will of God is not realized in the lives of those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit and are released from their servitude to the old order. God's commands have now become God's enablers. (F.F. Bruce)

Rom. 8:5 For (explanatory conj.) those (Subj. Nom.; article used as an immediate demonstrative pronoun) who are (είμι, PAPtc.NPM, Descriptive, Substantival) dominated by the flesh (Adv. Acc. Ref.; the OSN) keep thinking about (φρονέω, PAI3P, Iterative; intent upon, disposed towards, concentrate on) the things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trends toward sin, good and evil) of the flesh (Descr. Gen.; human viewpoint), but (adversative conj., however) those (Subj. Nom.; article used as an immediate demonstrative pronoun) dominated by the Spirit (Adv. Acc. Ref.) the things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrines) of the Spirit (Descr. Gen.; divine viewpoint).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:5** οἱ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ὄντες τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς φρονοῦσιν οἱ δὲ κατὰ πνεῦμα τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος

^{VUL} **Romans 8:5** qui enim secundum carnem sunt quae carnis sunt sapiunt qui vero secundum Spiritum quae sunt Spiritus sentiunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:6** Consequently, the carnal thought pattern [sin nature way of thinking] leads to spiritual death [through progressive stages of divine discipline], but the spiritual thought pattern [doctrinal way of thinking] leads to capacity for life [supergrace quality] and prosperity [blessings from God].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:6** For to have the mind dominated by the sinful nature is death, but to have the mind dominated by the Spirit is life and peace;

^{KJV} **Romans 8:6** For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Death in this verse does not mean going to hell. Death is the opposite of life and peace, which represent a qualitative experiential life. Death in this verse is experiential: a life of sin, emptiness and a frantic search for happiness. The fleshly or carnal thought pattern leads to spiritual death. The carnal thought pattern is the old sin nature way of thinking. It leads a believer through various stages of divine discipline if the believer does not restore himself to fellowship by the confession of sin. First comes warning discipline, then intensive discipline, and ultimately the sin unto death. The sin unto death is not a particular sin, but is any sin (or lifestyle of sin) that is lived habitually up to the point of physical death.

The spiritual thought pattern leads to capacity for life and prosperity. The spiritual thought pattern is the doctrinal way of thinking. It leads a believer through various stages of progressive sanctification. Ultimately, there will be eternal rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ for the doctrinal way of thinking. There will also be temporal rewards for thinking doctrinally, which Paul here calls capacity for life and prosperity. Capacity for life is a supergrace quality of life; prosperity is peace and blessings from God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Often when the thought pattern of a mature believer strays from correct priorities, he may lose something (temporarily) that he has placed as a higher priority than Bible doctrine. This can be loved ones, friends, money, a job, etc. God delivers this believer from the "error of his ways" by the divine "rod and staff." While he is alone, God is allowing him to recharge his capacity for life, sort of a spiritual reinvigoration; the point being, that the Source is still there - Jesus Christ and His Word, Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Death, being the opposite of life and peace, is not final commitment to hell. It is the life of anxiety which comes to any man, believer or unbeliever, who sets his mind on the wrong things. (J. Dillow)

Teaching Bible doctrine is the "holy ground" of this dispensation; perception of Bible doctrine is the most important thing in life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When the Spirit of God takes hold of a man's affections, the things which are according to the will of God become attractive to him, and the things contrary to God become odious to him. Let us test ourselves! In which way do our thoughts move with the greatest pleasure? The last news? The latest fashions? Earth's pleasures? In what direction do our desires tend? Where do we find most satisfaction? Who are our chosen companions? Those who mind the things of the flesh or of the Spirit? Grand and glorious is the contrast between these two principles of living. (M. Rainsford)

"Prosperity (blessing) without capacity is misery." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In the business world, this is true not just for the overly ambitious person, but also for his subordinates. Promotion beyond one's capacity destroys a company from the inside and spreads misery up and down the corporate ladder. [LWB]. The spiritual man discerns the excellence of spiritual objects. He recognizes in the Scriptures a message from the Most High. He delights in spiritual exercises, deeming them not a round of duties, but of enjoyments. He flees to them as a refuge from cares and anxieties. The fleshly man is deaf to the charms of the spiritual melody, and blind to the glory of the spiritual sunrise. To mind the things of the Spirit is to draw instruction from every event, to turn the mercies of God into praise, and His judgments into matter for humiliation. We do not deny that worldly minded men occasionally turn their thoughts to the spiritual realm; but this is accidental, and does not accord with their ordinary behavior, so as to flow spontaneously from the inner life. (S. Aldridge)

Rom. 8:6 Consequently (inferential conj.), the carnal (Descr. Gen., fleshly) thought pattern (Subj. Nom.; OSN way of thinking) is (ellipsis, "leads to") spiritual death (Pred. Nom.; leads a believer thru the various stages of divine discipline, and ultimately to the *sin unto death*), but (adversative conj.) the spiritual (Descr. Gen.) thought pattern (Subj. Nom.; doctrinal way of thinking) is (ellipsis, "leads to") capacity for life (Pred. Nom.; *supergrace* quality of life) and (conn. conj.) prosperity (Pred. Nom.; peace, blessings from God).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:6** τὸ γὰρ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς θάνατος τὸ δὲ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος ζωὴ καὶ εἰρήνη

^{VUL} **Romans 8:6** nam prudentia carnis mors prudentia autem Spiritus vita et pax

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:7** Because the carnal thought pattern [sin nature way of thinking] is hostile towards God, for it is not subordinate to the divine policy of God [Bible doctrine as our way of life], because it is not able [doesn't have the capacity to do so].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:7** Because the mind dominated by the sinful nature is hostile to God, for it does not marshal itself under the command of the law of God, neither is it able to.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:7** Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The carnal thought pattern, which is a result of the sin nature's control of the soul, is hostile towards God. When a believer is out of fellowship and is operating under the power of the old sin nature, his thinking is opposed to Bible doctrine. The old sin nature, in fact, is a bitter enemy of both God and His Word. The old sin nature is in a permanent state of rebellion (continued insubordination) against God; it refuses by its nature (unable to do otherwise) to be subject to (Gnomic Present tense) divine authority. The Greek words in this verse present a military scenario, in which the old sin nature is at war against the divine policy of God.

The divine policy of God for the Church Age believer is that Bible doctrine in the soul produces the capacity for life required for divine blessings. The old sin nature is opposed to this policy; it is opposed to both Bible doctrine and the Spirit-filled life. The policy of the old sin nature is to persuade the believer to sin and to try to live under the law (in the energy of the flesh) instead of by the Spirit. As we have seen in prior verses, neither sin nor the law is part of God's protocol for the Church Age believer. Because of its inherent make-up, the old sin nature does not have the capacity (Gnomic Present tense) to submit to God's principles or policy. It is a power or force diametrically opposed to God, one of Satan's allies.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The carnal believer is not the one who sins, because we all sin! The carnal believer is the one who sins but rejects *rebound*, the confession of sin taught in I John 1:9. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) If we could imagine for an instant an unregenerate man admitted into heaven, he would find no enjoyment there without a change of heart, and tastes and nature. The heavens which purify the saint would only serve to exasperate the sinner ... The same holds true for the carnal believer who is prey to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life - snares of Satan which trip us up, allure us, and functioning as bribes, become instruments to destroy us. (M. Rainsford)

In the beginning there had been one will, the will of God, the Creator. After the rebellion of Lucifer there had been two wills, that of God and the rebel. But now there are *billions* of wills. Satan's own *declaration of independence* from the will of God, and its resultant hostility, has now become man's. (D.G. Barnhouse) Cosmic believers are also hostile towards God, and are used as aggressors in the divine field exercise we call life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Will man be able to organize himself, humanity, civilization, so that he can bring a semblance at least of peace and order into his realm? That is the question at which men toil and with which they wrestle. (D.G. Barnhouse) This is the carnal thought

pattern which motivates all of his frantic efforts towards human good - a kingdom for himself (eg. perhaps under the UN banner), without God. [LWB]

Carnality and reversionism, which are both the results of negative volition to Bible doctrine, are unable to fulfill the policy of God and cannot produce divine good. They lead to self-induced misery on the one hand, and divine discipline on the other. These believers cannot grow spiritually, because there is no substitute for God's plan. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Before the Holy Spirit can empower the spiritual life and doctrinal intake can resume, the sin nature must be brought under control. While the sin nature can never be eradicated in this life, its control is instantly halted by rebound, the confession of sin. Rebound sets in motion the machinery of GAP, the grace apparatus for perception. The consistent function of GAP provides the believer with the alertness to use rebound as soon as it becomes necessary. (ibid)

Here we have a key to the seeming inability of many Christians to live consistent, powerful Christian lives. When a Christian sets his mind on the flesh, he is hostile to God and is cut off from the Holy Spirit and therefore unable to obey. To say that these verses in Romans 8:1-7 refer to a contrast between Christians and non-Christians rather than between two kinds of Christians not only contradicts the facts of Christian experience, but the rest of the NT as well. All Christians do not “walk according to the Spirit” (8:4), do not have their minds “set upon the things of the Spirit” (8:5), and do not have their minds “set upon the Spirit” (8:6). This contradicts Paul’s teaching elsewhere that walking in the Spirit is not automatic and inevitable (Gal. 5:16). In addition, it is refuted by the conditionality of this walk in the immediate context of Romans 8. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 8:7 Because (causal conj.) the carnal (Descr. Gen.; the OSN) thought pattern (Subj. Nom.; way of thinking) is (ellipsis) hostile (Pred. Nom.; a bitter enemy) towards God (Acc. Dir. Obj.), for (explanatory conj.) it is not (neg. adv.) subordinate to (ὑποτάσσω, PPI3S, Gnostic; under military orders, subject to the authority of) the divine policy (Dat. Ind. Obj.; law, principle) of God (Poss. Gen.; that Bible doctrine in the soul produces the capacity for life required for divine blessings), because (explanatory conj.) it is not (neg. adv.) able (δύναμαι, PMI3S, Gnostic, Deponent; helplessness, does not have the inherent power or capacity to do so).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:7** διότι τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν τῷ γὰρ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναται.

^{VUL} **Romans 8:7** quoniam sapientia carnis inimicitia est in Deum legi enim Dei non subicitur nec enim potest

LWB Rom. 8:8 Moreover, those [carnal & reversionistic believers] who are continually in the flesh [under the sin nature’s control] are not able to please God.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:8** Moreover, those who are in the sphere of the sinful nature are not able to please God.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:8** So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Carnal and reversionistic believers do not have the ability (Gnomic Present tense) to please (Constative Aorist tense) God. As in the prior verse, the Gnomic Present tense points to the utter impossibility for the flesh to please God. Anything that proceeds from the flesh, no matter how noble or good it appears on the outside, is rejected by God. Only production from a believer in the sphere of the Spirit is acceptable by divine standards. So the most important thing in life is to be continually operating in the sphere of the Spirit as opposed to the sphere of the flesh or old sin nature.

Carnal and reversionistic believers spend the majority of their time (Iterative Present tense) in the sphere of the flesh. Carnal believers are those who are struggling to live in the Spirit, but who fail repeatedly and succumb to the flesh. Reversionistic believers are those who have abandoned the life of the Spirit altogether and are going in the opposite direction with their sinful arms wide open. In other words, these terms are often used as a matter of degree. Carnal believers are at least trying to live by divine protocol, but reversionistic believers have ceased trying, at least for the time being.

Both believers are in one stage of divine discipline or another. The reversionist has most likely passed from warning discipline to intensive discipline. The old sin nature controls both categories of believers to some extent. As a guide, carnal believers are operating from the arrogance complex of sins, primarily those related to the flesh and worldly distractions. Reversionistic believers are operating from the pride and hatred complex of sins, primarily those related to satanic (demon) influence. Carnal believers are distracted by the flesh and the world; reversionistic believers are antagonistic to God and other believers.

Regardless of the stage of sin a believer is in, nobody who operates under the control of the sin nature is pleasing to God. The carnal believer may confess sin on occasion, and when he is in the sphere of the Spirit, he may perform some divine good (works, production) that satisfies God's standards. The reversionist, however, is angry and hostile towards God and nothing he does gives pleasure to the Lord. The reversionist has not lost his salvation, but he is virtually unrecognizable from your average unbeliever. His spiritual life is a shambles; he may be headed for the sin unto death.

This verse could also apply to unbelievers, who after all, are also in the flesh, and likewise cannot do anything to please God. This includes the inability to believe the gospel without the regeneration of the Spirit. Some commentators make a distinction between "according to the flesh" and "in the flesh," the former referring to believers and

the latter to unbelievers. This argument says that believers are never “in the flesh” although they often walk “according to the flesh.” While believers are no longer “in the flesh” positionally, they can indeed be “in the flesh” experientially. I see a dual reference in this verse: a primary reference to believers and a secondary referenced to unbelievers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Believers: The phrases describing the two contrasted lives here suddenly change. Instead of “after the flesh” and “after the Spirit,” they are spoken of as “in the flesh” and “in the Spirit.” It is no longer a question of standard, or principle, but of sphere in which they live. (W.G. Thomas) Having spoken of the inability of Christians to obey when their minds are set on the flesh, he now reminds them that, if they were unsaved (in the flesh), they would have no possibility of knowing the fulfillment of the law in them. But they ARE saved, and they therefore not only have the possibility of this experience, but the obligation (8:12) to live in this new plane. (J. Dillow) The “Christian service” of the arrogant, carnal believer is human good. God is not impressed with this façade. Why? No matter how good, how noble, or how impressive the results, human good comes from the sin nature and is an expression of the satanic policy of evil. No product of the sin nature – neither sin, human good, nor evil – is acceptable to God (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Unbelievers: The believing and loving response which the calling requires is a moral and spiritual impossibility on the part of the one who is dead in trespasses and sins. (J. Murray) The very idea of someone being “disposed” toward the gospel is utterly contrary to Paul’s teaching in Romans 8:7-8. The difference is that some were appointed to eternal life as part of the eternal decree of God, and others were not. The only reason people suggest otherwise is because they do not wish to accept the teaching of the passage. No rebel sinner, outside of the grace of God bringing them spiritual life, is crying out for help. Even if the proverbial “life ring” were cast into the pond, or a squad of firemen made it to the rebels in the smoke, they would not cooperate with the rescue effort. They lack the capacity, due to spiritual death, to take advantage of any kind of assistance even if they desired to do so! (J. White)

Rom. 8:8 **Moreover** (transitional conj.), **those** (Subj. Nom.; carnal & reversionistic believers) **who are continually** (είμι, PAPtc.NPM, Iterative, Substantival) **in the flesh** (Loc. Sph.; under the control of their OSN; Cosmic I,II) **are not** (neg. adv.) **able** (δύναμαι, PMI3P, Gnostic; inability, do not have the power) **to please** (ἀρέσκω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; satisfy, give pleasure to) **God** (Dat. Apparent Obj. or Root Idea).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:8** οἱ δὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ὄντες θεῷ ἀρέσαι οὐ δύνανται

^{VUL} **Romans 8:8** qui autem in carne sunt Deo placere non possunt

LWB Rom. 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh [divorced from the old sin nature, positionally], but in the Spirit [baptism of the Spirit, positionally], assuming that the Spirit of God dwells in you. In fact, if a person does not possess the Spirit [indwelling] from Christ, this one does not belong to Him [is an unbeliever].

KW Rom. 8:9 But, as for you, you are not in the sphere of the sinful nature but in the sphere of the Spirit, provided that the Spirit of God is in residence in you. But, assuming that a person does not have Christ's Spirit, this one does not belong to Him.

KJV Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, there are two positional truths that Paul applies to you in this verse. You are (Static Present tense) not in the sphere of the flesh, but are in the sphere of the Spirit. You were divorced from the old sin nature (positionally) when you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the new birth. Paul makes this definitive, positional statement under the assumption that his hearers are all indwelt (Static Present tense) by the Spirit of God. He is writing to the Roman believers, so this assumption is true (1st class condition). But keep in mind that Paul is making a positional statement here, not an experiential one. You may be a Christian, and have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but you may nevertheless be living “in the sphere of the flesh” or “according to the flesh.”

If a person does not have (Static Present tense) the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, then this person is obviously not a Christian. Only believers in the Lord Jesus Christ belong (Static Present tense) to Him. And only believers in Jesus Christ have the indwelling (Latin: habitation) of the Spirit. The phrase “Spirit from Christ” emphasizes the doctrine of procession, in which the Spirit proceeds from Jesus Christ as a source to the believer. Also, as an FYI, the believer is indwelt by all three Persons of the Trinity. The believer is indwelt by the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Paul is not teaching the “multiple indwelling” in this verse, but it is important to know that because the Trinity indwells us, we are able to have fellowship with each Member according to His “distinctive character and operation.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Believers may have fellowship with the three distinct persons of the Godhead in the strict particularity which belongs to each person in that grand economy ... fellowship with the Father in His Own distinguishing character and operation, fellowship with the Son in His Own distinguishing character and operation, and fellowship with the Spirit in His Own distinguishing character and operation. It is not the blurred confusion of rapturous ecstasy. It is faith solidly founded on the revelation deposited for us in the Scripture and it is faith actively receiving that revelation by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. (J. Murray)

In sharp contrast to their former life in the flesh, Paul asserts they are no longer in that sphere. They are now in a new sphere and thus able to achieve victory due to the presence of the indwelling Spirit. (J. Dillow) If God did the most for us when we were His enemies, He can only do much more than the most now that we are His sons. Restated in a fortiori logic: If God did the most difficult in providing salvation for us, it stand to greater reason that He can do what is far less difficult, namely, bless us in time. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:9 However (adversative conj., apodosis), you (Subj. Nom., emphatic relative pronoun) are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Static) not (neg. adv.) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.; you are divorced from the OSN *positionally*), but (adversative conj.) in the Spirit (Loc. Sph.; baptism of the HS, *positionally*), assuming that (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes "it is true", Accompanying Circumstance) the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) of God (Gen. Rel.) dwells (οἰκέω, PAI3S, Static; inhabits, resides) in you (Loc. Sph., relative pronoun). In fact (continuative conj.), if (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes "it is true") a person (Subj. Nom., indefinite pronoun) does not (neg. adv.) possess (ἔχω, PAI3S, Static; have) the Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the 1st motivator) from Christ (Abl. Source; doctrine of *procession*), this one (Subj. Nom., resumptive demonstrative pronoun, apodosis) does (εἰμι, PAI3S, Static, idiomatic) not (neg. adv.) belong to Him (Poss. Gen., intensive pronoun; he is an unbeliever).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:9** ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι εἶπερ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ δέ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 8:9** vos autem in carne non estis sed in Spiritu si tamen Spiritus Dei habitat in vobis si quis autem Spiritum Christi non habet hic non est eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:10** In fact, if Christ is in you [indwelling of Christ], on the one hand, the body is [spiritually] dead because of sin [carnality or reversionism], but on the other hand, the [human] spirit is alive [energized by the Holy Spirit] because of [His imputed] righteousness.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:10** But, assuming that Christ is in you, on the one hand the body is dead on account of sin, but on the other hand the [human] spirit is alive on account of righteousness.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:10** And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul wrote this sentence using classic oratory construction. It has no verbs, so we must supply them on the basis of ellipsis, or leave them out entirely if desired. He also uses the debater's technique of contrasting two opposing principles by summation, with correlative conjunctions to provide the "on the one hand, on the other hand" contrast. The physical body and the human spirit are compared and contrasted. The body is spiritually dead due to sin: carnality and reversionism. The human spirit is alive due to imputed righteousness. The best way to picture this sentence structure is to make two columns on a piece of paper and fill in the contrasts piecemeal.

On the one hand, the body; on the other hand, the spirit. On the one hand, the body is dead; on the other hand, the spirit is alive. On the one hand, the body is dead because of our sin; on the other hand, the spirit is alive because of His imputed righteousness. See how Paul starts with one opposing contrast (body versus spirit) and fills in the blanks with additional descriptors? And to make things even more interesting, he starts the entire contrast with a 1st class conditional clause, which means we are to assume that we are believers who are indwelt by Jesus Christ. The indwelling of Christ is an invisible motivator in the spiritual life, a divine Assistant for those who are making forward progress in the spiritual life.

This is a most interesting doctrine: the indwelling of Christ. Most believers have heard of the indwelling of the Spirit, but few have dealt with the indwelling of Christ, and in other verses, the indwelling of the Father. There are differences between each indwelling, too many, in fact, to go into at this time. One major distinction, however, is that the indwelling of the Spirit is permanent, while the indwelling of Christ and the Father may be temporary (there is debate over the permanence or impermanence). You cannot lose the indwelling of the Spirit, because it is positional by nature. But the indwelling of Christ and the Father may be experiential; they "depart" when you are out of fellowship. See my notes on 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.

This is a difficult section of Scripture precisely BECAUSE Paul is bouncing back-and-forth between positional and experiential elements. What I've discovered in my studies of chapters 8 & 9 is that many of the commentators don't know Greek and were using poor translations that hid this alternation of position and condition. The section we are discussing here is dealing with experiential topics all the way up to this verse, and then refers back to positional elements to show what we received from Christ that enables us to live that experiential life.

"If Christ is in you" (1st class condition, meaning he assumes everyone who is reading Romans is a believer and is indwelt) ... then two things are possible (on the one hand, on the other hand).

- (1) "the body is dead because of sin"
- (2) "the spirit is alive because of righteousness"

The original condition "if Christ is in you" assumes the listener is a believer. If it wasn't there, then I'd agree with the positional viewpoint. Because then Paul could be talking to unbelievers as well, and all our bodies are dead because of sin (believers and unbelievers). But then part 2 doesn't make sense, because "the spirit is alive" never refers to an unbeliever.

The contrast between body/spirit, dead/alive, and sin/righteousness WITHOUT THE QUALIFIER of Christ's indwelling, would indeed leave this verse as a possible positional verse, because these three contrasts would work for either positional or experiential truth.

So in verse 9, Paul distinguishes between those who have the indwelling of the Spirit (believers) and those who don't (unbelievers).

Then in verse 10, I see Paul telling us that the indwelling of the Spirit enables us (those who have the indwelling) to live the spiritual life.

In verse 11, I see Paul telling us that the indwelling of the Spirit enables us (those who have the indwelling) to live in eternity in a resurrection body.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Spirit's indwelling is *functional*; Christ resides in our bodies to *manifest His glory* in our lives (2 Cor. 3:18). In us Christ provides encouragement (John 14:18-21), motivation (Eph. 3:17), and confidence (Col. 1:27). The reversionist does not benefit from the indwelling of Christ; no fellowship exists when human good and evil dominate the soul (2 Cor. 13:5). As long as the reversionist is out of fellowship and ignores Bible doctrine, he cannot look into the mirror of the Word and see the reflected glory of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 3:20). "Christ in you" is the indwelling of Christ which belongs exclusively to the royal family of God. Christ indwells every Church Age believer. Hope of glorifying Christ belongs only to those who are advancing in the plan of God. Our potential remains unknown to us apart from learning doctrine. If unknown, unfulfilled. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is permanent, while the indwelling of Jesus Christ is based on maturity adjustment to the justice of God. Only those who are filled with the Spirit and who have reached spiritual maturity (the hot) through consistent metabolization of Bible doctrine may be indwelled by Christ. Reversionists (the lukewarm) and unbelievers (the cold) are never indwelled by Christ; the lukewarm are vomited out of His mouth, i.e. the sin unto death. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The word here refers, not to the Holy Spirit which is not a logical contrast to the human body, but to the human spirit, that part of man which gives him God-consciousness and enables him when that spirit is made alive by the Holy Spirit, to worship God. (K. Wuest) We have not only become alive to God as the result of the Holy Spirit's work, we have also become alive to the Word of God. It is in the Bible that God speaks to us clearly, regularly, and forcefully. We know that the words of the Bible pass the high standard of absolute truth

and will endure forever, even when heaven and earth have passed away. Is the Bible a meaningful and attractive book to you? Are you attracted to it? Do you want to know more? (J. Boice)

The state of mind of the lost man is one that is totally alienated from the life of God. If you go and preach "whosoever will" to the unsaved masses, and if God does not intervene to do His work of grace, not one human being will come to God. If God had sent masses of angels to preach the gospel to the lost race and had not applied any supernatural power within the individual, not one member of the human race would ever have accepted Christ as Savior. The innate hostility of the mind of man to the laws of God would (and does) make any such acceptance impossible. (D.G. Barnhouse) We would not go astray here if we asserted that the apostle is here teaching that not only does the indwelling Spirit revive and revitalize our spirit, but indeed, it will one day result in our physical resurrection. (J. Dillow)

It is clear that the believer who by faith has come to be joined with Christ has not only Christ, but also the Spirit resident within. The indwelling Spirit and the indwelling Christ are distinguishable but inseparable. (D. Moo) God has designed a unique life for the Church Age believer, part of which is experienced and part of which is not. The nonexperiential aspect of the unique life includes the indwelling of all three members of the Trinity. This is the Church Age believer's permanent status, not his progressive sanctification. The experiential aspect of the unique life is the glorification of Christ in the body of the believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:10 In fact (continuative conj.), if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") Christ (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) in you (Loc. Sph.; the indwelling of Christ as the 2nd motivator Who leads the believer in a Godward direction), on the one hand (correlative conj., concessive clause, rhetorical antithesis), the body (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) dead (Pred. Nom.; out of fellowship due to carnality or reversionism) because of sin (Causal Acc.; failure to rebound), but on the other hand (correlative, contrast), the spirit (Subj. Nom.; human spirit) is (ellipsis) alive (Pred. Nom.; the Holy Spirit energizes the human spirit with divine life) because of (His imputed) righteousness (Causal Acc.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:10** εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην

^{VUL} **Romans 8:10** si autem Christus in vobis est corpus quidem mortuum est propter peccatum spiritus vero vita propter iustificationem

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:11** Now if the Spirit [God the Holy Spirit] from Him [God the Father] Who raised up [resurrected] the Jesus [God the Son] from deaths [both physical and spiritual]

indwells you, He [God the Father] Who raised up Christ from deaths shall also quicken your mortal bodies [future resurrection] by means of His Spirit Who indwells you.

κω Rom. 8:11 And assuming that the Spirit of the One who raised up Jesus out from among the dead is in residence in you, He who raised from among the dead Christ Jesus, will also make alive your mortal bodies through the agency of the Spirit who is resident in you.

KJV Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a classic Trinitarian formula in this verse. The 1st class conditional clause means his protasis is true. God the Holy Spirit was sent by God the Father to resurrect (Dramatic Aorist tense) God the Son from both spiritual and physical deaths. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells all believers (Durative Present tense). Moreover, the same God (the Father) Who resurrected Christ from both spiritual and physical deaths, will also resurrect (Predictive Future tense) the mortal body of every believer by means of the same Holy Spirit. The Latin word “habitat” points to our current physical body as being only a temporary residence for our soul and spirit. It will be raised up (Latin: vivified) and transformed into a new resurrection body.

The resurrection of Christ was a prototype of our future resurrection. The means of accomplishing His resurrection is the same means that will be used to accomplish ours. The same Holy Spirit that indwelled Christ indwells (Durative Present tense) the believer today. The same Father that sent His Spirit to resurrect Jesus will likewise send His Spirit to resurrect us. The veracity of the Father in the first act of resurrection will without doubt do the same for us. The omnipotence of God will accomplish for us what He accomplished first in His own Son. The frailties of our current physical body will not stop Him from resurrecting us and providing us with a new resurrection body. This is great and encouraging news!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a down payment on the future resurrection of our mortal bodies, a guarantee that we will have something after death or the rapture. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Holy Spirit can't wait to indwell our new resurrection body; He is looking forward to His new and improved home! (ibid) To this point Paul has taught the Romans that God has released us from our penal servitude to sin and has made that freedom experientially available to those among us who walk according to the Spirit (8:1-7). Then in a parenthetical aside he reminded them that we are no longer unsaved and living in the sphere of the flesh. Indeed, we have the promise that one day we will be done with it altogether in the resurrection. (J. Dillow)

To be “made alive” is a more limited idea than to “be raised.” For this second term applies in general to all who shall live again, even to perish, whereas the first applies to the complete gift of perfect life. The limitation of the subject can therefore naturally proceed from the special meaning of the verb itself. The two “alls” embrace those only to whom each of the two powers extends. Moreover, it should be remembered that Christ can hardly be regarded as the first-fruits of the damned who are raised again, and verse 23, which continues the development begun in verse 20, evidently takes account only of believers. The “all men” of Romans 5:18 is identified with those “who receive abundance of grace and of the gift on righteousness” in verse 17. The meaning of “all” must be determined by the context. The efficacy of Christ’s atonement is no more extensive than faith, and faith is not universal. (R.B. Kuiper)

God the Holy Spirit indwells us to create a temple for the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah Glory, to be a down payment of our royal inheritance, and to empower us in the execution of the Father’s plan. God the Son indwells us for a number of reasons: (1) As a sign or badge of the royal family (John 14:20); As a guarantee of the availability of divine power in time (2 Cor. 13:4-6); As a guarantee of life after death in the presence of God forever (Col. 1:27); As the depository of special blessings for time and eternity (Eph. 1:3); As motivation for continued momentum when facing the three categories of suffering (Gal. 2:20); As the basis for assigning highest priority to relationship with God over relationships with people (I John 2:24); and as the basis for the glorification of Christ, the Shekinah Glory (John 17:22-23, 26), in the unique life of the Church Age believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:11 **Now** (conn. conj.; notice Trinitarian formula) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes "it is true") **the Spirit** (Subj. Nom.) **from Him** (Abl. Source; God the Father) **Who raised up** (ἐγείρω, AAPtc.GSM, Dramatic, Circumstantial, Substantival; resurrection, not resuscitation) **the Jesus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **from deaths** (Abl. Separation; both physical and spiritual deaths) **indwells** (οἰκέω, PAI3S, Durative; inhabits, resides in) **you** (Loc. Sph.; true of believers only), **He** (Subj. Nom., apodosis; God the Father) **Who raised up** (ἐγείρω, AAPtc.GSM, Dramatic, Circumstantial, Substantival) **Christ** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **from deaths** (Abl. Separation; both physical and spiritual deaths) **shall also** (adjunctive particle) **quicken** (ζωοποιέω, FAI3S, Predictive; give life to, resurrect, vivify) **your** (Poss. Gen.) **mortal** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; subject to the frailties of life) **bodies** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; future resurrection of the believer's body) **by means of** (because of) **His** (Gen. Rel.) **Spirit** (Abl. Means & Source) **Who indwells** (ἐνοικέω, PAPtc.GSN, Durative, Substantival; inhabits, resides in) **you** (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:11** εἰ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἐγείραντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν ὁ ἐγείρας ἐκ νεκρῶν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ζωοποιήσῃ [καὶ] τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:11** quod si Spiritus eius qui suscitavit Iesum a mortuis habitat in vobis qui suscitavit Iesum Christum a mortuis vivificabit et mortalia corpora vestra propter inhabitantem Spiritum eius in vobis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:12** **Consequently, therefore, brethren, we are debtors [under obligation] not to the flesh so that we habitually live according to the standards of the flesh [follow the lust pattern of our old sin nature].**

^{KW} **Rom. 8:12** So then, brethren, we are those under obligation, not to the sinful nature to live habitually under the dominion of the sinful nature.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:12** Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because we have a new husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and because we are indwelt by the Spirit (as well as the Father and Son), we are not (Descriptive Present tense) under obligation to the siren call of our former husband, the old sin nature. We do not have to habitually conduct our lives (Iterative Present tense) according to the lusts of our old sin nature. Such sinful rationalization is completely unnecessary and incompatible with the spiritual life. We cannot live an abundant spiritual life if we continue to oblige ourselves to the dictates of the sin nature. We have a new obligation, an obligation to live by the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The method of living abundantly is not by the flesh but by the Spirit of God and the use of certain spiritual weapons. Indeed, persistence in using the means of grace will result not only in a vital Christian life but joint-heirship with the Messiah in the final destiny of man. Instead of seeing this chapter as a contrast between different qualities of Christian life, many see it as a contrast between the Christian and the non-Christian. In so doing, they reduce it to a kind of test of salvation. Paul's intent, however, is not to challenge the Romans to examine themselves to see if they are Christians. Since they are Christians and therefore dead to sin and alive to God, they are obligated to live lives consistent with these facts. (J. Dillow) The "flesh" is the complex of sinful desire, motive, affection, propension, principle, and purpose, and to live after the flesh is to be directed and governed by that complex. (J. Murray)

Rom. 8:12 Consequently (inferential conj.), therefore (illative particle), brethren (Vocative Address; royal family of God), we are (ἐγώ, ΠΑΙΠ, Descriptive) debtors

(Pred. Nom.; under obligation, bound to some duty), **not** (neg. adv., dependent clause) **to the flesh** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the siren call of the OSN) **so that we habitually live** (ζάω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose & Result, Articular, Epexegetic; order our behavior, conduct our life) **according to the standards of the flesh** (Adv. Acc.; following the lusts of our OSN through rationalization).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:12** Ἄρα οὖν ἀδελφοί ὀφειλέται ἐσμέν οὐ τῇ σαρκὶ τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:12** ergo fratres debitores sumus non carni ;ut secundum carnem vivamus

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:13** Indeed, if you continually live according to the standards of the flesh [dictates of the old sin nature], you will inevitably die [self-destruction and maximum divine discipline leading to the sin unto death]; but if by means of the Spirit you make it a practice to recognize as dead [condemn] the functions from the body [any system of human good or self-righteousness], you will live [abundant life].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:13** For, assuming that you are living habitually under the dominion of the sinful nature, you are on the way to dying. But, assuming that by the Spirit you are habitually putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:13** For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Indeed, if you continue to live (Iterative Present tense) according to the lusts of your old sin nature, you will certainly (Gnomic Present tense) die spiritually (Futuristic Present tense). The Gnomic present tense means it will certainly happen, it is destined to occur if this behavior continues. What kind of death is this? Death is not hell, and life is not heaven. This is a reference to spiritual death, impoverishment in the Christian life. Continual behavior in the sphere of the old sin nature will lead to self-destruction and self-induced misery. On top of that, the Lord will apply maximum divine discipline leading up to the sin unto death. However, if you live (Iterative Present tense) by means of the Holy Spirit and condemn (Latin: mortify) the actions from the body, you will live an abundant life (Predictive Future tense).

If you try to “mortify” sin without the filling of the Spirit and Bible doctrine, you are performing dead, legalistic works, rather than functioning in the spiritual life. The classical “mortification of sin” from the Reformed tradition is not a work of the flesh. Many have substituted the mortification of sin for the Christian way of life and have destroyed their spiritual momentum. “Functions from the body” are not restricted to sins of the flesh only, but they also include self-righteous legalism and human good panaceas.

The life of the Spirit promises forward momentum, an advance to maturity, what is otherwise known as the abundant or supergrace life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Life here is abundant life, not regeneration or heaven. The context is experiential, and talks about a warfare, a war between the Holy Spirit and the sin principle within – the flesh. We must fight this foreigner, this enemy, by the Spirit. (J. Dillow) Mortification is a function of the spiritual life, *not* a method of self-discipline or asceticism. No one ever receives blessing from God by "being good." This is a distraction from the only thing that builds capacity for the spiritual life - Bible doctrine. Relying on "human good" for blessing from God is one of the greatest *deterrents* to the Christian life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This is a new kind of life under God's plan, substituting human standards with divine standards. (ibid)

The result of sin in the life of a Christian is spiritual impoverishment. A non-Christian is already dead in trespasses and sin. The wage earned by sin secures the same result as that obtained by the man who lives according to the flesh, spiritual failure, but in no case is this to suggest that spiritual failure is to be equated with loss of justification. Arminians often assume that "death" means "go to hell" or "lose salvation," but there is no necessary exegetical evidence for this conclusion. In fact, the context argues for "life" being abundant life and "death" referring to spiritual impoverishment. Death cannot mean "go to hell." The apostle declares just the opposite in Romans 8:38-39. (J. Dillow)

It is worth noting that in this verse there is a double play on "life" and "death." Both words are used in the Bible in more than one sense. Life is not only physical existence, but that quality of experience which belongs to those who dwell in God. In the same way, death is the cessation of bodily existence, but it is also the destruction of that true life which is God's gift to His children. This death jeopardizes man's fellowship with God. The love of evil undermines the communion with God in "those who are perishing." What Paul emphasizes in the present passage is the simple but far-reaching fact that those who live on one plane die on another. (J. Knox) Believers obtain sanctification by the Spirit through the Truth. Their sanctification, then, must be in proportion as the Truth is understood and believed. All Christians are not equal in sanctification. (R. Haldane)

It seems obvious that it is possible for "brethren" to die. In some sense a true Christian can experience spiritual death. Earlier in the context he has defined death as the opposite of "life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). It is therefore not to be equated with loss of salvation or hell, but with emptiness, depression, and spiritual impoverishment. True, abundant life is meant, and not just regeneration. That it is possible for these brethren not to put to death the deeds of the body is obvious because he says, "if." A failure to do this results in the opposite: death, or walking according to the flesh. Paul's picture here is of a battle, a battle between the flesh and the Holy Spirit. A Christian must choose life or death, fellowship with God or spiritual impoverishment. (J. Dillow)

Either eternal life is the recompense of mortification, or a sense is given to the word “live” which does not belong to it, making it to intend degree of spiritual enjoyment ... It does not signify *eternal death* to the wicked. Nor does it signify that the soul shall endure *present spiritual death*, such as is the state of the unregenerate. Nor is it the common death of men ... Though the believer is not in the flesh to his condemnation, the flesh is in him for his trial. He is in the Spirit, and thus able to please God. But he may not actually do so. He may habitually give the reins to the old nature. Hence an “if” and a penalty, are suspended over him ... Thus both the work of Jesus, and our own works as believers, have their place in the great adjustment at His return. The indwelling of the Spirit in the body of every saint, and this membership in Christ which attaches to every believer, shall assuredly produce his resurrection. But his own conduct shall decide whether his be a rising at the first, or at the second resurrection. (R. Govett)

The imputation of the perfect righteousness of Jesus shall produce, as its predestined result, *eternal life*; but subordinate results of death and life shall be the consequences of the limited righteousness of each saint ... What life is promised? Not *eternal life*. That is a gift through Jesus Christ. Not *present spiritual life*. That is already enjoyed. “The mind of the Spirit is life and peace.” It is, then, *life in resurrection*, to be obtained at its earliest exhibition, at “the resurrection of the just.” In those who walk after the Spirit, only the body is dead. It is of that, then, that the life promised is to be understood. Life is to be granted, as the recompense of a successful struggle against the dictates of the flesh. Now this contention ends not but with death, or with the coming of the Lord. Thus, again, the life spoken of is shown to be in resurrection ... Every design that rests on the sovereignty of God to perform shall surely be accomplished; while many purposes stated by Him as the Just Governor, are ruined by the feebleness and evil of the hands to which they are entrusted. (R. Govett)

Rom. 8:13 **Indeed** (emphatic conj.), **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes "this is true") **you continually live** (ζάω, PAI2P, Iterative; order your behavior, conduct your life) **according to the standards of the flesh** (Adv. Acc.; synecdoche, following the lusts of your OSN through rationalization), **you will inevitably** (μέλλω, PAI2P, Gnostic, apodosis; will certainly, destined) **die** (ἀποθνήσκω, PAInf., Futuristic, Conceived Result, Dir. Obj. of Verb; spiritual impoverishment; self-destruction, maximum divine discipline and self-induced misery leading to the *sin unto death*); **but** (adversative conj., *antithesis*) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes "this is true") **by means of the Spirit** (Instr. Means) **you make it a practice to recognize as dead** (θανατώω, PAI2P, Iterative, Potential Ind.; condemn to death, mortify) **the functions** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; actions, activities, deeds) **from the body** (Abl. Source; renounce any system or panacea of human good and self-righteousness), **you will live** (ζάω, FMI2P, Predictive, apodosis; the advance to maturity, abundant life).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:13** εἰ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆτε μέλλετε ἀποθνήσκειν· εἰ δὲ πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε ζήσεσθε

^{VUL} **Romans 8:13** si enim secundum carnem vixeritis moriemini si autem Spiritu facta carnis mortificatis vivetis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:14** For as many as are continually led by the Spirit of God [divine guidance], these are the mature [high quality] sons of God.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:14** For as many as are being constantly led by God's Spirit, these are sons of God.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The phrase “as many as” is restricted to mature believers only; it does not encompass loser believers. Why do I say this? Because there is a qualification for these believers to fulfill (Perfective Present tense) in order to be categorized as mature sons of God. All believers are not mature sons. Mature sons are continually (Iterative Present tense) led by the Spirit. Being a mature son is a status of high quality, not quantity. Only winner believers are mature sons of God. Other believers are elsewhere classified as babies (brephos), infants (nepios), youngsters (teknon), or adolescents (sophomoros). Mature son (huios) is an honored status, just beneath wise men (sophia). The normal Christian experience is to be continually led by the Spirit, but the vast majority of believers are abnormal because they are not following this divine mandate.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

One of the marks of our sonship is that we shall recognize other members of our family in the midst of a world largely composed of children of wrath and children of disobedience. The nearer you grow to Christ the more you wish to have fellowship with all those who *truly* believe in Him - in His person and in His work. (D.G. Barnhouse) This applies not only to the believer-unbeliever relationship, but also to the mature-immature Christian relationship as well; mature believers seek fellowship with other mature believers, and carnal believers seek fellowship with other carnal believers. [LWB] Like must seek like. I must find myself drawn to those who also love the Lord [have a heart for God] and wish to honor Him. (D.G. Barnhouse) The work of the Holy Spirit is not only momentary, as in regeneration, but also constant in sanctification. (R. Govett)

Regeneration concerns our nature and condition, while adoption concerns our position and privileges. The two are complementary aspects of our Divine sonship. (W.G. Thomas) The Spirit guides into the paths of righteousness by a blessed combination of invincible power and gentle suasion, not forcing us against our wills, but sweetly constraining us. (A.W. Pink) True life consists of allowing oneself to be led by the Spirit

of God and being a joint-heir with the Messiah in the final destiny of man. It is true that all Christians are sons of God by faith in Christ. We are all part of His family. But it is also true that the word “huios” can take a different emphasis depending on the context. Sonship in this verse depends for its continuance on man’s passive obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit. (J. Dillow) Positionally all believers are *sons of God* by virtue of faith in Christ. Yet experientially only those believers who walk according to the Spirit, who are led by Him, are manifesting their identity as *sons of God*. Paul is referring to the latter here. (R. Lopez)

The reference is therefore to a more advanced stage of the Christian life. You have a right to the title of sons as soon as you let yourselves be led by the Spirit. Though one becomes a son by justification, he does not possess the filial state, he does not really enjoy adoption until he has become loyally submissive to the operation of the Spirit. (Godet) Those Christians who are “putting to death the deeds of the body” are sons in behavior as well as in fact. Some Christians allow themselves to be led by the Spirit of God, and some do not. Those who do are “sons indeed.” (J. Dillow) A person who considers himself to be led by the Spirit apart from the Bible will soon fall into error and excess. He will begin to promote non-biblical and therefore false teaching. But a person who reads the Bible apart from the illumination provided by the Holy Spirit, which is true in the case of all unbelievers, will find it to be a closed and meaningless book. The Christian is led by the operation of the Holy Spirit and the Bible together. (J. Boice)

The Greek word “son” (huios) suggests status and privilege as well as the natural relationship of a child. Those who are led by the Spirit have gone beyond formal membership in an ecclesiastical body to claim the standing to which they are entitled, a standing to which they can appropriate only if they possess the insight and understanding and devotion which kinship presupposes. The nature of this relationship is clarified when it is contrasted with another. Some are sons, others are slaves. In the religious life it is a matter of choice which we shall be. The spirit of nervous apprehension, which makes all duties burdens, and finds in discipleship only a heavy responsibility, is common enough among earnest people; but it should be out of place in a child of God. You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Each relationship, we may notice, has its appropriate emotional atmosphere. In slavery it is fear; in sonship it is confidence and grateful joy. (J. Knox)

Rom. 8:14 For (continuative conj.) as many as (Subj. Nom.; correlative relative pronoun; mature believers) are continually led (ἄγω, PPI3P, Iterative; divine guidance system) by the Spirit (Instr. Agency) of God (Poss. Gen.), these (Subj. Nom.; demonstrative pronoun) are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Perfective) the mature sons (υἱός, Pred. Nom., anarthrous construction emphasizes the high quality of sonship) of God (Gen. Rel.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:14** ὅσοι γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται οὗτοι υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:14** quicumque enim Spiritu Dei aguntur hii filii sunt Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:15** For, you have not received a spirit [disposition] of slavery resulting in a state of fear, but rather you have received the Spirit of adult sonship [spiritual toga virilis], by Whom we may shout: Father, Father!

^{KW} **Rom. 8:15** For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again with resulting fear, but you received the Spirit who places you as adult sons, by whom we cry out with deep emotion, Abba, [namely] Father.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:15** For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As believers, we have not received (Constative Aorist tense) a spirit of slavery, a life of servitude, resulting in a state of fear. A life of fear and timidity is characterized by reverse process reversionism, not spiritual maturity. A spirit of slavery and a mental attitude sin of phobias and instability are characteristics of loser believers, not winners. By contrast, we have received (Constative Aorist tense) the Spirit of adult sonship. Hopefully we will reach spiritual maturity; in Roman days, this was signified by the custom of adoption. The toga virilis was given when an adolescent reached adult son status, and included the provisions for his future inheritance. We should all receive our spiritual toga virilis by metabolizing maximum doctrine in the soul.

As might be expected, when an adult son received his toga and promise of inheritance, he was quite excited. It was a spectacular, public event. They would often thank their benefactor by shouting (Static Present tense): Father! Father! Likewise, adult sons in the Spirit may call out loudly, confidently and happily: Father! Father! The first is Hebrew and Aramaic (abba) and the second occasion is Greek (pater); nevertheless, it is emphatic in nature. Again, only mature believers can legitimately cry out: Father, Father, because they are living in the Spirit as adult sons as opposed to in the spirit as slaves. Paul's contrasts are unmistakable.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Enantiosis, or contraries, is when a contrast is expressed by affirmatives and negatives. (E.W. Bullinger) Regeneration is the prerequisite of adoption. (J. Murray) Adoption in this instance implies a great opportunity for blessing, but also great responsibility. The mature believer, as an adult son, must tend to the business of the Father, i.e. fulfill the Protocol Plan of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Our adoption is an act of grace *towards* us; the Spirit of adoption is an act of grace *within* us; thus, grace bestowed and grace received make up our spiritual history. (M. Rainsford) The Holy Spirit is not a spirit of bondage, but of adoption. This Spirit does not lead to fear again. This fear can be understood as the opposite of the certainty of adoption. An adopted son knows he is in the family; he is

secure forever. (J. Dillow) The Holy Spirit was manifested of old in two ways, as the Spirit of *sanctification*, and as the Spirit of *power*. (R. Govett)

That Paul had such a distinction in mind between being a son and behaving as a son is reinforced by the fact that he connects the sonship of verse 15 with being an adopted son, which is different from being a son by birth. All Christians are adopted sons by virtue of our spiritual birth and the legal ransom paid, but not all adopted sons fulfill the requirements of adoption even though God does His part. Adoption is of grace, and we are adopted regardless of whether or not we fulfill the requirements (Gal. 4:5), but only those who do so are worthy of the name “son” and will finally obtain the inheritance rights. Only faithful Christians are “sons indeed.” It is these “sons indeed” who allow themselves to be “led by the Spirit of God.” A man cannot be led into sanctification unless he allows himself to be, that is, unless he walks by the Spirit. (J. Dillow)

Paul, being a Hebrew by birth, had become a Roman citizen by a form of "adoption" parallel to that of entering God's plan, so upon realizing how this concept applied to himself personally, he used both his Hebrew (by birth) word for *Father* and the Greek (by Roman custom) word for *Father* simultaneously. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Prayer is a key privilege of adoption which we enjoy now. We have access to God (Rom. 5:1-2) based on our adoption. Because of it we can approach God as “Father.” And only through the Spirit of adoption can we be assured that God is our Father and that He indeed hears our prayers. That is what Paul is speaking of here. (J. Boice) The repetition of this word, first in Aramaic and then in Greek, is remarkable and brings home to us the fact that Christianity had its birth in a bilingual people. (Sanday & Headlam)

The stress is on the present enjoyment of our status as God’s children. We should, then, attribute the apparent contradiction between this verse and 8:23 to the “already-not yet” tension of the Christian’s eschatological status: “already” truly adopted into God’s family, with all its benefits and privileges, but “not yet” recipients of the inheritance, by which we will be conformed to the glorious image of God’s own Son. (D. Moo) The present era of history is the Church Age, in which every individual who believes in Christ as his Savior is adopted as an adult son and heir into the royal family of God. We are royalty now and will be royalty forever. This is our eternal position; in our current experience, however, we must learn to think as royalty. We must learn to conduct ourselves as royalty. Royalty lives by protocol. The Christian way of life can be called the protocol plan of God because the system – the sphere of spiritual power – for utilizing God’s power is a system of protocol. God designed the Christian life; we must do things His way. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:15 **For** (explanatory conj.), **you have not** (neg. adv.) **received** (λαμβάνω, AAI2P, Constative; accepted) **a spirit** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; state of mind, disposition, life) **of slavery** (Descr. Gen.; servitude - such a spirit as is possessed by a slave, not by the son of the house) **resulting in a state** (Adv. Result; falling back upon, returning to a former state of things, reverse process reversionism) **of**

fear (Acc. Gen. Ref.; mental attitude sin of timidity, phobia, instability), **but rather** (contrast, adversative conj.) **you have received** (λαμβάνω, AAI2P, Constative) **the Spirit** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of adult sonship** (Descr. Gen.; the Roman custom of adoption for the purpose of inheritance did not occur during childhood, but upon reaching adult son status, *toga virilis*), **by Whom** (Instr. Means) **we** (mature believers only) **may shout** (κράζω, PAI1P, Static, Potential Ind.; call out loudly with confidence and inner happiness): **Father** (ἄββα, Emphatic vocative, Hebrew & Aramaic), **Father** (πατήρ, Ind. Nom., Greek)!

^{WHO} **Romans 8:15** οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα δουλείας πάλιν εἰς φόβον ἀλλὰ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἰοθεσίας ἐν ᾧ κράζομεν Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ

^{VUL} **Romans 8:15** non enim accepistis spiritum servitutis iterum in timore sed accepistis Spiritum adoptionis filiorum in quo clamamus Abba Pater

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:16** The [Holy] Spirit Himself testifies with our [human] spirit that we are children [students] of God,

^{KW} **Rom. 8:16** The Spirit Himself is constantly bearing joint-testimony with our [human] spirit that we are God's children,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our human spirit that we are (Perfective Present tense) children of God. The prefix “sum” on the Greek verb means joint testimony, a confirmatory agreement between two witnesses. Children in this verse refers to our experiential state when we first became Christians; our positional state was as adopted sons.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Romans 8:14-17 speak of adoption as a separate work of God's Spirit through which: (1) we are delivered from bondage to the law and from fear; (2) we are assured of our new relationship to God; and (3) we become God's heirs with Christ. (J. Boice) It may be helpful to arrange the descriptions of the two kinds of Christians involved in the following table:

	Spiritual Christian	Carnal Christian
8:4	walks according to the Spirit	walks according to the flesh

8:5	sets mind on Spirit	sets mind on flesh
8:6	life and peace	death
8:7		hostile to God not subject to God unable to obey God
8:12	puts to death the deeds of the body	lives according to the flesh
8:13	those being led by the Spirit of God	walks according to the flesh
8:17	joint-heirs of Christ	those who do not suffer with Him

It is possible for brethren to be characterized by the things on the right hand side of the table. If so, the result is that these Christians will “die.” If the brethren are characterized by the things on the left hand side of the table, the result of this activity is that these brethren will “live.” Thus, true abundant life is meant, and not just regeneration. Paul’s picture here is of a battle, a battle between the flesh and the Holy Spirit. A Christian must choose life or death, fellowship with God or spiritual impoverishment. (J. Dillow)

That the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit does not seduce believers from the written Word, or expose them to delusions, mistaken for internal revelations, differing from the revelations of Scripture. (R. Haldane) At a dramatic moment in the Roman ceremony of adoption, the new heir is clothed with the magnificent toga virilis, the garment of manhood. Christians wear the spiritual equivalent of the toga virilis from the moment of salvation, when the baptism of the Spirit occurs. Through the merits of Christ, Church Age believers are adopted as adult sons of God and joint heirs of Christ ... with the full privileges and responsibilities of an adult son of God because he is in union with the Lord Jesus Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit (Subj. Nom.; Holy Spirit as the 1st witness) Himself (relative pronoun) testifies with (συμμαρτυρέω, PAI3S, Static; confirms, bears witness, agrees with) our (Poss. Gen., relative pronoun) spirit (Instr. Assoc.; human spirit as the 2nd witness, joint testimony) that (confirmation conj.) we are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Perfective) children (τέκνον, Pred. Nom.; students) of God (Gen. Rel. & Poss.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:16** αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐσμὲν τέκνα θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 8:16** ipse Spiritus testimonium reddit spiritui nostro quod sumus filii Dei

LWB Rom. 8:17 Now if we are children [born of God], then we [believers] are heirs [our spiritual heritage depends on Whom we are related to]: on the one hand we are heirs of God [by the 1st birth]; on the other hand we are joint-heirs with Christ, if after this [becoming heirs of God], we [undeservedly] suffer together; then we will also be glorified together [rewards & blessings for winner believers].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:17** And since children, also heirs; on the one hand, heirs of God, on the other, joint-heirs with Christ, provided that we are suffering with Him in order that we also may be glorified together,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:17** And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reiterates the difference between positional and experiential truth. All believers are heirs of God by the first birth, as represented in the NT by the Greek word “sperma.” Some believers will be joint-heirs with Christ, as represented in the NT by the Greek word “sporos.” The 1st class conditional clause means we are heirs of God if (protasis) we are children. In other words, you must be born of God to be spiritually connected with the Father and Son. Our spiritual position is a matter of heredity; it depends entirely on Whom we are related to, the 1st or last Adam. Unbelievers are not children of God; they never were and they never will be.

If we are positional members in the first half of this verse, we then have the possibility of being experiential members of the second half of this verse. If we are believers, we are guaranteed to suffer together as Christians to one extent or another. If that suffering is undeserved (Potential Indicative) and continues over a period of time (Progressive Present tense), we can be assured that we are on the road to spiritual maturity. If our suffering is deserved, meaning divine discipline for living a life of sin and reversionism, we can be assured that we are not growing spiritually at all. Suffering together in this verse refers to experiential suffering of growing believers. We must faithfully endure to the end in order to be one of Christ’s “metachoi,” servant kings (winner believers) who will reign with Him in eternity.

Paul uses the prefix “sun” three times in this verse, emphasizing the “togetherness” winner believers share with Christ. He also uses the Potential Indicative and the Potential Subjunctive to point to the experiential nature of His reign, suffering and glorification. This is not a reference to deserved suffering inflicted upon carnal believers, nor to the positional glorification obtained by all believers, including loser (reversionist) believers. Only winner believers will share in His reign, His undeserved suffering and the honor and rewards related to His glorification. The combination of the “potentials” and the “sharing” communicate far more than mere positional truths.

Not all believers will grow spiritually; there is no such thing as spiritual equality. If there were, we would not have gradations of progressive sanctification taught throughout Scripture. Believers have the option of following God’s precisely correct protocol plan or one of their own choosing. If we suffer undeservedly with other believers, then we will be glorified together (Culminative Aorist tense) when we reign with Him. This is a Potential Subjunctive mood, meaning the rewards and blessings associated with

glorification are only for those (winners) who make positive spiritual decisions. Only winner believers will reign with Christ as participants; loser believers will be spectators

RELEVANT OPINIONS

All Christians are "born ones," children of God. The Spirit of God testifies to the heart of all that they are His offspring. But not all Christians are sons in the sense of those who go on to maturity, who maintain relationship with Christ, who suffer with Him, and as a result will one day share in His inheritance-kingdom, being honored with Him there. (J. Dillow) The Holy Spirit is the *earnest* (small portion) of our inheritance. If God changed His mind about us, we'd get to keep the Holy Spirit anyway! (K. Lamb) We are all heirs of God by virtue of the fact that we are His children. We are also co-heirs of Christ "if indeed we share in His sufferings." The 2nd heirship mentioned in this verse is conditional upon our joining with Him in His sufferings. Being an heir of God is unconditional, but being a joint-heir of the kingdom is conditioned upon our spiritual perseverance. Only those who resist the flesh with suffering can overcome. There is a condition to obtaining the co-heirship with Christ. (J. Dillow)

The apostle is careful to use the term "sons" as well as "children," and we must be equally careful to distinguish between them. The word "son," as distinct from "child," represents the believer as a full-grown son, adopted into God's family as an adult member of the household. Whatever difference there is between the babe and the young man, that in things spiritual is the difference represented between "child" and "son." The chief mark of this full-grown sonship is being "led" by the Spirit of God, which clearly implies conscious responsiveness on our part to the teaching and guidance of the Spirit. This characteristic of sonship is the true meaning of "the Spirit of adoption." It is the attitude of whole-hearted trust, joyous obedience, and complete consecration. This is how the Christian life continues. (W.G. Thomas) "Joint-heirs with Christ" means the children of God enter in jointly with Christ into the possession of the inheritance which was bestowed on Him. (J. Murray)

We are all the seed of Abraham, but we are not all the children of Abraham. One is natural, the other is spiritual. The *sperm* of God remains in me through 1st birth and I am born of God. When the *spore* of God comes to me it then produces life through the 2nd birth. You are a child of God by being born right; you are a son of God through maturity. Being an heir of God is the *sperm*, our 1st birth; being joint-heirs is the *spore*, our 2nd birth. We came into this world the 1st time being related to God the Father as an heir of God. But He didn't want His heirs to go to hell. So what did He do? He sent His Son into the world in the seed of Abraham [because it was Abraham's blessing He was imparting to us - every covenant blessing God ever gave came through Abraham] that He might give life to us to make us joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. (K. Lamb) I think Keith is on the right track, but this explanation has a questionable idea that all believers are joint-heirs with Christ. I prefer Dillow's interpretation on how we become joint-heirs with Christ, which in a later quote (below), is likewise affirmed by Lamb. (LWB)

There are two manner of words in the Greek for seed: *sperm* and *spore*. They do not have the same expressed meaning. The word *sperm* addressed something which by itself cannot produce life. The word *spore* addresses a seed which is able to produce life. In the parable of the sower, the good seed which is the Word of God is the *spore*, something which already has the capability of producing life. The word *sperm* is used to describe the seed of the tares. The good seed (*spore*) are also called the children of the kingdom. Everybody is the natural seed of something. But there is a spiritual seed that comes through that natural line (i.e. Romans 11). We all come into this world the natural seed of Abraham, but there is a spiritual seed which comes out of that natural seed that contains both the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman (which are born not by the will of man, but by the will of God - the *sperm* of God). But the *sperm* has no capability in itself of producing life. So the *spore* (Word of God) comes to the *sperm* (those who are born of God - born from *above*) and life is generated. The Word of God comes to the believer and he believes it. Why does he believe it? Because he's a believer! He believes because he is a believer, he's not a believer because he believes. You are not a sinner because you sin, you sin because you are a sinner. You do what you are, you aren't what you do. So God sees you in Christ because the *spore* has come to what is God's and there is life - that's new birth. The tare is the serpent's seed, the children of the wicked one. Note: there is no suggestion in the parable of the wheat and the tares that the tares, if they stayed long enough with the wheat, could ever become wheat. Neither is there any suggestion that if the wheat stayed with the tares it could ever become tares. Wheat is wheat, because what is born of the Spirit is Spirit. The tares will remain tares, because what is born of the flesh is flesh. (K. Lamb)

In law there is a difference between an heir and a joint-heir. If a man dies and leaves his farm to four heirs, the estate is divided evenly and each heir receives 25% of the estate. But if the same man leaves his farm to the same four as joint-heirs, then each one owns the whole farm. In human divisions, this would probably be undesirable due to quarrels over the inheritance, but in divine procedure it is perfect ... everything that God the Father has given to the Lord Jesus Christ has been given to us also. (D.G. Barnhouse) Inheritance is ours because we were born right. Reward is based on our faithfulness. (K. Lamb) Union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of His glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end. (J. Murray)

Mere suffering does not fulfill the condition. It is suffering with Christ. (Vincent) The inheritance attached to divine sonship is attained only on the condition expressed in this clause. Paul was sure of it in his own case, and took it for granted in that of others. Those who share in His sufferings now will share in His glory hereafter; and in order to share His glory hereafter, it is necessary to begin by sharing His sufferings here. (Denney) Capacity for blessing requires capacity for suffering. Being true of mature believers only, this assumes: (1) maturity adjustment to the justice of God, which results in the imputation of divine blessings, (2) which blessings come from undeserved suffering,

blessings which are superior to any human acoutrements. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Eric Sauer similarly views the co-heirship with Christ in this passage as conditional and graduated according to faithfulness. Wilbur Smith punctuates the text the same way and relates the joint-heirship with Christ to Psalm 2:8. The inheritance refers not to heaven, but to our reward in the kingdom, reigning with Christ. Newell says, “Here two schools of interpretation part company, one boldly saying that all the saints are designated, and all shall reign with Christ; the other, that reigning with Christ depends upon voluntary choosing a path of suffering with Him.” I am obviously in the latter group. (LWB)

Certainly being an heir in the sense of final deliverance from hell is not based upon sharing in His sufferings. Otherwise salvation is earned and based on works. Paul specifically says we are heirs of God by virtue of the fact that we are sons and for no other reason in Galatians 4:7. Yet in Romans 8:17 he says that this heirship is conditioned upon works, perseverance in suffering. Contextual considerations suggest that two kinds of Christians are in view, and thus two kinds of inheritances are implied. The heirship which results in a rich life now and an abundant life in the kingdom, a reward, is based upon a work: putting to death by means of the Spirit the misdeeds of the body and victorious perseverance in suffering with Christ. Contextual considerations suggest that two kinds of Christians are in view, and thus two kinds of inheritances are implied. (J. Dillow) Paul makes it clear that this suffering is the condition for inheritance; we will be glorified with Christ (only) if we suffer with Him. Participation in Christ’s glory can come only through participation in His suffering. (D. Moo)

Only the mature believer who has exploited the victory of grace glorifies God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Our *standing* in Christ in the Father is *objective*, our *state* in Christ as we walk on the earth is *subjective*. Our dealings are with the Father through the Son. Our *objective standing* is with the Father, our *subjective walk* is with the Son. Our *objective position* is perfect and can never change; our *subjective experience* is being matured in Christ. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, but we are not predestined to reign. The second half of this verse is dealing with reigning with Him in eternity. We will all be heirs and joint-heirs, but we will not all reign with Him - this is for winners only. (K. Lamb) Such benefits can be gained only by those who are prepared to satisfy the requisite conditions. Daily experience should have taught us that nothing worth having is ever got until we have paid the appropriate price, and we should consequently expect to find that the same inevitable sequence holds good in the spiritual world. Those who desire great spiritual gifts can expect to receive them – but only if they are prepared to meet exacting requirements. (J. Knox)

Rom. 8:17 **Now** (transitional particle) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "assumes it is true") **we are** (ellipsis, copula supplied) **children** (τέκνον, Pred. Nom.; born of God), **then** (Adv. Result, apodosis) **we are** (ellipsis, copula supplied; all believers without exception) **heirs** (Pred. Nom.; by heredity—depends totally upon Whom we are related to): **on the one hand** (correlative conj.) **we are** (ellipsis, copula supplied) **heirs** (Pred. Nom.; by the 1st birth) **of God**

(Gen. Rel.; *sperm*); **on the other hand** (correlative conj.) **we are** (ellipsis, copula supplied) **joint-heirs** (Pred. Nom.; by the 2nd birth) **with Christ** (Gen. Assoc. & Abl. Source; spore), **if after this** (3rd class conditional particle, "maybe yes, maybe no"; declarative particle, "in as much as"; referring to the preceding *positional* truths) **we suffer together** (συμπάσχω, PAI1P, Progressive, Potential Ind.; conditional: the undeserved suffering of mature believers in the royal family); **then** (Purpose) **we will also** (adjunctive) **be glorified together** (συνδοξάζω, APSubj.1P, Culminative, Potential, Purpose Clause; conditional: the rewards and blessings reserved for winners, those who will *reign* with Him).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:17** εἰ δὲ τέκνα καὶ κληρονόμοι· κληρονόμοι μὲν θεοῦ συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ εἶπερ συμπάσχομεν ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:17** si autem filii et heredes heredes quidem Dei coheredes autem Christi si tamen compatimur ut et conglorificemur

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:18** For I conclude that the sufferings of this present period of time [the Church Age] are not comparable to the glory [eternal honor, rewards & blessings] which is intended to be revealed to us.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:18** For I have come to a reasoned conclusion that the sufferings of the present reason are of no weight in comparison to the glory which is about to be revealed upon us.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul concludes, after a careful, reasoned, unemotional review of all the facts, that the undeserved sufferings of the Church Age dispensation are not comparable (are of low comparable value) to the future rewards, honors, and blessings which winner believers will receive in eternity. The glories of the reign of the Messiah are destined to take place. The big question for each of us is whether we will be one of His winner believers who will share in them. They are intended to be revealed to us (Punctiliar Future tense), so we may share them as part of His reflected glory. The Tential Present tense points to the revealing of this glory as optional to each of us; it depends on our daily decisions to metabolize Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These glories are to be revealed to us and not "in us" as some translations read. The wonders of the great future will be revealed to all, but they will be shared in (inherited)

only by those who persevere in suffering. (J. Dillow) The affliction is light and temporary when compared with the all-surpassing and everlasting glory. It is not that the glory is a compensation for the suffering; it grows out of the suffering. There is an organic relation between the two for the believer as surely as there was for the Lord. (F.F. Bruce)

The future kingdom embraces the entire created order. One day mankind will conquer the galaxies! (J. Dillow) The Spirit connects our “already” with our “not yet,” making “the hope of glory,” though unseen, as certain as if it were already ours – which, in a sense, it is, as we are glorified in verse 30. (D. Moo) Undeserved suffering demands intensified application of Bible doctrine, accelerating spiritual growth and increasing the believer’s appreciation of the Lord. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:18 For (explanatory conj.) I conclude (λογίζομαι, PMI1S, Static, Deponent; calculate, reckon according to the facts, rational estimation, non-emotional thinking) that (epexegetical conj.) the (undeserved) sufferings (Subj. Nom.) of this present (Temp. Adv., current) period of time (Adv. Gen. Time; the Church Age) are (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) comparable (Pred. Nom., of equal value, worthy of) to the glory (Acc. Comparison; eternal honor, rewards and blessings; the glories of the reign of the Messiah) which is intended (μέλλω, PAPtc.ASF, Tendentia, Attributive, Articular; future purpose, certain to take place, destined) to be revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, AMInf., Punctiliar Future, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) to us (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun, reflected glory).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:18** Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἄξια τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 8:18** existimo enim quod non sunt condignae passiones huius temporis ad futuram gloriam quae revelabitur in nobis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:19** Moreover, the confident expectation of the creation [material universe] waits eagerly for the manifestation [at the 2nd advent] of the adult sons [winner believers] of God,

^{KW} **Rom. 8:19** For the concentrated and undivided expectation of the creation is assiduously and patiently awaiting the revelation of the sons of God;

^{KJV} **Romans 8:19** For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul invented a triple compound noun (apokaradokia) to express the concept of the material universe in a state of intense concentration, stretching its head forward to fix a gaze on what happens next. It is a hapax logomena, because it is used only once in Scripture, and a personification, because it assigns human characteristics to the material creation. The creation is eagerly waiting (Descriptive Present tense) for the manifestation at the 2nd advent of Christ of the adult sons of God. All children of God will be transformed, but only sons of God will rule with Christ. This includes both OT and NT saints. Sure, the creation is waiting for the manifestation of the children of God, but it is especially (eagerly) waiting for the manifestation of the adult sons of God. It's a matter of degree – adult sons obtain greater honors and rewards than children.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Romans 8:19-21 is composed of expectations and reasons for having these expectations. For example: verse 19 is an expectation, verse 20A is the reason - the creation made subject; verse 20B is an expectation, verse 21 is the reason - the creation delivered. Both reasons function as a parenthetical addition. The creation, or created things or creatures, is a *metonymy*, where the abstract is put for the concrete. (E.W. Bullinger) This is the final imputation of supergrace blessings, which occurs during the period of: the great genuflect, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the bride returning with Christ, operation footstool, the triumphal procession, the coronation of the groom, and the wedding supper of the Lamb - all during their appointed time. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Greek word for “stretch forward” is further strengthened by the compound “apo” denoting diversion from other things and concentration on a single object. (Sanday & Headlam) Not all Christians are "sons of God" in this sense, but all are children of God. The "revealing of the sons of God" is then making known to all creation who these faithful Christians are. It refers to their installation as the co-heirs and co-rulers with Messiah in the final destiny of man. The entire creation longs for the future reign of the servant kings. (J. Dillow) All adopted children have the full rights of being an heir of God. Only those adopted children who suffer with Christ will be co-heirs of Christ (Alford).

Inanimate nature too may be included in the idea, it also seeming to share in the present mystery of evil, and falling short of our ideal of a terrestrial paradise. It may be said that Paul had in his mind what is said in Genesis of the cursing of the ground for man's sake, and of the thorns and thistles; and also the pictures found in the prophets of a renovated earth, in which the desert should rejoice and blossom as the rose. (J. Barmby) All three (creation, we, the Spirit) groan as in childbirth, hopefully looking forward to the birth of the promised glory. We might say, therefore, that “for” introduces “the three groanings.” (W. Hendriksen)

The ground, as a part of God's creation, was cursed because of sin (Gen. 3:17), and the birds and animals groan (Gen. 3:14), waiting for the day when they will no longer be under the curse of sin ... Nature was cursed as a result of God's curse on humans, and

this shows how inextricably linked humans are with the world in which they live ...
Today the curse covers the world and brings the groaning of pain even to that which is inanimate. Yet one day God will remove the curse and save the earth from its pain when He establishes His Millennial Kingdom here on the earth. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 8:19 Moreover (continuative conj.), the confident expectation (Subj. Nom.; Paul invented this triple compound noun for "stretching the head forward", intense concentration, to look up with the head erect) of the creation (Poss. Gen.; material universe, world) waits eagerly (ἀπεκδέχομαι, PMI3S, Descriptive, Deponent; triple compound deponent verb) for the manifestation (Acc. Dir. Obj.; revealing at the 2nd advent) of the adult sons (Obj. Gen.; both O.T. and N.T. saints; all children of God will be transformed, but only the sons will rule with Christ) of God (Poss. Gen.),

^{WHO} **Romans 8:19** ἡ γὰρ ἀποκαταδοκία τῆς κτίσεως τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεκδέχεται

^{VUL} **Romans 8:19** nam expectatio creaturae revelationem filiorum Dei expectat

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:20** For the creation [material universe] became subject to the vacuum [shared in Adam's sin, futility, and emptiness], not voluntarily, but because of Him [God the Father] Who subordinated it [the material universe] in the time of hope [at the Fall],

^{KW} **Rom. 8:20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not voluntarily, but on account of the One who put it under subjection upon the basis of the hope,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:20** For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The material universe became under the authority of (Ingressive Aorist tense) the vacuum. What is the vacuum? The vacuum (mataiotēs) is the utter futility and emptiness (Latin: vanity) that occurred at the Fall of Adam. It is the sin and nothingness in all of us due to the imputation of the sin nature. The creation shares in this vacuum because of its undeserved suffering. The creation did not voluntarily, willingly sin with man, because the creation as a whole has no volition. Instead, God the Father subordinated (Constativ Aorist tense) the material universe in the time of hope, at the Fall.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the curse, the perfect universe was rendered futile, unable to fulfill the purpose for which it was brought into being. The purposes which God had for the universe were

rendered relatively futile by the curse. (K. Wuest) How then could you say, that a nature, which with the advent of sin dons the garment of mourning, and still groaning ever waits for the revelation of glory which is to come, should not have quaked, when the great suit also regarding *her* future was decided, and the Mediator, Who was also her Creator, died away in the death on the cross. (A. Kuyper) The doctrine of a cosmic fall is implicit in the biblical record from Genesis 3, where the ground is cursed for man's sake, to Revelation 22, where the curse is finally removed. (F.F. Bruce)

This expression must not be toned down. It refers to all the creation, outside of man himself, with which man has to do; our world, which is connected by a mysterious solidarity with ourselves, sorrowing in our sorrow, rejoicing in our joy. Once? It was very good; all was harmony, beauty, peace. We may not tell what were the joys of the early creation, but it was the garden of the Lord, the paradise of man. But man's fall drew a shadow across the beauty; and for love, liberty, and life, there were then strife, bondage, death. The creation was subjected to vanity; cursed was the world for man's sake. (T. Lockyer)

When the future reign dawns, it will include a physical transformation of the creation itself. The creation has endured a subjection to futility for many ages. This subjection creates within itself a sense of hope for something better. That "something better" is a transformation similar to that which will occur to all Christians, "the freedom of the glory of the children of God." This glory is part of, but not equal to, the "glory that is to be revealed to us" in verse 18. The former is a general term for the glories of the messianic era. The latter is the glory of a transformed body which all Christians will share in the day of resurrection. (J. Dillow) Humanity's fall into sin marred the "goodness" of God's creation, and creation has ever since been in a state of "frustration." (D. Moo)

Rom. 8:20 [**for** (explanatory conj.) **the creation** (Subj. Nom.; material universe, world) **became subject to** (ὑποτάσσω, API3S, Ingressive; under the authority of, submitted to, subordinated) **the vacuum** (ματαιότης, the creation shared in Adam's sin; vanity, futility, emptiness, nothingness, nature's undeserved suffering), **not** (neg. adv.) **voluntarily** (Indepen. Nom., the old Ptc. form is merely an Adj.; willingly, by its own volition or accord), **but** (adversative conj.) **because of Him** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; God the Father) **Who** (voluntarily) **subordinated** (ὑποτάσσω, AAPtc.ASM, Constative, Substantival) **it** (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied; the material creation) **in the time of hope** (Loc. Time; at the Fall)].

^{WHO} **Romans 8:20** τῆ γὰρ ματαιότητι ἣ κτίσις ὑπετάγη οὐχ ἑκοῦσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα ἐφ' ἐλπίδι

^{VUL} **Romans 8:20** vanitati enim creatura subiecta est non volens sed propter eum qui subiecit in spem

LWB **Rom. 8:21** Therefore, the creation itself [material universe] shall also be delivered [set free at the 2nd advent] from the bondage of corruption [ruin & destruction] into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

KW **Rom. 8:21** That the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

KJV **Romans 8:21** Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The material universe shall also be delivered (Predictive Future tense) at the 2nd advent of Christ. It shall be set free for the duration of the millennium from the bondage of corruption it has been under all these years. The curse of ruin and destruction will finally come to an end, and the creation will enter into the same glorious liberty that the children of God enter into. The creation shares in the future glory of the children of God, the heirs of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek word “pftoras” (corruption) is a term used of Mithridates, who was allowed to decompose while he was still alive, i.e. maggots and worms swarmed as a result of the destruction and putrefaction of his body. (BAG) The creation does not share in all aspects of the future glory. It will never be set free to rule with Christ, the revealing of the sons of God. No inanimate thing can share in the reign of Christ’s servants. But the creation will share in an aspect of the future glory common to all the children of God, physical transformation. For this reason, Paul changes from “sons” in verse 19 to “children” of God in verse 21. All children of God will be transformed, but only the “sons” will rule with Christ. (J. Dillow)

Do not be surprised when things go wrong in this life. This world is not a good place. We live in a fallen environment. Your plans will misfire, you will often fail, others will destroy what you have spent long years and much toil to accomplish. This will be true even if you are a Christian and are trying to follow Jesus. But your successes are not what life is all about. What matters is your love for God and your faithfulness. (J. Boice)

Rom. 8:21 Therefore (demonstrative conj.), the creation (Subj. Nom.; the material universe) itself (Nom. Appos., intensive pronoun) shall also (adjunctive particle) be delivered (ἐλευθερώω, FPI3S, Predictive; set free at the 2nd advent for the duration of the millenium) from the bondage (Abl. Separation; slavery) of corruption (Descr. Gen.; ruin, destruction, deterioration, depravity) into the glorious (Descr. Gen.) liberty (Prep. Acc.) of the children (Gen.

Assoc.) **of God** (Poss. Gen.; note the concatenation of piling up of genitives).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:21** ὅτι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 8:21** quia et ipsa creatura liberabitur a servitute corruptionis in libertatem gloriae filiorum Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:22** Moreover, we know that the entire creation [material universe] has been groaning together [shares in the condemnation of mankind] and suffering agony together [travailing in childbirth] until now,

^{KW} **Rom. 8:22** For we know that the whole creation groans and travails together up to this moment,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:22** For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Moreover, we know beyond a doubt (Gnomic Perfect tense) that the material universe has been groaning together (Durative Present tense) with us, sharing in the condemnation of mankind. The creation is also suffering agony together (Durative Present tense) with us, travailing in childbirth up to and including the present time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Nature is the glory of mankind in the same way that the wife is the glory of her husband. The groanings look back to the Fall, while the pains of childbirth look forward to the 2nd advent. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The childbearing pains are growing more intense and the contractions are coming at increasingly short intervals. (D.G. Barnhouse) The pains with which the whole creation groans are not death pains but birth pains. Paul has in mind the Jewish expectation of a coming Messiah, but he knows that a time of great tribulation will precede the millennial rule of the Messiah. Both humankind and the rest of God's creation will share in these birth pains as they together anticipate the joy that follows the pain of birth. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 8:22 Moreover (explanatory conj.), we know (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Gnomic) that (demonstrative conj.) the entire (Nom. Spec.) creation (Subj. Nom.; the material universe) has been groaning together (συστενάζω, PAI3S, Durative; shares in the condemnation of mankind) and (connective conj.) suffering agony together (συνωδίνω, PAI3S, Durative; travailing in childbirth) until (improper prep.; "up to and including the present time") now (Adv. Time),

^{WHO} **Romans 8:22** οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν·

^{VUL} **Romans 8:22** scimus enim quod omnis creatura ingemescit et parturit usque adhuc

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:23** **And not only nature [the material creation], but also ourselves [mature believers], although we possess the firstfruits from the Spirit [blessings imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation]; even we ourselves groan from time to time [complain] within ourselves, waiting expectantly for the adoption [ultimate sanctification], i.e., the redemption of our body [resurrection].**

^{KW} **Rom. 8:23** And not only, but we ourselves also who have the firstfruit of the Spirit, we ourselves also are groaning within ourselves, assiduously and patiently awaiting the full realization of our adult sonship at the time of the redemption of our body.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:23** And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The material creation is not the only entity that experiences undeserved suffering. Believers also experience undeserved suffering, even though we possess (Static Present tense) the firstfruits from the Spirit. The firstfruits from the Spirit are the blessing imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation. They are a down-payment on the balance which will come in eternity. Even believers groan within themselves on occasion (Iterative Present tense), as they struggle to bear up under undeserved suffering. The Greek word used here refers to complaining and sighing, something none of you would ever do. I'm being facetious, of course.

As we wait expectantly (Durative Present tense) for our ultimate sanctification, our patience often fails us and we sigh and complain under adversity. We know that the redemption of our body, our resurrection, will arrive soon, but this knowledge is not enough. That is why we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Our future resurrection body is also referred to as the final stage of our adoption, something we all eagerly wait for. This eager anticipation is something we share with the rest of the material creation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This verse refers to the completion of our adoption which consists in the reception of our resurrection bodies. (J. Dillow) Though today we may be attacked by physical pain, surrounded by financial distress, or discouraged by failing health, we know that because we possess the Holy Spirit as our down payment, God will certainly redeem our bodies as He has already redeemed our souls. As the sons of God, we will one day be clothed with immortal and incorruptible bodies. (W. Kroll)

This is a discourse on undeserved suffering, which only the mature believer experiences. It is structured around groans, from the sharing of the curse of Adam. Only the mature believer “eagerly anticipates” with confident expectation the accelerated growth obtained by divine testing. “Possessing the first fruits” reveals that the category of believers in view is those who have already developed the necessary capacity from doctrine to receive supergrace blessings in time. Which category of believers is that? Mature believers. These “first fruits” are merely a taste of far greater blessings in heaven that will come to the believer who trained and persevered and disciplined himself on earth to cross the goal of spiritual maturity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:23 And (connective conj.) not (obj. neg. adv.) only (Acc. Spec., solely) nature (ellipsis, the undeserved suffering of the material creation), but (adversative conj.) also (adjunctive particle) ourselves (Ind. Nom., intensive pronoun, mature believers only), although we possess (ἔχω, PAptc.NPM, Static, Concessive) the firstfruits (Acc. Dir. Obj.; blessings imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation, a downpayment on what is to come in eternity) from the Spirit (Abl. Source); even (ascensive particle) we (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) ourselves (Nom. Appos., reflexive pronoun; as believers) groan from time to time (στενάζω, PAIIP, Customary & Iterative; sigh, complain) within ourselves (Loc. Sph., reflexive pronoun), waiting expectantly for (ἀπεκδέχομαι, PMptc.NPM, Durative, Deponent, Circumstantial; eagerly, patiently) the adoption (Acc. Dir. Obj.; ultimate sanctification), i.e. the redemption (Acc. Appos.) of our (Poss. Gen.) body (Obj. Gen.; resurrection body).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:23** οὐ μόνον δέ ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντες [ἡμεῖς] καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς στενάζομεν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπεκδεχόμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:23** non solum autem illa sed et nos ipsi primitias Spiritus habentes et ipsi intra nos gemimus adoptionem filiorum expectantes redemptionem corporis nostri

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:24** So then, we [mature believers] are delivered with reference to that future expectation [we were saved for a future purpose]. However, when a hope is seen, it is not a hope, for who hopes for what he sees?

^{KW} **Rom. 8:24** For we were saved in the sphere of hope. But hope that has been seen is not hope, for that which a person sees, why does he hope for it?

^{KJV} **Romans 8:24** For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

So then, we are delivered (Constative Aorist tense) with reference to that future expectation. We were saved in order to have this future, a resurrection body which can inhabit both earth and heaven. Hope is confidence prior to the reality of this fulfillment. When a hope is seen (Temporal Participle), it is no longer a hope. This is only common sense, because who continues to hope (Aoristic Present tense) for what he has already seen (Pictorial Present tense)? There is also an experiential element to this verse, since many believers have no hope and are not eagerly anticipating a spiritual life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Just as “faith” represents an entire system of applying the Word of God, so also “hope” is a system, which is derived from knowledge of doctrine. Hope is absolute confidence in future divine provisions and blessings. At each stage of a person’s life, he not only can enjoy the blessings he has but can also anticipate with assurance or “hope for” the blessings that will come with the next stage of growth. Thus, there are three hopes; together they trace an individual’s advance from being an unbeliever who anticipates salvation, to becoming an immature believer who looks forward to supergrace blessings, to becoming a mature believer who eagerly awaits the eternal rewards of heaven. The fulfillment of each hope lays the foundation for the next hope. No matter how much God blesses us, we can always anticipate more. Another way of looking at these three “hopes” is: Hope 1 (the imputation of divine righteousness) looks forward to Hope 2 (our future resurrection body) which looks forward to Hope 3 (the imputation of undeserved suffering and/or martyrdom). (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Bible doctrine saturates the mature believer’s thinking. He has maximum application of doctrine to every experience. Cognizance of doctrine enables him to give divine viewpoint precedence over empirical evidence. Consequently, his mental attitude is stabilized by the doctrine he knows rather than destabilized by the circumstances of life. The mature believer views his life in the light of God’s plan, which gives him tremendous confidence regarding time and eternity. This confidence in God’s ability to provide for him and to bless him in any future contingency is the biblical definition of “hope.” Hope is the mature believer’s problem-solving device directed toward Bible doctrine and related to his mental stability ... Both faith-rest and hope are subordinate systems that function within the larger sphere, the love complex. A believer can apply doctrine and advance from hope to hope only inside the sphere of power, the divine dynasphere. Faith and hope depend on the divine system, which empowers us to learn doctrine and sustain spiritual momentum. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:24 so then (inferential conj.), we are delivered (σώζω, API1P, Constative) with reference to that future expectation (Dat. Ref.; hope is confidence prior to the reality of fulfillment; we were saved in order to have a future). However (adversative conj.), when a hope (Subj. Nom., anarthrous) is seen (βλέπω, PPpTc.NSF, Tendentia, Temporal), it is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) a

hope (Pred. Nom.), for (explanatory conj.) who (interrogative pronoun) hopes for (ἐλπίζω, PAI3S, Aoristic) what (Acc. Dir. Obj., indefinite pronoun) he (Subj. Nom.) sees (βλέπω, PAI3S, Pictorial, Potential Ind.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:24** τῆ γὰρ ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν· ἐλπίς δὲ βλεπομένη οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλπίς· ὃ γὰρ βλέπει τίς ἐλπίζει

^{VUL} **Romans 8:24** spe enim salvi facti sumus spes autem quae videtur non est spes nam quod videt quis quid sperat

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:25** Now if we continue to hope for what we do not see [modus vivendi of the mature believer], we stand with eager anticipation [confident in the promises of God].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:25** But if that which we do not see, we hope for, through patience we expectantly wait for it.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:25** But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The 1st class conditional clause means Paul assumes that he is addressing mature believers, because the modus vivendi of the mature believer is to live continuously (Iterative Present tense) with confidence in what we do not see (Pictorial Present tense). In other words, when rationalism and empiricism fail, the mature believer utilizes faith perception. At this point, the mature believer is then able to stand firm (Durative present tense) in doctrine with eager anticipation. The immature believer succumbs to emotionalism or false concepts and is unable to stand firm with doctrinal rationales.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The hope of Romans 8:24-25 is the hope gained through progressive sanctification. Paul had learned that perfect sanctification awaits the redemption of the body. It cannot be attained in this life. Any attempt to claim for the present life elements which belong to consummated perfection, whether in the individual or collective spheres, are only symptoms of that impatience which would disrupt Divine order. The hope of the child of God is built upon the foundation of Biblical truth and will never disappoint him. This is the time of suffering, and the time to come is the time for glory without suffering. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 8:25 Now (transitional conj.) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "assumes it is true") we continue to hope (ἐλπίζω, PAI1P, Iterative) for what (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) we do not (neg. adv.) see (βλέπω, PAI1P, Pictorial; the limits of empiricism; point of view of the mature

believer), **we stand** (ἀπεκδέχομαι, PMI1P, Durative) **with eager anticipation** (Gen. Atten. Circum. & Abl. Means).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:25** εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ βλέπομεν ἐλπίζομεν δι' ὑπομονῆς ἀπεκδεχόμεθα

^{VUL} **Romans 8:25** si autem quod non videmus speramus per patientiam expectamus

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:26** And in the same manner, the Spirit also helps us [positive believers only] through our spiritual weakness [during periods of undeserved suffering], for we do not know, as is our duty, what we should be praying for [lack of advanced doctrine hinders our prayers during times of adversity]. But the Spirit Himself intercedes on our behalf [during periods of undeserved suffering] from time to time with inexpressible groanings [which are accepted at the Supreme Court of heaven].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:26** And in like manner also the Spirit lends us a helping hand with reference to our weakness, for the particular thing that we should pray for according to what is necessary in the nature of the case, we do not know with an absolute knowledge; but the Spirit Himself comes to our rescue by interceding with unutterable groanings.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:26** Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Spirit comes to the aid of positive believers (Customary Present tense) when they are struggling to apply advanced doctrinal rationales during times of adversity. The Spirit actually provides divine assistance to those believers who are making forward momentum in the Christian life. In the earliest stages of the Christian walk, the Spirit may rescue an ignorant believer from some of his or her adversities; this is a short-lived form of helping hand. Divine protocol insists that we learn to metabolize doctrine and apply it to our life. If we do not “get with the program,” this type of assistance will be replaced by divine discipline. Why do I limit this assistance to positive believers? There is a double prefix attached to the Greek word “Iambano.” The combination of the three (triple compound verb) points to positive believers only.

The prefix “sun” means there is a reciprocal relationship existing between the Spirit and the believer. If a believer is not following precisely correct divine protocol on how to live the Christian way of life, there is no reciprocal relationship to speak of. If a believer is not filled with the Spirit and metabolizing Bible doctrine on a daily basis, the believer is not performing his required part of the relationship. This believer is negative to doctrine and to the protocol plan in general; the relationship would be completely one-sided on the part of the Spirit. Divine discipline is what this believer will ultimately receive, not assistance from the Spirit. The Middle Voice of this Greek word also points to the Spirit helping those who are helping themselves. A carnal or reversionistic believer is not

helping himself. The 2nd prefix “anti” means the believer is in a place of testing (something against him) in which spiritual assistance is helpful.

For the positive believer, life is a series of metabolizing doctrine and applying divine truths to our daily life. On occasion, we may be overcome by adversity and our doctrinal resources fail us. During these strenuous times, we do not know (Intensive Perfect tense) how to properly get through a particular situation (Gnomic Present tense), even though it is divine protocol that we should do so. It is our duty as growing believers (Potential Subjunctive mood) to apply what we have learned from Scripture and pray for divine assistance when we are struggling. During those times, the Spirit Himself will honor our attempts to walk the spiritual life and will often intercede on our behalf (Iterative Present tense) with inexpressible sighs or groanings within during prayer. These inexpressible sighs are understood and accepted in the Supreme Court of heaven.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Holy Spirit lays hold of our weakness along with us and carries His part of the burden, facing us as if two men were carrying a log, one at each end. (A.T. Robertson) The word “help” speaks of the action of a person coming to another’s aid by taking hold over against that person, of the load he is carrying. The person helping does not take the entire load, but helps the other person in his endeavor. The Holy Spirit comes to our aid during spiritual problems and difficulties, but He does not take over the responsibility for them, nor does He give the saint an automatic deliverance without any effort on His part, but by lending a helping hand, allowing him to work out his problems and overcome his difficulties, with His help. (K. Wuest)

The picture is of something we might call a heavenly law firm with us as clients. It has a heavenly branch presided over by the Lord Jesus Christ and an earthly branch directed by the Holy Spirit. Each of them pleads for us. It is the Spirit’s role to move us to pray and to intensify that prayer to a point of which we ourselves are not capable. Similarly, it is the ministry of the Lord in heaven to interpret our prayers aright and plead the efficacy of His sacrifice as the basis of our coming to God. The consequence of this is that we can have great boldness in prayer. (J. Boice)

It is not our ignorance of the right manner of prayer that is reflected on, but rather our ignorance respecting the proper content – we know not what to pray as the exigencies of our situations demand. It is at the point of this destitution on our part that the Holy Spirit comes to our help. The children of God have two divine intercessors. Christ is their intercessor in the court of heaven. The Holy Spirit is their intercessor in the theatre of their own hearts. (J. Murray) When your whole world collapses around you and you can’t even pray, the Spirit grieves with you and prays for you. But His grief exceeds yours, and He groans with feelings too deep for words. The Father searches the mind of the Spirit, interprets these groanings, and knows what His Holy Spirit is thinking as He prays in your behalf. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 8:26 And (connective conj.) in the same manner (transitional conj.; similarly), the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) helps us (as positive believers only) through (συναντιλαμβάνομαι, PMI3S, Customary, Deponent, triple compound verb; gives us a helping hand, takes part in, assists, comes to the aid of) our (Poss. Gen.) spiritual weakness (Dat. Ind. Obj.; during our undeserved suffering; a weakness in faith, which, through lack of advanced knowledge, considers externals of the greatest importance), for (explanatory conj.) we do not (neg. adv.) know (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Intensive) [as (Adv. Manner) is our duty (δεῖ, PAI3S, Gnostic; necessity, opportunity)] what (Acc. Dir. Obj.) we should be praying for (προσεύχομαι, AMSubj.1P, Constativē, Potential Subj., Deponent, Articular; we don't know how to pray in undeserved suffering), but (adversative conj.) the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) Himself (Nom. Appos., intensive pronoun) intercedes on our behalf (during periods of undeserved suffering) from time to time (ὑπερεντυγχάνω, PAI3S, Iterative) with inexpressible (Instr. Manner) groanings (Instr. Means; anthropopathism for sighs that baffle words).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:26** Ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν· τὸ γὰρ τί προσευξώμεθα καθὼς δεῖ οὐκ οἶδαμεν ἀλλὰ αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα ὑπερεντυγχάνει στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις·

^{VUL} **Romans 8:26** similiter autem et Spiritus adiuvat infirmitatem nostram nam quid oremus sicut oportet nescimus sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:27** Furthermore, He [God the Father] Who continually scrutinizes our mentality [right lobe of the soul] knows what the thinking of the Spirit is, because He [the Holy Spirit] intercedes according to God's policy on behalf of the saints.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:27** Moreover, He Who is constantly searching our hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit because, according to God, He continually makes intercession on behalf of the saints.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:27** And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Father Who continually scrutinizes (Iterative Present tense) the mentality or thinking of our soul, knows beyond any doubt (Gnostic Perfect tense) what the thinking of the Spirit is. The Greek word “kardia” refers to the right lobe of the soul, where the majority of our thinking occurs; it is not the internal organ (heart) which pumps blood to the rest of our body. We may not understand these inexpressible groanings, but this divine

communication without words is understood in the Supreme Court of heaven. The Father knows what is being communicated by the Spirit due to His attribute of divine omniscience. The joint operation of our attempts to pray and His assistance (Customary Present tense: intercession) with sighs and groanings is part of the human/divine partnership in prayer. This is God's policy (Latin: postulate), divine protocol in action.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God's plan or policy for the Church Age believer can be seen in the following formula:

$$X + Y + Z = \text{"The good"}$$

where the first "+" refers to common and efficacious grace, and where the second "+" refers to both logistical and super-abounding grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Although we have no very definite conception of what we desire, and cannot state it in fit language (as we ought) in our prayer but only disclose it by inarticulate groanings, yet God receives these groanings as acceptable prayer inasmuch as they come from a soul full of the Holy Spirit. (K. Wuest)

As concerns the parts of God's will for our individual lives that are not revealed in the Bible, it is impossible for us to know them by any amount of mere human seeking. We will not find the answer to our questions about the will of God by reading signs, following hunches, bargaining with God, or by any other similar folly. Lest we be discouraged by this, however, we need to realize that for the most part we do not need to know the will of God in hidden areas, because the Holy Spirit knows it and is praying for us in these areas in accordance with God's will. Even if we knew what to pray for and prayed for it accurately or without distortion, and if our ability to walk in God's way depended on such personal prayers and understanding, we would still be uncertain. Since we do not generally know God's will for our lives in areas not covered by the Bible's directives (and do not need to know it), we must learn to make the wisest decisions possible, knowing that God has given us freedom to do so. Some legitimate ways of making decisions are open doors or opportunities, personal likes or dislikes, desires, impressions, and hunches. All these have a place as long as they are recognized for what they are, that is, not special revelations from God, but important human factors that should rightly be taken into account. Planning is proper, though we must recognize that God can alter circumstances and thus force a redirection of our plans. Whatever happens, we need to be submissive to the will of God in advance and as it unfolds before us. (J. Boice)

Rom. 8:27 Furthermore (continuative), He (Subj. Nom., God the Father) Who continually scrutinizes (ἐραυνάω, PAptc.NSM, Iterative, Substantival; searches, examines, investigates) our (ellipsis, Poss. Gen. supplied) mentality (Acc. Dir. Obj.; right lobe of the soul) knows (οἶδα, Perf. AI3S, Gnostic; divine omniscience, recognizes and approves) what

(Acc. Dir. Obj., indefinite pronoun) the thinking (Pred. Nom.; mind) of the Spirit (Poss. Gen.) is (ellipsis; this divine communication doesn't require words; He knows the mind of the Holy Spirit praying for us), because (explanatory conj.) He (the Holy Spirit) intercedes (έντυγγάνω, PAI3S, Customary; pleads our case, petitions, appeals) according to God's policy (Acc. Gen. Ref.) on behalf of the saints (Obj. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:27** ὁ δὲ ἐραυνῶν τὰς καρδίας οἶδεν τί τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος ὅτι κατὰ θεὸν ἐντυγγάνει ὑπὲρ ἁγίων

^{VUL} **Romans 8:27** qui autem scrutatur corda scit quid desideret Spiritus quia secundum Deum postulat pro sanctis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:28** In fact, we know with an absolute knowledge that for those who love God [limited to mature believers], He [the Father] works all things [including undeserved suffering] together for good, to those who are the elect [called-out ones] according to a predetermined plan [divine decree].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:28** And we know with an absolute knowledge that for those who are loving God, all things are working together resulting in good, for those who are divinely summoned ones according to His purpose.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If you think this is a positional sanctification verse, you are confused, but in good company. The vast majority of Reformation scholars thought the same, even though there is a qualification or restriction given in the first part of the phrase. We know with an absolute knowledge, beyond any shadow of a doubt (Gnomic Present tense), that for those who love God, all things work together for good. Who are “those who love God?” Is this a reference to all believers without exception? If that is your view, where have you been living? Anyone can quote this verse as if it was theirs, but only mature believers with maximum doctrine in the soul can claim this verse personally.

The Greek word “who love” is in the Tential Present tense, meaning it is a possibility, but not an absolute given. Some believers love God and others do not. Those who love God are living in the filling of the Spirit and are metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine on a daily basis. That is our primary purpose in life. Believers who are out of fellowship and who are disinterested in the Word (reversionists) do not love God. They are living the majority of their life on earth in one stage of divine discipline or another.

All things are not working in their favor, unless they utilize the rebound technique and get back to the divine plan.

The “all things” referred to in this verse goes back to previous verses (context) and means undeserved suffering. The purpose of undeserved suffering is to spur us forward in the spiritual life, to enable us to apply the doctrinal resources in our soul. The “good” is the guarantee of future honor and reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. For those who are outside the divine plan, the only good working in their favor is warning discipline, intensive discipline, and (perhaps this last one is arguable) the sin unto death. For those of us in the sphere of His power, filled with the Spirit and growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father is working (bringing) this underserved suffering to our ultimate benefit.

This “working” is not God sovereignly doing everything for us, as many Reformers insist. The prefix “sun” means together, cooperation. God brings the undeserved suffering, we apply doctrinal rationales to endure that suffering, and “the good” results. It is a joint effort between the growing believer using doctrinal resources and God bringing the tests and returning the honor and reward after a job well done. And as the previous verse attests, the Spirit indwells us and acts as our assistant and mentor in this experiential, sanctifying process. Again, “those” is a Dative of Qualification. There are qualifications to be in this group of believers; it is not a reference to all believers without exception. Only believers who are advancing to maturity by metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine know and love God. Only mature believers have the capacity for the “all things” that God is prepared to bless us with.

Is he doing this for all mankind? The second half of this verse restricts these benefits to “those who are the elect.” The elect are those who were called out (Perfective Present tense) for a divine purpose. This is an obvious restriction to believers only. Unbelievers are not part of the divine plan. They are not called to a predetermined purpose. They are not part of the divine will or decree. There are two Dative of Qualifications in this verse. The first one (mentioned earlier) is a restriction or qualifier addressed to mature believers only. The second one is a restriction or qualifier to believers only. The first is experiential, the second is positional. Paul is mixing the certainties of honor and reward for believers who are growing experientially in grace and knowledge with the positional foundation that they received by sovereign grace at the point of regeneration. The benefits of experiential sanctification are as absolute as the benefits of positional sanctification.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The love to God, which is commanded in Scripture, is nothing less than the response of a man in the totality of his being to the prior love of God. (J. Calvin) Paul fully accepts human free agency, but behind it all and through it all runs God's sovereignty, as here and on its gracious side. (A.T. Robertson) The flow of history leading to the glorification of God is to our good also. What is our good? Obviously there are many “goods” to be

enjoyed here now, and this verse includes them. But in its fullest sense our good is to enter into the destiny we were created for: to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ and thus to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. The providence of God will surely bring us there. (J. Boice) What is said of all things working together for good is here limited to those who love God. (R. Haldane) They are described in terms of their subjective attitude. (J. Murray) God doesn't promise we will "see" all things work together for good, He simply promises that He will make all things work together for good. That requires faith, fortified by the knowledge of experience. (W. Kroll)

There are three hopes: X+Y+Z, all of which come to the believer by way of imputation. The first, X radical, occurs at birth; the second, Y radical, occurs during time; the third, Z radical, occurs in eternity. Y and Z radicals do not apply to any jackass person who just got saved - they only apply to mature believers. Romans 8:28 does not apply to all believers; it belongs only to the mature believer! (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It is not all men who are entitled to such a happy way of looking at the events of life. It is for those who love God. In order to love God, we must know Him and trust Him. This knowledge and this trust can only come by the study of God's Word. (C. Irwin) All things which enter into God's plan for our governance, including apparently evil things which are suffered by Him to befall us, must ultimately subserve His purpose and be for the fulfilling of our hope. All this, assuming we "love God." (T. Lockyer)

Many persons think there is good only in those things that give pleasure or delight to the body or mind. They will admit that there is good in health and prosperity. But they find it hard to see what good there can be in sickness, in adversity, in poverty, or in sorrow. The apostle takes a wider view of life's experiences. He could appreciate the joys of life, but he felt that there was a wise purpose and blessing in life's sorrows and trials also. We are having exhibitions of God's love and goodness supplied to us every day in our daily food, in health and strength, and all the other blessings and comforts which we enjoy. Yet these, instead of making men think of eternity, seem to make them think more of this present world. God's goodness, instead of leading them to repentance, hardens their hearts. The discipline and awakening of suffering and trial are needed. These trials, breaking in upon the routine of our daily business and enjoyments, help to withdraw our desires from the things of this perishing world, and to fix them upon a more enduring substance. They remind us that this is not our rest; that we are entirely dependent upon a power that is above us for all our happiness and comforts; and that there is indeed a God that judges in the earth. And through all the Christian life, how many times have we thanked God for the discipline of trial?! (C. Irwin)

This statement is not a general law of life. It is a theological statement valid for those who have been called according to His purpose, which is embodied in Jesus Christ. It does not mean that all things are good. They are not, and to call evil good is a grievous error under any circumstances. It means that for those who love God no evil may befall them which God cannot use for their growth and His glory. God works in all things – even horrible things – to accomplish His eternal will. This verse testifies to God's sovereignty, not to the beneficent outworking of circumstances. Similarly, Paul enjoins

believers to give thanks in all circumstances, not for them. (J. Edwards) There is a limitation of the working. “To them that love God” is a restriction that must be carefully observed. (W.G. Thomas) The phrase *those who love God* refers only to faithful believers as opposed to all Christians ... Bad things happen to obedient believers for their good, whether it makes sense or not. (R. Lopez)

God’s eternal purpose is ridiculed by uninformed people. Some advocate with a fleshly fervour that calling precedes God’s eternal election. This is as logical as a contractor building a house before he has the plans drawn. Great struggles continue to rage between human conceptions of the Divine decree. We must not, in the discussion of God’s order, suppose a transposition of “temporal succession” into the eternity of God’s counsel. The concept of succession in God’s decree is a clear form of humanization of God. God is eternal; He is pro-temporal, co-temporal, and post-temporal. Therefore, His decree is present and future as well as past. It is with and after its fulfillment as well as before it. God’s order of salvation cannot be broken down into disorder. (W.E. Best) How do you love God when the object of your worship and adoration is invisible? You see, know, and love Him only through “truth,” Bible doctrine, and “spirit,” the filling of the Holy Spirit (John 4:24). When your soul is inculcated with doctrine so that you think His thoughts, share His viewpoint, and appreciate His perfect integrity and matchless grace, you love God. As your capacity to love God increases, you gain confidence that He directs even your problems for your benefit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Our relationship to God is through knowing, not feeling. Paul says “we know.” He does not say we “feel” all things to be good. Paul was no sentimentalist. He had been persecuted, beaten, stoned, and shipwrecked. He had been attacked and consistently slandered by the Gentiles as well as by his own countrymen. Paul did not go around saying how wonderful the world was or how pleasant his missionary endeavors had been. On the contrary, he reported that he had been “hard pressed on every side ... perplexed ... and struck down” (2 Cor. 4:8-9). But Paul came through the things that pressed down and perplexed him precisely because he knew God was working out His own greater and good purposes through these events. Sometimes we seem to be going up and down with no forward motion at all. At such times we say that our emotions are on a roller coaster or that we just can’t seem to get on track. Our lives have petty annoyances that spoil our good humor. Sometimes we are overwhelmed with harsh blows, and we say that we just can’t go on. It may be true; perhaps we really can’t go on, at least until we are able to pause and catch our spiritual breath again. But God has designed this timepiece of ours – this plan for our lives. That is the point. It has been formed “according to His purpose,” which is what our text is about, and it is because we know this, not because we feel it or see it, that we can eventually go on. There are many things that can defeat human planning. Our plans are often overturned by our sins and failures, others’ opposition or jealousy, circumstances, or our own indifference. But not God’s plans. He is the sovereign God. His will is forever being done. Therefore, you and I can go on in confidence, even when we are most perplexed or cast down. (J. Boice)

The classic delineation of the faith-rest drill is presented by Paul in Romans 8:28-32. Verse 28 is a divine promise intended to dispel worry or fear. A promise is a divine guarantee, a capsule statement of doctrine, a solid rock on which to anchor your mental attitude. Promises express the essence of God, provide instantaneous perspective, and reduce complicated situations to utmost simplicity. When you lay hold of the fact that God is working all things together for good, fear is brought under control. Where panic reigned, peace is now restored. But the inner peace of the relaxed mental attitude is only the beginning of the faith-rest drill. Claiming promises is never an end in itself; divine promises alone can neither sustain the relaxed mental attitude nor solve complex problems. Promises set the stage for the most important aspect of faith-rest: thought. The application of doctrine calls for reverse concentration. Concentration during Bible teaching brings doctrine into the soul; reverse concentration moves doctrine out to meet the demands of the moment. On the strength of Romans 8:28, verses 29 and 30 present a logical rationale extracted from epignosis (full knowledge) doctrine in the right lobe. This series of five basic doctrines restores divine viewpoint thinking. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:28 In fact (emphatic transitional particle) we know with an absolute knowledge (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Gnostic) that (epexegetical conj.) for those (Dat. Ind. Obj., Qualification; anyone can memorize Romans 8:28, but it is the possession of mature believers only) who love (ἀγαπάω, PAPtc.DPM, Tendential, Substantival, Dat. Qualification) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.), He (God the Father) works all things (Acc. Spec. & Dir. Obj.; sufferings of believers) together (συνεργέω, PAI3S, Customary & Static; cooperate, be helpful) for good (Acc. Purpose, anarthrous; prosperity, X+Y+Z=the good), to those (Dat. Adv., demonstrative pronoun; believers only) who are (εἰμί, PAPtc.DPM, Descriptive & Perfective, Substantival, Dat. Qualification) the elect (Dat. Adv., anarthrous; called out ones) according to a predetermined plan (Acc. Purpose; Divine will, design or decree).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:28** οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν τὸν θεὸν πάντα συνεργεῖ [ὁ θεός] εἰς ἀγαθόν τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:28** scimus autem quoniam diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum his qui secundum propositum vocati sunt sancti

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:29** Moreover, those He [God the Father] loved before time [in eternity past], He also predestined [determined in advance] to a form [ultimate resurrection body] similar to that of the image of His Son, so that He [Jesus Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren [the royal family of God shares in His birthright].

κω **Rom. 8:29** Because those whom He foreordained, He also marked out beforehand as those who were to be conformed to the derived image of His Son, with the result that he is the firstborn among many brethren.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:29** For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Those whom the Father loved before time (Dramatic Aorist tense) were also predestined (Dramatic Aorist tense) to the same form or resurrection body that his Son, Jesus Christ, also received. The Greek word “proginosko” means foreloved in eternity past. It is a reference to those He had intimate knowledge of, i.e., His elect, His sheep. God loved His elect in eternity past and chose them for His ultimate purpose. He gave His sheep to His Son by divine sovereignty. This is a restriction to believers only and is positional, not experiential. All believers, mature or immature, in supergrace or reversionism, are recipients of this “love before time.” People who are not included in any *one* of these five aorist tenses in verses 29 and 30 are not included in *any* of them, because they are not in God’s plan of redemption.

“Proginosko” means he loved us or “knew us intimately” as belonging to Him in eternity past. We were selected out of the sinful mass of humanity by His sovereign grace. We were not there when it happened; He did not require our permission to deal with His creatures as He saw fit. He required nothing from us for this grace gift. But He did design a plan and a purpose for each of us to fulfill, voluntarily, after being given the supernatural tools to do so. “Proorizo” means He created this plan beforehand so that each of us might glorify Him in the angelic conflict after becoming believers, culminating in receiving our resurrection bodies at the Judgment Seat - complete with a translucent uniform of glory, awards, and decorations bestowed according to our effort of living the spiritual life on earth.

All believers will ultimately be conformed to the image of His Son. This is a reference to His resurrection body, concerning which we will likewise receive as we appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are going to receive a resurrection body just like His. In this manner, Jesus Christ is the firstborn among many brethren. He died before we did and He received His resurrection body before we will, but as believers we share in His birthright. This birthright is often called primogeniture (Latin), or the right of the firstborn. Jesus was not only born first in time, but He was also uniquely born, i.e., hypostatic union, the union of deity and humanity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The fivefold chain of verses 29 & 30 is decisively against a human choice interpretation, a smaller number who meet the divine call with obedience ... it rather clearly denotes an effectual calling. This verse is understood only when it is realized that behind the love

which those who are righteous by faith have for God-and far transcending it in significance - is God's prior choice of them. The certainty of the hope, of which Paul has spoken, rests on nothing less than the eternal purpose of God. What is expressed here is a truly biblical confidence in the sovereignty of God. (C.E.B. Cranfield) This foreknowledge and choice is place in eternity past in Ephesians 1:4. (A.T. Robertson) On irrefutable exegetical grounds Reformed expositors insist that foreknowledge here has the pregnant meaning of love, which it so often has in Scripture, that foreknowledge is love from eternity, and that the teaching of these passages is that God's decree of election is rooted in His eternal love. (R.B. Kuiper)

Each statement forms a link in a chain, which secures believers to their future glory in Christ. Three words in this verse (foreknew, predestined, firstborn) carry the Greek prefix "pro," underscoring God's provenience and control of the process of redemption. Foreknew refers to God's eternal purpose, and predestined, which follows it, refers to God's eternal power to effect that purpose. God's purpose and power come to fruition in Jesus Christ. (J. Edwards) A man who is the object of grace, when he looks back upon himself, feels more and more that he has become what he is by no act or activity of his own, that grace came to him without his own will or power, that it took hold of him, drove him, led him on. Even his most intimate, his freest, acts of decision and assent become to him, without losing their quality of freedom, something that he experienced rather than did. (C. Dodd) Two of these works of God occurred in eternity past – foreknowledge and predestination; two occur in the present – calling and justification; and one will occur in eternity future – glorification. (W. Kroll)

Technically, there is no more foreknowledge than there is afterknowledge with God. He knows everything simultaneously. Foreknowledge is an expression for our convenience. God's knowledge is infinite. God sees future, present, and past all at once. He only accommodates Himself to man's method of communication, which is another manifestation of God's condescension. He knows all things intuitively, independent of any reasoning process. How else could the infinite God communicate with finite men? (W.E. Best) Here we have both "morphé" and "eikon" to express the gradual change in us till we acquire the likeness of Christ the Son of God so that we ourselves shall ultimately have the family likeness of sons of God. (A.T. Robertson) On the human level "foreknow" means advance knowledge, while in God's case, where time references do not enter in, it means elective favor or choice. Similarly, "to call" on the human level may make something possible, but it does not actually bring it about. By contrast, in God's case it does. In God's case the call actually brings about the response of the one summoned. (J. Boice)

This speaks of the sovereign act of God foreordaining certain from among mankind to be saved. (K. Wuest) What, then, was it in God that moved Him, so to speak, to choose certain persons unto life everlasting? He chose them because He loved them. *Knowledge* clearly has that pregnant meaning which it so often has in Scripture: namely, *love*. *Foreknowledge*, then, is *love from eternity*. God *loved* His elect from everlasting. For that reason, He elected them to eternal life. And if the question be asked why God from

eternity *loved* unto salvation some men in distinction from others, it behooves us humbly to confess ignorance. His thoughts are not our thoughts. (J.Murray) God did no more harm to those He passed by than a man who passes by others to choose the one he loves to be his wife harms those he passed by. (W.E. Best) Paul now expands on God's purpose in verses 29 and 30 by means of a sorites, a construction in which the predicate of one clause becomes the subject of the next clause. In the salvation provided by God, there is a link from eternity past, through the present, to eternity future. (W. Kroll)

Nothing is contingent in the mind of God, Who foresees and orders all events according to His Own eternal and unchangeable will. Jesus Christ was not delivered by God foreknowing it before it took place, but by His fixed counsel and ordination, or His providence. Thus believers are called "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter 1:2), and in the same chapter (verses 19-20), Peter says that Jesus Christ was "foreknown before the foundation of the world." Here foreknown signifies, as it is rendered, foreordained. By foreknowledge, then, is not here meant a foreknowledge of faith or good works, or of concurrence with the external call. Faith cannot be the cause of foreknowledge, because foreknowledge is before predestination, and faith is the effect of predestination. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48) By this foreknowledge is meant the love of God towards those whom He predestinates to be saved through Jesus Christ. All the called of God are foreknown by Him, that is, they are the objects of His eternal love, and their calling comes from this free love. Jeremiah 31:3 says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness I have drawn you." (R. Haldane)

Jeremiah 31:3 "I have *loved* thee with an everlasting *love*; therefore with *lovingkindness* have I drawn thee." To *know* is often to *love* or *approve*, with the idea of peculiar affection, for whom God peculiarly loves, He does thereby distinguish from others, which is in itself a selecting or choosing of them from among others. The usage of the word is favorable to *preferring*, *loving*, or *selecting*, i.e. to fix the mind on some to the neglect of the others, and to destine them to a proposed end. So God is represented as looking on the fallen mass of men, and fixing on some whom He predestines to salvation. (C. Hodge) God's foreknowledge here connotes that electing grace which is frequently implied by the verb "to know" in the OT. When God takes knowledge of people in this special way, He sets His choice on them, as in Amos 3:2 and Hosea 13:5. (F.F. Bruce) We must understand that the key word in this passage is "purpose." All the others arise out of the purpose of God, and our understanding of them must be in connection with God's eternal purpose ... Although it is true that foreknowledge means "to know beforehand," in the context of God's purpose, to interpret the expression this way would be an over-simplification. (W. Kroll)

Deut. 7:6-8 "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God: the Lord your God has *chosen* you to be a people for His Own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set His *love* upon you and *chose* you; for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it is because the Lord *loves* you and is keeping the oath which He swore to your fathers."

This Greek word (*proginosko*) does not denote mere foresight or prescience, but rather a selective knowledge which regards one with favor and makes one an object of love, and thus approaches the idea of foreordination. This passage loses its meaning, if the word is taken in the sense of simply taking knowledge of one in advance, for God foreknows all men in that sense. (L. Berkof) When God takes knowledge of His people, it is more than just a basic understanding of them. It is the knowledge that a father has of his child. God knows and loves the world, but His foreknowledge of His Own is an intimate knowledge that results in an abiding love for us that draws us to Him in salvation. (W. Kroll)

Foreknown means election has its spring in the love of God, as knowing someone with intimate love and affection. "You only have I *known* of all the families of the earth" declares God concerning Israel (Amos 3:2). He set His love upon Jeremiah saying, "Before I formed thee in the womb I *knew* thee." (E. Hulse) "Depart from Me ... I never *knew* you" in Matt. 7:23 does not mean foreseeing, but rather the idea of previous acquaintance or foreloving. (A.C. Custance) Before any man believes there are three works which must have taken place on his behalf, one from God the Father, one from God the Son, and one from God the Spirit. The believer has, first, been chosen by God the Father before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4); he has, secondly, been redeemed by God the Son (I Peter 1:18, 19); and he has, thirdly, been quickened by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8): *only then, fourth in the sequence, does he believe.* (D.G. Barnhouse) God's foreordination or predestination must not be equated with fatalism. Fatalism says that the world is plunging headlong toward an indeterminate end. Paul teaches that there is a very determinate end for those who are "the called." Their end or goal is to be conformed to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ. (W. Kroll)

Some leave the question of *foreknowledge* in the ability of God to merely see what is going to happen next. The final decision is supposed to be made by the human will. God has a certain knowledge of what that will may be, and is supposed to order His plans by it. Here is a fatalism pushed to its most offensive limits, for it is a fatalism that is based on choices that originate in the heart of evil, Adamic men. (D.G. Barnhouse) The thought expressed by the "pro" is not just that God's gracious choice of those referred to preceded their knowledge of Him, but that it took place before the world was created ... Paul is here using "foreknow" in a special Biblical sense ... to use it as mere foreknowledge ... represents a weakness in one's grasp of the nature of grace. (C.E.B. Cranfield) God's knowledge must surely involve ordination, since men and things must be and become what He knows them to be. The history and personal make-up of the Church are not due to chance or to arbitrary human choices, but represent the working out of God's plan. Only here can peace and security be found. (C.K. Barrett)

God the Father decreed everything *simultaneously* before they unfolded in time. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Salvation from first to last is of God, and altogether of grace. God's electing love, that is His decree of foreloving, predestination, and purpose, is the main source, main cause, and root of all that follows. The foreknowledge in our text then is no other than God's everlasting and electing love, which ever has been and ever will be the motive of all His dealings in grace with His people in all ages. (M. Rainsford) This will be

realized when the body of our humiliation is transformed into the likeness of the body of Christ's glory, when the corruptible will put on incorruption and the mortal puts on immortality, i.e. Phil. 3:21, I Cor.15:54. (J. Murray) Our destiny was fixed by God from the beginning, long before we could have any part in it. It is higher than our highest dreams, for it is nothing less than conformity to the image of His Son. And better still, our exaltation is the means of putting Him in the place supreme. He cannot be Firstborn without brethren. Thus we are essential to His glory! (A.E. Knoch)

The perfect participle of “horizon” means to mark out the boundaries or limits of any place or thing, to determine or appoint. This verb tells us that these deliberations were for the purpose of determining something, and the fact that it is in the perfect tense shows that these deliberations had reached a successful conclusion and the counsel of the council was fixed and unchangeable. (K. Wuest) God knows what He is going to make of us. He knows the end we have been made for and He is most certainly going to bring us to it in His own proper time. That end is clearly spelled out in Romans 8:29. Redemption begins with God’s electing foreknowledge of His own people, His predestination of them to be conformed to Christ’s image – His choice of material and the blueprint. Redemption further includes His call of these elected ones to salvation, their justification through the work of Christ and their glorification as a result of which God’s purposes with them are finally and totally achieved. (J. Boice)

The people of God are not contemplated even in the purpose of grace apart from Christ. (J. Murray) The eternal foreordination appears in time as *calling*, of course effectual calling: where salvation is contemplated as the work of God alone, as here, there can be no break-down in its processes. (Denney) One of the hardest lessons for man to learn is that everything that God does for us is by grace ... including salvation. I have heard many people say to me, "But it says, 'As many as believe on His name'" (John 1:12). And to this I inevitably reply that the next verse distinctly denies the implications they are attempting to draw from the text. Why should one verse be made to contradict the next one simply to satisfy the desire of the human heart to enter in on some of the credit for our salvation? We are born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He plants within us a new "willer" and we immediately become one of the "whosoever wills." (D.G. Barnhouse)

An attempted heretical response to verse 29 focuses on denying that “foreknown” carries the concept of “fore-loved” or “chosen.” We have seen this tactic repeated many times: did God ordain people to salvation or a plan? We have seen over and over that the direct object of the words used to describe God’s work is personal. People are predestined, people are chosen before the world begins, not acts, not plans, not possibilities. This remains the central error of this argumentation: the unbiblical replacement of the personal element of the electing grace of God with a philosophy derived, eisegetically inserted idea of God’s ordination of a plan that is dependent upon the actions of man for fruition and success. However, the verb “proginosko” is used three times in the NT with God as the subject: Romans 8:29, Romans 11:2, and I Peter 1:20. Every time God is portrayed as “foreknowing,” the object of the verb is personal. Therefore, to say that God foreknows

acts, faith, behavior, choices, etc. is to assume something about the term that is not witnessed in the biblical text. God foreknows persons, not things. (J. White)

Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor at Geneva, argued persuasively that Romans 8:29-30 describes an unbreakable chain consisting of five links. Note the terms "whom" and "these also." They link, as in a chain, the history of the same group of people from foreknowledge to glorification. The same group which was foreknown, will ultimately be glorified. The word "foreknowledge" is most probably a reference to the prior choice of God, and not merely His advance knowledge. For example, in Amos 3:2 God says of Israel, "Only thee have I known of all the nations of the earth." Obviously God has knowledge of the other nations, but only Israel was chosen. It is a personal, loving, and intimate choice. If He purposed before the foundation of the world to save His elect, His elect will be saved. Even if the election of God was based on the foreseen knowledge of the believer's faith, the same argument applies. If God knew that we would believe and be saved, then we cannot do otherwise than believe and be saved. If we do believe and then for some reason unknown to God are not saved, then God did not know, and His foreseen knowledge was false. If God does not certainly know that an event will take place, then He does not know it at all. But if He knows certainly that an event will occur, then the occurrence of that event must be without failure. (J. Dillow)

If all the word "foreknow" means is that God knows beforehand what people will do in response to Him or to the preaching of the gospel and then determines their destiny on that basis, what, pray tell, could God possibly see or foreknow except a fixed opposition to Him on the part of all people? If the hearts of men and women are as depraved as Paul has been teaching they are – if indeed "there is no one righteous, not even one ... no one who understands, no one who seeks after God" (Romans 3:10-11), what could God possibly foresee in any human heart but unbelief? (J. Boice) Even if it were granted that "foreknew" means the foresight of faith, the biblical doctrine of sovereign election is not thereby eliminated or disproven. For it is certainly true that God foresees faith; he foresees all that comes to pass. The question would then simply be: whence proceeds this faith, which God foresees? And the only biblical answer is that the faith which God foresees is the faith He Himself creates (John 3:3-8; 6:44,45,65; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29; 2 Peter 1:2). Hence His eternal foresight of faith is preconditioned by His decree to generate this faith in those whom He foresees as believing. (J. Murray) Foreknowledge means that salvation has its origin in the mind or eternal counsels of God, not in man. It focuses our attention on the distinguishing love of God, according to which some persons are elected to be conformed to the character of Jesus Christ, which is what Paul has already been saying. (J. Boice)

A rationale is a "reasoned exposition of principles, an explanation or statement of reasons, a set of reasoned rules or directions." By mentally tracing out a rationale in a crisis, you are reexplaining to yourself basic concepts of doctrine that pertain to your relationship with God. This is necessary because fear and emotion have revolted against thought, and you must take conscious, deliberate steps to reinstate the rightful authority in your soul. In two verses, Romans 8:29-30, Paul has outlined the plan of God. In their

logical order the five doctrines of foreknowledge, predestination, election, justification, and glorification encapsulate God's design, beginning in eternity past and concluding with the mature believer's rewards in eternity future. By utilizing this systematic reverse concentration on doctrines previously learned, the believer can immediately recall his place in the overall picture of God's grace. By this faith-application of Bible doctrine, he stabilizes his objectivity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:29 Moreover (continuative conj.) those (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) He (God the Father) loved before time (προγινώσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic; foreloved in eternity past, intimate knowledge of His elect, sovereign pleasure; not limited to mature believers only), He also (adjunctive conj.) predestined (προορίζω, AAI3S, Dramatic; determined beforehand in eternity past, marked out in advance, foreordained, to put limits or boundaries upon beforehand) to a form similar to that (Acc. Comparison & Advan.; conformed to the likeness of, but not exactly in the same form as; outward expression of an inward essence or nature) of the image (Adv. Gen. Ref.; icon, derived likeness, resemblance; eternal resurrection body) of His (Gen. Rel.) Son (Poss. Gen., Jesus Christ), so that He (Compl. Acc., intensive pronoun; Jesus Christ) might be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Contemplated End Result, Classic notion of Purpose has been broken away from, Articular) the firstborn (Compl. Acc.; primogeniture, birthright, rulership, possessing the double-portion heritage; Jesus Christ was the firstborn in time, but more important, He was *uniquely* born, i.e. hypostatic union) among many (Dat. Spec.) brethren (Instr. Assoc.; the royal family of God shares in His birthright).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:29** ὅτι οὐς προέγνω καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς·

^{VUL} **Romans 8:29** nam quos praescivit et praedestinavit conformes fieri imaginis Filii eius ut sit ipse primogenitus in multis fratribus

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:30** Moreover, those He [God the Father] has predestined [determined beforehand in eternity past], these same ones He also elected [effectually called in time], and those He has elected, these He also justified [at the moment of conversion], and those He justified, these same ones He also glorified [positionally in the heavens].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:30** Moreover, those whom He thus marked out beforehand, these He also summoned. And those whom He summoned, these He also justified. Moreover, those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:30** Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Notice the gradation shown in gradual ascent, like going up a ladder. Those God the Father predestined in eternity past (Dramatic Aorist tense), these same individuals he also elected (Gnomic Aorist tense) in time. Predestination refers to marking out an individual in advance of a plan or purpose. Believers were predestined in eternity past, before they were ever born. When the appropriate time in God's plan arrived, they were effectually called and converted. There was never any doubt that their conversion would occur. Those He elected in time (Dramatic Aorist tense), He also justified (Gnomic Aorist tense) when that specific moment arrived. There was no doubt that this would occur either.

Those that He justified, He also glorified (Culminative Aorist tense). This glorification is obviously future in its fullest sense, but positionally, all believers are already glorified. Our glorification is the culmination of the prior steps in the ladder of decrees. Notice the alternation of Dramatic and Gnomic Aorist tenses. The Dramatic Aorist tense points to the supernatural (divine) power required for each step in this ladder of decrees. The Gnomic Aorist tense (or Culminative) points to the absolute certainty that the step in question has occurred. In other words, each dramatic step in the believer's life occurs by divine decree, and because each step is enabled and maintained by divine omnipotence, it is certain to occur without incident and without delay just as planned in eternity past. Nothing is left to chance; nothing is left to man's impotent will to fulfill.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He did not merely, in His premundane decree, acquit them of sin, but also *clothes them with glory*: the aorist being used, as the other aorists, to imply the completion in the divine counsel of all these, which are to us, in the state of time, so many successive steps, - simultaneously and irrevocably. Glorification is stated as already consummated, though still in the future in the fullest sense. (A.T. Robertson) In the application of redemption there is order, and the order is one of progression until it reaches its consummation in the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The main thought is the invariable conjunction and sequence of these divine acts and their indissoluble connection with God's eternal purpose. For here we have a chain of unbreakable links beginning with foreloving and ending with glorification. There are so many intimations of order in this passage as a whole that we cannot but conclude that order of logical sequence is intended throughout. (J. Murray)

These things referred to are the successive steps of sovereign grace and power which are taken in bringing the believer to his final glory. In this passage time is lost sight of and human worthiness is passed over in the resistless onward movement of the eternal purpose of God. (L.S. Chafer) Several steps or stages of our salvation are included in this plan of God. (C. Hodge) Some so-called 'theological students' immediately begin

undoing the word 'predestination' as soon as they find the word 'foreknowledge' in the King James version of the Bible. But keep in mind that it was not Adam in the garden crying out: God, where are you? It was God in the garden crying out: Adam, where are you! The work of redemption is God looking for lost men, not lost men looking for God. The calling is always from God towards man, not man towards God. (K. Lamb)

What God decrees in eternity becomes actual in time, and calling is the point where His eternal foreknowledge of some and His predestination of those to salvation finds what we would call concrete manifestation. We are creatures in time. So it is by God's specific calling of us to faith in time that we are saved. Justification, which comes after calling in this list of divine actions, is always connected with faith or belief, and it is through God's call of the individual that faith is brought into being. God's call creates or quickens faith. Or, as we could perhaps more accurately say, it is the call of God that brings forth spiritual life, of which faith is the first true evidence or proof. The Bible never says that we are saved "because of" our faith. That would make faith something good in us that we somehow contribute to the process. But it does say that we are saved "by" or "through" faith, meaning that God must create it in us before we can be justified. (J. Boice)

The Aorist in this verse and others is an aggressive tense, particularly in the active voice, where it encroaches on the domain of the Perfect, and all but supplants the Pluperfect. (Clyde) When God thus calls effectually, a man responds with the obedience of faith. (Cranfield) There is no "awful" Divine partiality here, but rather Divine love calling out men to do the works of love, and enriching them with noble gifts that they may undertake high responsibilities. The Bible declares that the God who remembered us and loved us before we knew father and mother has beset us behind and before and laid His hand upon us from the moment we first drew breath. Each separate soul has its place in the mysterious election of Eternal Love. He elects us just as a captain picks out soldiers for some special service. (E. Hastings) Foreknowledge and foreordination belong to the eternal past, in the eternal counsel of the Godhead; calling and justification take place in the believer's present experience; the glory that begins now will not ultimately and completely be known until the future. Although salvation from our viewpoint is an instantaneous act, it has in fact stretched from eternity past to eternity future and finds its basis, not in our merit or in the works of the law, but in the purpose of God. (W. Kroll)

To suggest that what God knows will never happen is unthinkable. Who makes everything that is known by God certain to be fulfilled? Did God determine the acts of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, etc.? If they were not determined by God, there must be a force in time independent of God. This conclusion is to deny that God knows all things, and that would lead to deism. God's purpose is founded in sovereignty, ordered by infinite wisdom, ratified by omnipotence, and cemented in immutability. Furthermore, His purpose is eternal, founded in Divine wisdom, efficacious, absolute, all comprehensive, and more than a mere permission of His will with reference to sin. The problem cannot be solved by using the word 'permission'. Such a term would suggest that God allows the sinner to freely decide

against His command. If this were the teaching of Scripture, God in providence would be no more than an observer of a contest whose outcome is never quite certain. (W.E. Best)

This is a *heterosis* of tenses, where the speaker views the action as being as good as done. It is regarded as already accomplished in the Divine purpose and determination: the figure is to show the absolute certainty of the things spoken of. The *called* are spoken of as already (in the Divine purpose) in Christ, justified, yes, even glorified. (E.W. Bullinger) This call *begets the faith* by which the believer is united to Christ. Any merely external call has since the fall of man evermore met with inattention, or cold assent, or downright refusal. But this *call* of God is not the *calling forth* of internal qualities, powers, and graces into operation, but a *bestowing* of them. It is not calling upon the blind man to open his eyes, or the deaf man his ears, or the dead man to live; but it is giving sight to the blind eyes that they may see, causing deaf ears to hear, and communicating eternal life to a soul that was dead in trespasses and sins. (M. Rainsford)

There are two calls which are set forth in Scripture and they must be clearly distinguished from each other. The *inward* call of God is the effect of His eternal predestination and purpose to conform those whom He has chosen to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. The *outward* call comes to all men. It is the proclamation of the gospel to the whole human race. Thus we who have been inwardly called go about proclaiming the outward call to all men. The Lord Jesus ordained that we should do this. Our Lord stated the distinction, "Many are called, but few are chosen." It would be permissible to translate this, "Many are called outwardly, but few are called inwardly." The *inward* call is not one that is made to the will of man, but one that is the effective bestowing of all that man needs. (D.G. Barnhouse)

It is important to use the adjective "effectual" at this point when discussing the "calling," because there are two different kinds of calling referred to in the Bible, and it is easy to get confused about them. One kind of calling is external, general, and universal. It is an open invitation to all persons to repent of sin, turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved. It is what Jesus was speaking of when He said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." The problem with this kind of call is that, left to themselves, no men or women *ever* respond positively. They hear the call, but they turn away, preferring their own ways to God. The other kind of call is internal, specific, and effectual. That is, it not only issues the invitation, it also provides the ability or willingness to respond positively. It is God's drawing to Himself or bringing to spiritual life the one who without that call would remain spiritually dead and far from Him. (J. Boice)

The election of God is not intended as a barrier between any sinful soul and Christ the Savior, but to secure that the blood should not have been shed in vain and that Christ "shall see the reward of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." (M. Rainsford) Justification is taught in the Lord's statement in John 10:27, "I know them." He not only knows the elect, but He has always known us. He is the eternal God, and He gave us grace in Christ before the world began. God knew us on the basis of the redemptive work

of Jesus Christ which would be accomplished. That too was in the eternal mind of God. There is *eternal justification* as well as justification by faith in time. Both are based on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. A person cannot believe one without believing the other. (W.E. Best) Here we have the golden chain of God's sovereignty forged for our blessing. Its four links cannot be separated. He has designated us and called us and justified us. Three links are forged. The next is glory! (A.E. Knoch)

The successive stages in the accomplishment are set out clause by clause. The foreknowing and foreordaining belong to God's eternal counsel; the calling and the justifying have taken place in His people's experience; but the glory, so far as their experience is concerned, lies in the future. Sanctification is glory begun; glory is sanctification consummated. Paul looks forward to the consummation of the work of grace – a consummation guaranteed by its inception. (F.F. Bruce) Romans 8:29-30 describes "the golden chain of salvation." It is taught that glorification comes only to the justified, that justification comes only to the called, that calling comes only to the elect, and that election springs from God's eternal love. (R.B. Kuiper) The *source* of our justification is the grace of God. The *ground* of our justification is the work of Christ. The *means* of our justification is faith. The *effect* of our justification is union with Christ. (J. Boice)

An outward call by the word of God inviting sinners to come and partake of the rich treasures of God's love and pardon and the fullness of His unspeakable gift has been freely and loyally sent to us from the beginning, but it has *always* and in *every case* been unavailing. Sinners, in blind unbelief or in the alienation of their hearts from God, have all with one consent made excuse. And while all men are welcome and whosoever will may come, the sad fact remains, *men will not come, and do not come!* And if the salvation Christ died to procure depended for its success on the sinner's acceptance of Christ and his coming unto God by Christ, to be saved in God's way, the only way in which a just and holy God *can save*, Christ must have died in vain. Hence the necessity for an almighty interposition in sovereign grace over and above all invitations, beseechings, warnings, and entreaties on God's part. (M. Rainsford)

It is my measured opinion that confusing sanctification with justification is the cause of more false doctrine than any other error that has ever been committed by religious thinkers. Even to think of sanctification as an integral part of justification is to give some credit to the Adamic heart. God declares a man to be wicked, helpless, undone, ungodly in every part of his being. God announces that he proposes to save *some* men and to join them to the Lord Jesus Christ forever. He reaches down and touches them when they are dead in trespasses and sins, at a moment when they have no thought of Him, no concern for Him, no thought of their need, no thought of salvation. He plants within them saving faith, and by the Holy Spirit gives them the Spirit of conviction that makes them feel their need. It appears to them as though they were seeking God, when in reality that very seeking is the first mark that true and eternal life has already been planted within them by God, and they have already been marked by Him as His Own forever. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Some human agent, already one of His Own, brings to them the knowledge and terms of the gospel, often in a distorted fashion ... and the first faint stirring of new life that has been given in irresistible grace has made itself known in the horrible nest of the Adamic nature. God, all the time, has been doing the work in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and on the books of Heaven He has already written all of the sins of that individual to the account of Christ, and has written the perfect, divine righteousness to the account of the sinner. Some of these "sinners become saints" think that they have done it themselves, accepted Christ of their own wills. But the new birth is entirely the work of God, and a man has been saved, generally for a long time before he has the remotest idea of the nature of what has happened to him, by the grace of God alone. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Two different aspects of one future glorification are sometimes in view. For instance, in verse 17 the glorification is conditional and only for those who suffer with Christ, but in verse 30 it is unconditional and is for all who are justified. In verse 17 it is a sharing in the glory of the Messiah, but in verse 30 it refers to our own glorification. In verse 17 the verb is "be glorified with," and in verse 30 the verb is "glorified." In verse 17 it refers to the wonders of the messianic era, but in verse 30 it refers to our ultimate conformity into the image of Christ at the resurrection of the body. In verse 17 the verb is in a purpose clause implying intent and not necessarily certainty. But in verse 30 it is an indicative implying the certainty of a presently achieved fact. Verse 17 is in a context which stresses exhortation. It is a challenge to persevere in order that we might share in Christ's glory. But verse 30 is a statement of fact that we have already, in a proleptic and anticipatory sense, entered into that glory. All believers share in the latter aspect of that glory, the final resurrection, but only those who put to death the deeds of the body will share in the former, the future reign of the servant kings. (J. Dillow)

Union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. The perspective of God's people is not narrow; it is broad and it is long. It is not confined to space and time; it has the expanse of eternity. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of His glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end. (J.M. Boice) We preach the Word and He quickens whom He wills. For though we preach "whosoever will" on every possible occasion, we know the answer to that very important question: Who will will? We seek to preach to every man in the world, and we proclaim, as we must, "whosoever will may come ..." Yet we know that only those will come who are quickened - made alive - from their state of darkness and death by a *definite* act of God in the sovereignty of His eternal purpose in grace. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Called? His prophetic office. Justified? His priestly office. Glorified? His kingly office. (M. Rainsford) The believer's final glorification is their full conformity to the image of Christ glorified; but it is probable that Paul is here thinking not only of their final glorification but also of their growing conformity to Christ here and now in suffering and obedience, that is, to embrace sanctification as well as the final glory, the former being thought of as a progressive conformity to Christ, Who is the image of God, and so as a

progressive renewal of the believer into that likeness of God which is God's original purpose for man. (Cranfield, Headlam, Lagrange) Glorification is stated as already consummated, though still future in the fullest sense. The step implied in "He glorified" is both complete and certain in the divine counsels. (Sanday & Headlam)

With confidence from metabolized doctrine in the soul you begin to live in the light of an eternally secure future. Your self-worth becomes inseparably united with Jesus Christ because you eternally share in all that Christ has and is, including His personal destiny. United with Christ and His destiny you can imitate Him, glorify Him, and you will accompany Him at the 2nd advent and rule with Him forever. You have acquired the sense of your destiny. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:30 Moreover (continuative conj.; notice the *climax* or *gradation* shown in gradual ascent, like going up a ladder), those (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) He (God the Father) has predestined (προορίζω, AAI3S, Dramatic; determined beforehand in eternity past, marked out in advance), these same ones (Acc. Dir. Obj., immediate demonstrative pronoun) He also (adjunctive particle) elected (καλέω, AAI3S, Gnostic; called, effectual conversion), and (continuative conj.) those (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) He has elected (καλέω, AAI3S, Dramatic), these same ones (Acc. Dir. Obj., immediate demonstrative pronoun) He also (adjunctive particle) justified (δικαιώω, AAI3S, Gnostic), and (continuative conj.) those (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun) He has justified (δικαιώω, AAI3S, Dramatic), these same ones (Acc. Dir. Obj., immediate demonstrative pronoun) He also (adjunctive particle) glorified (δοξάζω, AAI3S, Culminative; conformed to the image of His Son; stated as already consummated, though still future in the fullest sense).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:30** οὐς δὲ προώρισεν τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν· καὶ οὐς ἐκάλεσεν τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν· οὐς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:30** quos autem praedestinavit hos et vocavit et quos vocavit hos et iustificavit quos autem iustificavit illos et glorificavit

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:31** What, therefore, shall we conclude about these things [doctrines concerning suffering and the divine decrees]? If God is for us [acting on our behalf], who can be against us?

^{KW} **Rom. 8:31** What then shall we say to these things? In view of the fact that God is on our behalf, who could be against us?

^{KJV} **Romans 8:31** What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What shall we conclude (Deliberative Future tense) about the doctrines Paul has been teaching us concerning undeserved suffering and the divine decrees? If God is acting on our behalf, and the 1st class condition affirms that He is, who or what could possibly be against us? Note the antithetical parallelism, "for" versus "against." This is a rhetorical question, which could almost be understood as if it were not a question, but instead an affirmative pronouncement. Nobody (nothing) can align itself against us and succeed in the long run. We are under divine care. If somebody or something appears to be getting the best of us, it is being allowed by divine providence for some good reason or purpose. Who are the "us" in this verse? The "us" are restricted to those in the prior verses, obviously believers only.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a *metonymy* of operation, where the verb denotes the *effect* rather than the act. They can, of course, be "against us," but not have any hurtful effect. (E.W. Bullinger) The first strophe (31-32) celebrates omnipotent grace; the second (33-34) vindicating grace; the third (35-37) overcoming grace in the face of physical dangers; and the final strophe (38-39) heralds victorious grace in the face of cosmic dangers. (J. Edwards) It is important to see that the passage limits the audience to believers, those seen in the preceding verses as the predestined and called saints of God. When Paul says "what shall we say to these things," and "if God is for US, who is against US?" he is clearly speaking of elect believers. (J. White)

The opinion of universal redemption (heresy), if consistent, must teach that all men shall be saved. If Christ paid the price of redemption for all men, the rules of justice demand deliverance of all. However, Scripture, history, and observation prove that all men are not saved. If Christ paid the price of redemption for all men, God, who is righteous in all His ways, cannot withhold from His Son what He purchased with His own blood. If the universal redemption theory is correct, the only logical conclusion is that Christ died in vain for some. This would mean that God failed in what He purposed. (W.E. Best)

These conclusions, which are stated as rhetorical questions, enable you to take control of the situation that ignited fear and anxiety only a few moments before. With objectivity and confidence restored, you can evaluate your circumstances and make the decision or take the action your good judgment and common sense dictate as a solution to the problem. Fear is removed by the doctrine that "if God is for us, who can be against us?" The mature believer employs the faith-rest drill to transform this maximum pressure into blessing. In dramatic contrast to your adverse circumstances, God demonstrates His power through your application of His Word. If Bible doctrine in your soul gives you mastery over the most difficult, frightening, and shocking situations in life, certainly doctrine can

sustain you and bless you under more tranquil circumstances. The faith-rest drill maintains your ability to think and to appreciate the grace of God. God will support and bless you as long as the divine plan calls for you to remain in this life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul has just finished presenting the “golden chain” of Romans 8:29-30. These five unbreakable links guarantee the believer’s eternal destiny. What shall we say in response to this “golden chain,” he now asks? The truth is that God, having justified the ungodly, will not and cannot contradict Himself by charging them with evil. To do so amounts to reversing their justification. Christ either died for our sins and has paid the penalty or He has not. God is ultimately the only one who ultimately could bring a charge against His elect, and as Paul says, God has already rendered His verdict – justified. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 8:31 What (interrogative pronoun, rhetorical question), therefore (inferential conj.), shall we conclude (λέγω, FAIIP, Deliberative) about these things (Acc. Gen. Ref., immediate demonstrative pronoun, idiom for "to what conclusion are we forced?"; doctrines concerning suffering and the divine decrees) ? If (protasis, 1st class condition, "and He is") God (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) for us (Gen. Adv., personal pronoun; acting on our behalf), who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun; what) can be (ellipsis) against us (Gen. Disadv., personal pronoun)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:31** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν πρὸς ταῦτα εἰ ὁ θεὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τίς καθ' ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:31** quid ergo dicemus ad haec si Deus pro nobis quis contra nos

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:32** Indeed, He Himself [God the Father] did not spare His Own Son, but delivered Him up on behalf of [substitutionary atonement] all [believers outside of Rome] of us [those who meet the qualification in the previous verse]. So how is it possible that He [God the Father] together with Him [God the Son] will not also graciously provide for us [the beneficiaries] the all things [positionally: the benefits of the divine decrees; experientially: prosperity from undeserved suffering]?

^{KW} **Rom. 8:32** Indeed, He who His own Son did not spare, but on behalf of us all delivered Him up, how is it possible that He shall not with Him in grace give us all things?

^{KJV} **Romans 8:32** He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God the Father did not spare (Constative Aorist tense) His own Son, Jesus Christ, but delivered Him up (Dramatic Aorist tense) on behalf of all of us. Who are the “all of us?” The designation “all” is restricted to the context, in this case referring to all believers outside of (and including) Paul’s audience in Rome. He is writing this epistle to the

Roman believers, but the doctrines likewise apply to believers in other geographical locations. None of His elect will ever *slip through His fingers*, regardless of where they live. The phrase “on behalf of” is also the Genitive of Specification or Substitution, a reference to the substitutionary atonement of Christ. Paul is addressing those who were elect in eternity past and who have always been His sheep. This is NOT an option for the unregenerate, nor is it a verse for supporting the heresy called unlimited atonement.

Since the Father did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up as a substitute for all believers, then how is it possible that the Father and the Son will not also graciously provide (Deliberative Future tense) for us the all things? What are the all things? Positionally, they refer to the benefits of the divine decrees, which Paul has been discussing in the past few verses. Experientially, they refer to undeserved suffering and the imputation of prosperity to the mature believer, i.e., blessings in time and eternity. In other words, the Father and Son provide us (Latin: donate) with both positional and experiential blessings. All believers without exception receive the positional blessings; winner believers receive the experiential blessings. Both categories of blessings are included in the “all things.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It would be absurd to insist that the presence of the word "all" has the effect of universalizing the scope. The "all" is not broader than the "us" in verse 31, who are interceded for by Christ, and the restrictive "elect" in verse 33. (J. Murray) If He has given us His Son, will He refuse us adoption, inheritance, deliverance, pardon, righteousness, peace, grace, glory, honor, immortality, a kingdom, the Holy Spirit, eternal life? (M. Rainsford) Since love is God's gift, whoever God loves receives His gift. The gift is not to every man; for to whomever He gives His Son, He gives all things freely with Him. (W.E. Best) We know that all spiritual powers opposed to our true well-being will be unable to prevail against us because Christ's death has already proved that nothing can keep us in its servitude if we accept the liberation which He offers. The general form of the argument is familiar: because we have received the greater, we shall not be denied the less. If God has already gone beyond the utmost conceivable limits of generosity, is there any necessary gift that He will now withhold? (J. Knox)

The goodness or love of God is manifested toward His creatures in a general [impersonal] and special [personal] way. When manifested toward His creatures in general, the love of God prompts Him to exercise kindness toward all His creatures as creatures. This aspect of God's love is non-redemptive. Therefore, it is referred to theologically as the general [impersonal] love of God. When the goodness or love of God is manifested toward His creatures in a special way, it is reflected only in those rational creatures whom He has loved with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). This aspect of His love is redemptive. Therefore, it is referred to theologically as the distinguishing or redemptive love of God. It is this unalterable love of the triune God, which adds warmth of personality and a personal love to the eternal purpose and plan of God. (G.D. Long)

The quality of the believer's life on earth depends on his execution of God's plan after salvation. Impact and blessings in time and eternity depend on fulfilling God's plan in time. The question becomes emphatic. What is God's plan for the believer following that initial instant of faith in Christ? God freely gives all things after salvation. What are they? After salvation, what? The simplified answer is: Learn Bible doctrine. The Bible reveals God's person and plan. Only through knowledge of God can anyone appreciate, love and worship Him. As Christians we are commanded to "renovate our thinking" with divine viewpoint thinking so God's gracious purpose can be fulfilled in and through our lives. God's purpose for the post-salvation life of the believer calls for spiritual growth. The Christian is kept alive on earth to fulfill his destiny, which is to become a mature believer, a spiritual winner, a "mature person to the measure of the maturity which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13-16). Each believer's life becomes a unique expression of the glory of God in both time and eternity, but only the mature believer glorifies God by receiving the highest and best that God has prepared for him. Divine blessings that the Christian can understand and experience and the overt manifestations of the Christian way of life come as results of spiritual growth. The means of spiritual growth is the believer's consistent reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine through all the circumstances of his life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

If this is true (and it is), and if Christ died for all mankind as the universal redemptionist affirms, why is it that "all men have not faith" (II Thess. 3:2), since God has promised to freely give all things to those for whom Christ died? The immediate context of Romans 8, among other things, predestination, calling, justification and glorification, are included in the "all things" of verse 32, being expressly designed for all the Christians at Rome and, by way of extension, for all true believers. Now if this is true (and it is), is not saving faith also included? Is one justified by any other means than faith? And if one must believe to cause this salvation, then this makes Christ only a partial mediator. Or if faith is a fruit (gift) of the death of Christ, why is it not given to all men since he died for all men (assuming that He did)? Does not this verse state that those for whom Christ was crucified will be freely given all things in Him? (G.D. Long)

The so-called 4-point Calvinist's argument would seem to reduce to this: "God gave Christ to die for all men, but upon this condition: that they perform that which of themselves, without Christ, they cannot perform." But this kind of logic supposes that God purposed, on His part, not to accomplish what He sent Christ into the world to accomplish. Is this not self-contradictory? Certainly it is! Is it honoring to God's wisdom to say that He purposed that which He knows shall never be accomplished? Certainly not! If justification is included as one of the gifts of saving grace in the "all things," then saving faith must also be included. Clearly, this passage limits the extent of Christ's substitutionary death to God's elect, i.e. a definite atonement. (G.D. Long)

Rom. 8:32 Indeed (intensive enclitic particle), He (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun; God the Father) Himself (middle voice) did not (neg. adv.) spare (φείδομαι, AMI3S, Constativ, Deponent) His own (possessive pronoun) Son (Obj. Gen.), but

(adversative conj.) **delivered** (παραδίδωμι, AAI3S, Dramatic) **Him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **up** (to judgment) **on behalf of** (substitutionary atonement) **all** (Gen. Spec.; not restricting his audience to Christians in Rome - none of His elect will slip through the crack) **of us** (Gen. Adv.; Paul is addressing those who meet the qualifications in the prior verse, i.e. this is not an option for the unregenerate). **So how is it possible** (interrogative particle) **that He** (God the Father) **together with Him** (Dat. Accompaniment; Jesus Christ) **will not** (neg. adv.) **also** (adjunctive particle) **graciously provide** (χαρίζομαι, FMI3S, Deliberative, Potential Ind., Deponent; grace giving which is based on the justice of God) **for us** (Dat. Adv.; the beneficiaries) **the all things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; positionally: the benefits of suffering and the divine decrees in prior verses; experientially: the imputation of prosperity to the mature believer, i.e. escrow blessings in time and eternity)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:32** ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίζεται

^{VUL} **Romans 8:32** qui etiam Filio suo non pepercit sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum quomodo non etiam cum illo omnia nobis donabit

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:33** Who shall bring charges [accusations] against God's elect? God, the One Who justifies?

^{KW} **Rom. 8:33** Who shall bring a charge against God's chosen out ones? God, the One who justifies?

^{KJV} **Romans 8:33** Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Who shall bring accusations (Deliberative Future tense), whether true or false, against God's elect ones? After all, only God has all the facts. Anyone who presumes to accuse believers before God is engulfed in arrogance. And who might we ask actually does this on a continual basis? Satan is the relentless accuser of believers before God. But his accusations are a complete waste of time, because he is bringing these accusations to the same God Who justifies (Static Present tense) the very believers that are being accused. Is there any possibility that the Father is going to agree with Satan's accusations against any believer whose sins were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross? Is there any chance that the Father will revoke the justification of a believer because Satan has a legitimate charge against him? No, because even if the charges were legitimate, they were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross and are no longer an issue.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As an alternate translation, take out the minor interpunctuation, the conditional elements. It is probable that the questions ought to be repeated as such: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God Who justifies? Who is he that condemns? Christ Who died? Yea, rather, Who has risen again?" (E.W. Bullinger) Even God cannot both condemn us and justify us at the same time. (K. Wuest) Satan is the great Accuser of the brethren. God is the Judge who sets us right according to His plan for justification. The Accuser must face the Judge with his charges. (A.T. Robertson) Satan is identified as the "accuser" of God's people in Revelation 12:10. His accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer's sinfulness and defilement. But Satan's accusations will be thrown out of court, because it is God who justified. (J. Witmer)

If you have been saved by God through the work of Jesus Christ, you are among those "whom God has chosen." If you are among those who God has chosen, it is also true that God has justified you of all sin. Our greatest offense is against God, however great our offenses against other persons may be. God knows the law perfectly. God has satisfied all possible claims against us; He has done this Himself, through Jesus Christ. The jurisdiction of God's court is universal. Christians have been acquitted before the bench of the highest court of all, and no one is authorized to reopen their case. (J. Boice)

Those justified by God can never be unjustified. The righteousness by which they are justified is an everlasting one (Dan. 9:24); the sentence of exoneration passed upon them in the high court of Heaven can never be revoked by man or devil. They have a title to everlasting glory and cannot come into condemnation. (A.W. Pink) A noncreative means cannot be associated creatively with a creative antecedent. That means a sinner cannot be associated with God in the application of salvation. God justified the elect sinner on the basis of His Own faith, assurance, and confidence in the work of His Son. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 8:33 Who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun, affirmative negation) shall bring charges (ἐγκαλέω, FAI3S, Deliberative; accusations, swearing) against God's (Poss. Gen.) elect (Obj. Gen.; only God has all the facts)? God (Subj. Nom.), the One who justifies (δικαίωω, PAPtc.NSM, Static, Substantival, Articular)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:33** τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ θεὸς ὁ δικαίων·

^{VUL} **Romans 8:33** quis accusabit adversus electos Dei Deus qui iustificat

LWB Rom. 8:34 Who is attempting to condemn us? Christ Jesus, Who died [as our Substitute], even greater, Who was resurrected [ascension], Who is both at the right hand of God [session], and Who continues to intercede [as defense attorney] on our behalf?

κω **Rom. 8:34** Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, the One Who died, yes, rather, who has been raised, who is on the right hand of God, who also is constantly interceding on our behalf?

KJV **Romans 8:34** Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Who is attempting to condemn us (Tendential Present tense)? Neither Satan, nor an unbeliever, nor a carnal or reversionistic believer will have any success. We already know that the Father isn't trying to do so. What about Christ Jesus, Who died (Dramatic Aorist tense) for us? Even greater than that, what about the Christ Jesus Who was resurrected (Dramatic Aorist tense), and Who is (Static Present tense) both at the right hand of God and Who continues to intercede (Iterative Present tense) on our behalf? The rhetorical nature of these questions obviously point to the absurdity of the notion. Jesus Christ died for us, was resurrected for us, sits at the right hand of God for us, and intercedes for us daily. Is our Defense Attorney in the Supreme Court of Heaven, Jesus Christ, going to abandon us before the prosecuting attorney, Satan? Is He going to cease being our High Priest in spiritual matters such as these? Absolutely not!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some manuscripts contain “from the dead,” which has the appearance of being an explanatory gloss added by copyists. (B. Metzger) It is a bold accuser who can face God with false charges, or with true ones for that matter, for we have an Advocate at God's court, Who is at the right hand of God and Who makes intercession for us. Our Advocate paid the debt for our sins. The score is settled. We are free. (A.T. Robertson) We cannot be accused of owing anything. The only reason for such an accusation by a court would be ignorance of the fact that the debt has already been paid – or deliberate deception by the accuser. In the final judgment no such contingencies could ever arise because the Judge is the Lord Himself, the same Who has already paid our debt. One might say that there can be no double jeopardy. A penalty cannot legally be demanded twice. (A. Couston)

The intercessory work is simply the complement of His redemptive priestly work, and is therefore equal to it in extent. Christ intercedes for *all* those for whom He has made atonement, and for those *only*, i.e. a definite atonement. (L. Berkof) Christ died (1), He is risen (2), He advocates (3) and He intercedes (4). Because of these four ministries of Christ, "nothing will be able to separate us from the love of Christ." (J. Dillow)

Rom. 8:34 Who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun, affirmative negation; Satan, carnal or reversionistic believer) is attempting to condemn (κατακρίνω, PAPTc.NSM, Tendential, Substantival; judging, maligning fellow

believers) us (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied)? Christ Jesus (Subj. Nom.) Who died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAPtc.NSM, Dramatic, Substantival, Articular), even (ascensive particle) greater (adv. degree), Who was resurrected (ἐγείρω, APpTc.NSM, Dramatic, Substantival; raised up, ascension), Who (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) both (connective conj.) at the right hand (Loc. Place, anthropomorphism which denotes the highest power, the most Divine authority, the session of Christ) of God (Poss. Gen.), and (connective conj.) Who (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) continues to intercede (ἐντυγχάνω, PAI3S, Iterative; includes the function of defense attorney in Satan's courtroom drama) on our (Poss. Gen.) behalf (Gen. Adv.; petitions for us as our High Priest)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:34** τίς ὁ κατακρινῶν Χριστὸς [Ἰησοῦς] ὁ ἀποθανῶν μᾶλλον δὲ ἐγερθεὶς [ἐκ νεκρῶν] ὃς ἐστὶν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ ὃς καὶ ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:34** quis est qui condemnet Christus Iesus qui mortuus est immo qui resurrexit qui et est ad dexteram Dei qui etiam interpellat pro nobis

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:35** Who [what: momentum and disaster tests] shall separate us from the love of Christ [His love for us, not our love for Him]? Outside pressure [affliction], or difficulty [mental anguish], or legitimate persecution [anti-Christian endeavors], or economic depression [due to liberalism or socialistic policies], or deprivation [lack of clothing], or lurking danger [historical catastrophe], or two-edged sword [military defeat and rampant crime]?

^{KW} **Rom. 8:35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

^{KJV} **Romans 8:35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Who or what shall separate us (Rhetorical Deliberative Future tense) from the love of Christ? The “what” refers to various categories of momentum and disaster testing. The “love of Christ” is Christ’s love towards us, not ours toward Him, because His love is unchangeable, while ours is fickle. What are some of these momentum and disaster tests? They include affliction from others, mental anguish, persecution for being a Christian, economic disaster brought about by liberalism, socialistic monetary policy and the welfare state, lack of food and clothing (Latin: nudity), historical disaster in the country, including rampant crime and possible military defeat (Latin: gladiator).

This question should be understood in the same vein as "who shall ever be able to pluck us out of the Father's hand?" Who can be against us? (vs. 31) No one. Who will bring any charge against God's elect? (vs. 33) No one. Who is he that condemns? (vs. 34) No one. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (vs. 35) No one. Are you starting to get Paul's picture? No person or thing can separate us from the love of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As the Father has loved Christ Himself, so Christ loves His people with a love that is infinite, immutable, and eternal. Nothing can separate us from it. Those whom He loves are the special portion and inheritance given to Him by the Father, and will He lose His portion when it is in His power to keep it? No, He will not. (A.W. Pink) In our time I am convinced that many more people experience distress than outright pressures. Take the example of a man who is in a dead-end job. He entered his company with hopes for advancement, but he is now in his late forties and has been passed over for promotions several times. It is getting to where he cannot make a good lateral move, and he knows he will not move up much in the company, if at all. Meanwhile, he is married, with a wife and children to support and a mortgage to pay. He sometimes thinks of being free of these confining circumstances, but he knows that he cannot break free and still honor his commitments. How are you to triumph in such circumstances? The best way is to realize that Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, has fixed His love upon you and that nothing is ever going to separate you from His love. You may be in narrow straits now, but you are an heir of heaven, and one day your horizons will be as vast as the universe and as soaring as the stars. Nothing will deprive you of this destiny, because nothing, not even hardship, will be able to separate you from Christ's love. (J. Boice)

In Romans 8:31-35 the apostle asks four questions, each beginning with the word "who." Who can be against us (v. 31)? His answer is no one, because Christ gave Himself for all of us, and therefore God will graciously give us all things. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen (v. 33)? His answer is no one, because God, the only One who could bring such a charge has already rendered His verdict, justified! Who is he that condemns (v. 34)? His answer is no one, because Christ has paid the penalty for sin and is at the right hand of God right now interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ (v. 35)? His answer is no one, because Christ loves us. What is striking about all of these answers is that Paul never asks the believer to look inwardly and test for evidences of regeneration. Rather he directs him to Christ. The Bible does not ask him to examine his life for assurance, but to look outwardly to Christ. Assurance can be felt to greater or lesser degrees, but it is the product of looking at the "mirror of our election." (J. Dillow)

Rom. 8:35 Who (interrogative pronoun, affirmative negation; "what", refers to momentum and disaster testing) shall separate (χωρίζω, FAI3S, Rhetorical Deliberative) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from the love (Abl. Separation) of Christ (Subj. Gen.; Christ's love towards us, not ours towards Him,

because His love is unchangeable, while ours is fickle)? Outside pressure (Ind. Nom.; affliction, tribulation, angst; beginning a long list of anarthrous words), or difficulty (Ind. Nom.; mental anguish, trouble, distress), or legitimate persecution (Ind. Nom.), or economic depression (Ind. Nom.; famine, liberal or socialistic monetary policies), or deprivation (Ind. Nom.; stripped bare, nudity, without an outer garment, poorly dressed), or lurking danger (Ind. Nom.; peril, risk, historical catastrophe), or two-edged sword (Ind. Nom.; Roman short-sword, saber, *metonymy* for slaughter or violent death, military defeat, crime)?

^{WHO} **Romans 8:35** τίς ἡμᾶς χωρίσει ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Χριστοῦ θλίψις ἢ στενοχωρία ἢ διωγμὸς ἢ λιμὸς ἢ γυμνότης ἢ κίνδυνος ἢ μάχαιρα

^{VUL} **Romans 8:35** quis nos separabit a caritate Christi tribulatio an angustia an persecutio an fames an nuditas an periculum an gladius

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:36** Just as it stands written [in Psalm 44:22]: For Your sake [Jesus Christ] we are being murdered throughout the entire day [continuous martyrdom in Rome during the reign of Nero Claudius Caesar]; we have been evaluated [looked upon] as sheep for the slaughter [doomed to become martyrs].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:36** Even as it stands written, For your sake we are being put to death all the day long. We were accounted as sheep destined for the slaughter.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:36** As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It stands written in Psalm 44:22 (Descriptive Perfect tense) that for the sake of Jesus Christ, we are being murdered (Dramatic Present tense) all day long. What is this a reference to? It refers to the continuous execution of Christians by Nero Claudius Caesar in Rome. Making a stand for Jesus in those days could cost you your life. Christians were counted (Dramatic Aorist tense) as sheep set aside for slaughter. Nero saw (Latin: estimated) all believers as threats to his sovereignty and had them murdered by all manner of atrocious methods. Sheep were slaughtered by cutting their throats, a symbol in other verses for martyrdom.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is difficult to think of any words that could be more comprehensive than Romans 8:35-39, which prove that once we come to Christ, nothing can ever separate us from God's

love. Paul lists no fewer than seventeen obstacles to salvation. Yet none of them poses even the slightest threat to the believer's eternal security. (J. Boice)

Rom. 8:36 Just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Descriptive; in Psalm 44:22): For (improper prep., "on account of") Your sake (Obj. Gen.; Jesus Christ) we are being murdered (θανατόω, PPI1P, Dramatic; continuous martyrdom) throughout the entire (Acc. Spec.; all, whole) day (Acc. Extent of Time; "all the day long", during the reign of Nero Claudius Caesar); we have been evaluated (λογίζομαι, API1P, Dramatic, Deponent; imputed, reckoned, calculated, looked upon, estimated, counted) as (Comparative particle) sheep (Pred. Nom.) for (devoted to, set aside for, doomed to) the slaughter (Adv. Gen. Purpose; throat-cutting as a symbol for martyrdom, dying grace).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:36** καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Ἔνεκεν σοῦ θανατούμεθα ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλογίσθημεν ὡς πρόβατα σφαγῆς

^{VUL} **Romans 8:36** sicut scriptum est quia propter te mortificamur tota die aestimati sumus ut oves occisionis

LWB Rom. 8:37 Nevertheless, in spite of all these things [suffering and adversities], we are winning the supreme victory [glorifying Christ by suffering] as conquerors through Him [God the Father] Who loves us.

^{KW} **Rom. 8:37** But in these things, all of them, we are coming off constantly with more than the victory through the One who loved us.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:37** Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of all the suffering and adversities in previous verses, we are winning the supreme victory in the angelic conflict as super-conquerors (Iterative Present tense) through God the Father Who never ceases to love us (Gnomic Present tense). By utilizing the doctrine in our souls, even to the point of martyrdom, we are glorifying Christ in time when we stand firm through suffering. If we meet adversity by falling apart, by entering into some form of emotional instability, are we winning the supreme victory in the angelic conflict? If we have no doctrinal resources in our soul when adversity strikes, are we fighting the spiritual battle and emerging as super-conquerors? Aggregately, as the royal family of God, as the bride of Christ, we are winning – but individually, we may be casualties on the spiritual battlefield. You can quote this verse as you cheer for our team, but are you a participant or a mere spectator?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If the evils which confront us are incapable of separating us from Christ's love, it is because a spiritual vitality of the utmost importance has come into play. We are conquerors, even super conquerors, victors in the superlative degree. (J. Knox) The term "conquerors" reminds us that the life of a believer is a warfare, in which he is called to combat, both within and without. (R. Haldane) "More than conquerors" is a felicitous rendering, going back to the Geneva Bible, of the intensive verb Paul uses here. (D. Moo) It could also be rendered "keep on being conquerors to a greater degree" or "keep on winning a glorious victory." (J. Witmer)

Christ is the model of confidence and effectiveness under maximum stress. He encourages us when we face pressure. His example inspires us to look beyond ourselves and our immediate problems and see Him, to "begin thinking of such a Person." As we reflect on Him and His achievements, the theme of this book becomes emphatic: Jesus Christ has given us access to the very system that sustained Him throughout His 1st advent. His life on earth is proof that the system works. There is no fainting in the soul when residing inside the divine sphere of power and love. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) A conqueror is a person who defeats the enemy. One who is more than a conqueror cause the enemy to become a helper. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 8:37 Nevertheless (adversative conj.; yet), in spite of all (Dat. Attend. Circum.) these things (Loc. Sph., demonstrative pronoun; the suffering and adversities in verses 35 and 36), we are winning the supreme victory (glorifying Christ in time by suffering and/or martyrdom) as conquerors (ὑπερνικάω, PAI1P, Iterative; super-conquerors) through Him (Instr. Agency; God the Father) Who loves (ἀγαπάω, AAPtc.GSM, Gnostic, Substantival, Articular) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; believers only).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:37** ἀλλ ἐν τούτοις πᾶσιν ὑπερνικῶμεν διὰ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος ἡμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 8:37** sed in his omnibus superamus propter eum qui dilexit nos

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:38** Indeed, I am fully persuaded that neither death nor life, nor fallen angels nor demon generals, nor things which are imminent [during this present age] nor things which are destined to come [in future dispensations], nor powers [human conspiracies, bad government],

^{KW} **Rom. 8:38** For I have come through a process of persuasion to the settled conclusion that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things about to come,

^{KJV} **Romans 8:38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Indeed, Paul is thoroughly convinced (Intensive Perfect tense) that neither our manner of dying or the trials and tribulations of life, nor fallen angels nor demon generals, nor things in the current dispensation (Intensive Perfect tense), nor things in future dispensations (Futuristic Present tense), nor human conspiracies, bureaucracies, or poorly run governmental offices can separate us from the love of Christ. Paul is using a string of sometimes antithetical and sometimes synonymous couplets to instruct us in the doctrine of eternal security. Nothing whatsoever, no matter how powerful, can separate the believer from Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This Biblical promise makes soul sleep or annihilation impossible. If a believer is in a living relationship to Christ, not even death can sever his communion with the living God. (R.A. Morey) Angels can only mean fallen angels, of whom Satan is one. Principalities are the demons inhabiting the atmosphere of this earth. (K. Wuest) Here all the great forces of the universe are arrayed, and none of them, no, nor all of them together, can come between us and the unconquerable love of our God as displayed in Jesus Christ. (A.E. Knoch) There are no created beings who can intervene to separate us from the love of God. Angels, principalities, powers are supernatural creatures, elements in that hierarchy of spirits which was so real to Paul and his contemporaries. (J. Knox)

Every believer in phase 2 has resolved the issue of salvation and constantly receives logistical grace, but many Christians fail to progress beyond salvation. If a believer rejects the doctrine of eternal security, he may repeatedly rededicate himself or reaffirm his faith, but anxiety over the accomplished fact of salvation is ludicrous. God permanently holds each believer in His omnipotent hands. Only a colossally arrogant believer would presume that his sins or failures are greater than the work of Christ on the cross or that he could cancel what God has accomplished. This subjective preoccupation with salvation not only blasphemes against God, but squanders the grace that God provides for our spiritual growth. Leaving behind the settled issue of salvation, we must progress in the plan of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:38 Indeed (affirmative conj.; for certain), I am fully persuaded (πίθω, Perf.PIIS, Intensive; convinced, confident) that (epexegetical conj., 10 challenges in couplets) neither (neg. adv.) death (Ind. Nom.; manner of dying) nor (neg. adv.) life (Ind. Nom.; with its trials and tribulations), nor (neg. adv.) fallen angels (Ind. Nom.) nor (neg. adv.) demon generals (Ind. Nom.), nor (neg. adv.) things which are imminent (ένίστημι, Perf.APtc.NPN, Intensive, Attributive; impending, during this present age)

nor (neg. adv.) things which are to destined to come (μέλλω, PAPtc.NPN, Futuristic, Attributive; certain to take place, inevitable), nor (neg. adv.) powers (Ind. Nom.; human bureaucracy, government, conspiracy; couplet construction would place this along with "created things" in verse 39),

^{WHO} **Romans 8:38** πέπεισμαι γὰρ ὅτι οὔτε θάνατος οὔτε ζωὴ οὔτε ἄγγελοι οὔτε ἀρχαὶ οὔτε ἐνεστῶτα οὔτε μέλλοντα οὔτε δυνάμεις

^{VUL} **Romans 8:38** certus sum enim quia neque mors neque vita neque angeli neque principatus neque instantia neque futura neque fortitudines

^{LWB} **Rom. 8:39** Nor height [nothing in heaven] nor depth [nothing in hell], nor any creature of a different kind [non-human], shall have the power to separate us from the love of God [the Father] which is in Christ Jesus our Lord [doctrine of eternal security].

^{KW} **Rom. 8:39** Nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 8:39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Nothing in heaven (Latin: altitude), nothing in hell (Latin: bathosphere), nor any non-human creatures shall have the power (Gnomic Future tense) to separate (Gnomic Aorist tense) us from the love of God the Father which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul is emphasizing the doctrine of eternal security in the most powerful language possible. Nothing in the entire universe, human, angelic, creature or non-creature, has the ability to overrule God's effective power which keeps us in His plan throughout eternity. We are safe and eternally secure without exception.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the covenant of redemption God gave His people to His Son as the reward for the latter's obedience and suffering. This reward was fixed from eternity and was not left contingent on any uncertain faithfulness of man. God does not go back on His promise, and therefore it is impossible that they who are reckoned as being in Christ, and as forming a part of His reward, can be separated from Him, and that they who have entered into the covenant as a communion of life, should fall out. (L. Berkof) Height and depth were technical terms in astrology, and later in Gnosticism. (F.F. Bruce) The baptism of the Spirit is not progressive and cannot be improved. Furthermore, this instantaneous work of God the Holy Spirit for every Church Age believer is permanent. Never in all

eternity can it be undone, or canceled, and never does it need to be repeated. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Since Jesus Christ controls history in this Church Age, all the negative forces of international economics and politics cannot obstruct the timely delivery of blessings to even one mature Christian. War, economic depression, and religious persecution never hinder divine omnipotence. While the world seems to be collapsing around the protocol believer, he enjoys a stimulating life of blessing and total confidence in God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) God accomplishes the complete redemption of His people from start to finish. This great work of salvation is rooted and grounded in the electing love of God. If that foundation stone crumbles, biblical salvation crumbles. (J. Piper) We are justified in placing total confidence in God because He is infinite, absolute, eternal; He never has and never can fail anyone who trusts in Him. He is totally worthy of our complete trust. Confidence is a function of the priesthood and is related to learning doctrine. The more doctrine we know, the greater is our confidence in God. Eternal security creates confidence in God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 8:39 Nor (neg. adv.) height (Ind. Nom.; nothing in heaven) nor (neg. adv.) depth (Ind. Nom.; nothing in hell), nor (neg. adv.) any (enclitic indefinite pronoun) creature (Ind. Nom.) of a different kind (Acc. Gen. Ref.; non-human, animal), shall have the power (δύναμαι, FMI3S, Gnostic, Deponent; shall be able) to separate (χωρίζω, AAInf., Gnostic, Dir. Obj. of Verb) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from the love (Abl. Separation) of God (Poss. Gen.; the Father) which (Adv. Gen. Ref.) is (ellipsis) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.) our (Gen. Rel.) Lord (Dat. Ref.; doctrine of eternal security).

^{WHO} **Romans 8:39** οὔτε ὕψωμα οὔτε βάθος οὔτε τις κτίσις ἕτερα δυνήσεται ἡμᾶς χωρίσαι ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 8:39** neque altitudo neque profundum neque creatura alia poterit nos separare a caritate Dei quae est in Christo Iesu Domino nostro

CHAPTER 9

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:1** I am communicating doctrine in Christ (I am not lying) [intellectual honesty], my conscience [norms & standards] bearing joint-testimony with me in the Holy Spirit [divine inspiration],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:1** Truth I speak in Christ. I am not lying, my conscience bearing joint-testimony with me in the Holy Spirit,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:1** I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Having just completed a magnificent teaching on God's eternal plan, Paul emphasizes the truthfulness and extraordinary high quality (anarthrous construction) of the Biblical Truth he has been communicating (Perfective Present tense) to the Roman believers. No doubt he anticipated some skeptics in the crowd. In prior dispensations the Word of God was taught somewhat differently, such as the giving of the Law and the pronouncements of the prophets. Paul assures the Romans that he is not lying (Progressive Present tense); what he is teaching them has 100% academic integrity. Paul wrote while "in the sphere of Christ." His conscience, the home of his (and our) norms and standards, bore witness that what he was teaching was the truth. And operating jointly with his conscience, the Holy Spirit also bore testimony (Customary Present tense) that what Paul was communicating was guaranteed accurate.

The human writer (Paul) was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write these words for future generations. Every jot and tittle is accurate, both divinely inspired and God-breathed. The Word of God does not contain "some" truth, it is "the" Truth. There are no errors; there are no real discrepancies in the original languages; there are no contradictions. There are only mis-translations, mis-interpretations, and mis-applications by human agents. In Paul's case, as well as with those of other writers of the canon of Scripture, none of these errors existed. The Holy Spirit bore joint-testimony with the human writer, utilizing His divine omnipotence and veracity, that the Word of God was stated perfectly. Paul knew he was writing with the Spirit's direction and blessing, and that his words would become part of the canon of Scripture. By residing "in Christ" and "in the Holy Spirit," Paul assures his readers that He was in fellowship and not writing from a position of carnality or reversionism.

This verse teaches the doctrine of "inspiration," where a human agent writes biblical truth while in Christ and in the Spirit. This was a unique gift that only existed until the canon was completed, approximately 70 A.D. It has not existed since that day, notwithstanding the false claims of Catholicism, Mormonism, Russellism, Pentecostalism, and other aberrant organizations. In another verse, the doctrine of "inspiration" is augmented by the doctrine of the "infallibility" of Scripture, because the Word of God was "God breathed" (theopneustos). The Word of God is infallible; the human writers were not. Any "wanderings" from absolute Truth were corrected by God as the writer's pen touched the page.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Notice Paul's triple oath: Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and his own conscience. (A.T. Robertson) Some manuscripts have "sun" rather than "en," meaning "together with the Holy Spirit" rather than "in the Holy Spirit." (H.A. Sturz) The apostle now deals with the

national rejection of Israel. The Abrahamic covenant, promising Israel the possession of the land from the Nile on the southwest to the Euphrates on the northeast and east, actually, from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the Euphrates on the east, and the Davidic covenant, promising to Israel an eternal dynasty of kings of whom the last one would be an eternal Person, had never up to the time of the writing of Romans, been fulfilled. Israel will be brought back in sovereign grace, saved, and restored to its land under its covenanted King, the Lord Jesus. (K. Wuest) The apostle Paul has great compassion for his fellow Jews. He explains that just because they are Jews in the flesh does not mean they are all children of the “promise” made by the Lord. God is the one who chooses; he is the sovereign potter who determines the fate of the people. (W. Kroll)

E.C. Dargan has sections in his books in which he seeks to demonstrate the congruity of human freedom with divine sovereignty. His favorite illustration pictures a man on a fast-sailing vessel, which is moving in one direction while the man himself is running on the deck of the ship in the other. One could truly say that the man is moving both east and west at the same time. This is the way Dargan views God’s sovereignty. The sailing vessel is the movement of God; the running of the man on the deck is the will of man. God is going exactly where He wants to go and controls all events, and within that larger movement man acts freely, but in direct accord with God’s sovereignty. The apparent conflicts that exist do not involve two equal powers. To assume any real conflict is highly incongruous, for such would assume that both parties have equal dignity, equal claim for protecting their own interests, and relatively equal power to effect their claim. The case is simply not so. (T. Nettles) The only way to reconcile God’s promises with Jewish unbelief is to see the sovereignty of God underlying all of history. Hence, this chapter is all about divine sovereignty and corresponding divine choices. (W. Kroll)

It is clear that Paul is deeply moved when he dictates these words. The sorrow of his heart is great in its intensity, deep in its nature, amounting to nothing less than anguish, and unceasing in its duration. He has already expressed his opinion about the Jews in language that was anything but complementary, and he is going to do so again. His kinsmen might easily draw the conclusion, “Paul hates us.” But nothing could be farther from the truth. The apostle knew that his statements were going to be challenged, and, what is more important, shows that he is deeply conscious of writing in the very presence of God and under the constant direction of the Holy Spirit. (W. Hendriksen) Paul begins with a strong assertion of the truth of his statement as a man does who is about to say something of the truth of which he is firmly convinced himself, although facts and the public opinion of his countrymen might seem to be against him. (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 9:1 **I am** (positive affirmation) **communicating** (λέγω, PA1S, Perfective) **doctrine** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; anarthrous, emphasizing the high quality of Biblical Truth) **in Christ** (Loc. Sph.; a distinctive change from prior dispensations); [**I am not** (negative affirmation) **lying** (ψεύδομαι, PM1S, Progressive, Deponent; academic integrity, intellectual honesty)], **my** (Poss. Gen.) **conscience** (Subj. Gen.; home of the norms and standards) **bearing joint-testimony** (συμμαρτυρέω,

PAPtc.GSF, Customary, Circumstantial, Gen. Absolute; witness for the defense) **with me** (Dat. Assoc.; guaranteed accuracy in the communication of God's Word) **in the Holy Spirit** (Loc. Sph.; exhale of the inspired human author through writing),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:1** Ἀλήθειαν λέγω ἐν Χριστῷ οὐ ψεύδομαι συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 9:1** veritatem dico in Christo non mentior testimonium mihi perhibente conscientia mea in Spiritu Sancto

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:2** **That great personal sorrow [legitimate burden], even constant grief, is in my soul's mentality.**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:2** That I have a consuming grief, a great one, and anguish in my heart without a let-up.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:2** That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul had intense personal sorrow, an honorable and legitimate burden, for his Jewish brethren. There was constant, unceasing grief (Durative Present tense) in the mentality of his soul for his fellow countrymen. The Greek word "kardia" refers to the right lobe or mentality of the soul, not the physical heart that pumps blood through the body.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a kind of *cataploce*, or sudden exclamation by way of parenthesis. It is intertwined or plaited together with another sentence. (E.W. Bullinger) While Paul's sorrow for his people in the flesh (Israel) is to be commended, he knew as he penned Romans that while Israel for the present is cut off the olive tree of blessing, Israel is scheduled to be restored at the 2nd advent, when the Deliverer will come out of Zion. (J. Walvoord) Paul's sorrow is the reflection of the gravity pertaining to Israel's unbelief. The intensity of the apostle's sorrow is marked by its greatness, its continuance, and its depth. (J. Murray)

Rom. 9:2 **That** (epexegetical conj.) **great** (Adj., intense) **personal** (Poss. Dat., relative pronoun) **sorrow** (Subj. Nom.; an honorable and legitimate burden), **even** (ascensive conj.; indeed) **constant** (Adj., unceasing, continual) **grief** (Subj. Nom.; mental pain, anguish), **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Durative) **in my** (Poss. Gen.) **soul's mentality** (Loc. Sph.; right lobe of the soul).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:2** ὅτι λύπη μοί ἐστιν μεγάλη καὶ ἀδιάλειπτος ὀδύνη τῇ καρδίᾳ μου

^{VUL} **Romans 9:2** quoniam tristitia est mihi magna et continuus dolor cordi meo

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:3** Moreover, I could almost wish that I myself would be accursed [separated] from Christ on behalf of my brethren [courageous but impossible supposition], my kinsmen [blood relation] according to the flesh [Jewish race],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:3** For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ on behalf of my brethren, my kindred according to the flesh,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:3** For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul had such intense grief that he could almost (Voluntative Imperfect tense) wish that he himself would be separated (Tendential Present tense) from Christ on their behalf. Paul knows this is a prayer or vow that cannot happen, but it was a courageous supposition nevertheless. Perhaps it was nothing more than hyperbole, but it communicated his feelings well. His grief was for his kinsmen by birth, his fellow countrymen in Israel, the Jewish race. He knows that he cannot act as a substitute for his people, because Christ was the only Substitute. The reflexive pronoun, however, communicates his desire to at least intercede for them, so they may become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The courteous or polite use of the imperfect indicative is used for direct assertion, but the statement is thrown into a past tense, though the present time is contemplated. This comes close to the use of the indicative for unreality, the so-called “unreal” indicative. Best idiomatic translation: “I was at the point of wishing.” (A.T. Robertson) The imperfect of verbs of wishing is best explained as a true Progressive Imperfect, describing a desire which the speaker for a time felt, without affirming that he actually cherishes it at the time of his present utterance; it could be translated: “I have sometimes wished.” (E.D. Burton) There is a passion in Paul’s prayer more profound even than that of Moses’ prayer in Exodus 32:32. Moses identifies himself with his people, and if they cannot be saved, would perish for them; Paul could find it in his heart, were it possible, to perish with them. But Paul knew that in the sovereign grace of God, the nation would be saved at the 2nd advent, and such a sacrifice of himself would be unnecessary. (K. Wuest)

This figure is a *euche*, an expression of feeling by way of prayer or imprecation, brought in as a parenthesis or sudden change due to an excited condition. (E.W. Bullinger) Paul is obviously referring to natural Israel for he calls them his “kinsmen according to the flesh,” and it is to these people that he relates all these peculiar privileges. The fact that these words were spoken after the beginning of the Church is proof that the Church does not rob Israel of her blessings. (C. Ryrie) Chapter 9 gives us God’s *past* dealings with

Israel in electing grace, Chapter 10 His *present* dealings with Israel in governmental discipline, and Chapter 11 His *future* dealings with Israel in fulfillment of prophesy. (H. Ironside) Individual and corporate perspectives are intertwined in Paul. (D. Moo) Paul merely states the fact of the wish without regard to the conditions which made it possible. (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 9:3 Moreover (continuative conj.), I could almost wish (εὐχομαι, Imperf.MIIS, Voluntative, Potential, Deponent; a prayer that cannot come to fruition; "I could wish, but I do not") that I (Subj. Nom.) myself (Nom. Appos., reflexive pronoun) would be (εἰμί, PAInf., Tential, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) accursed (Pred. Nom.; separated; *hyperbolic supposition*) from Christ (Abl. Separation) on behalf of my (Gen. Rel.) brethren (Gen. Adv.; courage of a warrior), my (Gen. Rel.) kinsmen (Adv. Gen. Ref.; relationship by birth, fellow-countryman, fellow-citizens) according to the flesh (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Jewish race),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:3** ἡχόμην γὰρ ἀνάθεμα εἶναι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα

^{VUL} **Romans 9:3** optabam enim ipse ego anathema esse a Christo pro fratribus meis qui sunt cognati mei secundum carnem

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:4** Who are Israelites [from the Jewish client nation], to whom: the adoption [spiritual heritage of Israel], and the glory [Shekinah glory of Jesus Christ], and the unconditional covenants [Abrahamic and Palestinian], and the lawgiving [Mosaic law], and the ritual service [Levitical priesthood], and the promises [Abrahamic and Davidic],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:4** Who in character are Israelites, who are possessors of the position of a son by having been placed as such, and of the glory, and of the covenants, and to whom was given the law, and who are possessors of the sacred service and the promises,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:4** Who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's grief was for the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob, the Jewish client nation. It was to his people that the adoption, the glory, the unconditional covenants, the law, and the promises were given. The adoption refers to their spiritual heritage, their 'adult son' placing. The glory refers to the Shekinah glory of Jesus Christ that tabernacled among men. The glory that used to dwell behind the veil of the tabernacle dwelled on earth with men as the manifestation of the integrity of God in Christ Jesus. The unconditional covenants were the Abrahamic and Palestinian covenants.

The lawgiving refers to the codices (Latin: testaments) and principles (Latin: legislation) of the Mosaic law. The ritual service was a reference to the activities of the Levitical priesthood, the leaders of the worship of God during the Israelite dispensation. This included worship in the tabernacle and sanctuary service, with their sacred rituals and garments. The promises refer to the salvation promises in Abraham and the kingdom promises in David. The integrity of God was manifested to the client nation Israel in a variety of ways.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law was given to a distinctly defined group of people (Israelites only) and it was effective for a limited period of time, Gal. 3:23-25. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This is a *polysyndeton*, or the repetition of the word “and” at the beginning of successive clauses. (E.W. Bullinger) The fact that these words were written after the beginning of the Church is proof that the Church does not rob Israel of her blessings. The term Israel continues to be used for the natural (not spiritual) descendants of Abraham after the Church was instituted, and it is not equated with the Church. (C. Ryrie) Although Paul is jealous for the distinctions drawn in verses 6-7 that they are not all Israel who are of Israel and that natural descent does not constitute the “seed,” yet he in no way discounts the advantages belonging to ethnic Israel. (J. Murray)

The name “Jew” speaks of him in his national distinction from a Gentile. The term “Israelite” refers to him as a member of the theocracy, and a partaker of the theocratic privileges and glorious vocation of the nation Israel and an heir of the promises. God never makes any covenants with the Gentiles. He made these covenants with Israel because that nation was to be used as a channel to bring salvation to the human race. The Mosaic Law was given exclusively to Israel, and never pertained to the Gentiles. The “religious service” as seen in the tabernacle, offerings, and priesthood as found in Exodus and Leviticus were strictly for Israel. The promises refer to the Messianic promises. (K. Wuest)

Paul’s selection of the term “Israelites” is significant. For, in contrast to the colorless, politically and nationally oriented title “Jew,” “Israelite” connotes the special religious position of members of the Jewish people. It is therefore no accident that Paul generally abandons the word “Jew,” which has figured so prominently in chapters 1-8, in favor of the terms “Israelites” and “Israel.” Paul is no longer looking at the Jews from the perspective of the Gentiles and in their relationship to God and His promises to them. The appellation “Israelites” is no mere political or nationalistic designation, but a religiously significant and honorific title. And despite the refusal of most of the Israelites to accept God’s gift of salvation in Christ, this title has not been revoked. (D. Moo)

Rom. 9:4 Who (Subj. Nom., indefinite relative pronoun; “every one who”) are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive) Israelites (Pred. Nom.; descendants of Jacob, Jewish client nation status), to whom (Gen. Adv.): the adoption (Ind. Nom.; adult-son placing, spiritual heritage of Israel), and

(connective conj.) **the glory** (Ind. Nom.; the Shekinah glory Who used to be behind the veil became flesh and tabernacled among us, i.e. the manifestation of the integrity of God through Jesus Christ), **and** (connective conj.) **the unconditional covenants** (Ind. Nom., *idiomatic plural*; Abrahamic and Palestinian), **and** (connective conj.) **the lawgiving** (Ind. Nom.; codices and principles of the Mosaic law), **and** (connective conj.) **the ritual service** (Ind. Nom.; Levitical priesthood, worship of the true God during the dispensation of Israel; sanctuary service, tabernacle worship), **and** (connective conj.) **the promises** (Ind. Nom.; emphasizing the integrity of God; the salvation promises in Abraham, the kingdom promises in David),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:4** οἵτινες εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται ὧν ἡ υἰοθεσία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ αἱ διαθήκαι καὶ ἡ νομοθεσία καὶ ἡ λατρεία καὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι

^{VUL} **Romans 9:4** qui sunt Israhelitae quorum adoptio est filiorum et gloria et testamenta et legislatio et obsequium et promissa

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:5** From whom are the fathers [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as our regenerate ancestors]. In fact, from whom [genetically] according to the flesh [humanity] Christ came [1st advent], the One Who is over all [divine sovereignty], the blessed God [deity of Christ] unto the ages [forever]. So be it.

^{KW} **Rom. 9:5** Of whom are the fathers, and out from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, the One who is above all, God eulogized forever. Amen.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:5** Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob also came from client nation Israel. They are the spiritual heritage, the regenerate ancestors, of both Gentile and Jewish believers. As a matter of fact, the humanity of Christ came from the Jewish race. The Lord physically descended from Israel, with regard to His 1st advent. This is the same Jesus Who is Lord (Descriptive Present tense) over all. This is a reference to His deity, divine sovereignty, and His ruling and reigning after the 2nd advent. Jesus Christ is the one and only blessed God throughout all dispensations. His deity will reign supreme forever.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As is well known, the difficulty here is a matter of exegesis and the punctuation of the editor will be made according to his theology. But it may be said in brief that the natural way to take Christ and God is in apposition. This idiom is common in older Greek. This

is a clear statement of the deity of Christ following the remark about His humanity. (A.T. Robertson) Eternity is composed of successive ages, which is why the plural is used here. (E.W. Bullinger) Paul here calls Jesus “God,” and Romans 9:5 becomes one of the most important proof-texts for the deity of Christ. Connecting “God” to “Christ” is exegetically preferable, theologically unobjectionable, and contextually appropriate. Paul here calls the Messiah, Jesus, “God,” attributing to Him full divine status. (D. Moo)

When language so clear as in the current passage is perverted to avoid recognizing the obvious truth contained in the divine testimony, it more fully manifests the depravity of human nature and the rooted enmity of the carnal mind against God, than the grossest works of the flesh. (R. Haldane) Like many other commentators and Bible teachers, I find Romans 9:5 to be one of the most sublime testimonies to the full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ in all the Bible. The grammatical arguments favor it, the word order points to it, a doxology is included in it, and the reference to Christ being “after the flesh” requires a phrase pointing to His deity. It also teaches the humanity of Jesus, the supremacy of Jesus, and the rightness of praising Jesus in addition to the deity of Jesus. (J. Boice)

Once saved, Paul was deeply solicitous for the salvation of his countrymen. Never before had he realized that to be a Jew by virtue of race or religion did not automatically guarantee a favored status in time and eternity. So Paul set out to explain that the Jewish race must be based upon regeneration, which was the original requirement for Abraham, the first Jew, and that the regenerate Jew is the only true Jew in God’s sight. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul is obviously referring to natural Israel for he calls them his “kinsmen according to the flesh” (verse 3), and it is to these people that he relates all these particular privileges. The fact that these words were spoken after the beginning of the Church is proof that the Church does not rob Israel of her blessings. In no case are the national promises to Israel destroyed. (C. Ryrie)

Rom. 9:5 From whom (Abl. Source, our spiritual heritage) are (ellipsis) the fathers (Nom. Appos.; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as our regenerate ancestors); in fact (explanatory conj., begins a typical Pauline doxology; considerable debate exists on the punctuation in this verse), from whom (Abl. Source; genetically) according to the flesh (Acc. Gen. Ref.; with reference to His humanity; “as far as physical descent is concerned”) Christ (Subj. Nom.) came (ellipsis, verb supplied; reference to the 1st advent), the One Who (Nom. Appos.; with reference to His deity) is (εἰμί, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Modal, Relative clause) over all (Acc. Rel. & Measure; divine sovereignty, reference to His ruling and reigning after the 2nd advent), the blessed (verbal adj.; anarthrous, “one and only”) God (Nom. Appos.; reference to His deity) unto the ages (Acc. Spec., Time; idiom: throughout all dispensations of time, forever). So be it (Acknowledge it).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:5** ὧν οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα· ὁ ὧν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:5** quorum patres et ex quibus Christus secundum carnem qui est super omnia Deus benedictus in saecula amen

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:6** However, the Word of God [Old Testament] has not run aground [drifted off course] because of this [setting aside of Israel and inserting the Church Age], for not all who have descended from Israel [by physical birth] are really Israel [not racial, but born-again Jews].

^{KW} **Rom. 9:6** But the case is not such as this, that the Word of God is fallen powerless, for not all who are out of Israel, these are Israel,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:6** Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

However, just because the dispensation of Israel was set aside and the Church Age was inserted into God's plan does not mean the Word of God has drifted off course. The Word of God has not run aground (Gnomic Perfect tense) because the "times of the Gentiles" has replaced the "Jewish client nation." It might seem that way by cursory reading, but it won't stand up under close scrutiny. Because all those who descended from Israel nationally, meaning by physical birth, are not really Israel. The "true" Israel is spiritual and encompasses only those Jews who believe in Jesus Christ, regardless of which OT dispensation they lived in. The "true" Israel is not racial, or national, but "born again" Israel. The national promises are for national Israel, but the spiritual promises are for spiritual Israel ... and by spiritual Israel, I mean believing Jews, not believing Gentiles, or the Church. The Church is not "spiritual Israel," as many misguided believers have asserted in the past century. Neither Gentiles nor the Church are ever referred to as "Israel."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Gentile Christians are never included in the designation *Israel*. The contrast here, is not between those who inherit Abraham's promises and those who do not, but rather it is between the promises which belong to Israel according to the flesh, and those which belong to the Israelite who enters into them by faith, which latter promises also belong to the Gentile believer who then becomes a child of Abraham by faith (Gal. 3:6). The passage intimates nothing concerning the relationship of Israel and the Church, but it draws sharply the distinction between believing Israelites and unbelieving Israelites as to their present blessings. Both groups still remain genuine Israelites, but the distinction is made with regard to their attitude toward Christ. Believing Israelites come into the blessings of the Church in this age while unbelieving Israelites do not. This passage does not say that the spiritual remnant within Israel is the Church. It simply distinguishes the nation as a whole from the believing element within the nation. (C. Ryrie)

This is an *antanaclasis*, or a repetition of the same Word in the same sentence, with different meanings. The former use of Israel refers to the true spiritual seed of Israel; the latter denotes Israel according to the flesh, the natural descendants from Israel's loins. The objection which is met is this, in the form of a *tecta* or *hypophora*, an objection that is not stated, but is implied by the answer given: If Israel is rejected and cast off for a time, then the Word of God has failed, and is ineffectual. No! For they are not all Israel which are of Israel. And there is to be a people taken out from among the Gentiles for His name, as well as a remnant of Israel, according to the election of grace. (E.W. Bullinger) God established the Jews as a *regenerate* race, founded through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as *believers* in Christ. Not all Israel is Israel. (R.B.Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 9:6 However (contrast conj.; "But it is not as though"), the Word (Subj. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.; in this case, Paul is referring to the O.T. Scriptures) has not (neg. particle) run aground (ἐκπίπτω, Perf.AI3S, Gnostic; drifted off course, withered, perished, failed) because (causal conj.) of this (Nom. Spec.; the setting aside of the dispensation of Israel and the insertion of the Church Age, i.e. the "times of the Gentiles" replaces the "Jewish client nation"), for (explanatory conj.) not (neg. particle) all (Subj. Nom.) who (Nom. Appos.) have descended (ellipsis, verb supplied) from Israel (Abl. Source; nationally, by physical birth) are (ellipsis) really (emphatic, resumptive pronoun) Israel (indeclinable; the "true" Jew is not the racial Jew, but is the *born-again* Jew, i.e. *spiritual* Israel).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:6** Οὐχ οἶον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ.

^{VUL} **Romans 9:6** non autem quod exciderit verbum Dei non enim omnes qui ex Israhel hii sunt Israhel

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:7** Neither because they are the seed [descendants] from Abraham are they all [racial Jews] children [Abraham had 8 sons], but rather in Isaac [one son only] shall your seed be elected.

^{KW} **Rom. 9:7** Nor because they are offspring of Abraham are they all children, but: In Isaac an offspring shall be named for you.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:7** Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Neither is the seed (Greek: sperm) of Abraham the only qualification for being part of elect Israel. Abraham had eight sons and only one of them, Isaac, carried the elect seed forward. Being a racial Jew because you were from the line of Abraham did not qualify you to automatically inherit the spiritual promises. The line of the spiritual seed (Latin: semen) narrowed (by divine election) to only one of Abraham's sons, Isaac. In other words, the spiritual seed of Abraham was sovereignly elected (Gnomic Future tense) in Isaac only. As a matter of fact, where did the identity or designation Israel originate? It originated with Jacob, the son of Isaac; therefore even Abraham was not an Israelite! Because Abraham was the grandfather of Jacob (Israel), he preceded him in time and technically could not have been an Israelite. The qualifications for the spiritual blessings went from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob (Israel).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Salvation is always ultimately a matter of God's sovereign choice or election. God gives life to whomever He chooses. (J.M. Boice) In the present passage, the point is not that Abraham's real children are those who believe, but that Divine sovereign *calling* lies behind all. The great revealed truth of the sovereignty of God which is about to be revealed perplexes many, disturbs others, and some take occasion to stumble at it. (W.R. Newell) Paul defends the principle of an Israel within Israel by arguing that God makes limiting choices among Abraham's various descendants. Thus, as every Jew knew, Abraham was the father of many descendants, including Ishmael and the sons of Keturah, but God chose to fulfill His plan of salvation only through Isaac. All of this is the result of divine decree. Abraham's wider descendants were not rejected for any failure, nor was Isaac chosen for any virtue; both choices and their consequences lay in the sovereign will of God. (J. Edwards)

A Jew can be defined in terms of race, religion, or regeneration. This passage distinguishes between racial Israel, those who are Jews by birth; religious Israel, those who are Jews by religious tradition; and regenerate Israel, those Jews who have believed in Christ and are members of the Royal Family of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Jesus Christ knows His own, and in John 10:15, He said, "... I lay down my life for the sheep." God's choice of the sheep in Christ before the foundation of the world is election. Jesus Christ purchased salvation absolutely and perfectly for them. He did not provide salvation for everybody contingent upon the fact that they might or might not believe. Everyone for whom He died will, without the loss of one, become a Christian. The infinite love that moved the Lord Jesus to lay down His life on behalf of the sheep also moves Him to reveal Himself to all of those for whom He died. He reveals Himself to the elect, but conceals Himself from the nonelect, Matt. 11:25-27. (W.E. Best)

At the 2nd advent of Christ true Israel in contrast to the Church will enter into the fulfillment of the unconditional covenants. Throughout Israel's history there was always a requirement of faith in Yahweh for individual Israelites to become true Israel. But this regenerate Israel was still part of the nation. In the millennium the entire nation, regenerate and unregenerate, will benefit from the physical aspects of the unconditional

covenants – the land, a king, and blessing – but the unregenerate cannot receive the eternal aspects of the covenants. Regenerate Israel was the catalyst for OT prophecies that depict a future for Israel as a nation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Weren't the promises of Jehovah made to all the descendants of Abraham? No. God has always worked on the principle of divine sovereignty. Sovereignly God made a distinction between Abraham's descendants. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:7 Neither (neg. conj.) because (causal conj.) they are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive) the seed (Pred. Nom.; sperm, posterity, descendants) from Abraham (Abl.Source; he had eight sons) are they (ellipsis; racial Jews) all (Nom. Spec.) children (Pred. Nom.; Abraham was not an Israelite), but rather (ascensive conj.; see Genesis 21:12) in Isaac (Loc. Sph.) shall your (Poss. Gen.) seed (Subj. Nom.; sperm, posterity, descendants) be elected (καλέω, FPI3S, Gnostic & Predictive; the qualifications of the elect are further delineated);

^{WHO} **Romans 9:7** οὐδ' ὅτι εἰσὶν σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ πάντες τέκνα ἀλλ' Ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα

^{VUL} **Romans 9:7** neque quia semen sunt Abrahae omnes filii sed in Isaac vocabitur tibi semen

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:8** That is, those who are children of the flesh [racial Jews], these are not the children of God [true Jews]: but the children [heirs] of the promise [regenerate Jews] are imputed for the seed [spiritual seed of Abraham].

^{KW} **Rom. 9:8** That is, not the children of the flesh, these are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for offspring;

^{KJV} **Romans 9:8** That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Those who are children of the flesh, meaning racial Jews, are (Static Present tense) not the children of God, meaning true Jews. Being a child of God in the Jewish economy never meant physical birth only; it always meant spiritual birth. The true heirs of the promise were regenerate Jews only. Only regenerate Jews comprise the spiritual seed of Abraham; only regenerate Jews receive the imputation (Perfective Present tense) for this spiritual seed. The Greek word “sperma” points to the spiritual seed being given by God's grace; it is not a seed generated by procreation, man's faith or other efforts.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In Romans 9:8 the conjunction must not deceive us. The copula must be supplied between them. (A.T. Robertson) This is a *metonymy*, or the change of one noun for another related noun; the promise is put for the faith which receives it. The children of the promise are counted for the seed. (E.W. Bullinger) It is most necessary that we perceive that Paul is speaking here, not of man's believing a promise and therefore being written down as one of God's children; but on the contrary, of the promise (of God to Christ) that characterizes the existence and calling of all the real children of God. (W.R. Newell)

We have seen Paul as a Christian patriot ready to sacrifice his everlasting fellowship with Christ if it could ensure the salvation of his fellow countrymen. But alas, the fact of the rejection of Jesus and His gospel by many of the Jews must be accepted. And when the apostle turns to history, he finds that there has been no wholesale salvation of either the descendants of Abraham or of Israel, but a certain proportion only became children of promise. (J. Barmby) God established the Jews as a regenerate race, founded through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as believers in Christ. Not all Israel is Israel. Individuals who were genetically, culturally, or religiously Jews were not party to the unconditional covenants unless they personally believed in the promised Messiah. His person and work are revealed in the one conditional covenant. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 9:8 That (demonstrative pronoun) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static), those who (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) are (ellipsis) children (Pred. Nom.; heirs) of the flesh (Descr. Gen.; racial Jews), these (Nom. Appos., immediate demonstrative pronoun) are (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) the children (Pred. Nom.) of God (Descr. Gen.; true Jews): but (adversative conj.) the children (Subj. Nom.; heirs) of the promise (Descr. Gen.; regenerate Jews) are imputed (λογίζομαι, PPI3S, Perfective, Deponent; counted, estimated, calculated) for the seed (Acc. Gen. Ref.; *spiritual* seed of Abraham).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:8** τοῦτ ἔστιν οὐ τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας λογίζεται εἰς σπέρμα

^{VUL} **Romans 9:8** id est non qui filii carnis hii filii Dei sed qui filii sunt promissionis aestimantur in semine

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:9** For this is the word of promise [Genesis 18:10]: Immediately after this time [the exact prophetic moment in God's plan], I [Jesus Christ] will return and a son will be provided for Sarah [spiritual blessing].

^{KW} **Rom. 9:9** For the word of promise is this, According to this season I will come and there will be to Sarah a son.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:9** For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

According to the prophecy in Genesis 18:10, Jesus Christ would return (Predictive Future tense) to Abraham to impute the blessing of a son. This son will be provided (Predictive Present tense) through his wife, Sarah. There was no chance for this prophecy to fail; it was predicted and upheld by the integrity and power of God. It is possible, however, that this precise moment in time occurred when Abraham “cracked the spiritual maturity barrier.” Was there any doubt that a son would be born? No. Was the moment of birth waiting on Abraham to reach spiritual maturity? Maybe. If so, was there any chance he would never reach spiritual maturity? No. Unless God has withdrawn from the operation of His creation, which is a heretical concept, Abraham’s son was born at the precise second ordained by God. And if it coincided with Abraham’s supergrace status - that too, was according to God’s plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Isaac, the coming child, did not believe the promise in order to be born! But, God promised Isaac to Abraham, and kept His promise by a miracle. When Isaac was born, therefore, he was a child of *promise*, - a *promised* child, in God’s sovereign will. (W.R. Newell) Ishmael was born of Abraham’s natural powers. But Isaac was conceived when Abraham was past the age of engendering children and when Sarah was past the age of conceiving and giving birth. It is the same with our spiritual conception and new birth, which is the inevitable outworking of God’s electing choice and is likewise supernatural. We cannot engender spiritual life in ourselves, for we are spiritually dead. For us to become spiritually alive, God must do a miracle. (J. Boice)

God’s historical purpose toward the Jewish nation has not failed, because all whom God has elected to salvation are or will be saved. God had previously revealed that not all Israel would be saved and that some Gentiles would be. And the failure of the Jews to believe was their own fault, not God’s. Some Jews (Paul was an example) have believed and have been saved. It has always been the case that not all Jews but only a remnant has been saved. The salvation of the Gentiles, which is now occurring, is meant to arouse Israel to envy and thus be the means of saving some of them. In the end all Israel will be saved, and thus God will fulfill His promises to Israel nationally. It all began with the promise of a child for Sarah. (J. Boice)

Rom. 9:9 **For** (explanatory conj.) **this** (Subj. Nom., immediate demonstrative pronoun) **is** (ellipsis) **the word** (Pred. Nom.) **of promise** (Descr. Gen.; Genesis 18:10): **Immediately after this** (immediate demonstrative pronoun; short range prophecy) **time** (Acc. Extent of Time; when Abraham reaches maturity), **I will come** (ἔρχομαι, FMI1S, Predictive, Deponent; Jesus Christ will come to impute blessing), **and** (connective conj.) **a son** (Subj. Nom.; supergrace sexual prosperity) **will be provided** (εἶμι, FMI3S, Predictive) **for Sarah** (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:9** ἐπαγγελίας γὰρ ὁ λόγος οὗτος Κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον ἐλεύσομαι καὶ ἔσται τῇ Σάρρα υἱός

^{VUL} **Romans 9:9** promissionis enim verbum hoc est secundum hoc tempus veniam et erit Sarrae filius

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:10** And not only her [Sarah], but also Rebecca when she had sexual intercourse [conceived a child] with one man, i.e. [namely], our father, Isaac,

^{KW} **Rom. 9:10** And not only, but also Rebecca, conceiving by one, Isaac, our father.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:10** And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Lord provided a son not only to Sarah, but also Rebecca. This occurred when she had sexual intercourse (Historical Present tense) with her husband, Isaac. The Greek word “koite” (coitus) points to conceiving a child by “sleeping” with her husband at bedtime. The phrase “one man” refers to her husband, and our spiritual father, Isaac. The preposition “out of” denotes her pregnancy by Isaac only. There was no illicit sex in their marital relationship, as there was in the case of Abraham (with Hagar). This eliminates the Arabs (descendants from Hagar) from inheriting the promises of Israel which were passed down through Isaac to Jacob (Israel).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Esau and Jacob were twin children, not only of the same patriarch, but also of the same wedded wife, and yet one was chosen and the other rejected, and this even before birth. (J. Barmby) In the former instance some might allege that their condition was unequal, the one being the son of an handmaid; but these were of the same mother, and were even twins: yet one was rejected, and the other was chosen by the Lord. It is hence clear, that the fulfillment of the promise does not take place in all the children of the flesh indiscriminately. (J. Calvin)

The interpretation which tries to restrict this predestination or unconditional election to nations rather than individuals or to historical tasks rather than eternal destinies must ignore or distort the problem posed in Rom. 9:1-5, the individualism of 9:6, the vocabulary and logical structure of 9:6-8, the closely analogous texts elsewhere in Paul, and the implications of 9:14-23. The position is exegetically untenable. And this determination is not based on what any man is or wills or does (9:11, 12, 16), but solely on God whose word or call effects what He purposes (9:12). For this reason Paul is confident that God’s word has not fallen, but is in fact working out God’s sovereign purpose even in the unbelief of Paul’s kinsmen. (J. Piper)

Rom. 9:10 **And**(connective conj.) **not** (neg. adv.) **only** (Acc. Spec.) **her** (ellipsis, pronoun supplied; reference to Sarah), **but** (adversative conj.) **also** (pleonastic) **Rebecca** (Subj. Nom.) **when she had** (ἔχω, PAPtc.NSF, Historical, Temporal) **sexual intercourse** (Adv. Acc.; "to sleep with at bedtime", idiom for "conceiving a child") **with one man** (Gen. Rel.; prep. "out of" denotes her pregnancy by Isaac only), **i.e.** ("namely", brought out by the Acc. Gen. Ref.) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **father** (Gen. Rel.), **Isaac** (Adv. Gen. Ref.),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:10** οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ Ῥεβέκκα ἐξ ἑνὸς κοίτην ἔχουσα Ἰσαὰκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν·

^{VUL} **Romans 9:10** non solum autem sed et Rebecca ex uno concubitum habens Isaac patre nostro

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:11** For the twins, not yet having been born, neither having committed anything good or evil, so that the sovereign purpose of God according to election would stand [no changes to the divine plan], not by works [human will or effort], but by Him Who elects [the source of selection is God Himself).

^{KW} **Rom. 9:11** For not yet having been born nor having practiced any good or evil, in order that the purpose of God dominated by an act of selecting out may abide, not out of a source of works, but out of the source of the One who calls,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:11** (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The twins, Jacob and Esau, had not been born yet (Temporal Participle), nor had either of them accomplished anything (Constative Aorist tense) good or evil. Jacob was selected before soul life was imputed to him at birth, so obviously he was not chosen by God because he had done something good or Esau had done something evil. And because Jacob had not been born yet, obviously he did not will or choose God from his own free will in order to be chosen. He wasn't alive yet when God's selection was finalized! There is no clearer declaration of the sovereignty of God in all Scripture, but oh, how the flesh crawls when it discovers that it had no part in the decision. Sinful man refuses to let God be God, and man to be under His divine authority.

The purpose clause points to the sovereign purpose being exactly that: sovereign. The selection of Jacob over Esau was done before they were ever born. This selection was done in eternity past for the express purpose of eliminating those arrogant, humanistic philosophies that would try to take this sovereign choice away from God and place it in man's hands. The selection was done in eternity past so that God's sovereign elective purpose would stand (Gnomic Present tense) - without assistance and without human

argument or intrusion. And if that wasn't enough to silence those who worship human free will instead of the sovereignty of God, Paul adds another definitive proclamation: "not by works, but by Him Who elects."

The phrase "not by works" eliminates all philosophical notions about election being by the exercise of the human will. The "before birth" statement places election outside of time, while "not by works" places election outside of human means or will. The One Who elects (Historical Present tense) did so in eternity past so that no man could say he was elected by his own free will decision. Election was (and still is) entirely in the hands of God. Man has absolutely no input in election, either national or personal. The source of the selection is God Himself, and none other. The status quo of sovereign grace remains unchanged; it is sovereign now and always will be. You would think this verse would silence those who object to God's free will, but instead, it has tormented some carnal believers for centuries.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

How could it possibly be said more plainly than in this passage that the predestination of Jacob to salvation [and Esau left to rejection] was not due to anything that they did or may have been foreseen as doing - even to the foreseen faith of one and the foreseen unbelief and disobedience of the other - but to the mysterious choice of God? Then the Apostle takes up an objection, one that is still urged in the 20th century against this doctrine of predestination. Does Paul explain away the doctrine of predestination by saying that all he meant was a predestination conditioned upon a man's future choices, or the like? Not at all! He does nothing of the kind; he does not recede from his position a single inch; he does not explain the doctrine away. On the contrary, he appeals again in support of the doctrine to the sheer mystery of the sovereign will of God. (J.G. Machen)

By saying that the decree of election originates in the divine good pleasure, the idea is also excluded that it is determined by anything in man, such as foreseen faith or good works; it is based exclusively on the sovereign good pleasure of God, Who is also the originator of faith. God's sovereign good pleasure is irresistible. This does not mean that man cannot oppose its execution to a certain degree, but it does mean that his opposition will not prevail. Neither does it mean that God in the execution of His decree overpowers the human will in a manner which is inconsistent with man's free agency. It does mean, however, that God can and does exert such an influence on the human spirit as to make it willing. (L.Berkof) With the use of the preposition "ek" Paul makes explicit that God's decision to treat Esau and Jacob differently is not merely prior to their good or evil deeds, but is also completely independent of them. God's electing purpose and his concrete prediction in verse 12 are in no way based on the distinctives Esau and Jacob have by birth or action. This rules out the notion of the early Greek and Latin commentators that election is based on God's foreknowledge of men's good works. Nor does Paul ever ground the electing purpose of God in man's faith. (J. White)

In God's election, the Father sees the nonexistent elect already in Jesus Christ because He gave them to the eternal Son before the world began (John 17; Eph. 1:4; II Tim. 1:9). There is no time with God; He is the eternal "I Am." The understanding of election is endangered by (1) those who teach that election is based on foreseen faith, (2) those who teach that election takes place at the point of faith, (3) those who teach the freedom of God to the exclusion of means, (4) those who teach an elected plan, (5) those who attribute arbitrariness to God in His election because they do not understand arbitrariness as it relates to God, (6) those who say election makes God guilty of partiality - injustice. (W.E. Best) The point of the argument is that the choice of those who would receive the blessing of salvation lay with God entirely, then as now. God gives life to whom He chooses. (J. Boice)

What Paul is arguing against is the claim of the Jews that God was bound to their race. It is against this claim, this immoral claim to perpetual privilege on the part of one race, however they might behave, that Paul exalts the absolute freedom of God to choose or reject as He sees fit. (C. Gore) The order of these clauses is largely dependent on the flow of thought in the speaker's mind. There is usually a logical basis for this order. Sometimes the final clause somewhat interrupts the flow of the sentence. (A.T. Robertson) There is also the possibility of a parenthesis in this verse, though it is more likely an *anacaluthon*, the failure to complete a sentence as intended when it was begun. The completion does not follow grammatically from the beginning. Artistic orators like Isocrates frequently used such grammatical blemishes. (ibid)

Hatred in itself is not sinful. Holy love necessitates holy hatred for everything contrary to that holy love. (W.E. Best) God's freedom is absolute. Whatever happens, God's purpose, which operates on the basis of election, stands firm. This marks out the theme of chapters 9-11. God has a purpose; it works by a process of election; and it cannot fail. When viewed from the human side this means that not works but the call of God is decisive. The 20th century Christian cannot escape the consequences of the argument. For what Paul has established is the freedom of God in grace. God, if He be still God, still operates on the basis of His elective purpose. (C.K. Barrett) The phrase "not from works but of the One who calls" does not allow the smallest crack through which one could slide in any sort of human participation. God's choices are not grounded in or constrained by anything outside His own creative purposes. (J. Piper)

Rom. 9:11 **For** (explanatory conj.) **the twins** (ellipsis, supplied from the Gen. Absolute Plural Ptc.), **not** (neg. disjunctive particle) **yet having been born** (γεννάω, APptc.GPM, Constative, Temporal; prenatal, before soul life is imputed at birth), **neither** (neg. disjunctive particle) **having committed** (πράσσω, AAPtc.GPM, Constative, Circumstantial, Gen. Absolute; performed, done, accomplished) **anything** (Acc. Dir. Obj., indefinite pronoun) **good** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **or** (contrast conj.) **evil** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; wicked, despicable, worthless), **so that** (Purpose conj.) **the sovereign purpose** (Subj. Nom.; divine will, plan)

of God (Poss. Gen.) **according to election** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; adjunctive, attributive adj.) **would stand** (μένω, PASubj.3S, Gnostic, Purpose clause; status quo unchanged), **not** (adversative conj.) **by works** (Abl. Means), **but** (contrast conj.) **by Him** (Abl. Agency; election to salvation is totally of God, not of man) **Who elects** (καλέω, PAPtc.GSM, Historical, Substantival, Articular; chooses, calls; the source of the selection is God Himself).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:11** μήπω γὰρ γεννηθέντων μηδὲ πραξάντων τι ἀγαθὸν ἢ φαῦλον ἵνα ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ μένη οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος

^{VUL} **Romans 9:11** cum enim nondum nati fuissent aut aliquid egissent bonum aut malum ut secundum electionem propositum Dei maneret

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:12** It was spoken to her [in Genesis 25:23]: The elder [Esau] shall serve the younger [Jacob],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:12** It was said to her, The older shall serve the younger;

^{KJV} **Romans 9:12** It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It was spoken (Constative Aorist tense) to Rebecca in Genesis 25:23 during her pregnancy that the elder brother (Esau) would serve (Predictive Future tense) the younger brother (Jacob). Primogeniture, or the right of the firstborn, was being set aside by the divine prerogative of God. In Latin, the “major” would serve the “minor.” The promises and inheritance that would under normal human conditions go to Esau would instead go to Jacob by divine fiat.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the present passage the Divine sovereignty - “the purpose of God according to election” - is seen extending still further than birth, to the disposition of the condition and affairs of the children thus promised. The *elder shall serve the younger*, is not only a prophecy that Jacob would inherit and obtain the Divine blessing, and that his seed (as in the days of David and Solomon) would be temporarily triumphant over the Edomites, Esau’s descendants; but also looks far into the future beyond the brief triumph of the Herodians, the Edomites, in the days of Christ and the apostles, to the day when, as Balaam was forced against his will to prophesy in Numbers 24:17,18. (W.R. Newell) Paul advances that God, by His sovereign personal choice, superceded the process of natural primogenitureship and chose Jacob, the younger, to be served by Esau, the elder ... Every action of God arises out of His eternal purpose. Jacob was chosen even before

he was born, before he could do anything good to win God's election or anything bad to lose it. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:12 It was spoken (λέγω, API3S, Constative; Genesis 25:23) to her (Dat. Adv.; refers to Rebecca during her pregnancy; ὅτι used in direct discourse as a colon or quotations): The elder (Subj. Nom., comparative; major, older brother Esau) shall serve (δουλεύω, FAI3S, Predictive; be subject to, be subservient, obey) the younger (Dat. Ind. Obj., comparative; minor, younger brother Jacob; primogeniture is set aside),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:12** ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ ὅτι Ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι

^{VUL} **Romans 9:12** non ex operibus sed ex vocante dictum est ei quia maior serviet minori

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:13** Just as it stands written [in Malachi 1:2-3]: I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau.

^{KW} **Rom. 9:13** Even as it stands written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:13** As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul partially quotes from Malachi 1:2-3, just as it stands written (Dramatic Perfect tense) in the Old Testament. This quote from the Lord is a judicial opinion, not a human emotional reaction. The Lord says, I loved (Constative Aorist tense) that Jacob. This love is selective, not generalistic or impersonal. The Lord drafted Jacob, recruited him in a manner of speaking; Jacob was not an enlistee. By contrast, the Lord hated (Constative Aorist tense) that Esau. This is Holy hatred for evil, which cannot be defined as “loving less.” It means He was disgusted with the mentality of Esau's soul; it refers to a divine aversion to a sinful nuisance. Both “loved” and “hated” are in the active voice, and could also be translated as a Dramatic Aorist tense.

God was not passively sitting by waiting for Jacob and Esau to make a decision for or against Christ. God actively loved Jacob and selected him; God actively hated Esau and passed him by. Both were in a state of sin and hopelessness, but God rescued the younger brother by His sovereign grace. Love and hate are not anthropopathisms in this verse. If you make “hate” an anthropopathism, you are obliged to make “love” an anthropopathism, too. Do we worship a God Who loved us in eternity past and set His elective grace upon us, or was His love just a meaningless term of accommodation, a mere anthropopathism? The attempt to translate “hate” as “loved less” or as nothing more than an anthropopathism is a travesty of exegesis.

Malachi 1:1-5 is a perfect example in the OT where God's hatred of evil people is followed up by outward expressions of His wrath.

Mal. 1:1 The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

1:2 I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was not Esau Jacob's brother?* saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,

1:3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

1:4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

1:5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.

There is no way “loving less” would do these things to rebellious, obstinate people. Wrath, indignation and holy judgment are not anthropathisms. But there is no doubt that humanists would try to render the following passages as “loved less” or anthropopathisms, too – in an attempt to empty the clear meaning from Scripture. Replace the word “hate” in the following verses with “loved less” and see how ridiculous it sounds.

Psalms 5:5 The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

Psalms 11:5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Proverbs 6:16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Isaiah 1:14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them*.

Isaiah 61:8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Jeremiah 44:4 Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

Hosea 9:15 All their wickedness *is* in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes *are* revolters.

Amos 5:21 I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.

Zechariah 8:17 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.

Malachi 2:16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This argument is one which can have little weight with those who have imbibed Arminianism and accepted their false interpretation of John 3:16 [including those who explain God's love as an anthropopathism]; but they who perceive the Divine love to be a discriminating and particular and not an indefinite and general one will find here that which is sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. If it were true that God loves the whole human race then, seeing a large part thereof is already in hell, I could draw no assurance therefrom that I shall never perish. But when I discover that God's love is restricted to those whom He chose in Christ and that He loves them with "an everlasting love," then I unhesitatingly conclude that "many waters" cannot quench that love, Song of Solomon 8:7. (A.W. Pink) It is intolerable that men should think that they can limit God's freedom by the expectations which they themselves have formed. There is something particularly irreligious in the suggestion that our wishes could circumscribe the liberty of God or that we should try to dictate His decisions, as Paul's critics attempted to do. (J. Knox)

It is not a general good will directed toward everyone *en masse* and hence toward no one in particular, but rather a love that singles out individuals and blesses them specifically and abundantly. (J.M. Boice) God ordained faith in His elect as the means of their salvation. Unbelief was not ordained by God as He ordained faith. It is suffered by God in the reprobate as the cause of final damnation. Election and reprobation do not result from one causality as two parallels in the ways of belief and unbelief. In election, faith is the gift of God. In positive reprobation, unbelief originates from within man. (W. E. Best) The redemptive efficacy of His death is described as taking place within a given circle, and as bearing upon a given company of persons. The Lord's sayings on this point are so express that we are not left in any doubt whatever that the atonement was offered specifically for the persons who actually receive the benefits of His death. Its extent coincides with its effects. (G. Smeaton)

Men today often misunderstand the whole idea of election. It does not fit in with our democratic understanding of life, nor with our deep-rooted conviction that man, and not God, should be the arbiter of salvation. So, rejecting in advance the true idea of election, we think of it as an arbitrary device, and caricature it as a means of choosing men without rhyme or reason. And having made it look sufficiently ridiculous we find it totally unacceptable. But the Bible concept of election is not so easily dismissed. And in particular it has to be stressed that there is something back of it other than arbitrary caprice. There is the love of God. God chooses men for salvation because He loves them. Whenever we are talking about the Biblical idea of election we should not forget that. I do not suggest that this is a key which unlocks all the mysteries of election, so that no further difficulty remains. But I do suggest that we are not doing justice to Paul's thought unless we see salvation as proceeding from election, and election as being the outworking of God's love. (L. Morris)

It should be evident from Scripture that God does not manifest the same uniform affection or goodness toward all mankind, as Arminian unlimited redemptionists claim. One only has to provide one scriptural illustration, contextually cited, to prove this - Romans 9:13. To say that Christ's sacrificial death, which is the highest expression of

divine love to man, applies equally to all men, and then to observe that a multitude of mankind has and is entering a Christless eternity, certainly does not magnify God's love or His wisdom. Will God love those who are in hell equally with the redeemed who are with Christ in eternity? Certainly not, for a love of this nature cannot be that love of God which is immutable and eternal. What kind of God is it Who delivers up His Son to die for the redemption of each and every individual of mankind, yet does not send multitudes the gospel to acquaint them with the gift of salvation, or send them His Spirit to apply the benefit of redemption, or give them saving faith to lay hold upon it? Such a love would be unworthy of God and a mockery to the very persons who, according to the theory of universal redemption, were bought with Christ's blood. In effect, the universal redemptionist's view reduces to this: God loved each and every one enough to have Christ die for them, but He did not love them enough to save them, or for that matter, enough to pray for them in John 17:9. This concept of redemption seems infinitely more repulsive than the objections to the doctrine of particular redemption. (G.D. Long)

An Arminian objection is raised against that love which motivated God to give His Son is a special and discriminating love of God to His elect and to them alone. But to object to this is to forget that the highest form of divine love, which is the motivating cause for God giving His Son to die upon the cross, is also the motivating cause for imparting all the other saving graces. Does not the Scripture declare: He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32) If this is true (and it is), and if Christ died for all mankind as the universal redemptionist affirms, why is it that "all men have not faith" (II Thess. 3:2), since God has promised to freely give all things to those for whom Christ died? Now if this is true (and it is), is not saving faith also included? Is one justified by any other means than faith? Not according to Scripture. Then, if the term "all" in this verse means all mankind without exception as those who believe in an indefinite atonement assert, why are not all mankind saved? (G.D. Long)

It is impossible to believe in election without also believing in reprobation. If God chose some, He passed by others, and all those He passed by are reprobates. Persons who have not been regenerated are incapable of receiving these or any other truths of God. Religionists know their human tradition, but they do not know the teaching of Scripture. Opponents of God's sovereignty in election and reprobation manifest their anger by asking, Did God make man to damn him? An Arminian always argues from the point of reprobation, but the Christian argues from the point of God's absolute sovereignty. Arminians will not take the time to consider the difference between their ignorant and sentimental question and God's creating man upright and then condemning him for his sin. When God chose some and passed by others, He saw all as sinners. The vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy all come from the same lump. God saw all mankind under sin. God did not have to chose any. Choosing some is a manifestation of His mercy. Condemning individuals for their sin is a manifestation of His justice. God is not only merciful, but He is also just. God's love and hatred are not emotions but Divine principles. (W.E. Best)

A woman once said to Spurgeon, "I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau." "That," Spurgeon replied, "is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob!" All men being sinners, we must allow God to "retreat into His Own sovereignty," to act as He will. The favor of God to the children of promise (to those whom He has given to Christ) is not procured by their response to God's grace, but contrariwise, their response to God's grace is because they have been given to Christ. (W.R. Newell) Scripture does not state that He loved Esau less than He loved Jacob. God could love nothing in Jacob above Esau but His own grace which He gave Jacob before the world began. There is no difference between any Christian and any non-christian other than God gave the Christian grace before the world began. The reason many dislike this truth is because they do not understand grace. (W.E. Best)

This is a *meeonymy*, where parents and ancestors are frequently put for their posterity and for children, and the name of the stock or race is put for the *patronym*. (E.W. Bullinger) One who opposes our love and loyalty to God or Christ is the worst possible enemy. A man's foes shall be they of his own household. If one remains true to the Lord Jesus Christ, he may have to forsake his own household and kin. He cannot be a true disciple and love his parents, wife or children more than Christ. Hence he must needs set them aside, forsake them, love them less, and even oppose them, assuming toward them the hostile attitude of an enemy for Christ's sake, Micah 7:6; Matt. 6:24; Deut. 13:6-11, 21:15; John 12:25; Mal. 1:2,3. (M.S. Terry) It is ludicrous how some theologians who do not like predestination try to squirm out of it. Emil Brunner attempts to convince us that Paul is not speaking about Esau and Jacob back in the times of the patriarchs. According to Brunner Paul is talking about the Edomites in the time of Malachi. Because these Edomites had done so much evil, God rejected them. How in the world could anyone suggest such a perverse interpretation? To offer such a ludicrously false interpretation one has to be either the brilliant Emil Brunner or completely *non compos mentis*. (G. Clark)

The truth of restricted love is opposed and rejected by most religionists today. The principle of contempt prior to examination is a bar against all information and keeps man in ignorance. Truth always involves more than appears on the surface. The tendency in our day is to despise laborious research and substitute human reason for Divine revelation, i.e., Greek philosophies which hate the sovereignty of God and elevate man's free will to the status of a deity. (W.E. Best) God's love is a sovereign love. It is not a general good will directed toward everyone en masse and hence toward no one in particular, but rather a love that singles out individuals and blesses them specifically and abundantly. Because God is God and is therefore under no obligation to anybody, He is free to love whom He chooses. Indeed, He says as much in this verse. To most people this is an unpopular teaching, but it is the only way things can be if God is truly to be God. (J. Boice)

In election God actively intervenes to rescue those who deserve destruction, whereas in reprobation God passively allows some to receive the just punishment they deserve for their sins. Some people don't like the doctrine of reprobation. I've heard someone say, "I

could never love a God like that.” Fair enough, we may say; nevertheless, that is the God with Whom you have to deal. As soon as we think that God owes us something or that God must do something, we limit Him and diminish His glory. Election and reprobation surround and protect God’s glory, for they remind us that God is absolutely free and sovereign. God does whatever He wants with His universe. As long as we believe that we are in control of our own destinies, we will never assume the posture: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me” in Mark 10:47. It does us no good to arrogantly try to prove that God cannot do what the Bible clearly teaches us He does. (P. Ryken)

We must not predicate of this divine hate those unworthy features which belong to hate as it is exercised by us sinful men. In God’s hate there is no malice, malignancy, vindictiveness, unholy rancor or bitterness. The kind of hate thus characterized is condemned in Scripture and it would be blasphemy to predicate the same of God. But there is a hate in us that is the expression of holy jealousy for God’s honor and of love to Him. This hate is the reflection in us of God’s jealousy for His own honor. We must, therefore, recognize that there is in God a holy hate that cannot be defined in terms of not loving or loving less. Furthermore, we may not tone down the reality or intensity of this hate by speaking of it as “anthropopathic” or by saying that it “refers not so much to the emotion as to the effect.” The hate of verse 13 belongs to the transcendent realm of God’s sovereignty for which there is no human analogy. (J. Murray)

In the context of Malachi 1:1-5, we don’t appear to do justice to the context if we believe the expression “Esau I hated” means an innocuous “love less.” In the OT passage, God actually directed His wrath toward Esau and his descendants. (W. Kroll) It can readily be suspected that in the original context, as it pertains to the Edomites (Mal. 1:1-5), the mere absence of love or favour hardly explains the visitations of judgment mentioned: “Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness” (verse 3). “They shall build, but I will throw down; and men shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord has indignation forever” (verse 4). These judgments surely imply disfavour. The indignation is a positive judgment, not merely the absence of blessing. In Scripture God’s wrath involves the positive outflow of His displeasure. (J. Murray)

Rom. 9:13 Just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Dramatic; partial quotation from Malachi 1:2,3 - a judicial opinion, not human emotions): I loved (ἀγαπάω, AAI1S, Constative, Dramatic; selected, drafted, recruited) that Jacob (Acc. Dir. Obj.), but (adversative conj.) I hated (μισέω, AAI1S, Constative, Dramatic; was disgusted with, aversion, nuisance; *Holy hatred* for evil cannot be defined as *loving less*) that Esau (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:13** καθάπερ γέγραπται Τὸν Ἰακώβ ἠγάπησα τὸν δὲ Ἡσαῦ ἐμίσησα

^{VUL} **Romans 9:13** sicut scriptum est Iacob dilexi Esau autem odio habui

LWB **Rom. 9:14** What, then, shall we say? There is no injustice [unrighteous prejudice] with God, is there? Let it not be so!

KW **Rom. 9:14** What shall we say then? There is not unrighteousness with God, is there? Away with the thought.

KJV **Romans 9:14** What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Using classic debater's technique, Paul asks to what conclusion are we forced (Deliberative Future tense) when we hear that God loves one but hates another? Is God guilty of injustice? Did God capriciously chose one man over another? Was God prejudiced against Esau? If the prior verse was not meant to be understood as a contrast between love and hate, emphasizing absolute divine sovereignty, what is the point of this argumentative objection? Don't skip this question in your reading. Answer me.

If Paul was not teaching election and reprobation, there would be no point of contention in the depraved sinner's mind! The mere presence of this question, in its vein of human effrontery, is proof that sovereign grace and divine election was being taught in exactly the manner that the Arminian takes exception to and the Calvinist affirms. What is Paul's answer to this hypothetical, Arminian question? "Hell no!" is his answer. "Of course not!" "Let it not be true!" There is no stronger negation to be found in the Greek language.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We have now come upon that passage of Scripture against which the human mind rebels most of all. For it sets the creature as he really is before God; not, indeed, as an automaton, nor in fatalistic compulsion, - otherwise there are no morals, and no appeal in the gospel. Nevertheless, it will be our only safe path to receive *just as God writes it down*, the truth we find here. (W.R. Newell) Paul did not try to satisfy the objectors. He simply rebuked them. No matter how reasonable an argument from Scripture is, it will not meet the satisfaction of the reasoner. Depraved minds accuse God of being unequal or unjust or unfair. All inconsistency is in our minds and not in God. Responsibility without freedom in the thinking of natural man is despotic and unjust. The natural mind objects to being responsible if one can do nothing to change his destiny. Those who make the frequently repeated statement "your faith can change your destiny" believe that by their faith they are born of God. However, no person's faith can change his destiny. His destiny is changed *before* he can exercise faith. (W.E. Best)

Here the apostle shows Israel from their own history that *they must leave God to His sovereignty or else they must lose their promises*; and then that in the exercise of this sovereignty He will let in the Gentiles, as well as the Jews. And if you want to take

Abraham's promises by descent, you must take in all Abraham's seed. And if you take in Abraham's children, then you must take in Ishmael - those Arabians! Oh no, say they, we cannot allow that; what! Ishmaelites in the congregation of Israel, and heirs of the promise? Yes, if by descent! You *must* take it by *grace*; and if it is by grace, God will not confine this grace to you, but will *exercise it toward the Gentiles*. (J.N. Darby) God is laid under no obligation by a human will or a human work. (Vincent) The usual deduction from this is that God is not just. In a man this would not be right, but it is God's sovereign privilege to display Himself through any of His creatures, in any way best suited to the purpose. (A.E. Knoch)

The judgment of the unbeliever is the manifestation of God's righteousness, an action that does not compromise His integrity, even though human viewpoint has problems understanding His motivations for doing so. [LWB] The fact that God favors some and passes by others, does not warrant the charge that He is guilty of injustice. We can speak of injustice only when one party has a claim on another. If God owed the forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all men, it would be an injustice if He saved only a limited number of them. But the sinner has absolutely no right or claim on the blessings which flow from divine election. As a matter of fact he has forfeited these blessings. Not only have we no right to call God to account for electing some and passing others by, but we must admit that he would have been perfectly just, if He had not saved any. (L. Berkof)

The names for this variation are *anthyphora*, a reply to an objection, and a substitution by stealth, being so called because by stealth, we take our opponent's objection, and substitute it for our own. It was also called *schesis*, because by anticipating the objection, we check the opponent, and keep him from speaking or replying. (E.W. Bullinger) Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, God would be justified in destroying all men. If He wiped out the entire human race, no one could point a finger of accusation at Him. So why are we accusing Him of unfairness when He chooses to redeem some from destruction? (C. Smith) Election and reprobation are the two most hated subjects in Scripture; however, one cannot believe one without believing the other. Election is hated because it is contrary to the opinion, judgment, estimate, or view of man in his depraved condition. That is why man counts the election of grace a strange (unexpected, incredible) thing (Luke 4:18-5:26). Election particularizes grace, and that is what the natural mind hates. (W.E. Best)

The apostle anticipated the objection of the carnal mind to his doctrine. Does not loving Jacob and hating Esau before they had done any good or evil, imply that there is injustice with God? This objection clearly proves that the view taken of the preceding passage is correct. For it is this view which suggests the objection. Is it just in God to love one who has done no good and to hate one who has done no evil? If the assertion respecting loving Jacob and hating Esau admitted of being explained away in the manner that so many do, there could be no place for such an objection. And what is the apostle's reply? Nothing but a decided rejection of the supposition that God's treatment of Jacob and Esau implied injustice. (R. Haldane) To the human observer, the choice of Jacob in preference to the elder Esau prior to their birth must appear to be arbitrary and unjust. But this is because

we as human observers are acting on the basis of limited knowledge. Paul's response to the thought that God could ever be unjust in choosing one over another is the strongest negative he can express. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:14 What (interrogative pronoun), then (inferential conj.; debater's technique), shall we say (λέγω, FAI1P, Deliberative; idiom for "To what conclusion are we forced?") ? There is (ellipsis, verbal supplied) no (emphatic neg. adv.) injustice (Pred. Nom.; unrighteousness, prejudice, iniquity) with God (Dat. Gen. Ref.), is there (ellipsis, verbal interrogative supplied) ? Let it not (neg. adv.; "emphatically not") be so (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Constatative, Deliberative Debater's Opt.; "Hell no")!

^{WHO} **Romans 9:14** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν μὴ ἀδικία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ μὴ γένοιτο·

^{VUL} **Romans 9:14** quid ergo dicemus numquid iniquitas apud Deum absit

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:15** **For He said to Moses [in Exodus 33:19]: I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion [God reserves the right to exercise divine sovereignty in both election and reprobation].**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:15** For to Moses He says: I will have mercy upon whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whomever I will have compassion.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:15** For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul buttresses his discourse on the sovereignty of God in election by quoting a verse from Exodus 33:19, in which God spoke (Historical Present tense) to Moses. I will have mercy (Aoristic Future tense) on whomever I will have mercy (Customary Present tense). I will have compassion (Aoristic Future tense) on whomever I will have compassion (Customary Present tense). In both clauses, the Aoristic Future tense points to an action that happened in the past which will likewise happen in the same manner (again and again) in the future. And whomever He decides to have mercy or compassion on will customarily receive exactly that.

God is sovereign and omnipotent; He reserves the right to do as He pleases with mankind, with no assistance required from you or me. In both clauses, the Customary Present tense points to the absolute sovereignty of God as being the customary exercise of His will in action. He has always conducted the affairs of the world (including men) in whatever way He sees fit. He is not deviating from divine protocol by choosing Jacob and rejecting Esau, and He will not be deviating from the continued exercise of this same

selection process in the future. As stated in Isaiah 48:3, “I declared the former things long ago, and they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.”

The indefinite local clause (subjunctive mood) is used where the action is expected to take place in the future according to God’s plan. His *modus operandi* of sovereignty in the days of Moses is the same as it is today. Indefinite means *we* don’t know who these people are, but *He* does. It is not our prerogative as men to know who His elect are, as was the context with Moses, when he interceded on behalf of the “stiffnecked” bunch of people that the Lord was preparing to wipe out. Furthermore, it is none of our business anyway! He will have mercy on whomever He pleases, and He does not ask us our advice on the matter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In Exodus 33:19, the people were caught worshipping the golden calf, thus forfeiting everything - the promises they had accepted on the condition of their own obedience (19:8), and the God Who made the promises, and Who alone could fulfill them. *Could God overlook this sin?* If He dealt with them in righteousness, every one must have been cut off. What could God do, *but retreat into His Own sovereignty? There He had a resource; for if any of them are to be spared, it must be in this way of mercy.* Man is entirely lost, so now God says, I will act for Myself. In His sovereignty, He can show mercy; in His justice, He cannot. (J.N. Darby) Meditate on this one awhile. (LWB) God operates on the just principle of His eternal purpose and on that alone. It’s the only way He can insure fairness, righteousness, and justice. God’s mercy finds its cause in Himself and not in any human activity. Salvation is not won like a race; it is awarded on the basis of God’s sovereign grace. (W. Kroll)

What is the ground on which the apostle here rests his denial that there is unrighteousness with God? He makes no defense or apology for God, attempts no metaphysical distinctions, but rests solely on the authority of Scripture. (R. Haldane) In analyzing God’s love for the children of promise, the apostle distinctly traces their election to God’s good pleasure. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and compassion on whom He will have compassion. And if mercy is “undeserved favor,” that is to say, if no one deserves it or is entitled to it, then He may justly give it to whomever He pleases. On the other hand, those who are passed by and hardened, having no claim to better treatment, receive simply the due reward of their deeds. Election rests on the good pleasure of God; reprobation on His holiness, which leads Him to antagonize and loathe what is unholy. (J. Barmby)

Some who have trouble with the doctrine of election accept the word, but try to reduce its force by arguing for what they call “conditional election.” This means that God bases His election of an individual on foresight, foreseeing whether or not a particular individual has faith. This destroys the very meaning of the word, of course, for such election is really not election at all. It actually means that men and women elect themselves, and God is reduced to a bystander who responds to their free choice. Even more important, if

election is based on what God foresees an individual might do, what could He possibly foresee in a spiritually dead sinner other than rejection of the gospel? To suppose that God could see something that is impossible apart from His determining will is irrational. On the other hand, to suppose that faith actually could be there denies the doctrine of man's radical depravity. Election cannot rest on foreknowledge of what might happen, because in the sovereignty of God, the only things that can be foreknown are those that are predetermined, and this means that election must be prior to faith. (J. Boice)

Salvation is conferred upon a select number who are conceived by the Holy Spirit and born again by the will of God alone. Whoever thus comes to birth does not by this dramatic experience become a child of God, but actually has already become a child of God (John 17:6) by a prior experience of supernatural conception (born from above). When he comes to birth, he has already been introduced into the family of God, and for this reason and for no other reason is able to hear God's words (John 8:47). We are thus quickened first and only then do we call upon His name for salvation (Ps. 80:18; Rom. 10:13). Were the grace of God not irresistible, none would be saved, for none would call upon His name. (A. Custance) God is not unjust or unloving because He casts the wicked into hell. He is sovereign in His wrath as well as in His grace. (R.A. Morey)

It is obvious that Paul quotes this declaration to prove that God claims the sovereignty which he had attributed to Him. In order to avoid the force of this passage, many deny that it expresses the sentiment of the apostle. They consider this and the following verses as the objections of a Jewish fatalist, a mode of interpretation so obviously inconsistent with the context, and even the proper force of the words, that it is mentioned only to show how hard it is to close the eyes against the doctrine which the apostle so clearly teaches. (C. Hodge) Election is the manifestation of God's sovereignty. Passing by others is a manifestation of God's justice. Giving grace to the elect is apart from merit; therefore, it is a choice of grace. God's refusing to give grace to those He passed by reveals what all men deserve. (W.E. Best) If you don't distinguish between the attribute of God which elects and the attribute which reprobates, you will NEVER understand these verses in Romans 9. (LWB)

Rom. 9:15 For (explanatory conj.) He said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical) to Moses (Dat. Ind. Obj.; in Exodus 33:19): I will have mercy (ἐλεέω, FAI1S, Aoristic) on whomever (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun with an indefinite particle) I will have mercy (ἐλεέω, PASubj.1S, Customary, Indefinite Local Clause, where the action is expected to take place in the future), and (connective conj.) I will have compassion (οἰκτίρω, FAI1S, Aoristic) on whomever (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun with an indefinite particle) I will have compassion (οἰκτίρω, PASubj.1S, Customary, Indefinite Local Clause, where the action is expected to take place in the future).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:15** τῷ Μωϋσεῖ γὰρ λέγει Ἐλεήσω ὃν ἂν ἐλεῶ καὶ οἰκτιρήσω ὃν ἂν οἰκτίρω

^{VUL} **Romans 9:15** Mosi enim dicit miserebor cuius misereor et misericordiam praestabo cuius miserebor

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:16** So then, it [election to salvation] is not by means of him [man] who wills [not by positive volition], nor by means of him [man] who exerts himself to the limits of his power in an attempt to move forward [strives to advance], but by means of God Who shows mercy.

^{KW} **Rom. 9:16** Therefore, then, it [this being the recipient of God's mercy] is not of the one who desires or even runs, but of the One who is merciful, God.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:16** So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his discourse on the sovereignty of God in salvation, both national and personal, by eliminating outright the philosophy that salvation depends on man. Election to salvation is not (Gnomic Present tense) by means of man's positive volition. The Arminian philosophy that man elects himself or helps God elect him by his will is categorically denied by Paul. Neither is election to salvation by means of a man exerting himself to the limits of his power (Gnomic Present tense) in an attempt to obtain election. Man is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins and until the Holy Spirit regenerates him, he does not strive or chase after salvation.

Election to salvation is entirely by means of God Who shows mercy (Gnomic Present tense) to sinners who deserve hell. The justice of God condemns all men to hell because of their sin. The mercy of God steps in and elects some men out from the jaws of hell and places them in Christ Jesus. The Gnomic Present tense points to the absolute nature of this process. It means man NEVER wills himself to be saved, NEVER strives to obtain it on his power, because the mercy of God has and always will be the sole means of election to salvation. Election has never been a joint, cooperative work between God and man and it NEVER will be. Man passively receives the benefits of election and thanks God for it.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These two particles represent a "double conclusion," one referring to Israel in the O.T. and the other referring to the Church in the N.T. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Jesuit, Lutheran and Arminian theologians argue for a *mediate* version of divine versus human will. Its ground is not on the eternal purpose of God, but the free action of the creature as simply foreseen. They suppose God arrives at it, not directly by knowing His Own purpose to effect it, but indirectly by His infinite insight into the manner in which the contingent second cause will act, under given outward circumstances, foreseen or produced by God.

(A.A. Hodge) But this is no solution of the problem at all. It is an attempt to reconcile two things which logically exclude each other, namely, freedom of action in the Pelagian sense and a *certain* foreknowledge of that action. Actions that are in no way determined by God, directly or indirectly, but are wholly dependent on the arbitrary will of man, can hardly be the object of divine foreknowledge. Moreover, it is objectionable, because it makes the divine knowledge dependent on the choice of man, virtually annuls the certainty of the knowledge of future events, and thus implicitly denies the omniscience of God. (L. Berkof)

God chose the nation of Israel and passed by all the other nations. He explains neither His reason for negatively reprobating the other nations nor His reason for passing by some individuals. The reason for preterition is unknown to us. It is known only to God. But the reason for condemnation is known to us. It is because of man's sin. (W.E. Best) The will of the natural man is in bondage to Satan. He is not dead to the things of nature, but he is dead to the things of God. The will of man is not self-determined. If the will of man determined itself, the action would be both cause and effect. Every effect has an uncaused cause. The uncaused cause is by necessity self-existent and must therefore be eternal and unchangeable. No act of the will can come into existence without a cause. Therefore, every act of the will is determined by a superior will which goes before, thus determining it (Phil. 2:13). To say that God has no power over the will of man is false. God does not save people against their wills. They are made willing after God has quickened them; they are willing to have a conversion experience. (ibid)

Faith is a passive response or attitude, a receiving, resting in a promise, NOT an active work in which God expects you to do something. Faith is *imputed* to the ungodly in place of righteousness. We have attempted to turn faith into something demonstrative, a form of hyper-faith, and it is not. Faith is defiled when it is mixed with our responsibility. It is simply understanding that what God says is true. A dead man cannot respond (will) until the faith from Jesus Christ is given him. (K. Lamb) Let not the bearer of the Gospel forget that the world of unregenerate men is one of universal *won't*. To declare to such a world that whosoever will may lay hold on eternal life, and then to depend on men to respond, is as futile as to proclaim to the serried ranks of the dead in a cemetery that whosoever will may arise. It is God Who shows mercy. By the life-giving operation of His Spirit in the hearts of men He makes them willing. In consequence, here and there and everywhere there are those who by the grace of God will. That truth, and it alone, makes "the whosoever will gospel" meaningful. (R.B.Kuiper)

Man thinks he can "will" and "decide" Godward, and that after he has so "decided" and "willed" he has the ability to "run," or, as he says, to "hold out." But these two things, deciding and holding out, are in this verse utterly rejected as the source of salvation, which is declared to be *God Who shows mercy*. Human responsibility is not at all denied here: man ought to will, and ought to run. But we are all nothing but sinners, and can do, will do, neither: unless God comes forth to us in sovereign mercy. Therefore in the gospel is power to turn men's hearts, for it is the *goodness* of God that leads us to repentance. (W.R. Newell) With regard to election God remains totally free, not to employ arbitrary

(or worse, malevolent) designs, but to express mercy. It is then, God's freedom and mercy which Paul advocates in these verses. God's superior power, His ability to execute what He desires, is, of course, everywhere acknowledged. (J. Edwards)

To this cardinal doctrine of the Word of God Arminian universalism does great violence, for it teaches that God did no more than make salvation possible through the death of His Son, and that it is for the sinner to make his salvation actual by the acceptance of Christ in faith of his own free volition. Thus the realization of salvation is made to depend on the will of man, not the will of God. Man becomes his own saviour. Salvation is no longer "of God Who shows mercy" but "of him that wills." The conclusion is inescapable that, if God did no more than make salvation possible by the death of His Son and left it to man to realize his salvation by believing on Christ of his own volition, then God by the death of His Son made salvation an unrealizable possibility. And that is only another way of saying that in that case Christ not only might have died in vain, but actually must have. Arminianism faces a dilemma. It is, of course, wholly unwilling to grant that its view of the design of the atonement involves the futility of the atonement. Yet, in order to escape that conclusion it must take its seat on one horn or the other of a most serious dilemma. Either it must teach that man is able to exercise saving faith without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, or it must teach that all men actually will be saved in the end. The former view is as patently unscriptural as the latter. (R.B. Kuiper)

The Bible has many promises that are the equivalent of "whosoever will." We praise God for these promises. We see from this text that salvation is not of him that runs but of God Who shows mercy. Then what is the purpose of the "whosoever will" verses? I believe that they are there in order to vindicate God and to demonstrate that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit; they are foolishness to him. "Who will determine to come to Christ?" The answer from the whole of the Bible is that, by himself, no man will determine to come to Christ. I ask these solemn questions: Who will come? Who will determine? Who will take the water of life? The answer comes from the whole of the Bible: Nobody, nobody, nobody. Then why are the promises there? They are there to prove the total depravity of man, to vindicate the righteous judgment of God, and to teach the believer. They teach me, first of all, the abysmal depths of iniquity that was in my heart and show me that I was absolutely incapable if God had not made the first step in my direction. They teach me, in the 2nd place, the wonderful mercy and the unfathomable grace which God has manifested towards us in saving us. He showed us mercy when we did not deserve mercy. He quickened us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. He made us alive when we were dead. (D. Barnhouse)

Some may ask what this does to the doctrine of the freedom of the human will. The Bible's answer is that the will is free for man to choose what he wishes to eat and drink, what he wishes to wear, where he wishes to go, and with whom He wishes to go. The will is free to work or be lazy, to be charitable or to be miserly. There are 10,000 things which the will is free to do, but in many fields the human will is not free. The old man cannot choose to be young; the sick cannot choose to be well. The slow man cannot choose to be a champion runner. The moron cannot choose to be intelligent. In all these fields we can

see the failure of the human will. Then we enter into the deep mystery of sovereign grace. God Almighty says that when the human race sinned, the will died in that fall so far as any choice about God was concerned. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "No man can come to Me except the Father draws him" (John 6:44). But men do not want God to be sovereign - they wish to have the final decision and control in their own heads and hearts. God has decreed differently and He will ultimately bring to naught any force, power or individual who attempts to vaunt ability, to claim power, or to parade pride. (D.G. Barnhouse)

The most concise definition of God's sovereignty is that God's sovereignty is absolute arbitrariness. Arbitrariness in God differs from arbitrariness in man. Man is under God's law. God is not under man's law. When man ignores or rejects God's law, he acts arbitrarily. He is committing heinous sin by rejecting a standard above himself. Man detests God's arbitrariness in Divine election according to grace because it is not according to his arbitrary standard of justice. He judges God's actions by his arbitrary standard that he has set up by which he thinks God should act. All laws enacted by man which are contrary to God's law are arbitrary laws. Man's pride and arrogance are manifested when he questions God. He accuses God of being unjust to elect some and pass by others. Thus he manifests that he does not know that all men are depraved by nature. The person who does not believe in election, does not truly believe in grace. The person who lives in his own view of nonarbitrariness in men sees arbitrariness in the freedom of the sovereign God. The person is wicked who sees arbitrariness in God's grace. Depraved man reprehends what he cannot comprehend. He finds fault with election, predestination, and other great truths related to God's sovereignty. In this manner, he stains the excellency of the sovereign God with his thoughts and speech. (W.E. Best)

Election does not make the chosen ones Christians, and passing by does not condemn the nonelect. The nonelect, as well as the elect, became sinners in Adam whether we were chosen or passed by. (W.E. Best) In regeneration one of God's elect is the subject, and the Spirit of God is the sole agent. The subject of the new birth is wholly passive: he does not act, but is acted upon. The sovereign work of the Spirit in the soul precedes *all* holy exercises of heart - such as sorrow for sin, faith in Christ, love toward God. This great change is wrought in spite of all the opposition of the natural heart against God. This great change is not a gradual and protracted process, but is *instantaneous*: in an instant of time the favored subject of it passes from death into life. (A.W. Pink)

If God does anything at all for sinful man, it is of His mercy. If He does nothing, He is not unjust, for man deserves nothing. If His dealings with them are to be governed by His mercy they cannot be determined by man's will, or earnest striving towards a goal. Everything depends, not upon man, but only upon the merciful God. Election necessarily implies non-election; if some are chosen, others must remain unchosen. Paul goes further. The non-elect, or some of them, are hardened so that a positive response to God becomes impossible for them. (C.K. Barrett) It is one of the fundamental errors of Socinians, and of many besides, to hold that the mercy of God must be necessarily and constantly

exercised. Mercy is a particular kind of goodness and is sovereign, and to confer favors freely, consistently with Divine wisdom, does injury to no one. (R. Haldane)

The whole process is initiated and completed by God in Christ, Who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. (A. Custance) God did not purchase a salvation dependent on the will of man to make it effectual. For God to will the salvation of all men, if they will, is not to will salvation at all. The will of God is never dependent on the will of man. (W.E. Best) So strong, and so pervasive is the commitment to the concept of the autonomy of man that even a passage that emphatically denies the role of the will of man can be turned on its head so that Arminians can claim, “this means it is a free act of our will in receiving it.” The main point of the entire passage is overthrown and literally contradicted to maintain the supremacy of the free choices of men! The term “eisegesis” is too mild to describe such an assertion. (J. White) An advocate of free will is an enemy of God’s grace. He believes God can do nothing for him until he gives God permission. Thus, he appoints God as the second rather than the first cause. This would indicate that there are as many gods as there are free wills, thus classifying those who believe in free will as polytheists. Those who believe in free will are enemies of free grace. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 9:16 So (illative particle) then (inferential particle), it (election to salvation) is (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) by means of him (Abl. Means, Source; mankind) who wills (θέλω, PAPtc.GSM, Gnostic, Substantival, Articular; purposes, resolves, volition), nor (neg. adv.) by means of him (Abl. Means, Source; mankind) who exerts himself to the limits of his power in an attempt to move forward (τρέχω, PAPtc.GSM, Gnostic, Substantival, Articular; runs, strives to advance, chases after), but (adversative conj.) by means of God (Abl. Means) Who shows mercy (ἐλεάω, PAPtc.GSM, Customary, Substantival, Articular).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:16** ἄρα οὖν οὐ τοῦ θέλοντος οὐδὲ τοῦ τρέχοντος ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 9:16** igitur non volentis neque currentis sed miserentis Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:17** **For the Scripture spoke to Pharaoh [in Exodus 9:16], that: For this very purpose I have raised you up, so that I might demonstrate [put on public display] My power through you, and so My Name might be proclaimed far and wide throughout all the land.**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:17** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, For this same purpose I raised you up, in order that I may demonstrate in you My power, and in order that there may be published everywhere My Name in all the earth.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:17** For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In support of his declarations on the sovereign mercy of God in election, Paul quotes a verse from Exodus 9:16 which was addressed (Historical Present tense) to the Pharaoh of Egypt at that time. The Lord informed the Pharaoh that the very purpose for his being created (Culminative Aorist tense) was so He might put His sovereign power on public display (Culminative Aorist tense) through the Pharaoh's exceedingly sinful thoughts and actions. The final clause in the subjunctive mood translated "might" does not mean there was a possibility of this not occurring. It means the sole and final reason the Pharaoh was brought into existence was for the demonstration (Latin: ostentatious) of God's power, both in and through him. And in conjunction with this display of sovereign power, the Lord's Name would ultimately be declared (Futuristic Aorist tense) far and wide throughout the entire earth. God took the most powerful man on earth at that time and showed the entire world (Latin: universa terra) that he was but a pawn in God's historical drama.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Pharaoh's heart was hardened. There are 18 references to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart from Exodus 4:21 through Exodus 14:8. These references state that either God hardened his heart or Pharaoh hardened his own heart. God was not a balcony observer while this was going on. God ordered the stubbornness of Pharaoh by commanding. Obedience was required, and by hardening his disobedience was punished. By God's command Pharaoh was obligated, but he did not obey. (W.E. Best) God wants Satan to fill up his cup of iniquity so he will receive his full measure of judgment. The same holds true for the wicked. When the full cup of iniquity is presented, a full cup of wrath is poured out. This is why God hardened Pharaoh's heart - so his insides would become manifest on the outside and he would fill up his cup of iniquity. (K. Lamb)

Supralapsarians can, while Infralapsarians cannot, give a specific answer to the question of why God decreed to create the world and to permit the fall. They do full justice to the sovereignty of God and refrain from all futile attempts to justify God in the sight of men, while the Infralapsarians hesitate, attempt to prove the justice of God's procedure, and yet in the end must come to the same conclusion as the Supralapsarians, namely, that in the last analysis, the decree to permit the fall finds its explanation only in the sovereign good pleasure of God. (Bavinck) He lays down the principle that God's grace does not necessarily depend upon anything but God's will. (Sanday & Headlam) The supreme end of God in creation, the manifestation of His glory, therefore, includes, as subordinate ends, the happiness and salvation of His creatures, and the reception of praise from grateful and adoring hearts. (L. Berkof)

God had a perfect right to allow Pharaoh to remain (where we all would have remained, apart from Divine sovereign mercy!) in a disobedient, God-defying attitude - and He did. (W.R. Newell) God withheld from Pharaoh the saving influences of His grace, and gave him up to his own wicked heart, so that he became more and more hardened, until he was

finally destroyed. God did nothing to Pharaoh beyond his strict deserts. He did not make him wicked; He only forbore to make him good, by the exertion of special and altogether unmerited grace. The reason, therefore, of Pharaoh's being left to perish, while others were saved, was not that he was worse than others, but because God has mercy on whom He will have mercy. It was because, among the criminals at His bar, He pardons one and not another, as seems good in His sight. He, therefore, who is pardoned, cannot say it was because I was better than others; while he who is condemned must acknowledge that he receives nothing more than the just recompense of his sins. (C. Hodge)

The passage quoted in verse 17, taken in conjunction with the whole history as given in Exodus, and especially with the passages in which God Himself is said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go, shows that not only the deliverance of Israel, but also the obduration of Pharaoh, was due to the determination of God that it should be so, in accordance with His own righteous purpose, which cannot be called into question by man. (J. Barmby) There is a national election as seen in verses 7-13, but here Paul deals with the election of individuals. (A.T. Robertson) Why does God open one man's eyes and not another's? Paul forbids us to ask why. But some misguided brethren try to set up free-will with the heathen philosophers, and say that a man's free will is the cause why God chooses one and not another, contrary to all Scriptures. (W. Tyndale)

It's hard to imagine a Christian rejecting the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, but I come across believers all the time that do. Some of them will say, "Of course, I believe in the sovereignty of God." But as soon as you come to a passage in Scripture where God is actively controlling somebody, especially them, His sovereignty goes out the window. What is usually believed by these individuals is that God is sovereign over birth and death, but He "checks out" after that and allows billions of human wills to run the show without His interference after that. Some common objections to God's sovereignty (and some answers from Scripture) are listed here by Woodrow Kroll.

If God is sovereign, how can he find fault with people?

Answer: **Romans 9:21** Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

People are the masters of their own lives.

Answer: **James 4:15** For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

People die simply by accident.

Answer: **Job 14:5** Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

God does not force Himself upon people; they can do what they want to do.

Answer: **Isaiah 43:13** Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

Mother Nature is in charge of natural events, not God.

Answer: **Job 28:26** When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

God is not involved in the affairs of history.

Answer: **Job 12:23** He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.

God does not determine all future events.

Answer: **Isaiah 46:10** Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Rom. 9:17 For (explanatory conj.) the Scripture (Subj. Nom.) spoke (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical) to Pharaoh (Dat. Ind. Obj., in Exodus 9:16), that (quotations in direct discourse): For (Purpose conj.) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.; immediate demonstrative pronoun) very (Acc. Gen. Ref.; intensive pronoun) purpose (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied; reason) I haved raised you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) up (ἐξεγείρω, AAI1S, Culminative; brought you into being), so that (Purpose conj.) I might demonstrate (ἐνδείκνυμι, AMSubj.1S, Culminative, Final Clause; put on public display) My (Poss. Gen.) power (Acc. Dir. Obj.; virtue) through you (Instr. Agency; Loc. Sphere, "in you"), and (connective conj.) so (Purpose conj.) My (Poss. Gen.) Name (Subj. Nom.; person, reputation) might be proclaimed far and wide (διαγγέλλω, APSubj.3S, Culminative & Futuristic, Purpose Clause; announced, declared) throughout all (Prep. Loc.) the land (Loc. Place; earth).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:17** λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή τῷ Φαραῶ ὅτι εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐξήγειρά σε ὅπως ἐνδείξωμαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν δύναμίν μου καὶ ὅπως διαγγελεῖ τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ

^{VUL} **Romans 9:17** dicit enim scriptura Pharaoni quia in hoc ipsum excitavi te ut ostendam in te virtutem meam et ut adnuntietur nomen meum in universa terra

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:18** **Consequently, therefore, on whom [the elect] He wills: He has mercy on; in fact, on whom [the non-elect] He wills: He hardens.**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:18** Therefore, then, upon whom He desires, He shows mercy; and whom He desires to harden, He hardens.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:18** Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Consequently, therefore, God has mercy on the elect because He wills to do so. In fact, not only does He actively have mercy on the elect, but He also actively hardens the non-elect because He wills to do so. The Active Voice means God shows mercy and hardens whomever He wishes as an exercise of His free will. He doesn't ask man his opinion nor seek his counsel. The Active Voice also disproves the philosophy that man hardens himself before God first hardens him. The notion that man can will anything, including his own election and salvation, without God acting first, is blasphemous. Whose will is involved in this verse? God's will is the only will mentioned.

The Customary Present tense points to the exercise of God's will as something that has always occurred in the past and will always occur in the future. We are His creation and our lives will fulfill His purpose whether we like it or not. This should not be a news bulletin. It has always been this way. Did the Lord ask Pharaoh if he wanted to be created for such a nefarious purpose? Of course not. Pharaoh was one of the non-elect because God willed him to be so. Pharaoh was hardened because God hardened him. All unbelievers are that way because God hardens them. And if you question God's wisdom in choosing some men to receive mercy and other men to receive hardening, you are blaspheming the Creator of heaven and earth.

Both the act of showing mercy and the act of hardening (Greek: sclerosis) are in the declarative indicative mood, meaning they are both stated as absolute facts. There is no hint whatsoever that man has the ability to change God's mind on whom He shows mercy or whom He hardens. They are also both Pictorial, because the mind's eye conjures up a scene in which those who receive mercy praise God and those who receive hardening express their hatred by stiffening their necks against Him even more. They could also be translated in the Futuristic Present tense, because at a time in the future, all those who receive mercy will appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ while all those who were hardened will appear at the Great White Throne Judgment. What God wills for each category of person will happen without question.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What is the difference between the atheist who denies the first cause and the Arminian who relegates God to the position of second cause? Assigning God to the second cause is a denial of the sovereignty of God, and the one who does not believe in the sovereignty of God does not know God. God Who created all things either directs all things or He has assigned them over to chance. Chance is a denial of providence, and the denial of providence is a denial of God. (W.E. Best) **Penal justice is not interested in bringing repentance** (as with Pharaoh), **only remedial justice.** (K. Lamb) To believe in *free will* as it pertains to justification is to dethrone the sovereign God; to believe in *free grace* as it pertains to justification is to dethrone depraved man. (W.E. Best) The exercise of God's sovereign freedom, in mercy and in hardening, is the means by which He declares the glory of His Name! This is the heart of Paul's defense ... in showing mercy (love)

and in hardening (hate) God is not unrighteous, for in this electing purpose He is acting out of a full allegiance to His Name and esteem for His glory. (J. Piper)

Men are not lost because they are hardened; they are hardened because they are lost; they are lost because they are sinners. God is not responsible for sin. He is under no obligation to save any one. Obligation and sovereignty cannot be predicated of God. If He saves any one it is a sovereign act of mercy. (W.R. Newell) The purpose Pharaoh was designed to serve, and actually did serve, on this stage, was certainly not his own; as certainly it was God's. (Denney) People who are not well grounded in the Bible take umbrage at the idea that God actually hardened Pharaoh's heart. Now, it is interesting to note that Pharaoh did not complain that God had hardened his heart. Pharaoh was quite satisfied. But others complain for him. The people who object to this have an exalted opinion of themselves and a low opinion of God. Many modern men continue to object that this destroys free will, degrades man, abolishes morality, and makes man a puppet. Well, it may destroy free will; but Paul just said, "It is not of him that wills." People who rely on free will must reject mercy. But this is not degrading to man unless one thinks it is degrading to be a creature instead of the Creator. (G. Clark)

Almost everything is, at times, spoken of as if it were produced by divine agency, although in a multitude of other places, these same results are referred to their immediate authors. According to this mode of representation, God is understood as merely permitting Pharaoh to harden his own heart, as the result is often expressly referred to Pharaoh himself. But there seems to be more than mere permission expressed by the language of this text, because it is a punitive act that is here intended. (C. Hodge) We are to reject the idea that God merely permits evil, and on the other hand, that He is the author of it. Hold fast to the doctrine that evil is from man, and that God orders and directs it, and that to punishment. It is to be remembered that hardening of the sinner's heart is itself punitive. (De Wette) Any reference to the foreknowledge of God in this passage, although not unfounded so far as evil is concerned, tends rather to pervert than to elucidate the passage, inasmuch as the precise object of the apostle is to render prominent the sovereignty of the divine will. (Olshausen)

Hardening must be distinguished from determinism. Hardening is an act of God's judicial judgment on man's self-determination. Failing to distinguish between God's sovereignty and determinism, man assumes one of two erroneous ideas: (1) He will make man the sovereign of history and salvation, (2) He will make history a Divine game in which human beings are moved about like checkers, void of responsibility. Determinism is the doctrine that all events, including human choices, are decided by antecedent causes. Some say that this destroys personality and voluntary sinning. Voluntariness is something undertaken, done, made, or brought about by one's own accord or free choice. The voluntary actions of a depraved person are to be understood in the sense of water flowing freely in one direction - down. The freedom with which the unregenerate person moves is away from, not to, God. He is going downhill. The unsaved person can no more get into Jesus Christ by the freedom of his depraved will than the free flowing Niagara River can

reverse itself and flow up the Niagara Falls. The tendency of both depraved men and water is down. (W.E. Best)

Indeterminism is the teaching that man's will chooses the motives which shall influence him rather than their being strictly determined by antecedent causes. This cannot be applied to man regarding salvation. Therefore, indeterminism cannot declare personality sovereign as well as free. Man is not sovereign. The sinner is free to choose sin because he has a natural attraction from within himself for it. In salvation, the sinner is not the initiator; he is the initiated. He is not the one who sets the process in motion. He is the one on whom the blessing has been bestowed by the work of the Holy Spirit who is the Determiner. (W.E. Best) The word is used in its positive sense, *hardens*, not merely *permits to become hard*. In Exodus the hardening is represented as *self-produced* (8:15, 32; 9:34), and as *produced by God* (4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:20, 27; 11:10). Paul here chooses the latter representation. (K. Wuest)

Permission is not ordination in any sense of the term, and ordination is quite a different idea from permission. The proud wisdom of rebellious man almost dares to charge the oracles of God with inconsistency on his head; or what is nearly as bad, takes upon itself either to explain away or to invalidate one part of Scripture truth in order to establish the other, and, in apologizing for Him before His creatures, to make God consistent with Himself! Such is the wicked presumption of man. The rectitude of God's will is not to be questioned. What men have to do is learn what God says, and then to receive it as unquestionably true and right. Can anything be more presumptuous than for the creature to pretend to greater wisdom than the Creator? And does it not insult the Creator to pretend to find imperfection in His proceedings? The rebellious heart of man is never satisfied with the apostle's answer. But the Maker of the world assigns to His creatures, by His own right, whatever lot He chooses. (R. Haldane)

Whether one is mercied or hardened is completely, inalterably, and utterly up to God. The verbs here are active: God performs these actions. He mercies whom He wills and He hardens whom He wills. The parallel between mercy and hardening is inarguable. We may like the mercying part more than the hardening, but they are both equally a part of the same truth. Reject one and you reject them both. Paul knew well the objections man presents to the words he just penned. (J. White) Pharaoh was not a kind, gentle, godly man who was forced to act in a bad way by a mean, nasty God. No, Pharaoh was a pagan idolater, justly under the wrath of God, whose every breath and heartbeat was his only as God extended mercy to him. His blackened, sin-filled heart was constantly being reigned in by God's common grace so that he was not nearly as bad as he could have been. He did not have the first desire to submit to God or do right. To say that Pharaoh "could not resist" is to assume he would ever want to. (ibid)

Rom. 9:18 **Consequently** (illative particle), **therefore** (inferential particle), **on whom** (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun, "His elect") **He wills** (θέλω, PAI3S, Customary; resolves, desires, wants): **He has mercy on** (ἐλέω, PAI3S, Pictorial & Futuristic, Declarative Ind. Stating an Absolute

Fact; pities); **in fact** (intensive conj.), **on whom** (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun, "the non-elect") **He wills** (θέλω, PAI3S, Customary; resolves, desires, wants): **He hardens** (σκληρύνω, PAI3S, Pictorial & Futuristic, Declarative Ind. Stating an Absolute Fact; hardens the heart of, stiffens the neck).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:18** ἄρα οὖν ὃν θέλει ἐλεεῖ ὃν δὲ θέλει σκληρύνει

^{VUL} **Romans 9:18** ergo cuius vult miseretur et quem vult indurat

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:19** **Therefore, will you ask me: Why then does He continue to find fault? For who can resist His sovereign will?**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:19** Then you will say to me, Why does He still persist in finding fault? For, with respect to His counsel, who has taken a permanent stand against it?

^{KJV} **Romans 9:19** Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates an argument from some believers who will refuse to let God be God, so he asks a couple of rhetorical questions (Deliberative Future tense) before these arrogant listeners get a chance to stir up trouble with other believers. Because the flesh hates the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, some arrogant believers will ask why God continues to find fault (Durative Present tense) with some unbelievers. In other words, if God does the hardening, how can he fault those unbelievers who continue to reject Him because He has hardened them? How can He blame or punish them for merely following His determination? The fact that Paul anticipates this question is proof positive that the mercy and hardening in the previous verse were meant to be ascribed to God's sovereignty! If there was an element of man's volition involved in God's decision, this objection would be utterly ridiculous and out of place! If the Arminian viewpoint was correct, this objection would not be here.

The second question asked by this hypothetical group of arrogant believers is related to the first. If God has hardened some men, how can they be held responsible for their unbelief, because who can resist (Dramatic Perfect tense) His sovereign will? Here is the Arminian philosophy in a nutshell. The Arminian says, "It's not fair!" The Arminian has the arrogant audacity to question God's choice of His elect and His passing by of the non-elect. The Arminian thinks he is wiser and more just than God. The Arminian blasphemes God on virtually every element of God's sovereignty in salvation, because he has enthroned his own will over God's, and his own sense of fairness over God's omnipotence and mercy. The reason these two questions are here is because Paul has accurately taught the sovereignty of God in both election and reprobation. His listeners understood exactly what he had said. They did not try to explain it away; instead, they did not like what they heard and their flesh revolted from it in horror!

Rather than rest in God's hands, knowing He is all-wise and all-powerful, these listeners were rejecting His wisdom and power to deal with His creatures as He saw fit. The answer to these hypothetical objections is that God continues to find fault with sinners because they are sinners! And if He leaves them in their state of sin, He cannot be blamed for something He did not do in the first place. He can merely be praised for mercifully bringing some to Christ. The only way these two questions have any relevance, is if those to whom they are addressed *thoroughly understand* that election is totally by God's will and not by the will of man. Paul does *not* tell them that they do not understand what he is saying. They heard him correctly; they just rejected what they heard.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Blasphemous and arrogant thinking accuses God of being unfair and not knowing what He is doing. But His sovereign right to do as He pleases with His creation does not negate or in any way interfere with His divine integrity. Some object that this doctrine destroys the responsibility of men. Paul gives a two fold answer: The very urging of an objection against a prerogative which God claims in His Word, and exercises in His providence, is an irreverent contending with our Maker, especially as the right in question necessarily arises out of the relation between men and God as creatures and Creator. There is nothing in the exercise of this sovereignty inconsistent with either mercy or justice. God only punishes the wicked for their sin, while He extends undeserved mercy to the objects of His grace. (C. Hodge)

Paul's imaginary objector picks up the admission that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. (A.T. Robertson) When you decide to get married, you don't go into a group of women and say: "Okay, whichever one of you wants me, let's go and get married." You put your affections on a certain woman, choosing her to the exclusion of the others. (K. Lamb) An advocate of free will is an enemy of God's grace. He believes God can do nothing for him until he gives God permission. Thus, he appoints God as the second rather than the first cause. This would indicate that there are as many gods as there are free wills, thus classifying those who believe in free will as polytheists. God's will is beyond the control of man. Therefore, God is carrying out one purpose on one principle to one conclusion. All men accomplish the purpose of the sovereign God. (W.E. Best)

This is another *anteisagoge*, a substitution by stealth, taking the opponent's objection and substituting our own, the answering of one question by asking another. (E.W. Bullinger) It will at once be perceived that this plausible and formidable objection to the apostle's doctrine is precisely the one which is commonly and confidently urged today against the doctrine of election. There would be no room either for this objection, or for that contained in the 14th verse, if Paul had merely said that God chooses those whom He foresees would repent and believe; or that the ground of distinction was in the different conduct of men. It is very evident, therefore, that he taught no such doctrine. The destiny of men is determined by His sovereign pleasure, to which the objection is plausible and natural. To this objection the apostle gives two answers: (1) That it springs from

ignorance of the true relation between God and men as Creator and creatures, and of the nature and extent of the divine authority over us, and (2) That there is nothing in this doctrine inconsistent with the divine perfections; since He does not make men wicked, but from the mass of wicked men, He pardons one and punishes another, for the wisest and most benevolent reasons. (C. Hodge)

Little by little man's inner resources have been wrongly estimated and a more "humanly reasonable" view of the way of salvation has been substituted for the Pauline theology. Man still needs salvation, but it is now seen as something possible with God's help - man cooperating by a certain willingness to acknowledge his need and express his faith. This much of human goodness has remained in him in spite of his fallen nature. The whole sentiment is that man is required to make a contribution towards his own salvation. But in truth, the grace of God does not search for men who are willing to accept it. The grace of God *makes* men willing, not *finds* men willing. God has always acted on this principle. Nor are some men elected to salvation because God *foresees* that they will believe, but because He *foreknows that none will*. But for the election of God the Lord would have died in vain. As Calvin said it: The grace of God does not find men fit to be chosen, but makes them fit. And Augustine said: Man is converted not because he wills to be, but he wills to be because he is ordained to election. Or as J.I. Packer has observed: Where the Arminian says 'I owe my election to my faith,' the Calvinist says 'I owe my faith to my election.' (A. Custance)

If we can trust the character of God, we can trust the wisdom of His sovereignty as well, even if we do not always understand. (W. Kroll) When everything is thus placed in God's hands, human reason rises up to say that that is not just. There is no small irony in the fact that humanity, condemned by its own impure motives and destructive ends, would itself raise a claim against God's character of holy love! (A. Hygren) It is on the basis of the truth of God's comprehensive sovereignty or meticulous providence that Paul is led to raise the question, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" Precisely because it is true that in heaven and on earth God does all that He pleases, the question arises regarding the basis for human culpability and moral responsibility ... If God's glory rests, ultimately, in His control of all that is, then it stands to reason that when God's control is diminished and human control elevated, so too is His glory diminished while human pretence to assume that glory rises. (G. Johnson)

Paul knows there will be objections to the idea that God purposefully hardened Pharaoh's heart. Even those who love God dearly will believe that you cannot find fault with a sinner for acting the way God made him. Some will say, "If God is sovereign, and He is, and it is impossible to resist His will, and it is, humans are not accountable for their lost condition." Although there is a fallacy in this type of reasoning (God did not make humans the way they are; He created them in His own image, and humans are the way they are today because of their own sin), Paul does not argue that point. Rather, in reply he quotes Scripture: "On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God?" The apostle knows that the creatures God created are not competent to sit in judgment on their Creator. To judge the validity of God's actions is to imply that humans are more

righteous than God; to judge the wisdom of God's movements is to imply that humans are wiser than God. Neither is true, and thus Paul sternly rebukes any type of reasoning that inverts the divine order of creature to Creator. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:19 Therefore (inferential particle), will you ask (λέγω, FAI2S, Deliberative, Interrogative Ind., rhetorical question) me (Dat. Ind. Obj., demonstrative pronoun): Why (interrogative pronoun), then (rhetorical, inferential particle), does He continue to (Adv. Time; still, yet) find fault (μémφομαι, PMI3S, Durative, Deponent; blame, punish, "what fault can He still find?")? For (inferential particle) who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) can resist (ἀνθήστημι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic; withstand, oppose, set himself against) His (Poss. Gen.) sovereign will (Dat. App. Obj.; who has the audacity to question God's choice of His elect by saying: "It's not fair!")?

^{WHO} **Romans 9:19** Ἐρεῖς μοι οὖν τί ἔτι μέμφεται τῷ γὰρ βουλήματι αὐτοῦ τίς ἀνθήστηκεν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:19** dicis itaque mihi quid adhuc queritur voluntati enim eius quis resistit

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:20** **On the contrary, oh man [derogatory insult], who are you who argues against [impugns the integrity of] the God? Shall the thing formed [creature] reply against Him Who did the creative forming [Creator]: Why have you made me this way?**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:20** O man, nay, surely, as for you, who are you who contradicts God? The moldable material shall not say to the one who molds it, Why did you make me thus, shall it?

^{KJV} **Romans 9:20** Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul answers the hypothetical questions he just posed against the position of an arrogant believer who refuses to let God exercise His divine sovereignty over His creatures. He begins with a Vocative Derogatory Address, an ironic insult similar to what we might say: Stupid! Fool! Paul's purpose is to remind his arrogant antagonists that God is God and we are but mere men. Paul says, Who are you to argue against God? The arrogant believer who argues against God's prerogative to exercise His sovereignty as He sees fit has the gall to impugn God's justice, to answer back to him in arrogance, to reject His authority over His creatures. The fickle, sinful will of man rejects God's sovereignty. Paul in effect tells these arrogant believers, as I have heard John MacArthur say on the radio, "Shut your mouth! You're blaspheming God!"

That is exactly what Paul is saying. He rebukes these arrogant believers by essentially saying, "Just who in the hell do you think you are?!" For most believers, this insulting

reminder is enough to silence any objections they might have against God being God and exercising His will over His creatures. But there are many arrogant believers, literally millions today, who place their volition and sense of justice on a higher plane than the volition and justice of God. They torture this passage of Scripture beyond all comprehension. Paul puts such believers in their rightful place as “mere men.” Shall the thing formed reply against Him (Imperative Future tense) Who did the creative forming? In other words, shall the creature fight against His Creator? Shall the pot contend with the Potter Who fabricated him? This is exactly what the Arminian believer does.

Paul uses a personification of “the thing” to represent the creature or the pot which is being produced by the creative activity of (Dramatic Aorist tense) the Creator or Potter. The molding, manufacturing or fabricating of the thing formed is solely in the hands of the Creator or Potter. Is the mere creature or pot going to argue with his Creator about how he turned out? Does the thing created ask why he was made (Culminative Aorist tense) in such a manner? This question assumes that the Creator has the power to create someone in a position of either advantage or disadvantage. The arrogant question isn’t being asked by an unbeliever, because an unbeliever doesn’t care about Christ in the first place! The question is being asked by an arrogant believer who thinks God is being unfair by creating an unbeliever like Pharaoh without giving him the innate ability to become otherwise.

The question is being asked by a believer who does not understand the doctrines of total inability and total depravity. If these believers properly understood these doctrines, they would realize that they are fighting against God on behalf of sinful men who hate God and will never believe in Christ because they are spiritually dead. Rather than being thankful for their own merciful gift of salvation, they are arrogantly demanding that God adhere to their warped, sinful sense of justice. In effect, they are telling God to move over and get off His throne, because they know better how to run His universe. Their sense of justice is presumed higher than His, because they would not send these hypothetical sinful believers to hell without a “fair chance.” Can you think of any concept more satanic than this?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If God had permitted all men to perish everlastingly, all would have received their just deserts and not one would have had cause for complaint. Rather than find fault with God for His altogether righteous dealings with certain hell-deserving sinners, let us adore Him for this eternal, gracious, saving love for others just as deserving of damnation. (R.B. Kuiper) This quote better fits the difference between ‘vessels of mercy’ (the elect) and ‘vessels of wrath’ (the non-elect), rather than between two vessels (honor and dishonor) who both fall under the category of ‘vessels of mercy’. [LWB] This objection to God’s sovereignty is an irreverent equalizing of man with God. (Shedd) The apostle answers the objection by pointing again to God’s sovereignty. God does not give His reasons, and it is blasphemous to judge Him by weak, puny, limited self. It is noteworthy how Paul meets this objection, not by reasoning, but by rebuke, not by exposing the fallacy, but by

denouncing the spirit of the question. He repels rather than refutes; he silences the opponent by saying that he has no right to put forth this objection. Paul's argument insists on God's freedom. (W.G. Thomas)

As God foresaw that none would believe and elected some to obtain salvation, He foresaw that those He passed by would continue in sin and be punished for their sin. God appointed no man to wrath merely from His sovereignty but from the rule of justice. The will of God is the cause of predestination of some to salvation, and the sin of man is the cause of predestination of all others to condemnation. The will of God is the cause of the first, and the sin of man is the cause of the second. The second cause became the first cause in sin. Why did He not create us incapable of being seduced? The only Person who is incapable of being seduced is the first cause Who is without a cause, and God cannot create God. Adam was induced by an antecedent cause, Satan. Therefore, sin began not with Adam but with Lucifer. (W.E. Best)

How easy for the apostle to have answered the objector, "You are mistaken, the choice is not of God, He does not choose whom He will, but those whom He sees will choose Him. It is not His will, but man's that decides the point." But Paul does not thus answer. He vindicates the doctrine of divine sovereignty. The fact, therefore, that Paul had to answer the same objections which are now constantly urged against the doctrine of election, goes far to show that that doctrine was his. (C. Hodge) The original words in Isaiah dealt with the nation, but Paul applies them to individuals. The question does not raise the problem of original sin for the objector does not blame God for that. The potter takes the clay as he finds it, but uses it as he wishes. (A.T. Robertson)

The Creator is not determined by the creation any more than a potter is determined by a pot. (J. Edwards) If we object to God's election, then our objection only shows that we are operating by a different and therefore by a sinful standard. (J. Boice) When man sets out to judge God's dealings by man's own standards, the results cannot be other than the conclusion that God's goodness is faulty. Paul proceeds in a wholly different manner. When he is faced with the question of the justice or injustice of God's dealings, he does not enter at all on any argument on the level of that issue. He simply disallows the question. Paul has no objection when a person seeks to understand as much of God's dealings as possible, but he objects strenuously when a person criticizes and rejects the truth which he discovers. The presumption that a man's sense of values is ultimate and can prevail against God's sense of values is as ludicrous to Paul as a ranting figurine. The sole authority for determining what sorts of vessels it is right to make belongs to the Potter-Creator. (J. Piper)

This is an *epitimesis*, a reprimand, an expression of feeling by way of censure, reproof, or reproach. (E.W. Bullinger) As concerns the right of the Divine Potter over the human clay, we need to go to Jeremiah to "the potter's house": "I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was making a work on the wheels. And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Oh house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Such as is the clay in the potter's hands, so are you in My hand, Oh house of Israel." God called man "dust"

in Eden, yet here is one atom of this “small dust” replying against God, saying, “What right has He to do thus with me?” God has rights above all our poor comprehension. He always acts righteously. We are not His judges! (W.R. Newell) Paul knew this would not silence the critics of God’s absolute sovereignty. Ignorant men quarrel with God about election and reprobation. Both election and reprobation are particular, but sin is universal. Election particularizes grace, and it is what the natural mind hates. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 9:20 On the contrary (particle used in answers, to emphasize or correct; rather), oh (interjection; sanctified, ironic insult meaning “stupid”) man (Vocative Derogatory Address, rhetorical imaginary antagonist; reminding us that He is God and we are men), who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) are (εἰμί, PAI2S, Static) you (Vocative in proleptic position, personal pronoun) who argues against (ἀνταποκρίνομαι, PMPTc.NSM, Descriptive, Substantival, Articular, Deponent; replies against, answers back to, impugns, places judgment upon, rejection of God’s authority) the God (Dat. Disadv.; in other words: “Just who in the hell do you think you are”)? Shall the thing (Subj. Nom.; personification of “the pot”) formed (created, molded) reply (λέγω, FAI3S, Imperative, Interrogative Ind.) against Him (Dat. Disadv.; God the Father as “the potter”) Who did the creative forming (πλάσσω, AAPtc.DSM, Dramatic, Substantival; molding, manufacturing, fabricating): Why (interrogative pronoun) have You made (ποιέω, AAI2S, Culminative; prepared, manufactured, produced, established; creative activity to one’s advantage or disadvantage) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) this way (correlative adv.; in this manner, thus, so, like this)?

^{WHO} **Romans 9:20** ὦ ἄνθρωπε μενοῦνγε σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ ἀνταποκρινόμενος τῷ θεῷ μὴ ἐρεῖ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι Τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως

^{VUL} **Romans 9:20** o homo tu quis es qui respondeas Deo numquid dicit figmentum ei qui se finxit quid me fecisti sic

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:21** Or doesn’t the potter possess authority over the clay to make, on the one hand, out of the same lump of clay [body of believers], a vessel unto honor [supergrace believers], but on the other hand, a vessel unto dishonor [reversionistic believers]?

^{KW} **Rom. 9:21** Or, does not the potter possess authority over the clay, out of the same lump to make, on the one hand, an instrument which is for honorable purposes and, on the other hand, one which is for dishonorable purposes?

^{KJV} **Romans 9:21** Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks yet another rhetorical question, this time concerning the right of the potter to make whatever type of pottery he desires from a lump of clay. Doesn't the potter possess the authority (Customary Present tense) to dispose of his clay in any manner he chooses? Doesn't the potter have the ability to take a lump of clay and then form (Constative Aorist tense) one piece of pottery for good use and another piece of pottery for less use? Paul is using the analogy of a potter and his clay to represent God and believers in Jesus Christ. As the Divine Potter, God has the authority to make supergrace believers or reversionistic believers. As part of experiential sanctification, He allows each believer to make spiritual decisions for better or worse, but that is not the point Paul is making here. He is defending God's authority to do anything with His "clay" that He wants.

There are two different interpretations posited by scholars on this verse. One interpretation is that the vessels of honor are believers and the vessels of dishonor are unbelievers. I do not subscribe to this interpretation, because what then, is a vessel of wrath in the next verse? The better interpretation, in my opinion, is that both of the vessels in this verse are in heaven – meaning they are both believers. The honored vessels are those who attain supergrace status, while the dishonored vessels are those who live their lives in reversionism. Both vessels are in God's house (heaven), but one is honored above the other. Vessels of honor are Complementary Accusatives, while vessels of dishonor are Non-complementary Accusatives. Vessels of wrath are unbelievers who will end up in hell rather than in God's house.

Vessels or pottery were made for different uses in ancient households. Pottery that was used to serve wine was more ornate than pottery that was used to pour water. Pottery that poured water was more ornate than pottery used to store grain. Pottery used to store grain was more ornate than pottery used to hold discarded garbage. Pottery used to hold discarded garbage was more ornate than pottery used to hold human excrement, i.e., what we might call bedpans. All of these various types of pottery were used in ancient households, but they did not look alike nor was their function identical. By way of analogy, all believers will be in God's house, but all believers will not look alike nor be used in the same manner. There will be no such thing as equality in heaven. Some believers will receive great honor and some will receive little-to-no honor, both in their appearance (with or without rewards and decorations) and their use (ruling over 5 cities, 10 cities, or no cities).

Again, I mentioned that there are two interpretations of the vessels in this verse. Some commentators draw a parallel between the vessels of honor with the vessels of mercy; likewise, they draw a parallel between the vessels of dishonor with the vessels of wrath. They arrive at this conclusion by an important precondition: that Paul is repeating his positional teaching with different words. I do not have this precondition, because I don't agree that Paul is repeating the same teaching over again. I see his introduction of different words (honor, dishonor – mercy, wrath) expressing different topics. The first group of words (honor, dishonor) is a further division of the vessels of mercy. From my

reading, I can state that I am going against the majority of interpreters. So if you don't agree with the distinctions I make between these different words, you are in good company.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To the lost man, responsibility without freedom of the will to choose life (Deut. 30:19) makes God not only domineering and arbitrary but also deficient in justice and fairness. Furthermore, since every lost person is an Arminian by nature, he resents the truth that he is not free to choose or not choose life. Hence, he asks how a person can be responsible if no effort on his part can change his destiny; and if one is not free, how can he be called into account and held responsible. Objectors who find fault with God are rebuked. The Potter has power over the clay and can do as He pleases with it. (W. E. Best) Paul thus claims clearly God's sovereign right to use men (already sinners) for His own purpose. (A.T. Robertson) Obviously a potter from the same pile takes some clay to form a finely shaped and decorated vase and takes other clay to make a cooking pot. (J. Witmer)

The potter molds some clay into a utensil to be used for noble purposes such as eating, and other clay to be used for ignoble purposes such as a depository for refuse, so God is sovereign in His use of an incorrigible such as Pharaoh for the purposes of demonstrating His power in the case of such an evil character, hardening his heart by forcing him to an issue which he did not want to meet. (K. Wuest) Some are designed for honorable purposes, others merely for menial use, yet the substance out of which they are all made remains one. In God's providence some serve one purpose, some another. All are necessary, and each has its appointed place. (J. Knox) Certainly he is free to make from the same lump of clay either an ornamental vessel or one for menial use. (R. Mounce) The potter, out of the same lump, may make either a fashionable vessel, and a vessel fit for creditable and honorable uses, or a contemptible vessel, and a vessel in which is no pleasure. (M. Henry)

Regeneration is presented as the act of the sovereign God, it is never presented as a duty of the sinner. The demands of the gospel, upon sinners, are limited to the terms of repentance and faith. It imparts the principle of life. *Conversion* is the act of man, by the power of the indwelling Spirit, in repenting and believing. *Regeneration* is a single act of God, and is never repeated; *conversion* is the beginning of a holy life, but there are many conversion experiences throughout one's earthly pilgrimage. The *position* of the believer in Jesus Christ, by virtue of *regeneration*, can be neither increased or decreased by anything in the recipient. *Condition* of the Christian life, however, will vary according to one's conversion experiences. *Regeneration* is not in itself an experience; *conversion* is a series of Christian experiences. Repentance and faith are *experiences* known to the person born of God. *Regeneration* is the cause of an individual turning to the Lord; *conversion* is the regenerate person actually turning. God does not repent and believe for man, but He enables man to do what he could not do by nature. *Regeneration* is the Lord opening the heart; *conversion* is the person, whose heart has been opened, turning to Jesus Christ in faith. *Regeneration* is a once for all cleansing; *conversion* is the

continuation of the renewal which began in regeneration. In *regeneration* we have God's power, the power of the indwelling Spirit; in *conversion*, the power is not *of us* but *in us* by God's sovereign choice. The spirit of God works *without means* in regeneration, and *with means* in conversion. (W.E. Best)

Some aspects of the Deity may be less pleasing to contemplate than others. The pride of man rejoices not at first in the thought of the majesty which overawes his littleness and compels him to submission. Yet as a hard flint forcibly struck emits a bright spark, and as a rough husk often covers a sweet kernel, so these stern views of the Almighty may, if reverently faced and meditated upon, yield salutary, ennobling, and even comforting reflections. We do not start in the race of life with exactly similar equipment, though we live in tabernacles of clay. If the physical and spiritual powers are the same in essence, like the particles of "the same lump," yet the faculties of some have been well trained from the beginning, and their natures have developed under favorable conditions. Here is a lesson of resignation. He is happiest who accepts the will of God as revealed in his lot, assured that God's decision has ample justification. We have to do all that lies within our power, and leave the result with Him Who is wise and merciful. For the Potter is our Father in heaven. (J. Barmby)

Vessels of mercy come in two types: vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor. Both vessels of honor and dishonor are inside the house, i.e., in heaven. An example of a vessel of honor is David; an example of a vessel of dishonor is Saul. Both will be in heaven. Vessels of wrath are outside the house, i.e., fitted for wrath and destruction. (K. Lamb) A theodicy puts humanity and its questions at the center, whereas Paul maintains the focus on God's sovereign purposes. There is indeed a "madness in the human mind" which presumes to fathom God's every purpose and which calls Him to account when it cannot. But God ordains persons, times and events for purposes of His own choosing, some for noble purposes and some for common use. Even if those purposes are not apparent, that is no reason to doubt that God's righteousness and holy love are also operative in them. (J. Edwards) The doctrine of apparent double predestination implies not a crude numerical division within the human race, but a profound definition of God and of His purpose for men in terms of mercy. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 9:21 Or (Interr. particle, rhetorical question) doesn't (neg. particle) the potter (Subj. Nom.) possess (ἔχω, PAI3S, Customary) authority (Adv. Acc.; to act, decide, or dispose of one's property as one wishes; right, absolute power, warrant, ruling power, official jurisdiction) over the clay (Acc. Poss.; wet mud, mire), to make (ποιέω, AAInf., Constativ, Result; create, form, mold), on the one hand (μέν ...), out of the same (Abl. Whole; identical) lump of clay (Abl. Source; that which is kneaded or mixed), a vessel (Acc. Dir. Obj.; pot, dish, jar) unto honor (Complementary Acc.; supergrace believers), but on the other hand (... δέ, contrast) a vessel (ellipsis, contrasting Dir. Obj.

supplied) unto dishonor (Non-complementary Acc. ; reversionistic believers)?

^{WHO} **Romans 9:21** ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὁ κεραμεὺς τοῦ πηλοῦ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ φυράματος ποιῆσαι ὃ μὲν εἰς τιμὴν σκεῦος ὃ δὲ εἰς ἀτιμίαν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:21** an non habet potestatem figulus luti ex eadem massa facere aliud quidem vas in honorem aliud vero in contumeliam

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:22** Now suppose God, Who is willing to demonstrate wrath [divine judgment] and to reveal His power [omnipotence], endures with great patience [postpones judgment on] the vessels of wrath [unbelievers] who are fitted for destruction [eternal judgment],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:22** But if, as is the case, God desiring to demonstrate His wrath and to make known His power, endured with much longsuffering instruments of wrath fitted for destruction,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:22** What if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul poses a rhetorical implied apodosis, which means God endures under the given circumstances. This is a 1st class condition, meaning it indeed occurs; it is not a 3rd class condition, meaning maybe this is true and maybe it is not. God bears with great patience (Constative Aorist tense) the vessels of wrath who are fitted for destruction (Intensive Perfect tense). He is willing to execute judgment now, but to demonstrate His forbearance, He refrains from doing so until the appointed hour. Since Paul previously used the Pharaoh as an example, God's patience brings to mind the plagues on Egypt. He repeatedly brought judgment on Egypt, and then withheld the next plague with forbearance. He waited to see what the Pharaoh would do next, postponing (humanly speaking) the next stage of judgment upon Egypt. By comparison, God is likewise withholding judgment on unbelievers - until the Great White Throne Judgment.

The vessels of wrath are unbelievers, the non-elect. They will never believe in Jesus Christ because they are spiritually dead and will remain so. They do not belong to the Father, so they will not be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Like the Pharaoh, they were created to serve a purpose, but not a noble one. They are fitted for destruction (Intensive Perfect tense), meaning they were designed for eternal judgment. They are in a permanent state of preparation for judgment, filling up their cup of wrath daily. Destruction means perdition and eternal torment, not annihilation. They will be given resurrection bodies that will be able to sustain continued torment and torture for all eternity. The degree of torment and misery will not be equal for all unbelievers. Like believers who are rewarded for good works, unbelievers will be judged according to their evil works.

The Passive Voice means these vessels of wrath were fitted by God to destruction. The Active Voice would have meant they performed the action of “fitting.” The Middle Voice would have meant they “fitted themselves” for destruction. But the Passive Voice means the vessels of wrath “received” the fitting for destruction from God. They were created for this purpose; they were designed for this cause. God is willing (Customary Present tense) to demonstrate His wrath on them like the days of old, but instead He waits with patience for the future day of judgment. God is willing to reveal (Constative Aorist tense) His omnipotence now, but He is refraining until the arrival of the Great White Throne Judgment. The Plural refers this “fitting” back to the vessels, not God.

The Latin choice of this word for “fitted” steers the reader’s thoughts away from *God doing the fitting* while the vessels passively accept their fitting (which is what the Greek teaches), to the *relative, subjective quality of the vessels* being the reason for their being fitted for wrath: the vessels having equipped themselves, becoming suitable for, having made themselves ready for - their wrath. This was an obvious attempt by those of Arminian persuasion (Catholic version) to re-write Scripture to fit their viewpoint of the *sovereignty of man* rather than the *sovereignty of God*. Contrary to Arminian philosophy, God has the right to do as He pleases whether we are comfortable with His decisions or not.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Here we have a remarkable *anantapodoton*, a hypothetical proposition without the subsequent clause - the conclusion, or apodosis, of the argument is omitted. (E.W. Bullinger) To avoid ambiguity the Greek often used particles to make the concessive idea plain, and this idiom survives in the N.T. (A.T. Robertson) The two leading objections against the doctrine of election: that it is inconsistent with the divine character, and incompatible with human responsibility, are answered by the apostle. It cannot be unjust, because God claims and exercises the right of sovereign choice. It is not inconsistent with human responsibility, because God does not make men wicked. Though, as their Sovereign, He has a right to dispose of wicked men as He pleases. He can, of the same corrupt mass, choose one to mercy and the other to wrath. (C. Hodge)

Reprobation may be defined as that eternal decree of God whereby He has determined to pass some men by with the operations of His special grace, and to punish them for their sins, to the manifestation of His justice. It is comprised of two elements: *preterition* or the determination to pass by some men, and *condemnation* or to punish those who are passed by for their sins. The positive side of reprobation is so clearly taught in Scripture as the opposite of election that we cannot regard it as something purely negative. Preterition is a sovereign act of God, an act of His mere good pleasure, in which the demerits of man do not come into consideration, while condemnation is a judicial act, visiting sin with punishment. The reason for preterition is not known by man. It cannot be sin, for all men are sinners. We can only say that God passed some by for good and wise reasons sufficient unto Himself. On the other hand, the reason for condemnation is known: it is sin. Preterition is purely passive, a simple passing by without any action on

man, but condemnation is efficient and positive. Those who are passed by are condemned on account of their sin. In the case of reprobation, as well as that of election, God will bring to pass by His Own direct efficiency whatsoever He has decreed. God's decree undoubtedly rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain, but He did not predestinate some unto sin, as He did others unto holiness. And as the holy God He cannot be the author of sin. (L. Berkof)

Although the will of God is the supreme and 1st cause of all things and God holds the devil and all the impious subject to His will, God nevertheless cannot be called the cause of sin, nor the author of evil, neither is He open to any blame. Although the devil and reprobates are God's servants and instruments to carry out His secret decisions, nevertheless in an incomprehensible manner God so works in them and through them as to contract no stain from their vice, because their malice is used in a just and righteous way for a good end, although the manner is often hidden from us. (J. Calvin) They act ignorantly and calumniously who say that God is made the author of sin, if all things come to pass by His will and ordinance; because they make no distinction between the depravity of man and the hidden appointments of God. (B.B. Warfield)

Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, and Arminians raise a serious objection to the doctrine of providence. They maintain that a *previous* concurrence, which is not merely general *but predetermines man to specific actions*, makes God the responsible author of sin. Reformed theologians are well aware of the difficulty that presents itself here, but they do not feel free to circumvent it by denying God's absolute control over the free actions of His moral creatures, since this is clearly taught in Scripture, Gen. 45:5, 50:19,20; Ex. 10:1,20; II Sam. 16:10,11; Isa. 10:5-7; Acts 2:23, 4:27,28. They feel constrained to teach: (a) that sinful acts are under divine control and occur according to God's pre-determination and purpose, but only by divine permission, so that He does not efficiently cause men to sin, Gen. 45:5, 50:20; Ex. 14:17; Isa. 66:4; Rom. 9:22; II Thess. 2:11; (b) that God often restrains the sinful works of the sinner, Gen. 3:6; Job 1:12, 2:6; Psalm 76:10; Isa. 10:15; Acts 7:51; and (c) that God on behalf of His own purpose overrules evil for good, Gen. 50:20; Psalm 76:10; Acts 3:13. The divine concursus energizes man and determines him efficaciously to the specific act, but it is man who gives the act its formal quality, and who is therefore responsible for its sinful character. Neither one of these solutions can be said to give entire satisfaction, so that the problem of God's relation to sin remains a mystery. (L. Berkof)

It is illogical to say that Christ died a substitutionary atonement for those who are ordained to destruction. The definite atonement position alone is consistent with the doctrine of retribution. The identity of the elect and the non-elect before the salvation of the former is known only to God. And well it should be, otherwise evangelists would not be obedient to God's ordained method of taking the gospel to every creature. (G.D. Long) We must let certain Scriptures lie just as they are, whether or not they consort with our conceptions, or whether we find ourselves able to "reconcile" them with our "theological system" or not. (W.R. Newell)

If there should be ten apples lying in the grass under a tree and you stoop down, choose one, and pick it up, it would be irrational indeed to accuse you of placing the other nine on the ground. They fell there because they are subject to gravity. This is how they came to be there. You, by your selection, have merely raised one of them which was sharing the same debasement with the others. (A. Custance) In a context where the sovereignty of God as a potter over clay has been stressed, Paul would have had to use a clearer grammatical construction to signify all of a sudden that man's destiny is self-determined. And indeed the well-known reflexive use of "etoimazein eautou" in Revelation 8:6 and 19:7 lay ready for such use if Paul had intended such. But both the passive "fitted" and the active "He prepared before" point back to the pre-temporal, pre-historical action of God. Certainly "katertismena" cannot mean that they fit themselves for destruction, nor can it be given merely an adjectival meaning. (J. Piper)

Rom. 9:22 Now (transitional particle) suppose (rhetorical protasis with an implied apodosis, 1st class condition, "and He did") God (Subj. Nom.), Who is willing (θέλω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; *although willing* is a viable option: Concessive) to demonstrate (ἐνδείκνυμι, AMInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; show, prove to someone) wrath (Adv. Acc.; indignation, anger, divine judgment, not an emotion but an anthropopathism representing God's policy) and (connective conj.) to reveal (γνωρίζω, AAInf., Constative, Articular, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; make known, declare) His (Poss. Gen.) power (Acc. Dir. Obj.; omnipotence), endures (φέρω, AAI3S, Constative; bears with patience, puts up with; brings to mind the plagues on Egypt) with great (Instr. Measure) patience (Instr. Manner; forbearance, steadfastness, longsuffering; the postponement of merited judgment) the vessels (Acc. Dir. Obj.; unbelievers) of wrath (Descr. Gen.) who are fitted (καταρτίζω, Perf.PPtc.APN, Intensive & Dramatic, Substantival; created, designed, in a permanent state of preparation for judgment) for destruction (Acc. Purpose; ruin, eternal judgment; endless perdition, not annihilation);

^{WHO} **Romans 9:22** εἰ δὲ θέλων ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατὸν αὐτοῦ ἤνεγκεν ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκεύη ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:22** quod si volens Deus ostendere iram et notam facere potentiam suam sustinuit in multa patientia vasa irae aptata in interitum

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:23** Also suppose that He desires to reveal the riches of His glory [grace blessings] upon the vessels of mercy [the elect] whom He has prepared beforehand for glory:

^{KW} **Rom. 9:23** And in order that He might make known the wealth of His glory upon instruments of mercy which were previously prepared for glory,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:23** And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds a 2nd rhetorical apodosis in a 1st class conditional clause, this time switching his emphasis from unbelievers to believers. Unbelievers are classified as vessels of wrath, while believers are classified as vessels of mercy. God desires to reveal (Culminative Aorist tense) the abundance of His grace blessings upon the vessels of mercy, but He refrains from giving them all that they deserve until the Judgment Seat of Christ. He exercises His forbearance by not judging the vessels of wrath now, and He exercises His forbearance by not judging the vessels of mercy now. He fitted the vessels of wrath for destruction, and He has prepared beforehand (Constative Aorist tense) the vessels of mercy for glory.

The earlier contrast was between type types of believers, honorable and dishonorable vessels. The current contrast is between unbelievers and believers, vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy. The riches of His glory are supergrace blessings in time and eternity. Some supergrace blessings are bestowed in time, while others are reserved for the Judgment Seat of Christ. In both cases, the vessels of mercy were prepared in advance for His good pleasure and glory. The Rhetorical Deliberative means He would like to reward believers immediately, but in order to display another aspect of His forbearance, He delays their ultimate rewards until a future appointed time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In a momentous action, God convened an appeal trial in which He would demonstrate His perfect character. Each believer's life becomes a unique expression of the glory of God in both time and eternity, but only the *mature* believer glorifies God by receiving the highest and best that God has prepared for him. Divine blessings that the Christian can understand and experience and the overt manifestations of the Christian way of life come as *results* of spiritual growth. The *means* of spiritual growth is the believer's consistent reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine through all the circumstances of his life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There is no other way (other than evangelism) for those who by grace are to respond except somebody in some direct or indirect way provides them with the occasion. The same message which is rejected by the unsaved is the means whereby the elect are brought into salvation. Elect and non-elect are indistinguishable as targets until the parting of the ways. The same message must therefore be presented to the elect and non-elect alike, though the responses will be exactly the opposite. (A. Custance) The controversy between man and God is not whether any or all the human race shall be

saved, but who shall have the glory of man's salvation - God or depraved man? (W.E. Best) The time of regeneration is called, in Ezekiel 16:8, "the time of love." Does the act of regeneration precede, accompany, or follow the hearing of the gospel? The Holy Spirit may perform His work of regeneration before, during, or after the *external call* of the gospel. But one thing is for sure, if a man is to hear the effectual call of God, there must first be a work of God in his soul. (W.E. Best)

Paul did not teach a parallel between election and positive reprobation. Vessels of wrath are not "... afore prepared ...", they are "... fitted to destruction," whereas, the vessels of mercy are "afore prepared" for salvation. God is neither the author of sin nor the creator of men for destruction. Positive reprobation is God's answer to sin. Sin, not God, causes positive reprobation. (W.E. Best) God demonstrated His wrath by bringing vessels of wrath to destruction, and He demonstrated His glory by showing mercy to those vessels ordained for glory. This is a justifiable rendering, which, if adopted, conceivably argues for double predestination. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 9:23 also (adjunctive particle) suppose (ellipsis, continuing the rhetorical apodosis from unbelievers to believers; this is also 1st class condition) that (Purpose conj.) He desires to reveal (γνωρίζω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Rhetorical Deliberative; make known) the riches (Acc. Dir. Obj.; wealth, abundance) of His (Poss. Gen.) glory (Descr. Gen.; supergrace blessings in time) upon the vessels (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of mercy (Descr. Gen.; the elect) whom (Acc. Appos., relative pronoun) He has prepared beforehand (προετοιμάζω, AAI3S, Constative; prepared in advance for His good pleasure) for glory (Acc. Result):

^{WHO} **Romans 9:23** ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σκεύη ἐλέους ἃ προητοίμασεν εἰς δόξαν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:23** ut ostenderet divitias gloriae suae in vasa misericordiae quae praeparavit in gloriam

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:24** Namely us, whom He has elected, not only out from the Jews, but also out from the Gentiles.

^{KW} **Rom. 9:24** Even us whom He called, not only from among Jews but also from among Gentiles.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:24** Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul tells us that those whom God prepared beforehand for glory are none other than us - believers in Jesus Christ, those whom He has elected (Dramatic Aorist tense). In addition, Paul

reminds us that the elect are not only among the Jews, but also among the Gentiles. He has been talking about his beloved brethren, the Jews, but there is a parallel to Gentile believers in nearly everything he has been communicating. The elect are not just from the nation Israel, but from all nations and peoples of the earth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God's election and Christ's blood (spiritual death), the two great causes of salvation, cannot save man apart from the application of redemption by the Holy Spirit. The elect continue in sin because of depravity until, by the work of the Holy Spirit, the new birth is actually applied in them. The *consciousness* of the union of the regenerated comes through the exercise of faith. Consciousness of this union must be distinguished from regeneration. Realization of this mystical union drives the elect from themselves to God for an answer to the mystery. The answer is made known only by the indwelling Spirit. (W.E. Best) Paul now explicitly includes Gentiles among those whom God is sovereignly calling to be part of His people. (D. Moo)

How constant, in Paul's consciousness, the owing all to God's sovereign grace. "Prepared unto glory" - in eternity past, in sovereign election, and having a calling befitting that "preparing." Surely no one can miss, in this apostle, the supreme consciousness that he is God's, - not by his choice, but by God's Own choice, - an eternally settled thing, uncaused by Paul! All believers will have this same consciousness, when they find, (as Paul found), along with their Divine election, that there is in them, in their flesh, "no good thing!" (W.R. Newell) The Christian is kept alive on earth to fulfill his destiny, which is to become a mature believer, a spiritual winner, a mature person to the measure of the maturity which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Each believer's life become a unique expression of the glory of God in both time and eternity, but only the mature believer glorifies God by receiving the highest and best that God has prepared for him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 9:24 Namely (ascensive conj.; even), us (Acc. Gen. Ref.), whom (Acc. Appos.) He has elected (καλέω, AAI3S, Dramatic), not (neg. adv.) only (Acc. Spec.) out from the Jews (Abl. Source; eliminates any claim to Jewish exclusivity), but (adversative conj.) also (adjunctive particle) out from the Gentiles (Abl. Source; nations, peoples).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:24** οὐς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:24** quos et vocavit nos non solum ex Iudaeis sed etiam ex gentibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:25** Likewise, He also communicated in Hosea [2:23]: I will call [elect] them [illegitimate Gentile children of Hosea's wife] who were not My people, My people [saved Gentiles during the dispensation of Israel], and she [Hosea's unfaithful wife] who was not beloved [physical Israel during the "times of the Gentiles"], beloved [restored, spiritual Israel during the millennium],

κω **Rom. 9:25** As also in Hosea He says, I will call those, not my people, my people, and those, not beloved, beloved.

κJV **Romans 9:25** As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In the same manner, Paul also uses a quote from Hosea 2:23 in which the Lord communicated (Epistolary Aorist tense) the status of Jewish and Gentile believers. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are elected, chosen by God, in all dispensations. The Lord said, I will call (Predictive Future tense) the illegitimate, Gentile children of Hosea's wife who were not My people during the dispensation of Israel, My people. During the dispensation of Israel, God was dealing with His chosen people, Israel. But there were Gentiles who believed in Christ and they were called (elected) His people just like Jewish believers.

The Lord also said, I will call Hosea's unfaithful wife who was not beloved (Intensive Perfect tense), beloved. "She who was not beloved" is a reference to physical Israel during the "times of the Gentiles." During the Gentile dispensations, Israel has been set aside as God's chosen people, but there will be a restored, spiritual Israel in the millennium. Israel will once again be beloved (Dramatic Perfect tense). The point in this verse is not only to predict God's prophetic plan for Israel and Gentiles during different dispensations, but also to show how His divine election takes into account believers in the Lord Jesus Christ regardless of the time in which they live.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is a difficulty at this point, and you may have noticed it if you have been comparing Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 with Romans 9:25-26 closely. In Hosea, the prophet is talking about the rejection and eventual restoration of the Jews of the ten northern tribes, whose capital was Samaria. But in Romans, Paul is writing about Gentiles. Verse 24 is speaking of a new people, the elect people of God, which is the church of Jesus Christ, composed of Jews and Gentiles. And the verses that follow obviously teach that the Gentiles, which were not a people, have now become the people of God along with believing Jews, and that the Jews as a nation continue to be rejected, although a remnant is saved. (J. Boice)

We are concerned here only with the last two children of Gomer. Their names are symbolical of Israel's condition as seen by the Lord. Lo-ruhamah means "Not my loved one;" and Lo-ammi, "Not my people." (W. Hendriksen) A son and daughter of Hosea are named Lo-ammi, "not a people" and Lo-ruhamah, "without mercy," to signify the fallen condition of the ten tribes; and Hosea prophesies their restoration. Paul applies the principle which underlies these words, that God can take into His covenant those who

were previously cut off from it, to the calling of the Gentiles. A similar interpretation of the verse was held by the Rabbis. (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 9:25 Likewise (comparative adv.; "in the same manner"), He also (adjunctive particle) communicated (λέγω, PAI3S, Epistolary) in Hosea (Loc. Place; Chp. 2:23): "I will call (καλέω, FAI1S, Predictive; elect) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the illegitimate, Gentile children of Hosea's wife) who were (ellipsis, verb supplied) not (neg. adv.) My (Poss. Gen.) people (Acc. Gen. Ref.; status of Gentiles during Israel's client nation status), My (Poss. Gen.) people (Acc. Gen. Ref.; saved Gentiles during the "times of the Gentiles"), and (connective conj.) she (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Hosea's unfaithful wife) who was not (neg. adv.) beloved (ἀγαπάω, Perf.PPtc.ASF, Intensive, Substantival; reference to physical Israel during the "times of the Gentiles"), beloved (ἀγαπάω, Perf.PPtc.ASF, Dramatic, Substantival; restored, spiritual Israel in the millennium),"

^{WHO} **Romans 9:25** ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὡσηῆ λέγει Καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαὸν μου λαὸν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἡγαπημένην ἡγαπημένην·

^{VUL} **Romans 9:25** sicut in Osee dicit vocabo non plebem meam plebem meam et non misericordiam consecutam misericordiam consecutam

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:26** And it shall come to pass [at the 2nd advent of Christ when Israel is restored] in the place [land of Israel] where it was said [Hosea 1:10] to them [Jews of the Northern Kingdom]: "You are not My people – in this same place [land of Israel], they [all Jewish believers in the future] shall be called the adult sons [unique quality] of the living God."

^{KW} **Rom. 9:26** And it shall come to be in that place where it was said to them, Not my people are you, there they shall be called the sons of the living God.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:26** And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Furthermore, according to Hosea 1:10, the 2nd advent of Christ will come to pass (Predictive Future tense) and the nation Israel will be restored in the same land in the Middle East where the Israelites used to live. During the time of Hosea when the Northern Kingdom existed, the Lord told them (Constative Aorist tense): You are not My people. Divine discipline on the nation began during Hosea's day. But in that same geographical location in the Middle East, Israel will once again be regathered. All Jewish believers alive in that day shall be called (Predictive Future tense) the adult sons of the living God. The anarthrous construction surrounding the Greek word "huios" (adult sons)

points to the unique quality of the Jewish believers in that time. The Predicative Participle in the Genitive Absolute points to the unique quality of God, that He is the “living” God; He is not dead, as some ascertain, but has a plan for both Gentile and Jewish believers in the future.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

How is it possible for Paul and Peter to take a passage which predicts restoration for Israelites and apply it to audiences in which Gentiles predominated? The answer is simple: the same principle operates throughout. Whether it is restoration to divine favor of Israelites, or conversion of Gentiles, or even both, the cause or source of restoration and salvation in each case is the same. That which brings about the restoration or conversion is ever the active, powerful, and sovereign grace of God Almighty! (W. Hendriksen) Paul was applying these verses from Hosea to the Gentiles, not reinterpreting them. He was not saying that Israel of the OT is part of the church. (J. Witmer)

Rom. 9:26 And (continuative conj.) it shall come to pass (είμι, FAI3S, Predictive; reference to the 2nd advent of Christ and the restoration of Israel) in the place (Loc. Place; the land of Israel) where (Adv. of Place) it was said (λέγω, API3S, Constative; in Hosea 1:10) to them (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the Jews of the Northern Kingdom in Hosea’s time): “You (Subj. Nom.) are (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) My (Poss. Gen.) people (Pred. Nom.)” - “In this same place (Adv. of Place; this same land of Israel), they (all Jewish believers in the future) shall be called (καλέω, FPI3P, Predictive) the adult sons (Pred. Nom., anarthrous constr. emphasizes their unique quality) of the living (ζάω, PAPtc.GSM, Descriptive, Predicative, Genitive Absolute) God (Gen. Rel.).”

^{WHO} **Romans 9:26** καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἐρρέθη [αὐτοῖς] Οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος

^{VUL} **Romans 9:26** et erit in loco ubi dictum est eis non plebs mea vos ibi vocabuntur filii Dei vivi

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:27** In fact, Isaiah cried out in a loud voice [10:22] concerning Israel: “If the number of the sons of Israel [Jewish race] is as the sand of the sea [a vast earthly multitude that cannot be numbered], a remnant [of believing Jews] shall be saved [delivered through the tribulation],”

^{KW} **Rom. 9:27** And Isaiah cries in anguish concerning Israel, If the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:27** Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In fact, Isaiah also prophesied in 10:22 with a loud voice (Historical Present tense) concerning the future of the nation Israel. The number of the sons of Israel will most likely become (Futuristic Present tense) as great as the number of grains of sand in the sea. The protasis of a 3rd class condition points to the high level of probability that this will happen. In any case, there will always be a remnant, a perpetuation of believing Jews, that shall be saved (Predictive Future tense) in that future day. They will become part of the heavenly multitude which includes Gentile believers, what is often called “the stars of the heavens” in other verses of Scripture.

Even though God’s plan has shifted from the dispensation of Israel to the dispensation of the Church Age, there is still a plan for national Israel to come. The doctrine of election spans all dispensations. But the emphasis in this verse is not that there will always be Jewish believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but that there are elective promises for Israel as a nation which have not yet been fulfilled. There will be a restoration of national Israel in the Middle East, which we now see in the land formerly called Palestine. The tribulation, also called Jacob’s Trouble, will have its center in the nation Israel after the rapture of the Church. After the seven year tribulation, the land grant promised to the nation Israel in the Davidic Covenant will be fulfilled.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The salvation in view is not deliverance from hell but the fulfillment of the promise to Israel that she would one day be restored to Palestine. (J. Dillow) The remnant shall return; Paul quotes a verse which predicts restoration of Israel back to its native land of Canaan. (W. Kaiser, Jr.) The OT itself shows that God chooses only some from among national Israel to be His true spiritual Israel. To establish the truth of God’s selectivity from within Israel, Paul cites texts from Isaiah that describe the important OT concept of the remnant. Characteristic especially of the prophets, the remnant doctrine contains both a word of judgment and a word of hope. (D. Moo)

Rom. 9:27 In fact (intensive particle), Isaiah (Subj. Nom., in Chp. 10:22) cried out in a loud voice (κράζω, PAI3S, Historical) concerning Israel (Adv. Gen. Ref.): “If (protasis, 3rd class condition, high level of probability) the number (Subj. Nom.) of the sons (Adv. Gen. Ref.) of Israel (Descr. Gen.; the Jewish race) is (εἰμί, PASubj.3S, Futuristic; becomes) as (comparative adv.) the sand (Pred. Nom.) of the sea (Descr. Gen.; a vast *earthly* multitude that cannot be numbered), a remnant (Subj. Nom.; there will always be a perpetuation of believing Jews) shall be saved (σώζω, FPI3S, Predictive; a *heavenly* multitude often referred to as “the stars of the heavens”, which also includes Gentile believers),”

^{WHO} **Romans 9:27** Ἡσαΐας δὲ κράζει ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ Ἐὰν ᾗ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται·

^{VUL} **Romans 9:27** Esaias autem clamat pro Israhel si fuerit numerus filiorum Israhel tamquam harena maris reliquiae salvae fient

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:28** For “the Lord [Jesus Christ] will execute His Word [at the 2nd advent] by completing [the remaining 7 years of the 490 years of Jewish discipline] and shortening [bringing the Church Age to a close and ushering in the 1,000 year millennium] the time on the earth.”

^{KW} **Rom. 9:28** For the Lord will execute His word upon the earth, finishing and cutting it short.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:28** For he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Isaiah also prophesied in 10:23 that the Lord Jesus Christ will execute (Predictive Future tense) His Word at the 2nd advent. He will do this by completing (Futuristic Present tense) the remaining 7 years of the 490 years of Jewish discipline. He will also execute His Word by shortening (Futuristic Present tense) the remaining time on earth by bringing the dispensation of the Church Age to a close and ushering in the 7-year tribulation followed by the 1,000 year millennium. The Modal Participles both point to the plan or method by which He will fulfill His promises to the nation Israel. They are not the center of God’s attention now, but they will return to the forefront at the end of the Church Age and during the Millennial Reign of Christ on earth.

The completing (Latin: consummation) of the Church Age and the short duration (Latin: brevity) of the remaining years of Jewish discipline in the Latin are common words to us today. However, the lengthier quote of Isaiah from the Vulgate (and the Textus Receptus used in the KJV) is not supported by the majority of Greek manuscripts.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Textus Receptus and the Vulgate have filled out the quotation from Isaiah 10:22-23 due to the opaque grammar of this verse. (B. Metzger) The Lord will so cut short, and cut off His people, that the residue may seem as it were a consumption, that is, may have the appearance and the vestige of a very great ruin. However, the few who shall remain from the consumption shall be a proof of the work of God’s righteousness, or, what I prefer, shall serve to testify the righteousness of God throughout the world. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 9:28 for (continuative conj.; quoting Isaiah 10:23) “the Lord (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ) will execute (ποιέω, FAI3S, Predictive; do, perform, accomplish) His (ellipsis,

Poss. pronoun supplied) **Word** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; at the 2nd advent) **by completing** (συντελέω, PAPtc.NSM, Futuristic, Modal; finishing; the remaining 7 years of the 490 years of Jewish discipline) **and** (connective conj.) **shortening** (συντέμνω, PAPtc.NSM, Futuristic, Modal; bringing the Church Age to a close and ushering in the final 1,000 year Millenium) **the time** (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied) **on the earth** (Gen.Place).”

^{WHO} **Romans 9:28** λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς

^{VUL} **Romans 9:28** verbum enim consummans et brevians in aequitate quia verbum brevium faciet Dominus super terram

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:29** And so, just as Isaiah [1:9] has prophesied: “If the Lord of the Armies had not left us [Israel] a seed [remnant], we would have become like Sodom [completely destroyed, 3 survivors] and we would have been made like Gomorrah [completely destroyed, no survivors].”

^{KW} **Rom. 9:29** And even as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us offspring, we would in that case have become even as Sodom and been made like Gomorrah.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:29** And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now compares the doctrine of the remnant of Israel to Isaiah 1:9, in which Isaiah prophesied (Aoristic Perfect tense) that Israel would have been completely destroyed forever if not for the mercy of the Lord. Jesus Christ is here addressed as the Lord of the Armies. Jesus Christ currently holds the record for the most kills in battle (Jericho), and He will enlarge upon that record at Armageddon. Our God is not a pacifist. Anyone who portrays Jesus Christ as a “girly man” has not properly read the Old Testament nor the Revelation. If the Lord of the Armies had not cut short His discipline upon Israel, there would not be any Jews on the earth today. The 2nd class conditional clause confirms that He didn’t destroy all Israel.

At the end of His discipline upon Israel, the Lord of the Armies left (Culminative Aorist tense) a remnant, a seed of Israel. Isaiah is thankful for His mercy, otherwise, Israel might have been compared historically to Sodom. The entire population of Sodom, with the exception of 3 survivors, was destroyed by God for homosexuality and lesbianism. If it were not for the Lord’s mercy, Israel might also be compared historically (Culminative Aorist tense) to Gomorrah, which was also destroyed for homosexuality and lesbianism, but with no survivors. The Lord takes a dim view of sexual perversion; He does not consider aberrant sexual practices to be an “alternative lifestyle.” The Lord was not a good environmentalist either, since he destroyed everything which grew on the ground as well.

The only reason there were 3 survivors from the destruction of Sodom was because of God's sovereign mercy and grace. Paul continues to document examples of the doctrines of election and the remnant. The three survivors were Lot and his two daughters. Lot's wife, you will recall, disobeyed God's command to leave the city without looking back, and she was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot's daughters were both married to homosexual men who refused to leave the twin cities and were killed along with the rest of the inhabitants by the Lord of the Armies, Jesus Christ. Sovereign mercy and grace were the instruments of deliverance, because there is no mention of Lot or his daughters desiring to leave Sodom or Gomorrah – they were commanded to leave or face death.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Israel might object to the doctrine of the Remnant, the “election of grace” by God, but this quote from Isaiah shows that if God had not intervened in sovereign grace, they would have all become as Sodom (in iniquity) and been made like unto Gomorrah (in their damnation). It was sovereign goodness that saved any Israelites, - just as it is sovereign goodness that saves any Gentiles. Thus it becomes plain (for Israel is but a sample of the human race) that opposition to the truth of Divine elective mercy arises from ignorance of or blindness to the utter sinfulness and wholly lost state of mankind. All would go to perdition unless God in mercy intervened! (W.R. Newell) Although today the world seeks to popularize and legitimize homosexuality and illicit heterosexuality, both remain despicable to God and are always, without exception, condemned by Him. (W. Kroll)

Stronger rejection of any personal merits or pretensions was certainly impossible, for these cities were considered the very culmination of wickedness. (W. Hendriksen) This future Ecclesia of Israel is to be built upon Christ, the Messiah, as the Foundation Stone. The Church of God, as an Assembly, is also compared to a building; its members are built individually on a doctrinal foundation, but the building itself is a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together by the Spirit. The present Church of God is composed of Jews and Gentiles, but the ecclesia here is a remnant of the children of Israel. (E.W. Bullinger) It is God's sovereignty that keeps Him from destroying Israel for its unbelief, just as it is God's sovereignty that draws us to Him in salvation and belief. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:29 And so (consecutive conj.), just as (comparative adv.) Isaiah (Subj. Nom.; Chp. 1:9) has prophesied (προλέγω, Perf.AI3S, Aoristic; said before): “If (protasis, 2nd class condition, “but He didn’t”) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) of the Armies (Descr. Gen.) had not (neg. adv.) left (ἐγκαταλείπω, AAI3S, Culminative, Potential Ind.; allowed to remain) us (Dat. Ind. Obj.; Israel) a seed (Acc. Dir. Obj.; spiritual sperm of Abraham, remnant), we would (2nd class conditional particle) have become (γίνομαι, AMI1P, Culminative, Potential Ind., Deponent) like (comparative particle) Sodom (Pred.

Nom.; completely destroyed, but with three survivors) **and** (connective conj.) **we would** (comparative adv.) **have been made** (ὁμοιόω, API1P, Culminative, Potential Ind.; compared to) **like** (comparative particle) **Gomorrah** (Pred. Nom.; completely destroyed, but with no survivors)."

^{WHO} **Romans 9:29** καὶ καθὼς προεῖρηκεν Ἡσαΐας Εἰ μὴ κύριος Σαβαώθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα ὡς Σόδομα ἂν ἐγενήθημεν καὶ ὡς Γόμορρα ἂν ὁμοιωθῆμεν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:29** et sicut praedixit Esaias nisi Dominus Sabaoth reliquisset nobis semen sicut Sodoma facti essemus et sicut Gomorra similes fuissetus

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:30** **To what conclusion, therefore, are we forced? That the Gentiles, who did not seek after righteousness, ended up attaining without effort [grace mechanics] the righteousness [of God], that is the righteousness by means of faith [as opposed to works].**

^{KW} **Rom. 9:30** What then shall we say? That Gentiles, the ones who do not earnestly endeavor to acquire righteousness, appropriated righteousness, in fact, a righteousness which is out of a source of faith.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:30** What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul draws a conclusion from the overall presentation of his arguments concerning Jews and Gentiles, law and grace, works and faith. What conclusion are we forced (Deliberative Future tense) to make from his teaching? The Gentiles who were not seeking after (Historical Present tense) righteousness by works like the Jews were, ended up attaining (Culminative Aorist tense) the righteousness of God without any effort at all. How is this possible? The righteousness of God is only obtained (Latin: apprehended) by means of faith, not works. All the efforts of the legalistic Jews were cast aside; faith, not works, was the means of obtaining God's righteousness. The grace of God provided this gift of saving faith to us at the point of regeneration, and the exercise of that gift of faith fulfilled the only requirement for obtaining the righteousness of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The *faculty* (spiritual ability) of faith is implanted in regeneration, but its exercise is brought forth in conversion. Men, by nature, have not the faculty or ability; it is the gift of God. Regeneration changes the soil of the heart before the word of the gospel finds lodgment. Regeneration is a Divine quickening that makes the soul a fit subject for calling, and a proper subject for conversion. Regeneration takes place in the sphere of the subconscious of man, i.e. outside of the sphere of conscious attention. The gospel, however, addresses itself to the consciousness of man. There is no conflict between

regeneration by the Spirit and justification through faith, when faith is understood to be the *gift* of God. W.E. Best)

This contains an *anadiplosis*, the repetition of the same word or words at the end of one sentence and the beginning of another. (E.W. Bullinger) This righteousness is “of faith” (Rom. 10:6), it is “of God” (Rom. 10:3, 2 Cor. 5:21), and it is “of God by faith” (Phil. 3:9). All these passages stress that our right standing comes to us from God. (L. Morris) The Jews continued to pursue the path of legal righteousness, seeking acceptance with God on the basis of their law-keeping, and yet never attained their goal. The reason was simple: they were following the wrong path. Acceptance by God was assured to faith and not to the works enjoined by the law. (F.F. Bruce) The facts have now been laid bare. God, in the pursuit of His elective purpose, has caused the partial rejection of Israel, and the election into the messianic people of the last age of a number of Gentiles. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 9:30 To what conclusion (interrogative pronoun), therefore (inferential particle), are we forced (λέγω, FAIIP, Deliberative, Interrogative Ind.; debater’s idiom, literally: “What, then, shall we say?”)? That (demonstrative pronoun) the Gentiles (Subj. Nom., anarthrous), who (Nom. Appos.) did not (neg. adv.) seek after (διώκω, PAPtc.NPN, Historical, Substantival, Articular; pursue, follow after, aspire to) righteousness (Acc. Dir. Obj.), ended up attaining without effort (καταλαμβάνω, AAI3S, Culminative; inheriting, winning, seizing, apprehending, catching, grasping) the righteousness (Acc. Dir. Obj., anarthrous; of God), that is (explanatory & adjunctive particle), the righteousness (Acc. Gen. Ref.) by means of faith (Abl. Means, Descr. Gen.; as opposed to works).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:30** Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν ὅτι ἔθνη τὰ μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 9:30** quid ergo dicemus quod gentes quae non sectabantur iustitiam adprehenderunt iustitiam iustitiam autem quae ex fide est

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:31** But Israel, who repeatedly pursued after the law for righteousness [incorrect protocol], did not overtake the law for righteousness [failed efforts].

^{KW} **Rom. 9:31** But Israel, earnestly endeavoring to acquire a law of righteousness, did not measure up to the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:31** But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the Gentiles receiving righteousness against Israel who did not receive righteousness. Israel repeatedly pursued (Iterative Present tense) the law for righteousness, but they did not live up to the perfect standards (Culminative Aorist tense) required by the law for righteousness. The Gentiles obtained it by faith; Israel lost it by works. The Gentiles obtained it by faith; Israel lost it by pursuing the law. In their ignorance, the Gentiles obtained righteousness by the only means possible: faith. In their ignorance, Israel did not obtain righteousness because instead of pursuing God, they pursued the law. God will not accept any human substitute for His precisely correct protocol in obtaining His righteousness. Not only is this true positionally, but it also applies experientially; the only way to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ is by the intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We are not even told that the Jews were pursuing after *righteousness*, but after *a law* by which, through their self-efforts, they hoped to attain righteousness! Although their own Law would have convicted them of sin if they had really *heard* it, yet they kept *pursuing after a Law* whose requirements they could not meet. (W.R. Newell) This verse contains an *hypallage*, an interchange of construction, whereby an adjective or other word, which logically belongs to one connection, is grammatically united with another, so that what is said of or attributed to one thing ought to be said of or attributed to the other. (E.W. Bullinger) God's absolute righteousness can never accept our relative righteousness, nor can any attribute of God's character be compromised. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 9:31 But (adversative conj.) Israel (Subj. Nom.), who repeatedly pursued after (διώκω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Substantival; sought) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.) for righteousness (Obj. Gen.), did not (neg. adv.) overtake (φθάνω, AAIS, Culminative; attain, reach, come up to) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.) for righteousness (*hypallage*, Description supplied).

^{WHO} **Romans 9:31** Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν

^{VUL} **Romans 9:31** Israhel vero sectans legem iustitiae in legem iustitiae non pervenit

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:32** Why? Because they did not pursue it by means of faith [correct protocol], but rather by means of works [incorrect protocol]. They stumbled over [rejected] the Stone of stumbling [Jesus Christ],

^{KW} **Rom. 9:32** Because of what? Because, not out of a source of faith but even as out of a source of works they sought to acquire it. They stumbled up against the stone which is a stumbling stone,

^{KJV} **Romans 9:32** Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Trying to fulfill the law in all its parts seemed like the thing to do. Israel concluded that this was the way to obtain the righteousness of God. They had been given the Ten Commandments, hadn't they? They had been given the temple, the tabernacle, and the sacrificial system, hadn't they? Then why didn't they obtain the righteousness they were so intent on obtaining? Because ritual without reality is dead. Israel did not obtain the righteousness of God because they did not pursue it by means of faith. They tried to obtain it by the works of their flesh instead. The protocol of God required faith alone in Christ alone, but they had substituted works and pursuit of the law instead.

Israel stumbled over (Culminative Aorist tense) the Stone of stumbling. "The Stone of stumbling" is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. Israel rejected Jesus Christ and pursued the law instead. They took offense at and rejected the Lord Himself, desiring the works of their flesh as a cheap substitute. They were offended by the doctrine of faith in Christ; they tripped over the only requirement for obtaining the righteousness of God – faith in Christ. They adhered to Codex 1 but failed to believe Codex 2. Correct protocol is crucially important to both positional and experiential sanctification.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Jewish leaders in the Age of the Hypostatic Union are depicted as builders (Acts 4:10-12), but they rejected Jesus Christ, their foundation. Therefore, work on Israel ceased, postponed until later dispensations. In the meantime, construction of the second building, the Church, began upon that same shared foundation stone. The current situation finds the Church under construction while Israel remains a foundation with its superstructure incomplete. When the Church is completed, then construction of Israel will resume. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

I have spoken in the past of four great offenses of the gospel: (1) the deity of Jesus Christ, (2) His humanity and humble estate, (3) that the gospel must be received by faith rather than being earned by works, and (4) that salvation is according to God's sovereign election and calling. Four great stones for stumbling! (J. Boice) The Textus Receptus, with some manuscript attestation, adds "nomou" to this verse, imitating Paul's usage in Romans 3:20, 28 and Gal. 2:16, 3:2, 5, 10. The shorter text is more strongly attested. (B. Metzger)

A free salvation becomes an offense to men on account of their pride. They cannot bear the idea of being indebted for it to sovereign grace which implies that in themselves they are guilty and ruined by sin. They desire to do something, were it ever so little, to merit salvation. All the unconverted reason in the same way. Many will not receive this, and

resort to every means they can devise to neutralize or controvert it, but God has testified it, and the apostle illustrates it by a striking figure. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 9:32 Why (interrogative clause, indirect question; vernacular of the causal particle "the reason why") ? Because (causal conj.) they did not (neg. adv.) pursue it (ellipsis, supplied from the prior verse) by means of faith (Abl. Means; they did not believe Codex 2), but (adversative conj.) rather (comparative particle) by means of works (Abl. Means). They stumbled over (προσκόπτω, ΑΑΙ3Ρ, Culminative; took offense at, rejected, felt repugnance for, tripped over) the Stone (Dat. Ind. Obj.) of stumbling (Descr. Gen.; offense, obstacle, reference to Jesus Christ),

^{WHO} **Romans 9:32** διὰ τί ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἀλλ ὡς ἐξ ἔργων· προσέκοψαν τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος

^{VUL} **Romans 9:32** quare quia non ex fide sed quasi ex operibus offenderunt in lapidem offensionis

^{LWB} **Rom. 9:33** Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 8:14, 28:16]: “Behold, I have laid a foundation in Zion, the Stone [Jesus Christ] of stumbling [cross before the crown], even the Rock [Jesus Christ] of offense [Jews ignore the 1st advent]; nevertheless, he who believes on Him shall not be disappointed [put to shame at the Last Judgment].”

^{KW} **Rom. 9:33** Even as it stands written, Behold, I place in Sion a stone, a stumbling stone, and a rock of offense. And the one who places his faith upon Him will not be put to shame.

^{KJV} **Romans 9:33** As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds his listeners that what he is teaching is nothing new, but was predicted in the Scriptures (Intensive Perfect tense) by the prophet Isaiah in 8:14 and 28:16. God the Father laid a foundation (Perfective Present tense) in Zion, the Stone of stumbling, Jesus Christ. The descriptive “stumbling” has a two-fold meaning: (1) it refers to the Jews refusal to believe in the 1st advent of Jesus Christ, and (2) it foretold the cross must come before the crown. The Rock they were to believe in was Jesus Christ. But he became the Rock of offense, because He aroused revulsion and anger in the Jews. It should also be noted that the Rock is identified as Jesus Christ, not Peter as Catholicism teaches.

Nevertheless, God did not leave the Jews completely in the dark. Anyone, Jew or Gentile, who believes (Aoristic Present tense) on Jesus Christ shall not be disgraced or dishonored at the Last Judgment. The door of righteousness remained opened by faith alone in Christ alone. Any Jew

who believes in Christ will be saved and will obtain the righteousness of God. This is the precisely correct protocol in place at this time for salvation. Any Jew who believes in Christ will be represented by Him at the last judgment and will go to heaven; any Jew who pursued the law instead of Christ will be humiliated at the last judgment and will go to hell. Believers (Jew and Gentile) will not be disgraced at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and will not be present at the Great White Throne Judgment.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In view of this passage, I cannot see how anyone can imagine that when Jesus told Peter that “you are Peter, and on this Rock I will build My church” (Matt. 16:18), he was teaching that Peter was to be the foundation on which He would build His church. The errors of the supremacy of the Roman pontiff and the infallibility of the pope when speaking *ex cathedra* are constructed on this text. But these are terrible errors, and they are certainly not what Peter himself understood the Lord’s words to mean. In the Greek language in which the NT is written, there is a pun on the word “Peter.” The Greek word for Peter is *petros*, which means a piece of rock and can mean something as small as a slingshot size stone or pebble. But when Jesus said, “On this rock I will build My church,” the word He used was *petra* (a feminine form of the same root word), which means “bed rock.” It was as if He were saying, “You are a little pebble, *Petros*, but I am going to build My church on Myself, because I am the bed rock, *Petra*. I am the only foundation on which anyone can securely build.” (W.R. Newell)

You ask, Is there not a place for human responsibility? Does not God command all men to repent? He does. But the Ninth of Romans is no place to discuss that subject, and that is because God does not here discuss it. We should be able to take a passage as Romans 9 and teach it *as it is*, and *leave it there*. And when we come upon another line of truth that can not be “reconciled” with the first, in the mind of men, we teach this second truth just as God stated it, and *leave it there* as well. (W.R. Newell) This could be another way of stating the supremacy of *verse by verse exegesis* over *categorical systematic theology* - at least in matter of priorities. [LWB] Once again the Textus Receptus and the Vulgate make an addition in order to “heighten” the effectiveness of the quotation; here “*pas*” is inserted, imitating Paul’s citation of the same quotation in 10:11, where none of the manuscripts omits “*pas*.” The text without “*pas*” is strongly supported. (B. Metzger)

If we learn anything from the ninth chapter of Romans, it must be that God has always, and will always, operate out of His eternal purpose, which is unchanging. And it is His purpose that gives rise to His sovereign choices, and His sovereign choices are demonstrated in His sovereign actions. God is sovereign and is willing to demonstrate that sovereignty, not when we demand it, but when He sovereignly wills it. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 9:33 Just as (comparative particle) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Isaiah 8:14, 28:16): “Behold (demonstrative particle; listen carefully), I have laid a foundation (τίθημι, PAI1S, Perfective; set up, established) in Zion (Loc. Place), the Stone (Acc. Dir.

Obj.; Jesus Christ) of stumbling (Descr. Gen., the cross must come before the crown), even (ascensive conj.) the Rock (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) of offense (Descr. Gen.; scandal, revulsion, anger, arouses opposition; the Jews have blotted-out the 1st advent); nevertheless (continuative conj.), he who believes (πιστεύω, PAPtc.NSM, Aoristic, Substantival, Articular) on Him (Dat. Adv.; Jesus Christ) shall not (neg. adv.) be disappointed (καταισχύνω, FPI3S, Predictive; will not be disgraced, dishonored, humiliated, or put to shame at the Last Judgment)."

^{WHO} **Romans 9:33** καθὼς γέγραπται Ἴδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυθήσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 9:33** sicut scriptum est ecce pono in Sion lapidem offensionis et petram scandali et omnis qui credit in eum non confundetur

CHAPTER 10

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:1** Brethren [fellow Christians], on the one hand, the desire of my mentality [of the soul] and my [intercessory] prayer face-to-face to God on their behalf [Israel in the flesh] is for their salvation [deliverance from hell & restoration to Palestine],

^{KW} **Rom. 10:1** Brethren, the consuming desire of my heart and my supplication to God on behalf of them is with a view to their salvation.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:1** Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Whenever Paul uses the Vocative “brethren” he is addressing his fellow believers. He is expressing to his fellow believers (us included) how he thinks and feels about his racial family, Israel. He uses a contrast particle to set up a difficult position he is experiencing with regards to his Jewish connections. The desire of his mind and his intercessory prayer to God is on behalf of Israel in the flesh. On the one hand, he continually prays for his Jewish family to believe in Christ and be saved. But the emphasis here is his remembrance of God’s promised deliverance of the remnant. He has just quoted some OT verses in which Israel was delivered or judged. He now prays that they will be delivered once again, individually by faith in Christ (of course), and nationally when the remnant is restored some day in the future.

When you see the word “salvation” in the KJV, please understand that the Greek word for salvation has many meanings, one of which is temporal deliverance and restoration. That is the primary emphasis in this verse, with eternal salvation being secondary. “The salvation in view is not deliverance from hell, but the fulfillment of the promise to Israel that she would one day be restored to Palestine.” (J. Dillow) Paul is praying for the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant. When he says he desires Israel’s salvation, he refers to the line of cumulative fulfillment of the remnant doctrine. This is the positive half of the emotional contrast he has in his soul; the negative half is expressed in the next verse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The effectiveness of prayer is determined by the spiritual maturity of the believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Natural Israel and the Gentiles are contrasted in the NT as is seen from the fact that Israel is addressed as a nation *after* the Church has been established. (C.C. Ryrie) Also, the term *Jew* continues to be used (I Cor. 10:32) as distinct from the Church. (J.D. Pentecost) We conclude that being “saved” in this verse refers to full salvation, salvation in time and eternity. It is a salvation from enemies and deliverance from hell. (J. Dillow)

What type of salvation is referred to here? It is a salvation in the prophetic mode of fulfillment, simply put: God is fulfilling His promises in many individual historical events which will finally culminate in a complete fulfillment, called the doctrine of the salvation of the remnant. (W. J. Beecher) The *immediate reference* is deliverance from temporal devastation, i.e. survivors of the Assyrian invasion in 722 B.C., survivors of the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah, survivors of the destruction of the temple and the people of Israel in 70 A.D. The *remote references* are (a) the fulfillment of the promise to Israel that she would one day be restored to Palestine, and (b) deliverance from hell, i.e. eternal salvation. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 10:1 Brethren (Voc. Address; fellow Christians), on the one hand (μέν ... contrast particle), the desire (Subj. Nom.; motivation) of my (Poss. Gen.) mentality (Adv. Gen. Ref.; right lobe of the soul) and (connective conj.) my (ellipsis) prayer (Subj. Nom.; intercessory prayer) face-to-face to God (Acc. Dir. Obj.) on their behalf (Gen. Adv.; referring to Israel in the flesh) is (ellipsis) for their deliverance (Acc. Purpose, Poss. Gen. supplied; temporal deliverance of the remnant),

^{WHO} **Romans 10:1** Ἀδελφοί ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας καὶ ἡ δέησις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰς σωτηρίαν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:1** fratres voluntas quidem cordis mei et obsecratio ad Deum fit pro illis in salutem

LWB Rom. 10:2 But on the other hand, I must testify against them [Israel in the flesh], for they have a zeal [arrogant motivation to keep the law] for God, but not according to a full and complete knowledge [salvation by grace through faith is missing],

KW Rom. 10:2 For I bear testimony to them that a zeal for God they have, but not according to a full and accurate knowledge.

KJV Romans 10:2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

On the negative side of Paul's dilemma, he must publicly acknowledge (Historical Present tense) that Israel in the flesh has (Customary Present tense) a religious zeal, motivated by an arrogant attitude to keep the law, for God. In other words, they are keen, but clueless. They expend a lot of energy to keep the law, but they are operating outside God's program. Their efforts are not according to a full and complete knowledge of God's Word. Their modus operandi of keeping the law lacks the understanding of the Biblical doctrine of "salvation by grace through faith." This was taught in OT times in many passages of Scripture, but they have missed this crucial element of salvation and have replaced it with legalism.

As long as his Jewish brothers are ignoring Christ and are pursuing the law, Paul must pray that their eyes will be opened to the grace of God. Their pursuit of the law is a form of knowledge (gnosis), but it is not a precisely correct, complete understanding (epignosis) of God's salvation protocol. They are indeed zealous, but they are expressing their zeal out of bounds. Paul tries to soften the blow concerning their great theological error by a small compliment - that at least they are attempting to pursue God in some honorable way, even though their methodology is incorrect and will not lead them to salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Zeal must never be mistaken for knowledge of divine things. (W.R. Newell) This is an example of *tapeinosis*, or demeaning, a lessening of a thing in order to increase it. By lessening the terms of the expression, the truth is more strongly stated, and the emphasis is thrown on their blindness and ignorance, which is enlarged upon in the next verse, while zeal and ignorance are combined in verse 19. (E.W. Bullinger) They had a knowledge of God and so were superior to the Gentiles in privilege, but they sought God in an external way by rules and rites and missed Him. They became zealous for the letter and the form instead of for God Himself. (A.T. Robertson)

The apostle first endeavored to bring every thing commendable and exculpatory into view (i.e. their zeal), but their zeal was nevertheless misguided. The Jews had "gnosis" (knowledge), but what they lacked was "epignosis," correct knowledge and appreciation.

Their knowledge was neither enlightened nor wise, neither right as to its objects, nor correct in its character. (C. Hodge) The context of salvation in this verse includes not only deliverance from enemies in time but final deliverance from hell as well. (J. Dillow) Knowledge is “epignosis,” a full, correct, vital, experiential knowledge. That is, the Jew’s zeal for God was not conditioned nor characterized by a complete but a partial, insufficient knowledge, which because insufficient, led them astray as to the method whereby they could appropriate salvation. (K. Wuest)

Zealous righteousness may be misdirected by ignorance. The apostle does not charge the Jews with neglecting, far less with despising, religion. In their own way they were very religious and many of them were found willing to put forth great efforts and endure many sacrifices for their religion. They hated idolatry; they revered their Scriptures, their temple, their priesthood, their sacrifices and festivals; they prided themselves upon their ceremonial purity and their scrupulous observances. Yet, with all this, they were not commended by the apostle. Their zeal was without knowledge. We meet with similar characters in our own time. Some persons consider that if there is religiousness with sincerity, that is sufficient. It is a great mistake. (J. Barmby)

The element of zeal without knowledge indicates a useless expenditure of vital force. The combination of religious zeal and ignorance of Bible truth is unutterably sad and very regrettable, more particularly as zeal should always be tempered with knowledge. Oh, the astonishing and deplorable lack of discernment in those who were presumably familiar with their own Scriptures. Is it not marvelous that people can read the Bible and all the time fail to see its essential teaching and its personal application to themselves? There is scarcely anything more surprising and saddening than the presence of intellectual knowledge of God’s Word with an utter failure to appreciate its spiritual meaning and force. (W.H.G. Thomas) “Epignosis” is especially used of religious knowledge, and suggests attainments in it. (W.R. Nicoll)

It is significant that the word Paul uses for “knowledge” is not the simple Greek word “gnosis,” which gave its name to the Gnostic movement and means “factual knowledge” pure and simple. The word he used is the compound word “epignosis,” which adds the idea of “knowledge that is according to godliness or with understanding.” According to Paul, the Jews had “gnosis.” What they lacked was “epignosis,” which is why he was praying for them. (J. Boice) The Jews were destitute, not of “gnosis,” but of the higher disciplined knowledge, of the true moral discernment by which they might learn the right way. “Epignosis” means a higher and more perfect knowledge, and hence it is used especially and almost technically for knowledge of God, as being the highest and most perfect form. (Sanday & Headlam)

Some of the Jewish believers in Rome had distorted the Mosaic Law into a system of legalism. They contend that man must keep the Law to be saved or blessed by God. They held the opinion that man is condemned for failure to live up to the Law’s perfect demands. But Paul disarms the legalists, taking the Law out of their hands. Today, some with a cynical and superficial knowledge of the Scriptures, have gone so far as to say that

God opposes knowledge. That is ludicrous! We know that the greatest virtue in the Christian life is maximum understanding and application of the Word of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 10:2 but on the other hand (elliptical use of γὰρ), I must testify (μαρτυρέω, PAI1S, Historical, Ind. of Obligation or Necessity; bear witness in court) against them (Dat. Disadv.; Israel in the flesh), for (explanatory conj.; that) they have (ἔχω, PAI3P, Customary; possess) a zeal (Acc. Dir. Obj.; religious zeal motivated by an arrogance to keep the law) for God (Obj. Gen.; on the positive side), but (adversative conj.; on the negative side) not (neg. adv.) according to (or as a result of) a full and complete knowledge (Acc. Gen. Ref. or Result; blind arrogance, their modus operandi lacked the understanding of the Biblical doctrine of *salvation by grace through faith*),

^{WHO} **Romans 10:2** μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὅτι ζῆλον θεοῦ ἔχουσιν ἀλλ οὐ κατ ἐπίγνωσιν·

^{VUL} **Romans 10:2** testimonium enim perhibeo illis quod aemulationem Dei habent sed non secundum scientiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:3** **For by being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and by striving to establish their own [outside of God’s plan] righteousness [glory to themselves instead of God], they have not been obedient to the righteousness of God;**

^{KW} **Rom. 10:3** For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to set up their own private righteousness, to the righteousness of God they have not subjected themselves.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:3** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Jews as a whole were ignorant (Descriptive Present tense) of God’s righteousness, so they strived with all their might (Pictorial Present tense) to establish (Constative Aorist tense) their own righteousness by keeping the law. The law was not given to them for the purpose of attaining righteousness. This faulty assumption was a product of their own creation, an imaginary religious system that had nothing to do with God’s protocol plan. The law was given to make sin exceedingly sinful. It was given to drive the hopeless to Christ and to rest in His grace for salvation. But the Jews rejected salvation by grace through faith, they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, and they substituted their own righteousness for His grace mechanics.

In pride and arrogance the Jews endeavored to create a monument of glory to themselves instead of to God. They refused to submit to (Culminative Aorist tense) the righteousness

of God. Like many believers during the Church Age, they rejected God's protocol plan for their dispensation in favor of a plan of their own making. Their zeal for the law and the sacrificial system was keen, but they were clueless. Likewise, unbelievers today have a zeal for morality and works, but they reject the Savior Jesus Christ, the only plan of salvation for the day in which we live. They attend Sunday services, participate in rituals, and go from program to program socializing, but they are far from God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The cause of the rejection of the Jews was the rejection of the method of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and their persisting in confiding in their own merits and advantages as the ground of their acceptance with God. (C. Hodge) The terrible devastation that would come upon Israel in A.D. 70 was their judgment for rejecting the free gift of the righteousness of God in Christ, their Messiah. (J. Dillow) The Jews evinced ignorance of the real meaning and purpose of the law, in resting on it for justification. This is Paul's constant position in speaking of the office of the Law, that it could not and was never meant to justify, but rather to convince of sin, to establish the need of and excite a craving for, redemption. And so prepare men to appreciate and accept the righteousness of God in Christ which was its end. (J. Barmby)

The righteousness the Jews desired was a righteousness that was in character their own, one tinged with their own endeavors, the product of their own efforts, one that would glorify themselves, not one characterized by what God in His glorious Person would do, not one handed to them as a gift for which they would feel obligated to thank Him. (K. Wuest) They were so religious that they did not want to settle for something God could give them. They wanted to be religious enough so that they could become partners with God in the matter of their salvation. (J. Edwards) Paul is acutely conscious of the tragedy of the man who seeks good ends, but pursues them by false means. The purpose of such a person is above criticism, but he condemns himself to defeat. (J. Knox)

Most people today are impatient with precise definitions, especially theological definitions or definitions of biblical words, which do not mean much to them in any case. I have had people tell me, "I tune out whenever you start talking about words." This is because they are impatient with precision about most anything. Yet some things require precision. You cannot make much progress in learning about God without precision, since God is Himself precise and is the source of all precision. The zeal of Paul's countrymen was "not based on knowledge." It was a zeal that was ignorant of the precise, accurate meaning of this word. (J. Boice)

"Imputed righteousness?" people say. "That's too easy!" Unwilling to see that they already have something far more valuable than anything they could develop on their own, believers push divine righteousness out of their thinking and devote themselves to establishing their own righteousness. Paul was describing his own countrymen in A.D. 58; they were already locked into the arrogance syndrome that would necessitate the holocaust of A.D. 67-73. Although Jewish unbelievers are in view, this passage applies

as well to Christians in this country who are full of zeal, but not full of doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 10:3 For (explanatory conj.) by being ignorant (ἀγνοέω, PAPTc.NPM, Descriptive, Circumstantial) of God's (Poss. Gen.) righteousness (Acc. Dir. Obj.), and (connective conj.) by striving (ζητέω, PAPTc.NPM, Pictorial, Modal; trying to obtain) to establish (ἵστημι, AAIInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Intended Result; put forward, propose, consider valid) their own (Acc. Poss.; private, personal, a product of their own efforts, an imaginary orthodoxy that has nothing to do with God's plan) righteousness (Dat. Disadv.; indicates pride in their endeavor to create a monument of glory to themselves instead of to God), they have not (neg. adv.) been obedient to (ὑποτάσσω, API3P, Culminative, Result clause; submitted to) the righteousness (Dat. Adv.) of God (Poss. Gen.);

^{WHO} **Romans 10:3** ἀγνοοῦντες γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν ζητοῦντες στήσαι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν·

^{VUL} **Romans 10:3** ignorantes enim Dei iustitiam et suam quaerentes statuere iustitiae Dei non sunt subiecti

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:4** For Christ is the end [termination] of the law with reference to [experiential] righteousness to each person who believes [Christians only].

^{KW} **Rom. 10:4** For the termination of the law is Christ for righteousness to everyone who believes.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:4** For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ is now and always has been the end of the law with reference to righteousness. He fulfilled the law in every point, but that is not the point here. He terminated the law, but that also is not the point. Any believer, Jew or Gentile, who tries to obtain righteousness by the law fails; any Jew or Gentile who believes (Customary Present tense) in Jesus Christ has righteousness imputed to him by grace. This is a primary reference to Paul's brethren in the flesh, the Jews, because the law was never given to Gentiles in the first place. This does not ignore the fact that imputation of God's righteousness at the point of belief in Christ is also true for Gentiles.

No one was ever *saved* by keeping the Law, regardless of which dispensation they lived under. The only righteousness that could ever be obtained by keeping its precepts was a *relative* (experiential) righteousness, sometimes called "living by establishment

principles,” not *absolute* (positional) righteousness. *Absolute* righteousness was always *imputed* based on grace through faith. Self-righteousness, or righteousness by human efforts, never saved anybody. And as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, the law has ended even for the goal of attaining relative (experiential) righteousness. Again, the law never (on any occasion) provided a means to any people (Jew or Gentile) of obtaining absolute (positional) righteousness. It has been used as a rule of life (relative) for experiential righteousness, but for the believer in Christ, this has been replaced by a new system of protocol.

The spiritual life for the believer in Christ Jesus is by grace mechanics, not law adherence. We are under the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” for experiential sanctification. While the establishment principles contained in the law are profitable, they are not the emphasis for living the Christian way of life. The Christian way of life is lived by the continual filling of the Spirit and the intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. Unbelievers may still profit by adhering to the establishment principles contained in the law, but believers have a higher standard to live by. For believers, walking in the Spirit has replaced living by the mandates of the law. The law has ceased to be the regulative principle for the attainment of experiential (relative) righteousness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It needs to be noted immediately that a qualifier is added: “to every one who believes.” This qualification implies that only for the believer in Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. It is, Paul says, for every one who believes that Christ is the end of the law, and his whole statement is simply to the effect that every believer is done with the law as a way of attaining righteousness. If Paul were speaking of the purpose of the law as fulfilled in Christ, we would expect the absolute statement: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness,” and no addition would be necessary or in place. The forgoing observation regarding the force of the apostle’s statement bears also upon an erroneous interpretation of this verse, enunciated by several commentators to the effect that the Mosaic law had propounded law as the means of procuring righteousness. It is strange that this notion should be entertained in the face of Paul’s frequent appeal to the Old Testament and even to Moses and the Mosaic law in support of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith (Rom. 3:21, 22; 4:6-8, 13; 9:15-16; 10:6-8; 15:8-9; Gal. 3:10-11, 17-22; 4:21-31). There is no suggestion to the effect that in the theocracy works of the law had been represented as the basis of salvation and that now by virtue of Christ’s death this method had been displaced by the righteousness of faith. We need but reflect again on the force of the proposition in question: FOR THE BELIEVER Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. Paul is speaking of “law” as commandment, not of the Mosaic law in any specific sense, but of law as demanding obedience, and therefore in the most general sense of law-righteousness as opposed to faith-righteousness. (J. Murray)

The Church Age believer has the privilege of living by the system of divine dynamics under which Christ lived, not by the ritual system of Israel which Christ totally fulfilled and abrogated. The entirety of the Law is no longer pertinent and no longer governs any people or nation. Our Lord's sinless life and respect for human freedom fulfilled the commandments in Codex I of the Mosaic Law. His sinlessness and substitutionary death for the sins of mankind [the elect] were the realities long anticipated by ceremonies in Codex II of the Law. His love for Israel demonstrates His fulfillment of the establishment laws in Codex III. Only He could perfectly execute the entire Law. He came to fulfill every jot and tittle of the Law (Matt. 5:18) whether or not the Jews accepted Him as their king. We are now under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2), which I designate the protocol plan of God of life in the divine dynasphere. Christ fulfilled the entire Mosaic Law in the power of the Holy Spirit in the prototype divine dynasphere. The Church Age believer obeys the new "law of Christ" by following His precedent: filled with the Spirit in the operational divine dynasphere, as in Rom. 8:2-4. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

A quite different opinion is as follows: The words **Christ is the end of the Law**, cannot mean Christ is the "fulfillment of what the law *required*." The Law required obedience to precepts - or death for disobedience. Now Christ *died*! If it be answered, that before He died He fulfilled the claims of the Law, kept it perfectly, and that this law-keeping of Christ was reckoned as over against the Israelite's breaking of the Law, then I ask, Why should Christ *die*? If the claims of the Law were met in Christ's earthly obedience, and if that earthly life of obedience is "reckoned to those who believe," the curse of the Law has been removed by "vicarious law-keeping." *Why should Christ die?* This idea of Christ's keeping the Law for "us" (for they will include us among the Israelites! although the Law was not given to Gentiles), *is a deadly heresy, no matter who teaches it*. Paul tells us plainly how the curse of the Law was removed: "Christ redeemed us," (meaning Jewish believers), "from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). It was on *the Cross*, not by an "earthly life of obedience," that Christ bore the Law's curse. Those who speak of Christ as taking the place of fulfilling the Law for us, give the Law *an office that God did not give it*. His obedience, which was perfect, was in order that He might "present Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot unto God," as a sin-offering. Also: *The Law is no more a rule of life than it is a means of righteousness*. Walking in the Spirit has now taken place of walking by ordinances. (W.R. Newell)

At present, only the Mosaic Law has been fulfilled completely. In His 1st advent Christ fulfilled the entire Law, including all three codices, by His sinless life and substitutionary death for the sins of mankind [the elect]. In His 2nd advent He will fulfill the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants when He returns to earth to restore Israel and rule over her. Even at the peak of Israel's glory under Solomon, the unconditional covenants were not fulfilled. Israel has never occupied all of the vast lands granted by the Palestinian Covenant. But God has not forgotten His people; He will keep His promises. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The law, as a dispensation, came to an end when Christ appeared. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 10:4 For (explanatory conj.) Christ (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis; and *always has been*) the end (Pred. Nom.; completion, termination, cessation) of the law (Obj. Gen.) with reference to righteousness (Acc. Gen. Ref.; relative, experiential righteousness) to each person (Dat. Adv.; both Jews and Gentiles) who believes (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DSM, Customary, Substantival, Articular; Christians are to walk by the Spirit rather than adhere to the mandates of the law).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:4** τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι

^{VUL} **Romans 10:4** finis enim legis Christus ad iustitiam omni credenti

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:5** Even Moses described the righteousness [morality] which comes by means of the law, that [in Leviticus 18:5]: “The man who attempts to perform these things shall live by them [in the sphere of their operation]. “

^{KW} **Rom. 10:5** For Moses writes that the man who does the righteousness which is of the law shall live in its sphere.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:5** For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even Moses described (Historical Present tense) the righteousness which comes by means of the law in Leviticus 18:5. This is a reference to the teachings of morality in Codices I and III, neither of which provide salvation. Any believer or unbeliever who attempts to perform (Constative Aorist tense) the freedom and morality in Codex I or the establishment principles in Codex III shall live (Predictive Future tense) in the sphere of the law’s operation. Initially, that doesn’t sound too bad, does it? There’s nothing wrong with freedom, morality or establishment principles, right? The law is holy, just and good – right? So what is the problem with this sphere of operation?

Living by the law means abiding by the law’s ultimate conclusion: condemnation. A person can conduct his life by adhering to freedom, morality and establishment principles and he will have a good life, but it will be a life without God and an eternal life in hell instead of heaven. A lifestyle of a nation or a person under Codices I or III of the law does not provide salvation. Salvation is not granted to those who live an upstanding, noble, moral, and good life; salvation is granted to those who believe in Jesus Christ. A lot of good people, living free and moral lives, are going to hell because they did not believe in the uniquely born Son of God.

Living the “spiritual life” by the law may clean up your outward behavior, but it does not provide the adherent with supernatural power. Living the spiritual life requires a spiritual power, the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit. Living the spiritual life requires grace mechanics, not law adherence. Morality is not identical with the spiritual life. A lot of unbelievers live moral lives, but they are going to hell. A lot of believers live moral lives, but if they are not filled with the Spirit while doing so, all this moral effort will be burned at the Judgment Seat of Christ as wood, hay or stubble.

Living in the sphere of the law’s operation will not recommend a believer before God. Positionally, the righteousness of the law in Codices I & III is a dead end. The righteousness by faith in Codex II is the only means of obtaining salvation. Experientially, Codices I & III are good principles to live by, but the spiritual life is to be lived by the Spirit, not the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Codex I protected the Jew’s ability to make decisions; Codex II presented the most important decision he faced; and Codex III prescribed the environment most conducive to making good decisions. Codex I - freedom code, which protected human life, freedom, privacy, and property; Codex II - spiritual code, which charged individual believers and communicators of God’s Word with accurately presenting the Gospel and teaching Bible doctrine within the nation; Codex III - establishment code, which covered Jewish government, jurisprudence, military service, economics, diet, hygiene, soil conservation, quarantine, and other aspects of life in Israel. *If* the citizens of Israel would obey the mandates of Codices I and III, *then* God would temporally bless them as individuals and the nation as a whole (Deut. 28:1-14). *If* the individual believed in the Messiah as his Savior, recognizing grace as the way of salvation and faith as the manner of entering into the eternal blessings of all the unconditional covenants, *then* God would grant salvation to that individual in the same instant. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul in this section has in the background of his mind, the fact that the Judaism of the first century had been perverted from a supernaturally revealed and empowered system in which salvation was given in answer to faith in a blood Sacrifice, to a mere ethical cult where obedience to the Old Testament Decalogue would bring salvation. He is combatting this. Israel sought a righteous standing by law obedience. Paul says it can only be appropriated by faith. (K. Wuest) One is justified before God by the righteousness of Jesus Christ which has been imputed to his account. This is not faith righteousness, but righteousness out of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. (W.E. Best)

Millions of spiritually dying people are willfully ignorant of their true condition and instead trust their efforts to paint over the surface of their lives with human morality. Some do it with sacraments. They suppose that if they have been baptized or take communion regularly, they must be all right with God – failing to see that these are meant to be signs of an inward change, not the reality itself. Other people try the same approach by charitable giving, or by giving their time to volunteer causes. They suppose

these acts of righteousness add up to God's righteousness. Righteousness is not obtained by these forms of legalism. (J. Boice)

Rom. 10:5 Even (ascensive conj., continuing the argument) Moses (Subj. Nom.) described (γράφω, PAI3S, Historical) the righteousness (Acc. Dir. Obj.; morality) which (Acc. Gen. Ref., relative pronoun) comes (ellipsis) by means of the law (Abl. Means; Codices I, III), that (declarative; in Leviticus 18:5): "The man (Subj. Nom.; believer or unbeliever) who attempts to perform (ποιέω, AAPtc.NSM, Constative, Substantival, Articular; endeavors to manufacture, accomplish, or produce some result) these things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; relative pronoun refers to freedom and morality in Codex I and establishment principles in Codex III) shall live (ζάω, FMI3S, Predictive, Potential Ind. Obligation or Necessity; abide by the law's ultimate conclusion - condemnation; conduct his life without failure in the law's sphere of operation) by them (Dat. Disadv. & Loc. Sphere; the lifestyle of a client nation under Codices I, III is not a basis for salvation, experiential or positional)."

^{WHO} **Romans 10:5** Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει ὅτι τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ὁ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτῇ

^{VUL} **Romans 10:5** Moses enim scripsit quoniam iustitiam quae ex lege est qui fecerit homo vivet in ea

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:6** However, the righteousness by faith [from Codex II] communicates in this manner [from Deut. 30:12]: "Do not think in your mentality: Who shall ascend into heaven [to obtain salvation]? That is, to bring Christ [as the Jewish Messiah] down to earth [to provide salvation],"

^{KW} **Rom. 10:6** But the righteousness which is out of a source of faith speaks in this manner, Do not say in your heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? This, in its implications, is to bring Christ down.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:6** But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*.)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

However, the Gospel message is taught in Codex II and Paul refers to this by quoting from Deuteronomy 30:12. Righteousness by faith, the only true and effective righteousness, is communicated (Static Present tense) in Codex II. Do not think for a moment (Subjunctive of Prohibition) in the mentality of your soul that you must ascend

(Deliberative Future tense) into heaven to obtain salvation. This implies (Static Present tense) that someone must enter heaven and bring Christ, the Jewish Messiah, back (Culminative Aorist tense) to earth for the purpose of obtaining salvation.

Codex II teaches that salvation is available here on earth, not at some later time in heaven. Codex II teaches that salvation is available now, by believing in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, Who is typified by the sacrificial system. Codex II teaches that you obtain salvation here on earth, then you go to heaven. The majority of Jewish teaching had turned this entire codex upside down, with Israel pursuing empty types and symbols as opposed to the living Christ portrayed by them. The “going up” combined with “to heaven” is used exegetically to complete the “bringing down” with an elliptical “to earth.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah was taught in Codex II by means of the animal sacrifices, the precise construction and furnishing of the Tabernacle, in the ceremonial clothing of the Levitical priesthood, and in the rituals that the priests performed. Salvation is neither *unattainable* (depending upon your own righteousness to get it) nor *unavailable* (you don't have to go to heaven for it) nor *unobtainable* (you don't have to go to the bottom of the sea or to Hades for it). This is tantamount to rejecting the 1st advent of Christ - accepting His alpha glory (as portrayed by the Law, the Tabernacle and its furniture, the priestly garments, and the animal sacrifices), but rejecting His omega glory (the hypostatic union); they accepted the ritual, but rejected the reality. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Mosaic law consisted of three parts, two of them pure law, the Decalogue and the social judgments upon conduct, the other, the tabernacle, sacrifices and priesthood. The first two showed Israel its sin and condemned it. The other made a way of salvation for the individual. Obedience to the first two on the part of a saved Jew would result in a righteous character. Obedience to the last on the part of an unsaved Jew which is the same as his act of faith in the coming Sacrifice for sin, would result in a righteous standing before God. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 10:6 **However** (adversative conj.), **the righteousness** (Subj. Nom.; divine +R) **by faith** (Abl. Means; which flows from faith; the Gospel in Codex II) **communicates** (λέγω, PAI3S, Static) **in this manner** (immediate demonstrative pronoun; Deut. 30:12): **“Do not** (neg. adv.) **think** (λέγω, AASubj.2S, Constative, Prohibition; say) **in your** (Poss. Gen.) **mentality** (Loc. Sphere; right lobe of the soul: mind, thoughts): **“Who** (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) **shall ascend** (ἀναβαίνω, FMI3S, Deliberative; go up) **into heaven** (Acc. Place; you don't have to go to heaven to obtain salvation)?’”, **that** (Nom. Appos., near demonstrative) **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static; “which means”, “this implies”), **to**

bring (κατάγω, AAInf., Culminative, Conceived Result) **Christ** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in the role of the Jewish Messiah) **down to earth** (ellipsis; for the purpose of obtaining salvation),

^{WHO} **Romans 10:6** ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν τοῦτ ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν·

^{VUL} **Romans 10:6** quae autem ex fide est iustitia sic dicit ne dixeris in corde tuo quis ascendit in caelum id est Christum deducere

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:7** Or [from Deut. 30:13]: **Who shall descend into the underworld [you don't have to die to find Christ and obtain salvation]? That is, to bring Christ up from the dead [rejection of His resurrection].**

^{KW} **Rom. 10:7** Or, Who shall descend into the abyss? This, in its implications, is to bring Christ up from among those who are dead.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:7** Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul quotes another example, this time from Deuteronomy 30:13 and Amos 9:2. Who shall descend (Deliberative Future tense) into the underworld? The second half of this statement implies (Static Present tense) that the “searching person” must bring (Constativ Aorist tense) Christ up from the underworld (Latin: abyss). Since Christ was resurrected from the dead, there’s no point in thinking you must go there to find Him. Since Christ was resurrected from the dead, even if you could enter the underworld, you wouldn’t find Him there. Christ is in heaven, and He indwells His saints spiritually.

The underworld is Hades, the abyss, the abode of the dead. The idea Paul is trying to communicate is three-fold: (1) You don’t have to die and go to the underworld to find Christ to obtain salvation, (2) Christ isn’t in the underworld anyway, because He was resurrected from the dead, and (3) You can believe in Christ here and now, right where you stand, and receive salvation. The doctrines of the death and resurrection of Christ are objective facts which we have only to believe; we do not have to follow Christ into the grave or abyss or into the heavens for salvation. An absurd deduction, to be sure, but one that Paul would not hesitate to use through his ingenious debater’s technique.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The *heaven* of Moses is combined with the *Sheol* of Amos (rather than the sea) so that the illustration holds together; this is because the 2nd advent is now historical fact, rather than predictive prophesy. The interpretative rule for this verse is “proving the

impossibilities of Psalm 139:8.” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The deity and resurrection of Christ are precisely the two chief points of attack today on the part of skeptics. (A.T. Robertson)

Let him not think that the personal presence of the Messiah is necessary to ensure his salvation. Christ needs not to be brought down from heaven, or up from the abyss, to impart to him forgiveness and holiness. (K. Wuest) God has brought his salvation near to us, in Christ. We do not have to climb the heavenly steps to procure it; we have no need to plumb the lowest deeps for it, for Christ has risen from the dead to make it secure to us. It is here, present and available. (F.F. Bruce)

Rom. 10:7 Or (continuative conj.; Deut. 30:13, Amos 9:2): “Who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) shall descend (καταβαίνω, FMI3S, Deliberative; go down) into the underworld (Acc. Place; the abyss, Hades, the abode of the dead; you don’t have to die to get salvation)?”, that (Nom. Appos.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static; “which means”, “this implies”), to bring (ἀνάγω, AAInf., Constative, Conceived Result) Christ (Acc. Dir. Obj.) up from the dead (Abl. Separation; rejection of His resurrection).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:7** ἢ τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον τοῦτ ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:7** aut quis descendit in abyssum hoc est Christum ex mortuis revocare

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:8** By contrast, what does it say [in Deut. 30:14]? “The message [salvation by grace through faith] is near you [not in heaven or hell], in your mouth [body] and in your mentality [soul],” that is, the message of faith [gospel] which we are proclaiming,

^{KW} **Rom. 10:8** But what does it say? Near you the word is, in your mouth and in your heart. This is the word of the Faith which we are proclaiming.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By contrast, what does Deuteronomy 30:14 say (Historical Present tense) on the matter? The message of salvation by grace through faith is (Static Present tense) near you, meaning it is not in heaven or hell. Instead, the message is in your mouth and in your mentality. What does that mean? Paul uses two figures of speech called “synecdoches of the part.” This means he uses a particular “part” of a larger organ to represent the larger organ itself. “Mouth” is a reference to the entire physical body and “mentality” is a reference to the entire soul. The combination of the two means the gospel message is in the totality of your being, inside your person. The content of the gospel message is what Paul and other believers are proclaiming (Customary Present tense) to the known world.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ That is, to bring Christ down (as though He had never become incarnate and lived on earth) ... or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ that is, to bring Him back from the realms of the dead, the nethermost deep (as though he had not already been raised up to newness of life). (F.F. Bruce) We do not need to go down to the abyss to find the truth any more than we need to ascend to heaven for the same purpose. For as Christ came from heaven to earth, so also did He come again from the lower parts of the earth and manifested Himself to men. (J. Murray)

Rom. 10:8 By contrast (adversative conj.; “but rather”), what (Acc. Dir. Obj.; interrogative pronoun) does it say (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; referring to Deut. 30:14)? “The message (Subj. Nom.; salvation by grace through faith) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) near (Adv. Space; close to) you (Adv. Gen. Ref.; meaning *not in heaven or in hell*), in your (Poss. Gen.) mouth (Loc. Sphere; *synecdoche* of the Part, representing your *physical body*) and (connective conj.) in your (Poss. Gen.) mentality (Loc. Sphere; *synecdoche* of the Part, representing the mentality of your *soul*)”, that (Nom. Appos.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static; idiom for *namely*), the message (Nom. Appos.; divine teaching) of faith (Descr. Gen.; content of the gospel) which (Adv. Acc. Ref.) we are proclaiming (κηρύσσω, PAI1P, Customary; preaching, announcing, making known),

^{WHO} **Romans 10:8** ἀλλὰ τί λέγει Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου τοῦτ ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:8** sed quid dicit prope est verbum in ore tuo et in corde tuo hoc est verbum fidei quod praedicamus

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:9** Namely, if you acknowledge with your mouth [experiential activity] Jesus as Lord [deity of Christ], and of course [as a positional prerequisite] believe in your mentality [faith] that God raised Him from among the dead [resurrection], you will be continually saved [temporal & eternal].

^{KW} **Rom. 10:9** If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from among the dead, you will be saved.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts this verse with a 3rd class condition, translated “if,” meaning maybe the listeners will obey and maybe they won’t. His listeners might believe but not confess, might believe and confess, or might ignore both. There is also a connective conjunction of necessity, translated “and of course,” which means the second item (believe) is a prerequisite to the first item (confess). Salvation is the issue, but what kind of salvation does Paul have in mind? “Salvation in this verse is not only deliverance from hell, but includes deliverance from divine discipline in time, brought about by disobedience, and the enjoyment of Divine favor.” (J. Dillow)

There are many other interpretations that have an element of truth in them, but I agree with the viewpoint expressed by Dillow. I believe his viewpoint puts the pieces together in an appropriate manner, but I have nevertheless added some quotes from other viewpoints (Relevant Opinions) because they contain an element of truth and represent an historical progression in how commentators have interpreted this passage.

There are two sides to this coin, one positional and the other experiential. If you keep these contrasts in mind, you should not fall for the heresy called “lordship salvation”:

Believe	Mentality	Resurrection	Righteousness	Justification-salvation
Confess	Mouth	Diety	Salvation	Sanctification-salvation

Using two sides of this coin, Paul explains the mechanics of “full” salvation to his Jewish family. The only thing necessary for salvation from hell is to believe (Constative Aorist tense) in your mind that God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead (Dramatic Aorist tense), i.e. bodily resurrection. If you believe in the resurrection (Potential Subjunctive mood), you will be positionally saved. “But two things are necessary for us to enjoy the full salvation spoken of in this context which includes God’s blessing, his individual and spiritual salvation in this life: (1) faith in Christ and (2) submission to His lordship. Furthermore, it is not inevitable that a man who believes in Christ will also confess Him as Lord.” (J. Dillow) So in order to live an honorable spiritual life according to divine protocol, a believer must also acknowledge (Constative Aorist tense) Jesus Christ as Lord with his mouth.

The justification-righteousness part of the equation was inserted by Paul to remind them of how inadequate their human efforts truly were. They sought to acquire righteousness by works instead of by faith, “seeking to set up their own righteousness, instead of subjecting themselves to the righteousness of God.” The sanctification-salvation part of the equation was inserted by Paul to remind them that once they are positionally secure, there is an experiential, spiritual life to live in order to honor God. We believe in order to obtain positional righteousness. We confess in order to live an experiential salvation. The resurrection guarantees our security in Christ in eternity. The deity of Christ indwells us and enables us (along with the indwelling of the Father and Spirit) to live the spiritual life. So salvation is both experiential (Progressive Future) and positional (Predictive Future) by nature.

But why does Paul put confession before belief in this verse? Isn't that putting the cart before the horse? After all, we can't confess and live a spiritual life until we first believe and obtain positional righteousness, correct? Paul puts confession before belief in this verse only because he is quoting from Deuteronomy 30:14, which says, "But the word is very nigh unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it." Because mouth is before heart (mentality) in the verse he is quoting, Paul does not change their order when quoting them in Romans.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This confession is unusual because it is the only place in the NT where a condition in addition to faith is added for salvation. The Gospel of John, which was written expressly for the purpose that we might believe and as a result be saved (John 20:30-31), never mentions confession of Christ as Lord as a condition. If we must confess Jesus as Lord in order to be saved, then a man could not be saved by reading John's gospel! (J. Dillow) The name "Lord" is "kurios" which in the Greek version of the OT is used for the august name "Jehovah," and by its use, implies deity. (K. Wuest) We never find in the Bible that contrast between "head" and "heart," between "intellect" and "emotion," which is so characteristic of our usage today. Trust always includes the assent of the mind and the consent of the will; the credence of the intellect and the confidence of the heart. (W.H.G. Thomas)

"Even of the rulers many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God." (John 12:42,43) You don't believe in Christ because you *say* you do, but because your *mind* says you do. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Jew had been accustomed to think of himself as the chosen of the Lord, and as the one to whom was committed the testimony of the one true and living God. (H. Ironside) Israel was still pursuing righteousness (justification) through the law and by works, instead of by faith and confession. (D.P. Fuller) In my judgment, the best explanation is that Paul is simply following the word order found in the text from Deuteronomy, which he is quoting. He repeats that order accurately, adding specific Christian content for each part. (J. Boice) This phrase was a way of identifying Christians who invoked the aid of God and were publicly associated with the risen Lord by calling on His name. (R. Lopez)

Does Christ being my Savior depend on my obedience to His lordship or mastery over my life? (C. Ryrie) Jesus is Lord whether or not a single soul believed it and built his life on it or not. (E. Harrison) Paul is dealing with His deity and His resurrection, *not* a subjective lordship of Christ. To believe that Jesus (the man) is Lord (God) and that He is alive (which means that He died) results in righteousness and salvation. Full deity, not mastery or discipleship, is the issue. As addressed to the Jews: Whatever you once believed about Jesus of Nazareth, change your minds and now believe that He is God and your Messiah Who died and Who rose from the dead. (C. Ryrie) Jews cannot ignore the 1st advent of Christ nor the reality of His being the Messiah; they cannot receive +R (righteousness) without believing in these things and acknowledging them to God. Once

they have acknowledged them to God, they have evidenced that they have already been saved and are therefore without the need of law or works. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

No Jew would do this who had not really trusted Christ, for *Kurios* in the LXX is used of God. No Gentile would do it who had not ceased worshipping the emperor as *Kurios*. The word *Kurios* was and is the touchstone of faith. (A.T. Robertson) "To confess" is used of abiding in the faith, and walking according to the truth; I John 4:15, Matt. 10:32. (E.W. Bullinger) Recognition that Christ is the Messiah, everything contained in Codex II - including the 1st advent. Believing and confessing represent "interior nearness" as opposed to "exterior law and works". (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Believing is a mode of *thinking*, not of *feeling*. It is that particular mode of thinking that is guided to its object by the testimony of another, or by some kind of intermediation. It is not intuitive. Confession is just faith turned from its obverse side to its reverse ... When faith comes forth from its silence to announce itself, and to proclaim the glory and the grace of the Lord, its voice is confession. (Morison) Of course, faith precedes confession. (A.T. Robertson)

Rom. 10:9 Namely (explanatory conj., elaborates and explains the mechanics of *full salvation* to the Jews), if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe you will, maybe you won't") you (Jews) acknowledge (ὁμολογέω, AASubj.2S, Constative, Potential; confess, declare, admit) with your (Poss. Gen.) mouth (Instr. Means; *experiential* element, a result of faith; available, as opposed to salvation by works, sanctification-salvation) Jesus (Acc. Gen. Ref.; from Nazareth) as Lord (Pred. Acc., Double Accusative; the ability of Jesus as *Diety* to deliver us from our enemies), and of course (connective conj.; by necessity - adding an especially important part to the whole, in fact, an essential prerequisite to confession), believe (πιστεύω, AASubj.2S, Constative, Potential; the *origin* or source of salvation) in your (Poss. Gen.) mentality (Loc. Sph.; right lobe of the soul; *positional* element; *attainable*, as opposed to keeping the law, justification-salvation) that (conj. that denotes mental perception) God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) raised (ἐγείρω, AAI3S, Dramatic; resurrected) Him (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus) from among the dead (Abl. Separation; resurrection is essential to recognizing the 1st advent, comparable to the "feast of the first-fruits"), you will be continually saved (σώζω, FPI2S, Progressive & Predictive; both temporal and eternal deliverance).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:9** ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς τό ῥῆμά ἐν τῷ στόματί σου ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν σωθήσῃ·

^{VUL} **Romans 10:9** quia si confitearis in ore tuo Dominum Iesum et in corde tuo credideris quod Deus illum excitavit ex mortuis salvus eris

LWB Rom. 10:10 For you see, by means of the mentality it [the resurrection] is believed resulting in imputed righteousness [positional, justification], and by means of the mouth it [diety of Christ] is acknowledged resulting in salvation [experiential, sanctification].

KW Rom. 10:10 For with the heart faith is exercised resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made resulting in salvation.

KJV Romans 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul explains his comments in the former verse in greater detail by means of a contrast. Continuing with two synecdoches of the part, he uses “mentality” or “heart” to represent the mind and soul, and “mouth” to represent the body. The mentality is the instrument of believing (Aoristic Present tense) and is positional. The mouth is the instrument of acknowledgment or confession (Aoristic Present tense) and is experiential. Believing results in justification and confession results in sanctification-salvation. The idea behind “salvation” in this verse is not deliverance from hell, but deliverance from our enemies, both external and from within. Our external enemies are the world and the devil; our enemies within are our personal sins in the flesh. Christ delivers us from our enemies positionally when we believe in His resurrection. He delivers us from our enemies experientially when we confess Him as Lord. Believing has eternal repercussions; confessing has temporal repercussions.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Usually, such a verb in the N.T. is in the passive voice, so that the subject is involved in the action of the verb. (A.T. Robertson) Perhaps it is an ‘impersonal passive’, merely a rhetorical device. (Gildersleeve) This verse is idiomatic and could be legitimately translated as: “Faith results in imputed righteousness, confession results in salvation.” But Paul’s attention to detail should not be construed as teaching two separate methods of salvation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Close, but I prefer Dillow’s explanation. (LWB) Believing with the heart results in final deliverance from hell, but confession of the lordship of Christ is necessary for the kind of salvation mentioned here, salvation from present enemies. Instead of confession of Jesus as Lord being the inevitable result of salvation, Paul to the contrary, says that salvation is the inevitable result of confessing Jesus as Lord. (J. Dillow)

For Paul, confession has *nothing at all to do* with righteousness by faith. The faith that occurs in the heart is the one and only condition for the imputed righteousness of God. Confession is not a part of justification. But confession with the mouth *is* a condition for the kind of salvation Paul has in mind here, which is the kind of salvation which is available to the believer in Christ *if* that believer is among those who regularly appeal to

the name of the risen Lord. Those who had been justified by faith were uniquely positioned to experience God's *deliverance* in their lives. Here, then, we meet the *saving of the saved*. (Z.C. Hodges) Believing is a mode of thinking, not of feeling. It is that particular mode of thinking that is guided to its object by the testimony of another, or by some kind of inter-mediation. It is not intuitive. (M. Vincent)

If the whole passage is looked at, both verses 9 & 10, it will be seen that there are four phrases, beginning with confession with the mouth and going on to belief in the heart, then repeating the matter of belief in the heart and ending, once more, with confession by the mouth. Thus Paul goes from the outward act and manifestation to that which is the real cause of the confession, explains the deep principle of inward faith, and ends with the fact that it must manifest itself in outward life. He is showing that here is a work that must proceed from faith, and that this faith surely produces that work. (D.G. Barnhouse) Paul is not teaching a distinction between *inward* belief and *outward* confession in this passage; again, the key is what type of salvation is referred to. Nearly all of the commentators I have read have fallen prey to the *reductionist error* by reducing the range of meaning of *salvation* to eternal rather than temporal salvation, and equating it with justification instead of deliverance. [LWB]

This is an example of an *ellipsis of repetition* where single words are involved in an interesting manner. Here *righteousness* [justification] is to be understood in the latter clause, as well as *salvation*; and *salvation* is to be understood in the former clause, as well as *righteousness*. Moreover *confession* must be made with the heart [mentality] as well as with the mouth; and righteousness includes salvation. The full completion of the sense is: "With the heart man believes unto righteousness (and salvation) and with (the heart and) the mouth confession is made unto (righteousness and) salvation." (E.W. Bullinger) Another example of the reductionist error. [LWB] This calling on the Lord for salvation is not asking for deliverance from hell. It encompasses a whole range of spiritual and physical deliverance received upon calling on Christ for help. (R. Lopez)

Rom. 10:10 For you see (explanatory conj.), by means of the mentality (Instr. Means; thought, right lobe of the soul) it (the Gospel concerning Christ) is believed (πιστεύω, PPI3S, Aoristic, Impersonal Passive; attainable) resulting in imputed righteousness (Acc. Result; justification, positional), and (connective conj.) by means of the mouth (Instr. Means; confession) it (the ability of Christ as Lord to deliver us from enemies within, i.e. personal sins, and from external enemies, i.e. the world and the devil) is acknowledged (ὁμολογέω, PPI3S, Aoristic, Impersonal Passive; confessed, declared, admitted to be true; available) resulting in salvation (Acc. Result; temporal deliverance, experiential).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:10** καρδιά γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:10** corde enim creditur ad iustitiam ore autem confessio fit in salutem

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:11** Therefore, the Scripture says [in Isaiah 28:16]: “Any person [Jew or Gentile] who believes on Him [Jesus Christ] shall not be ashamed [defeated or disappointed in life],”

^{KW} **Rom. 10:11** For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on Him shall not be put to shame.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Isaiah 28:16 says (Static Present tense) that any person, Jew or Gentile, who believes (Aoristic Present tense) on Jesus Christ shall not be ashamed (Predictive Future tense). The word “whosoever” (also translated as “any person”) means Jew or Gentile and is expanded on in the following verse. It is often overlooked (sometimes deliberately) by those of the Arminian persuasion. It does not mean “everyone without exception” but is determined by the context. The word “ashamed” has an immediate reference and a remote reference. The immediate reference is that believers will not be defeated or disappointed in life if they maintain fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The remote reference is that believers will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ as opposed to reporting to the Great White Throne without Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God’s act in regeneration initiates action in man, which is conversion. Conversion is a spiritual act, but *there can never be a spiritual act apart from spiritual life*, which is wrought in the heart of the sinner in regeneration. *Calling* is the Divine summons, which appeals to the principle of life, that causes the will and understanding to begin to act. Regeneration takes place independently of understanding; while in calling, understanding and will begin to act. Regeneration is the begetting of the new life; calling is the bringing forth of that life, by Divine summons, into the light of the gospel. What do you say to the person who thinks calling precedes regeneration? “How can a woman have a baby before she is even pregnant? As there is time between implanting seed in the womb and bringing forth a child in birth, so it is in the spiritual realm with the important difference between regeneration and conversion. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 10:11 Therefore (Continuative conj.), the Scripture (Subj. Nom.; Isaiah 28:16) says (λέγω, PAI3S, Static): “Any (Nom. Spec.) person (Subj. Nom.; Jew or Gentile - an explanation on the term “whosoever”, which is expanded on in the following verse, and which is often overlooked by those of Arminian persuasion) who believes (πιστεύω, PAPtc.NSM, Aoristic, Substantival) on Him (Dat. Ind. Obj.; Jesus Christ) shall not (neg. adv.) be ashamed (καταισχύνω, FPI3S, Predictive; immediate reference: to those who will not be

defeated or disappointed in life; remote reference: in contrast to those who will report to the Great White Throne Judgment without Christ),”

^{WHO} **Romans 10:11** λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυθήσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 10:11** dicit enim scriptura omnis qui credit in illum non confundetur

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:12** For there is no difference between a Jew and a Greek, for He Himself [Jesus Christ] is Lord [deity] over all [distinctions are meaningless], Who is generous [forgiving sins and delivering from enemies] to all those [Jew or Gentile believers] who make it a practice to call upon Him [confession of sin and prayer for deliverance],

^{KW} **Rom. 10:12** For there is not a distinction between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is over all, constantly rich toward all those who call upon Him.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:12** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues by describing who the “whosoever” are: they are both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles), meaning there are no distinctions (Customary Present tense) due to race, color, creed, sex, etc. Jesus Christ is Lord over all regardless of racial distinctions. The title “Lord,” of course, is yet another reference to the deity of Christ. He is generous (Customary Present tense) in that He forgives the sins of both Jews and Gentiles, and He delivers them both from their enemies. The only requirement is that they utilize correct protocol, meaning they confess their sins to the Lord privately, rather than adhere to some program of legalism or works. All Jewish and Gentile believers who make it a practice to call upon the Lord (Iterative Present tense) will have their sins forgiven. And if included in this prayer is a request for deliverance from their enemies, He will answer that prayer as well. This is an experiential sanctification “calling” (Latin: invoking) or praying to the Lord; only believers in the Lord Jesus Christ qualify for this special relationship.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It was the distinguishing mark of NT believers that they called upon the name of the Lord Jesus and therefore accorded to Him the worship that belonged to God alone. Calling upon the name of the Lord is a more inclusive act of worship that presupposes faith. (J. Murray)

Rom. 10:12 For (explanatory conj.) there is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Customary) no (neg. adv.) difference (Pred. Nom.; distinction) between (enclitic particle) a Jew (Abl. Separation) and (connective conj.) a Greek (Abl.)

Separation), **for** (explanatory conj.) **He** (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ) **Himself** (Nom. Appos., intensive pronoun; "the same") **is** (ellipsis) **Lord** (Pred. Nom., Appos.; diety) **over all** (Gen. Adv.; racial distinctions are meaningless), **Who is generous** (πλουτέω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; forgiving their sins and delivering them from their enemies) **to all those** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jew or Gentile believers who correctly utilize divine protocol) **who make it a practice to call upon** (ἐπικαλέω, PMPTc.APM, Iterative, Substantival, Articular) **Him** (Acc. Adv.; both the rebound technique and prayer for deliverance),

^{WHO} **Romans 10:12** οὐ γάρ ἐστιν διαστολή Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλημος ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς κύριος πάντων πλουτῶν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους αὐτόν·

^{VUL} **Romans 10:12** non enim est distinctio Iudaei et Graeci nam idem Dominus omnium dives in omnes qui invocant illum

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:13** For each person [Jew or Gentile believer], when he calls upon the Name [Person] of the Lord [both confession of sin and prayer for deliverance], will be repeatedly saved [continual, daily deliverance from internal and external enemies].

^{KW} **Rom. 10:13** For whoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:13** For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Joel 2:32 deals with the conclusion of the Jewish Age during the tribulation or Jacob's Trouble. But this is an experiential sanctification verse. Each Jewish or Gentile believer who calls upon (Constative Aorist tense) the Person of the Lord will be continually, daily saved (Progressive Future tense). "Calling upon" the Lord, as we mentioned in the prior verse, is both confession of sin (I John 1:9) and prayer for deliverance. These are not activities we do every once in awhile; these are activities we should be performing every day, and continually throughout the day.

Calling upon the Name of the Lord in this verse is for believers only. This is not an evangelistic verse, so quit sending people to hell with it. Joel is not referring to unbelievers. This is temporal salvation or deliverance, not eternal salvation. The immediate reference is that this is a habit of daily prayer for deliverance from both internal (person sins) and external (adversaries) enemies. The remote reference is to historical disaster for Israel during the tribulation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Used when an event is to be described which can and will occur, but whose occurrence cannot yet be assumed with certainty. (BAG) Many readers of Romans 10 think that the text talks about how a person can be saved from hell. But this completely ignores the fact that in the NT “calling on the name of the Lord” is a *Christian* activity. The salvation Paul has in mind here is broader in scope than simply salvation from eternal damnation. Instead it embraces the whole range of spiritual and personal deliverances which a risen Lord is able to bestow on those who call upon Him for it. (Z. Hodges)

There is here an allusion to the ancient custom, still in vogue in eastern lands, of the right of sanctuary. One who is in danger of death by the hands of the blood avenger, if he cannot reach a safe place in time, may invoke the name of some great and powerful person, and thus find salvation through his name. If the avengers of blood refuse to listen to his appeal, and take his life, it devolves upon the person on whose name he has called to take swift and summary vengeance. He gathers together all his friends and allies to assist him in punishing the outrage and in defending the honor of his name. For 3-1/3 days he executes vengeance on all who were concerned in killing the one who had invoked his name. “Whoever should be invoking the name of the Lord shall be saved.” When vengeance visits the earth, the only shelter will be the name of Jehovah. (A.E. Knoch)

The salvation in view must be determined by the context. In this case, Paul is quoting from Joel 2:32 and refers to the physical deliverance from the future day of wrath upon the earth and the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and not deliverance from hell. (J. Dillow) Furthermore, in the NT *calling upon the name of the Lord* is something only those who are already justified can do. A non-Christian cannot call upon the name of the Lord for assistance because he is not yet born again. (Z. Hodges) Sinners cannot call on the Lord until they hear God’s special call through gospel preaching. The fact that God is sovereign in grace does not diminish the persuasiveness of the gospel message in any way, but actually establishes it. In *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, Packer shows how the doctrines of grace preserve the necessity, urgency, and genuineness of the gospel offer, while still maintaining the sinner’s personal responsibility for receiving or rejecting it. (J. Boice)

In I Cor. 1:2, Christians met in worship and often appealed to their divine Lord for assistance by calling upon His name. Christians were known by this title; they were simply those who called upon the Lord (Acts 9:14,21). Paul similarly urged Timothy to flee youthful lusts and to pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call upon the name of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:22). Peter exhorted the believers, “And if you call upon the Father, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your sojourning here in fear” (I Peter 1:17). Stephen, as he was being stoned to death, *called upon the Lord* and asked Him to receive his spirit (Acts 7:59). Pagans called upon their gods for assistance, Romans upon Caesar for assistance, the early Christians upon the Lord for assistance. The point is that to call upon the name of the Lord was a distinctively Christian privilege. Non-Christians cannot call upon Him and to call upon Him is not a condition of salvation from hell, but of deliverance in time from the enemies of God’s people. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 10:13 **For** (explanatory conj.; Joel 2:32 deals with the conclusion of the Jewish Age during the tribulation, i.e. Jacob's Trouble) **each person** (Subj. Nom.; Jew or Gentile believer), **when** (3rd class conditional particle; could also be translated "if") **he** (Nom. Appos.; relative pronoun; or "she") **calls upon** (ἐπικαλέω, AMSubj.3S, Constative, Temporal Clause) **the Name** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Person) **of the Lord** (Descr. Gen.; both the rebound technique and prayer for temporal deliverance), **will be repeatedly saved** (σώζω, FPI3S, Progressive; continual, daily deliverance from internal and external enemies, i.e. historical disaster during the tribulation).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:13** Πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 10:13** omnis enim quicumque invocaverit nomen Domini salvus erit

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:14** **How, then, can they call upon [confess sin or pray for deliverance] the One [Jesus Christ] they have not believed [unbelievers cannot confess sin or pray for deliverance]? Furthermore, how can they believe on the One [Jesus Christ] they have not heard [faith comes by hearing]? Furthermore, how can they hear without a person who provides information [gospel truth needs a communicator]?**

^{KW} **Rom. 10:14** How is it possible then that they shall call upon the One in Whom they did not believe? Moreover, how is it possible that they will believe on the One concerning whom they did not hear? And how is it possible that they shall hear without one who proclaims?

^{KJV} **Romans 10:14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks three of four important rhetorical, deliberative questions in this verse. How can a person call upon (Constative Aorist tense) Jesus Christ if they have not yet believed in Him (Culminative Aorist tense)? The answer is: unbelievers cannot call upon the Lord for forgiveness of sin or deliverance from external enemies. How can they believe (Constative Aorist tense) on Jesus Christ if they have never heard (Culminative Aorist tense) of Him? The answer is: faith comes by hearing, and if they have not heard the gospel, they have nothing to believe in. How can they hear the gospel (Constative Aorist tense) if there is no person to provide them with the message (Customary Present tense) of salvation? The answer is: there must be an advocate, a person who can communicate the basics of the gospel clearly so the listener can hear and believe.

The salvation of His elect was determined in eternity past, but that salvation occurs in time for the believer. The “means of salvation” were likewise decreed in eternity past, but they must be executed in time. The gospel must be heard by the unbeliever, and the decreed “means” is through a communicator of the gospel. That communicator can be any Christian who knows the basics of the gospel. The KJV translation “preacher” is most unfortunate, because this is not a word restricting the communication of the gospel to an official of the church. All believers are commissioned to spread the gospel, not just evangelists, pastors and teachers. The Greek word “kerusso” simply means to speak or herald the truth; it does not have a built-in restriction on who may do so. Also, as an FYI, “hearing” refers to understanding the gospel and believing it. Physical ears (i.e. the machinery of hearing) is not in mind, otherwise deaf persons could not become Christians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They err grievously who put a premium on ignorance by suggesting that the less knowledge one has of the Bible, the simpler and stronger one’s faith is going to be. The antithesis of knowledge and faith is utterly false. Faith is neither a leap in the dark nor a gamble. (R.B. Kuiper) God chose His own from everlasting. In eternity He decreed that they would be saved. Likewise in eternity He decreed the entire method and all the means of their salvation. However, the actual salvation of the elect by that method and those means takes place in time. They have to be told the gospel and they have to believe it. That is accomplished by the gracious application of the message of an evangel to their hearts by the Holy Spirit. Only then are they saved. Not only does *election demand evangelism*, but *election guarantees that evangelism will result in genuine conversions*. All of God’s elect will be saved, precisely because the word of the gospel will not return to God void. (ibid)

It pleased God to save us by the foolishness of preaching. (I Cor. 1:21) The preaching of the gospel by the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus is the instrument appointed for the reconciling or bringing home of sinners to God in Christ. But, as we have pointed out in previous passages, the mere preaching of the Word - no matter how faithfully - will never bring a single rebel to the feet of Christ in patience, confidence, and allegiance. No, for *that* there must be the special and supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit: only thus are any actually drawn to Christ to receive Him as Lord and Savior. Psalm 110:3 says “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power”. (A.W. Pink)

A chronological sequence is intended here. An Israelite cannot hear unless there is a preacher. He cannot believe unless first he has heard. And he cannot call upon the name of the Lord **unless he has first believed**. When a man believes, the result, Paul says, is righteousness. He is delivered from hell. When he confesses Jesus as Lord or calls upon His name, he is saved and delivered from all enemies of the people of God in time. Beginning with physical deliverance from the Assyrian invasion, the remnant progresses through subsequent deliverances of the people in time. Paul desires that the people will be saved from destruction in A.D. 70, but he knows that all will experience the temporal

deliverances in the broadest sense as they call upon the name of their divine Lord for assistance in time. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 10:14 How (interrogative pronoun), then (inferential particle), can they call upon (ἐπικαλέω, AMSubj.3P, Constative, Rhetorical Deliberative; utilize the rebound technique or pray for temporal deliverance) the One (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) they have not (neg. adv.) believed (πιστεύω, AAI3P, Culminative; unbelievers cannot use rebound)? Furthermore (transitional particle), how (interrogative pronoun) can they believe (πιστεύω, AASubj.3P, Constative, Rhetorical Deliberative) on the One (Obj. Gen.; Jesus Christ) they have not (neg. adv.) heard (ἀκούω, AAI3P, Culminative; faith comes by hearing)? Furthermore (transitional particle), how (interrogative pronoun) can they hear (ἀκούω, AASubj.3P, Constative, Rhetorical Deliberative) without (neg. adv.) a person who provides information (κηρύσσω, PAPtc.GSM, Customary, Substantival, Genitive Absolute; herald, proclaim, "Truth needs an advocate")?

^{WHO} **Romans 10:14** Πῶς οὖν ἐπικαλέσονται εἰς ὃν οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν πῶς δὲ πιστεύσωσιν οὐ οὐκ ἤκουσαν πῶς δὲ ἀκούσωσιν χωρὶς κηρύσσοντος

^{VUL} **Romans 10:14** quomodo ergo invocabunt in quem non crediderunt aut quomodo credent ei quem non audierunt quomodo autem audient sine praedicante

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:15** Furthermore, how can they provide information if they are not sent out [missionary & evangelistic ministries]? Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:7]: “How timely is the arrival [communicators of the gospel in action] of those who proclaim the good news!”

^{KW} **Rom. 10:15** And how is it possible that they shall make a proclamation except they be sent on a mission? Even as it stands written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good tidings of good things.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:15** And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The fourth of Paul’s questions relates primarily to the divine commission of missionaries and evangelists, but it is not necessarily restricted to a spiritually gifted official. Any local church may commission members of the church to carry the gospel to another geographical location. A local church may even provide support, for example, to teenage

believers who speak the gospel on street corners, hiking trails, beaches, summer camps, etc. While Paul is primarily speaking about evangelists and missionaries, we need not restrict the spreading of the gospel with this verse.

Paul quotes from Isaiah 52:7 (Dramatic Perfect tense) concerning the delightful approach of a believer communicating the gospel. How timely is the arrival of those who proclaim (Customary Present tense) the good news of Jesus Christ! The word “timely” means the message they are bringing will fall on the ears of their hearers at exactly the right time. “Beautiful feet” in the KJV can also be translated idiomatically as “how delightful the approach.” Special feet (Latin: speciosi pedes) represents the person who is actively bringing the gospel. It refers first to evangelists and missionaries, but extends to all believers by way of the great commission to evangelize (Customary Present tense) every city, county, state, and country of the world.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This may be an example of a *synecdoche*, where the feet are put for the whole man, i.e. the coming of him who brings good news. Notice the *gradation*, or *anadiplosis*, in which successive words or phrases climb a ladder:

Callcall

believed believe

heard hear

preacher preach.

The KJV and other English versions follow the additional Latin words which are not in the Greek. (E.W. Bullinger)

Paul goes on to ask whether any could plead the excuse of not having heard, so as to justify want of the faith that comes of hearing. Nay, he replies, the sound of the good tidings has gone forth to all the earth (v. 18), even like the language spoken of in Psalm 19. The quotations from the OT that follow in proof of knowledge seem to support the view that what Israel knew, or ought to have known, was the Divine design of the promulgation of the “good tidings” to all the world, which has just been spoken of. Such promulgation should have been to them no stumblingblock, for it had been told to them from Moses downwards, and they had full opportunity of knowing it. (J. Barmby)

As the Word is shared, taught, preached or otherwise made known, the Holy Spirit uses it to bring forth new spiritual life in those whom God is saving. That is why the Bible tells us that it pleased God to save us by the foolishness of preaching. (J. Boice)

Rom. 10:15 **Furthermore** (transitional particle), **how**
(interrogative pronoun) **can they provide information**

(κηρύσσω, AASubj.3P, Constative, Result; herald, proclaim) if (3rd class conditional particle) they are not (neg. adv.) sent out (ἀποστέλλω, APSubj.3P, Gnostic, Concessive; emphasis on Purpose, divinely commissioned teachers and missionaries)? Just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Dramatic; documentation from Isaiah 52:7): How (exclamatory conj.) timely (Pred. Nom.; happening at the right time; *beautiful feet* in the KJV could mean how *delightful the approach*) is (ellipsis) the arrival (Subj. Nom.; *special feet* representing the person who is in motion) of those (Adv. Gen. Ref.; teachers and missionaries) who proclaim (εὐαγγελίζω, PMPTc.GPM, Customary, Substantival; announce, proclaim) the good news (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Gospel)!"

^{WHO} **Romans 10:15** πῶς δὲ κηρύξουσιν ἐὰν μὴ ἀποσταλῶσιν καθάπερ γέγραπται Ὡς ὠραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων ἀγαθὰ

^{VUL} **Romans 10:15** quomodo vero praedicabunt nisi mittantur sicut scriptum est quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem evangelizantium bona

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:16** Nevertheless, they will not all obey [embrace] the Gospel, for Isaiah said: “Lord, who has believed our report [content of our preaching]?”

^{KW} **Rom. 10:16** But not all lent an obedient ear to the good news. For Isaiah says, Lord, who believed our message?

^{KJV} **Romans 10:16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Nevertheless, not every person who hears the Gospel will obey (Futuristic Aorist tense) the command to believe in Jesus Christ. This is extremely important, especially in a day of highly questionable evangelistic “techniques.” The gospel is a command to believe in Jesus Christ as God (Lord) and Savior. Repeat: It is not an entreaty, it is a command. And as covered in previous chapters, the doctrine of election and the sovereignty of God assures the communicator of the Gospel that only His elect will have ears to hear and believe (Constative Aorist tense) the report. Even Isaiah, in the verse quoted, knew their disobedience was predicted.

Knowing Who is behind regeneration and conversion should spur the communicator forward, because those who are destined to hear, will. You need not twist arms, plead on your knees, or conjure up gimmicks to encourage your listeners to believe in the Gospel. The Holy Spirit will do that at exactly the right moment and upon exactly the right persons. It may be that a listener takes your message and “chews on it” for days, weeks, or months before his/her time in God’s appointed plan arrives. But when that time arrives, the gospel truth will become understandable

and effective. So do not be discouraged if your listeners do not immediately embrace Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Unbelief is sad. But it is still a reality, which we must acknowledge if we are not to become discouraged and utterly ineffective in our witnessing. (J. Boice) Hearing a message does not produce faith. It takes the regenerating Spirit of God to quicken a person. It takes life to produce the ability to hear. Faith does not produce life, but life produces faith. Faith comes from the ability to hear, and this ability to hear comes from regeneration. Faith is called into exercise because of the ability to hear. The ability to believe is because of the ability to hear. (W.E. Best)

Rom. 10:16 Nevertheless (adversative particle), they will not (neg. adv.) all (Nom. Spec.; every one) obey (ὑπακούω, AAI3P, Futuristic; listen to, follow, embrace) the Gospel (Dat. Disadv.), for (explanatory conj.) Isaiah (Subj. Nom.) said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical): “Lord (Vocative), who (Subj. Nom.; interrogative pronoun) has believed (πιστεύω, AAI3S, Constativ) our (Poss. Gen.) report (Dat. Adv.; account, the content of our preaching; Isaiah knew their disobedience was predicted)?”

^{WHO} **Romans 10:16** Ἄλλ οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ Ἡσαΐας γὰρ λέγει Κύριε τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:16** sed non omnes oboedierunt evangelio Esaias enim dicit Domine quis credidit auditui nostro

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:17** For you see, this faith [saving faith] comes from hearing [understanding], and this hearing [saving hearing] by means of a word [quicken word which determines who will “hear” and who will “not hear”] from Christ [emphasizes the role of sovereign grace in salvation].

^{KW} **Rom. 10:17** So then, faith is out of the source of that which is heard, and that which is heard [the message] is through the agency of the Word concerning Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:17** So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is one of the most abused verses in Scripture by Arminians. It’s amazing the twisted things they have done to such a straight-forward reminder from Paul - that God is sovereign in salvation. Faith, a gift from God to His elect, comes from hearing. This is not ordinary faith, but saving faith. And this hearing comes by means of a word from Christ. This is not ordinary hearing, but saving hearing. The “word from Christ” is a

quickenning word which determines who will “hear” and indirectly who will “not hear.” It is a quickening word that creates living faith.

This quickening word comes from Jesus Christ, as an exercise of His sovereign grace in salvation. He knows who His sheep are. On your part, you do nothing but listen; on His part, He speaks the quickening word. It is another way of saying salvation is by means of sovereign grace though the instrument of faith. The anarthrous relative pronouns point to the special quality of this “faith” and this “hearing.” In other words, it is saving faith and saving hearing, effective in its purpose from beginning to end. A believer must be quickened (regenerated) before he has faith.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As the gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit engenders faith in the gospel message in the hearts of those elected to salvation. And the thing heard (the gospel message), comes through the agency of the Word of Christ. (K. Wuest) Perhaps you were converted in a distant city in a lonely hotel room through reading a Gideon Bible.

Remember that somebody bought that Bible and somebody else put it there. If you were saved by a tract, some Christian wrote it, others published it, and still others arranged for it to get into your hands. It is the same if you have heard the gospel on the radio or on television or through a book. (J. Boice)

Instead of rendering evangelism superfluous, election demands evangelism. All of God’s elect must be saved. Not one of them may perish. And the gospel is the means by which God bestows saving faith upon them. In fact, it is the only means by which God employs to that end. Election also guarantees that evangelism will result in genuine conversions. (R.B. Kuiper)

Rom. 10:17 For you see (inferential illative particle), this faith (Subj. Nom.; anarthrous relative pronoun, emphasis on the quality of this faith - not ordinary faith, but *saving* faith) comes (ellipsis; could also be translated “is”) from hearing (Abl. Source), and (connective conj.) this hearing (Subj. Nom.; anarthrous relative pronoun, emphasis on the quality of this hearing - not ordinary hearing, but *saving* hearing) by means of a word (Abl. Means; this word determines who will “hear” and who will “not hear”; it is a *quickenning* word, that creates living *faith*) from Christ (Abl. Source; emphasizes the role of sovereign grace in salvation, for the Lord knows His sheep; on your part, you do nothing but hear, on His part, He speaks the quickening word).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:17** ἄρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς ἢ δὲ ἀκοῆ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 10:17** ergo fides ex auditu auditus autem per verbum Christi

LWB Rom. 10:18 But I ask: Have they never heard [had the opportunity to hear]? On the contrary [from Psalm 19:4]: “Their voice [evangelists, missionaries, ambassadors] was broadcasted unto all the earth, indeed, their words of life unto the limits of human habitation [the extent of the known world at that time].“

KW Rom. 10:18 But I say, did they not hear? Most certainly. Into all the earth their sound went out, and into the extremities of the inhabited earth, their words.

KJV Romans 10:18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Some naïve brethren might ask (Aoristic Present tense) Paul whether some people might never have heard (Gnomic Present tense) the gospel. Rather than rest in the knowledge of God’s sovereignty, that He will bring the message to each and every one of His sheep without exception, they ask a question from human rather than divine viewpoint. Might there be some people who have not had the opportunity to hear the Gospel? The question comes from a complete lack of understanding about the attributes of God and the mechanics of salvation. Paul answers the hypothetical question with an emphatic: On the contrary! This is a particle used to chide and correct the questioner.

Paul could blast the questioner for doubting the veracity, omnipotence, and wisdom of God, but instead he comments on the extent of the gospel message which has been preached. Paul quotes from Psalm 19:4, which says the voice of evangelists, missionaries, and other ambassadors of Christ was broadcasted (Culminative Aorist tense) unto all the earth. Even the voice of nature, God’s creation, communicates the existence of God. And the gospel message of Christ has not only gone out in all directions, but these words of life have reached the limits of the inhabited world. There is not one corner of the planet where the gospel has not been preached. There is not one of God’s elect who will not hear the gospel. Not one of His sheep will be lost.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The main verb is already negative to which “meh” has been added so as to question doubtfully the whole negative idea. The answer *No* is assumed. (W.G. MacDonald) “Noungeh” is used in rhetorical questions, “meh” making the verb negative, and “ouk” implying that a negative answer is expected to the question thus made negative. (E.D. Burton) The blessings of the gospel were extended from the nation Israel to all nations of the earth. This is one of the keys to the interpretation of the word “world” in such passages as John 1:29, 6:33,51; II Cor. 5:19; I John 2:2. (L. Berkof)

Rom. 10:18 But (adversative conj.) I ask (λέγω, PAI1S, Aoristic): Have they never (Double neg. adv.) heard (ἀκούω, AA13P, Gnomic, Rhetorical Interrogative Ind.; *had the*

opportunity to hear)? On the contrary (particle used to emphasize and correct; a quote from Psalm 19:4): Their (Poss. Gen.; evangelists, ambassadors of Christ, even the voice of nature) voice (Subj. Nom.; sound) was broadcasted (ἐξέρχομαι, AAI3S, Culminative, Deponent; went out) unto all (Acc. Spec.) the earth (Acc. Dir. Obj.), indeed (affirmative particle), their (Poss. Gen.) words of life (Subj. Nom.) unto the limits (Acc. Dir. Obj.; limits, boundaries) of human habitation (Descr. Gen.; planet, world, household, at least to the extent of the Roman Empire in that day).

^{WHO} **Romans 10:18** ἀλλὰ λέγω μὴ οὐκ ἤκουσαν μειοῦνγε· εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν καὶ εἰς τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:18** sed dico numquid non audierunt et quidem in omnem terram exiit sonus eorum et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:19** Yet, I must ask: Didn't Israel comprehend [understand the setting aside of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles]? First Moses said [in Deut. 21:21]: "I will provoke you [Israel] to jealousy by a non people [racially inferior]; by a foolish people [Gentile dogs] I will anger you."

^{KW} **Rom. 10:19** But I say, Israel did not fail to know, did it? First Moses said, I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are no people, and by a foolish people I will provoke you to anger.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:19** But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's imaginary questioner must, out of obligation or inner necessity, ask (Static Present tense) an important question. Didn't Israel understand (Constative Aorist tense) that the Jews would be set aside and the Gentiles would be called according to God's plan? They should have, as well as some groups of Christians today – because it was predicted in a number of OT Scriptures. For instance Moses made the following prediction (Historical Present tense) concerning Israel in Deuteronomy 32:21. "I will provoke you to jealousy (Predictive Future tense) by a non people." Of course, the Lord is speaking to Israel in this verse, and the non people he is going to use are Gentiles. The phrase "non people" means they didn't have the same heritage with God that Israel, his chosen people, had.

This same foolish people, called Gentile dogs in those days, were going to be used by God to anger (Predictive Future tense) Israel. These Gentiles were heathen, had worthless ancestry, and were of low moral quality. Yet many of them were called by God to become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to infuriate Jews who were not obedient to the Gospel with which they had been entrusted. But Moses was only the first

witness to be called to the stand by Paul; he continues his line of witnesses in the next verse. Notice, also, the irony. It is ironic that God's purpose was for the nation Israel to offer salvation to the Gentiles, but when they refused to do so, He rejected them, called the Gentiles to Himself, and now He uses Gentiles as evangelical instruments to offer salvation to the nation Israel, angering them to no end!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is an example of a *meiosis*, a lessening or diminution of a *non thing*. (E.W. Bullinger) Israel in its bigotry, claimed it had a monopoly on salvation in spite of the fact that Moses and Isaiah had predicted the salvation of the Gentiles, and Isaiah, Israel's opposition to the same. Moses predicts that God will provoke Israel, rejecting His salvation, to jealousy of the Gentiles, by giving salvation to the latter, arousing in Israel a desire for the same. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 10:19 Yet (adversative particle), I must ask (λέγω, PAI1S, Static, Potential Ind. Obligation or Necessity): Didn't (Double neg. adv.) Israel (Subj. Nom.) comprehend (γινώσκω, AAI3S, Constative, Interrogative Ind.; understand, know; reference to the calling of the Gentiles and the setting aside of the Jews)? First (Nom. Spec.) Moses (Subj. Nom.; called to the witness stand) said (λέγω, PAI1S, Historical; *chiasmus* or change in word order from Deut. 32:21): "I (Subj. Nom., relative pronoun) will provoke (παραζηλώω, FAI1S, Predictive) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Israel) to jealousy by a non (neg. adv.; with reference to God's heritage) people (Instr. Means; Gentiles, heathen, worthless ancestry); by a foolish (Dat. Disadv.; senseless, of low moral quality) people (Instr. Means; Gentile dogs) I will anger (παροργίζω, FAI1S, Predictive) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; relative pronoun; inversion of relationship)."

^{WHO} **Romans 10:19** ἀλλὰ λέγω μὴ Ἰσραὴλ οὐκ ἔγνω πρῶτος Μωϋσῆς λέγει Ἐγὼ παραζηλώσω ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ οὐκ ἔθνη ἐπὶ ἔθνη ἀσυνέτῳ παροργιῶ ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 10:19** sed dico numquid Israhel non cognovit primus Moses dicit ego ad aemulationem vos adducam in non gentem in gentem insipientem in iram vos mittam

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:20** Next, Isaiah was so bold as to say [in Isaiah 65:1]: "I was discovered by those [Gentiles] who were not looking for Me [Jesus Christ speaking]; I became manifest to those who did not inquire about Me."

^{KW} **Rom. 10:20** Moreover, Isaiah breaks out boldly and says, I was found by those who are not seeking me. I was made manifest to those who are not inquiring about me.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:20** But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul introduces his 2nd witness, Isaiah, who had the following bold statement (Historical Present tense) to make in Isaiah 65:1. The Lord Jesus Christ speaking, “I was discovered by those (Gentiles) who were not looking for Me (Historical Present tense).” The Jews were following the law, the sacrifices, the rituals, but the Gentiles were doing none of those things. The Jews were seeking for God, while the Gentiles were not. Yet He was discovered by the Gentiles and not by the Jews. This was all according to God’s plans and was attested by Isaiah. Jesus Christ also became manifest (Constative Aorist tense) to those (Gentiles) who were not inquiring about Him (Descriptive Present tense) at all.

Not only were they not seeking for the Lord, they were not even asking questions about Him. They were totally disinterested, yet in God’s perfect timing and plan, they became interested to the point of salvation. Paul is placing an obvious emphasis on the sovereignty of God in salvation by this quote, both as a direct reference to the Gentiles, and as a remote reference to his own salvation experience. In neither case were there any “positive bleeps” or “signals” being put forth by the recipients of God’s mercy and grace. The Gentiles were not looking for Him nor were they asking questions (Latin: interrogating) about His existence or His plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Our problem is not that we have misunderstood grace. It is that we have rejected grace. It is because we will not bow our stiff, disobedient, and obstinate necks to God’s gospel. (J. Boice) We were all, without exception, delivered by His free mercy from the deepest abyss of death, when there is no knowledge of Him, no desire of serving Him, in a word, no conviction of His truth. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 10:20 Next (continuative particle; introducing another O.T. *chiasm*), Isaiah (Subj. Nom.; 2nd witness) was so bold (ἀποτολμάω, PAI3S, Historical; uncompromising, courageous) as to (conj. introducing a result) say (λέγω, PAI3S, Durative; Hebrew construction in Isaiah 65:1 meaning “says very plainly or openly”): “I was discovered (εὕρισκω, API1S, Constative; found) by those (Dat. Adv.; Gentiles) who were not (neg. adv.) looking for (σκοπέω, PAPtc.DPM, Historical, Substantival; seeking) Me (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ speaking); I became (γίνομαι, AMI1S, Constative, Deponent; idiom for “I revealed Myself”) visible (Pred. Nom.; manifest) to those (Dat. Adv.; Gentiles) who did not (neg. adv.) inquire about (ἐπερωτάω, PAPtc.DPM, Descriptive, Substantival; ask for) Me (Acc. Dir. Obj.).”

^{WHO} **Romans 10:20** Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει Εὐρέθην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ζητοῦσιν ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 10:20** Esaias autem audet et dicit inventus sum non quaerentibus me palam apparui his qui me non interrogabant

^{LWB} **Rom. 10:21** **And face-to-face with Israel He [God the Father] said [in Isaiah 65:2]: “All day long I have stretched forth My hands [imploring gesture] face-to-face to a people who are disobedient [non-persuadible] and who are obstinate [a bundle of contradictions].”**

^{KW} **Rom. 10:21** But to Israel He says, The whole day I stretched out My hands to a non-persuadible and cantankerous people.

^{KJV} **Romans 10:21** But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

And in Isaiah 65:2, God the Father said (Historical Present tense) to the nation Israel the following. “All day long I have stretched forth (Latin: expanded) My hands face-to-face to a people who are disobedient (Descriptive Present tense) and obstinate. Day after day after day the Lord reached out to them in an imploring gesture. His “hands” is an anthropomorphism for His desire to have fellowship with Israel. Did Israel take His hand and follow Him? No, they were stiff-necked and non-persuadible. They were argumentative and full of contradictions; in actuality, they opposed their own Messiah. They had their own substitute religion and they preferred to follow it rather than the truth it embodied by type and example. They rejected God’s stretched-forth hands (Dramatic Aorist tense) day after day.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It was not want of knowledge, then, nor want of intelligence, but willful and stubborn disobedience that explains the exclusion of Israel from the Kingdom of Christ and all its blessings. (K.Wuest) He has left them to their own hearts’ desire, to their own will. If he changes some of them through irresistible grace which pierces the thickest armour and melts the most stubborn heart, then that is because of His unspeakable mercy. (E. Hulse) God pictures Himself as holding out His hands toward Israel for an entire day. Have you ever tried to hold out your hands (or arms) for even a few minutes? It is a terribly difficult thing to do. In a short time it becomes excruciatingly painful. Very few persons could hold out their hands for even an hour. No one on earth could do it for a day. Yet God says he has done this continuously. (J. Boice)

Rom. 10:21 And (continuative conj.) face-to-face with Israel (Acc. Dir. Obj.) He said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; referring to God the Father in Isaiah 65:2): “All (Acc. Spec.; entire,

whole) **day long** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; idiom for “day after day”) **I have stretched forth** (ἐκπετάινυμι, AAI1S, Dramatic; held out in an imposing gesture) **My** (Poss. Gen.) **hands** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; anthropomorphism) **face to face to a people** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **who are disobedient** (ἀπειθέω, PAPTc.ASM, Descriptive, Substantival; non-persuasive, stiffnecked) **and** (connective conj.) **who are obstinate** (ἀντιλέγω, PAPTc.ASM, Descriptive, Substantival; argumentative, contradictory, in opposition to someone)“.

^{WHO} **Romans 10:21** πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ λέγει Ὁλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα

^{VUL} **Romans 10:21** ad Israhel autem dicit tota die expandi manus meas ad populum non credentem et contradicentem

CHAPTER 11

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:1** Therefore, I ask: Has not God rejected His people [natural Israel]? May it never happen [Absolutely not]! For I also am an Israelite, out from the seed of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

^{KW} **Rom. 11:1** I say then, God did not repudiate His people, did He? Far be the thought, for as for myself, I also am an Israelite, the offspring of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:1** I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

After all the things Paul has said against Israel in the flesh, he used a Potential Indicative Mood of Necessity to ask (Aoristic Present tense) the next deductive question. Hasn't God rejected (Culmiantive Aorist tense) His people, natural Israel? It wouldn't be hard for a listener to think Israel is “toast” as far as God is concerned. But Paul's answer puts that theory to rest by effectively saying, “Hell no!” Now if that is too blunt for you, just insert “Absolutely not!” Whatever abhorrently negative answer you prefer, that's what Paul is saying to you.

Paul is indignant that such a question could be asked, because it slanders the character of God. Not only that, but Paul himself is (Descriptive Present tense) an Israelite, a racial Jew. He came from the line (Latin: semen, Greek: sperm) of Abraham and is from the tribe of Benjamin. He's

the last person to spread such an erroneous rumor, because he is a member of natural Israel himself. God has not repudiated natural Israel. God has not cast the Jewish nation from His eternal plan. God has not pushed His promises to Israel in the flesh aside, nor has He given them to somebody else, i.e. the Church.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The seed of Abraham represents Abraham's physical descendants through Jacob. Consequently the content of the promises that were made to this group remains in effect. There is no great difficulty in the idea that from the time of Jacob onward his progeny would become very numerous. And surely there is no problem in understanding that ethnic Israel will some day inhabit the land that God marked out for Abraham's descendants. (J. Walvoord) Distinguish the dispensations, and all is easy. (Augustine) God has not rejected His ancient people, for I myself am eminently of it, and I have been selected as a chief proclaimer and expounder of the gospel to the world. This would not have been the case if the nation had been cast off. (J. Barmby)

God is not thrusting away His people whom He foreknew. Their apostasy is only in part, and the term of it is temporary. That not all of Israel are thrust away is evident from his own case. He, of all Israelites, most deserved to be thrust from God's presence and blessing. Yet he is not included in the national defection. (A.E. Knoch) God's faithfulness is not dependent on depraved man. Paul is addressing the Jews whose unfaithfulness did not annul God's promise to national Israel. Therefore, man's unbelief cannot render God's work ineffectual. Every born-again person was an unbeliever until God in regeneration gave him the ability to believe. His unbelief did not nullify God's ordination that he believe. The absence of faith on man's part cannot render God's faithfulness unproductive. (W.E. Best)

Briefly, the 9th chapter of Romans means, God is sovereign; and the 10th chapter means, Israel has sinned. In this chapter, the two are brought into relation to each other, and we are shown how in the sovereign providence of God even the sin of Israel is made to contribute to the working out of a universal purpose of redemption – a redemption in which Israel also shares, in accordance with the inviolable promise of God. There is a remnant even at this present time according to the election of grace: and not only so, but that part of Israel (considered as having continuity of national existence) which is for a time hardened, shall ultimately come in, and so all Israel (nationally considered again, Israel as a nation) shall be saved. Thus the covenant of God with Israel, having been national, shall ultimately be fulfilled to them as a nation: not by the gathering in merely of individual Jews, or of all the Jews individually, into the Christian Church – but by the national restoration of the Jews, not in unbelief, but as a Christian believing nation, to all that can, under the gospel, represent their ancient pre-eminence, and to the fullness of those promises which have never yet in their plain sense been accomplished to them. (K. Wuest)

If God has rejected Israel, how can we suppose that He will avoid rejecting us as well? And if He can or will reject us, isn't it true that we must reject the doctrine of eternal

security? Paul's immediate answer was that God's plans for Israel have not failed, because (1) all whom God has elected to salvation are or will be saved, (2) God had previously revealed that not all Israel would be saved and that some Gentiles would be, (3) the failure of the Jews to believe was their own fault, not God's, (4) some Jews (Paul himself was an example) have believed and have been saved, (5) it has always been the case that even in the worst of times a remnant has been saved, (6) the salvation of the Gentiles, which is now occurring, is meant to arouse Israel to envy and thus be the means of saving some of them, and because (7) in the end all Israel will be saved, and thus God will fulfill His promises to Israel nationally. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:1 Therefore (inferential conj.), I ask (λέγω, PAI1S, Aoristic, Potential Ind. of Necessity): Has not (neg. adv.) God (Subj. Nom.) rejected (ἀπωθέομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; repudiated, forced out, pushed aside) His (Poss. Gen.) people (Acc. Dir. Obj.; natural Israel)? May it never (neg. particle) happen (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Dramatic, Voluntative, Deponent; an indignant, abhorrently negative answer: Absolutely not! Hell no!): For (continuative conj.) I (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive particle) am (εἰμί, PAI1S, Descriptive) an Israelite (Pred. Nom.), out from the seed (Abl. Source) of Abraham (Gen. Rel.), from the tribe (Abl. Source) of Benjamin (Gen. Rel.).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:1** Λέγω οὖν μὴ ἀπόσωτο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ μὴ γένοιτο· καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ Ἰσραηλίτης εἰμί ἐκ σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ φυλῆς Βενιαμίν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:1** dico ergo numquid reppulit Deus populum suum absit nam et ego Israhelita sum ex semine Abraham tribu Benjamin

LWB Rom. 11:2 God has not rejected His people [natural Israel] whom He has foreloved. Don't you remember what the Scripture said [I Kings 19:10, 14] about Elijah? How he appealed to God against Israel?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:2** God did not repudiate His people whom He foreordained. Or do you not know absolutely in the case of Elijah what the scripture says, how he pleads to God against Israel?

^{KJV} **Romans 11:2** God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God has not pushed aside or cast off (Culminative Aorist tense) His people, the nation Israel. He loved them intimately before time (Constative Aorist tense) and His love for them has not ceased to this day. Preachers and teachers who theorize that Israel has been eliminated from God's plan entirely and has been replaced by the Church are knowingly or unknowingly guilty of spreading an anti-Semitic falsehood. They are also guilty of

impugning God's character by displaying His love as some arbitrary and fickle emotion that is swayed by the disobedience of man. The Greek word "proginosko" points to an intimate relationship between God and Israel that existed in the past and continues to this day. Those who translate this word as simple foreknowledge do injustice to the etymology of the word.

Paul, using sanctified sarcasm, answers this heretical question by insulting the Scriptural knowledge of those who invented such a proposition. Don't they remember (Gnomic Perfect tense) what the Scripture says in I Kings 19: 10, 14 on this matter? The Gnomic Perfect tense points to this group of self-appointed scholars thinking they have complete knowledge of Scripture, but on this area of theology, they have fouled things up terribly. Elijah begged and pleaded (Historical Present tense) with God to get rid of Israel because of their desecration of the altars, murder of the prophets, and antagonism towards Elijah himself. If God has rejected Israel as some commentators suggest, He would have been more than happy to accommodate Elijah's wish. He did so once at the flood, and He could do something similar again.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Once more we emphasize that God's foreknowledge cannot mean mere advance knowledge. The moment we speak of foreknowledge in God, we speak of eternal purpose and divine ordination that a thing shall come to pass. (D.G. Barnhouse) The Bible does not speak of a passive or naked foreknowledge, as if God only saw beforehand what someone would be, do or believe. His foreknowledge is of persons, not of their state or conduct; it is not *what* but *whom* He foreknew. (W. Kelly) "Foreknowledge," as thus used, is involved in something more than simple prescience, of which all persons and all events are the objects. The people whom God foreknew were a people distinguished by that foreknowledge from all other people. God knows those who are His, and in the midst of general apostasy, preserves and saves those whom He thus foreknows as His Own. (C. Hodge)

Every agency of providence or judgment in all the world moves with a foreseen vital relation to the ultimate glory of God's elect. (M. Terry) "Foreknown" in Romans 11:2 means (as elsewhere in Scripture) a people fore-loved and fore-chosen. The word "know" is often used in the Bible as knowing someone with intimate love and affection. Adam "knew" his wife Eve. To the Corinthians Paul said, "If any man love God, the same is known (loved) of Him." "You only have I *known* of all the families of the earth" declares God concerning Israel in Amos 3:2. He set His love upon Jeremiah saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I *knew* you." Election has sprung in the love of God. Hence believers are described as "elect according to the foreloving of God the Father" in I Peter 1:2. (E. Hulse) This quote is a *gnome*, where the words are from the Hebrew or from the Septuagint, but they are varied by omission, addition, or transposition. (E.W. Bullinger)

"Foreknowledge" is used five times with reference to God (Acts 2:23, Romans 8:29, 11:2, I Peter 1:2, 20), where it means foreordination. The word occurs first in Acts 2:23

where it is associated with the words “determinate counsel” by Granville Sharp’s rule which requires that the word “foreknowledge” refer to the same thing that the words “determinate counsel” refer to, and is a further description of it. The words “determinate counsel” refer here to the council composed of the Persons of the Triune God convened to select and appoint from among their number, the One who should be the Lamb for Sacrifice. This action is foreordination, the appointing of a person to a certain destiny. The word foreknowledge is part and parcel of that act and partakes of the meaning of that act, namely, that of foreordination. Israel stood before God’s eyes from eternity as His people, and in the immutableness of the sovereign love with which He made it His, lies the impossibility of its rejection. (K. Wuest)

The Arminian notion of “foreseen faith’ is impossible as an interpretation of God’s foreknowledge in this verse, and in the passage of Romans 8:29 as well. God initiated a committed relationship from eternity with certain individuals whom He predestined for grace. (T. Schreiner) Elijah, who was undoubtedly exhausted emotionally by the earlier test of wills, lost confidence in God and fled on a 40-day journey into the remote wilderness. He could not see what God was doing, so he assumed that he was the only faithful person left. (J. Boice) But God has a way, accessible to Himself but concealed from us, by which He wonderfully preserves His elect, even when all seems lost. (J. Calvin)

After a careful and chaste discussion of its etymology and possible meanings Moo concludes that the use of the word here and in Romans 8:29 does not mean “know before” in the sense of “intellectual knowledge, or cognition” but to “enter into relationship with before” or “choose, or determine, before.” Wesley’s view of foreknowledge (Arminian philosophy) implies a tacit dualism in which the history of the created order has an independent existence apart from the wise providence of God. (T. Schreiner)

Rom. 11:2 God (Subj. Nom.) has not (neg. adv.) rejected (ἀπωθέομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; repudiated, forced out, pushed aside, cast off) His (Poss. Gen.) people (Acc. Dir. Obj.; natural Israel) whom (Acc. Gen. Ref., relative pronoun) He has foreloved (προγινώσκω, AAI3S, Constativ; loved before time, intimate knowledge). Don’t (neg. adv.) you remember (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Gnostic; know - santified sarcasm) what (Acc. Dir. Obj.) the Scripture (Subj. Nom.) said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical) about Elijah (Dat. Ind. Obj.)? How (explanatory conj.) he appealed (ἐντυγχάνω, PAI3S, Historical, Pictorial; approached, petitioned, prosecuted, pleaded) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) against Israel (Abl. Opposition; in I Kings 19:10,14):

^{WHO} **Romans 11:2** οὐκ ἀπώσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν προέγνω ἢ οὐκ οἶδατε ἐν Ἡλίᾳ τί λέγει ἡ γραφή ὡς ἐντυγχάνει τῷ θεῷ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:2** non reppulit Deus plebem suam quam praesciit an nescitis in Helia quid dicit scriptura quemadmodum interpellat Deum adversus Israhel

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:3** "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have torn down your altars; in fact, I am the only one [prophet] left behind, and they are seeking my life."

^{KW} **Rom. 11:3** Lord, your prophets they killed. Your altars they demolished. And as for myself, I was left alone, and they are seeking my life.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:3** Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is quoting this verse to show how Elijah wanted the Lord to wipe out the rebellious Israelities, but there is also an element of fear, panic and self-pity on Elijah's part. In self-righteous arrogance and self-pity, he complains to God that they have been killing His prophets (Dramatic Aorist tense) with perverse pleasure and enjoyment. Elijah obviously forgot that God already knew this was going on; He wasn't on vacation in the Bahamas. He also complained that they were tearing down the altars (Dramatic Aorist tense) in His sanctuary. These rebellious Jews were engaged in the destruction of life and property, and were apparently getting away with it. Elijah wanted them punished.

Elijah reminds the Lord that he is the only prophet left (Culminative Aorist tense), the others having been murdered. And on top of that, they are continuing to search for Elijah's whereabouts (Durative Present tense) so they might kill him, too. Elijah is in fear for his life and is seeing his world being destroyed around him. No doubt we would also utter complaints and prayers such as his if we were in a similar situation. And there is nothing wrong with desiring justice for those who have committed murder and who are destroying religious property. But behind Elijah's complaint is his hope that God would destroy ALL of Israel, not just the offenders.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is always the tendency, in a faithful man of God in dark days, to imagine himself alone. So he hunts the solitude befitting his imagined solitariness. But the voice of God came to Elijah, "What are you doing here?" Embarrassing question, that! It should bring out every Christian monk from his monastery! (W.R. Newell) Elijah is involved in a form of *spiritual flinching* which often grips mature believers when they are out of fellowship. He was complaining due to worry and preoccupation with disaster. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 11:3 "Lord (Vocative), they have killed (ἀποκτείνω, AAI3P, Dramatic; with perverse pleasure and enjoyment) your (Poss. Gen.) prophets (Acc. Dir. Obj.; destruction of life), they have torn down (κατασκάπτω, AAI3P, Dramatic; razed to the ground, desecrated) your (Poss. Gen.) altars (Acc. Dir.

Obj.; sanctuaries; destruction of property); in fact (Inferential conj.), I am the only one (Pred. Nom.; Elijah is enmeshed in self-righeous arrogance and self-pity) left behind (ὑπολείπω, API1S, Culminative with a Perfective element; from among the prophets), and (connective conj.) they are seeking (ζητέω, PAI3P, Durative) my (Poss. Gen.) life (Acc. Dir. Obj.; soul, fear-panic ploy has gripped Elijah).”

^{WHO} **Romans 11:3** Κύριε τοὺς προφῆτας σου ἀπέκτειναν τὰ θυσιαστήριά σου κατέσκαψαν κἀγὼ ὑπελείφθην μόνος καὶ ζητοῦσιν τὴν ψυχὴν μου

^{VUL} **Romans 11:3** Domine prophetas tuos occiderunt altaria tua suffoderunt et ego relictus sum solus et quaerunt animam meam

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:4** But what divine answer [in I Kings 19:18] did He respond to him with? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand full-grown [spiritually mature] men [no one knew who they were], ones that are of such a high quality of character [due to spiritual maturity] as to have not bowed the knee before Baal.”

^{KW} **Rom. 11:4** But what does the divine answer say to him? I reserved for myself seven thousand men who are of such a character that they did not bow the knee to Baal.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:4** But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of* Baal.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of Elijah’s wish to have all Israel destroyed, he received a different response (Aoristic Present tense) from the Lord that he anticipated. In I Kings 19:18, the Lord replied to Elijah. I have reserved for Myself (Culminative Aorist tense) a remnant of 7,000 spiritually mature Jewish believers. Elijah thinks he is the only mature believer left alive on earth, but he doesn’t know that there are many others like him who are not in the public eye. Just like the unknown Christian who is faithful in his metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, these unnamed believers were under God’s protection.

These men (and women) were invisible heroes, in that they were sticking to God’s protocol plan in spite of personal and national disaster. They were invisible because Elijah didn’t know they existed and they weren’t prominent public figures. The Qualitative relative pronoun points to them as being high quality, high caliber believers, because they retained their spiritual maturity and integrity while under pressure. They refused to bow their knee (Constative Aorist tense) to Baal (Latin: genuflex). God was preserving this remnant of believing Israel, just like He will preserve a remnant of believing Israel through the Tribulation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When you reach supergrace status, you become part of God's "reserve," a crack spiritual (militarily speaking) unit, the pivot of a client nation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Despite Baal's cancerous growth in Zion, God still preserved a faithful remnant. It was not given to Elijah to know precisely who the true believers were. Nevertheless, a faithful minority survived, and not by chance, but by God's grace. There is a remnant chosen by grace. Elijah presumed to number the elect, but failed to get beyond himself; God had preserved the elect beyond number for Himself. (J. Edwards)

Contrast the "short-sighted appeal" of Elijah (complaining that he is the only one left) with the "divine answer" of God (announcing that there are 7,000 mature believers left). Elijah's human viewpoint from the "reaction factor" of arrogance does not line-up with divine viewpoint in this situation. Many immature believers in Israel *did* bow to Baal, but these mature ones did not. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Things are often much better with the church of God than wise and good men think they are. They are ready to conclude hardly, and to give up all for gone, when it is not so. In times of general apostasy, there is usually a remnant that keep their integrity – some, though but a few; all do not go one way. (M. Henry)

Rom. 11:4 But (adversative conj.) what (Acc. Dir. Obj., Interr. pronoun) divine answer (Subj. Nom.; divine pronouncement) did He respond (λέγω, PAI3S, Aoristic, Interr. Ind.; reply, answer) to him (Dat. Ind. Obj.) with (in I Kings 19:18)? "I have reserved (καταλείπω, AAI1S, Culminative; left behind, permit to remain) for Myself (Dat. Adv., reflexive pronoun) seven thousand (Acc. Spec.) full-grown (spiritually mature) men (Acc. Dir. Obj.; invisible heroes because neither Elijah or anyone else knew they existed, just like the unnamed Christian who is faithful to Bible doctrine), ones who are of such a high quality of character (because of their spiritual maturity) as to (Nom. Appos., Qualitative relative pronoun; functioning as a spiritual pivot) have not (neg. adv.) bowed (κάμπτω, AAI3P, Constative) the knee (Ind. Nom., genuflected) before Baal (Dat. Ind. Obj.)."

^{WHO} **Romans 11:4** ἀλλὰ τί λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ χρηματισμὸς Κατέλιπον ἑμαυτῷ ἑπτακισχιλίους ἄνδρας οἵτινες οὐκ ἔκαμψαν γόνυ τῇ Βάαλ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:4** sed quid dicit illi responsum divinum reliqui mihi septem milia virorum qui non curvaverunt genu Baal

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:5** Likewise, therefore, in the same manner [both Israel & the Church share salvation by grace through faith], at this present time [Church Age], a remnant [believers

within natural Israel] according to the the election of sovereign grace [Jesus Christ controls history, not man] has come into existence;

^{KW} **Rom. 11:5** Therefore, thus also at this present season a remnant according to a choice of grace has come into being.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:5** Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In a similar manner, both Israel and the Church share divine status. Believers in the Church Age and believers as “true Israel” both share salvation by grace through faith. And during this present dispensation of the Church Age, there is a remnant of Jewish believers within natural Israel. Sovereign grace has selected a group of individuals within the nation Israel to become believers in Jesus Christ. This is the remnant, the “true Israel,” also called “spiritual Israel.” They did not elect themselves; God elected them by sovereign grace. Jesus Christ controls history, not man. His grace and will has brought them into existence (Dramatic Perfect tense) at exactly the prescribed time in history.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If God had not proceeded through divine sovereignty to choose a remnant, there would not have been any saved at all. (D.G. Barnhouse) Now there is a faithful remnant, the number of which is known to God alone, which is His people still, according to the election of grace. (J. Barmby) According to the argument there is a necessity for a remnant, however widespread may be Israel’s unbelief and apostasy. The necessity resides in the fact that Israel God had loved and elected. For that reason they are “His people which He foreknew.” That He should utterly cast them off is incompatible with electing love. The description of the source (election of grace) shows of itself that the differentiation finds its whole explanation in the sovereign will of God and not in any determination proceeding from the will of man. If grace is conditioned in any way by human performance or by the will of man impelling to action, then grace ceases to be grace. (J. Murray)

This remnant is according to the election of grace. The ground or motivating factor in this choice of certain in Israel who were to be the objects of the sovereign choice of God for salvation, was grace, the spontaneous overflowing love of God bestowing the gift of salvation upon one who does not only not deserve that gift, but deserves punishment for his sins. And let us remember, when we say an election of grace, how much those words imply; namely, nothing short of the entire exclusion of all human works from the question. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 11:5 Likewise (comparative conj.), therefore (result conj.), in the same manner (comparative particle; both Israel and the Church share salvation by grace through

faith), at this present (Adv. Time) time (Loc. Time; the dispensation of the Church Age), a remnant (Subj. Nom.; Jewish believers in Jesus Christ within natural Israel) according to the election (Adv. Acc.; divine selection) of sovereign grace (Abl. Source, Means; Jesus Christ controls history, not the will of man) has come into existence (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic, Deponent);

^{WHO} **Romans 11:5** οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ λείμμα κατ ἐκλογὴν χάριτος γέγονεν·

^{VUL} **Romans 11:5** sic ergo et in hoc tempore reliquiae secundum electionem gratiae factae sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:6** Now if [salvation is] by means of grace [producing humility in the recipient], then not by means of works [producing arrogant self-righteousness], otherwise grace itself [as a sovereign gift of God] no longer exists as grace [loses its character and meaning].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:6** But since it is by grace, no longer is it out of a source of works. Otherwise no longer is grace, grace.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:6** And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now if it is by means of grace, and the 1st class conditional clause says this is the case, then it is not by means of works. In other words, grace and works are mutually exclusive; salvation is either by grace or by works, but not both. Sovereign grace produces humility in the recipient, while works produces arrogant self-righteousness. This is a particularly important point that Calvinists have been pointing out for centuries. Calvinists are quick to say “salvation is all of God and not of man.” Arminians and other free-willists insist that they had something to add to the equation, primarily their own free-will decision. The first group casts themselves humbly before God and thanks Him for His sovereign grace in their salvation; the other group insists they were saved by their own free will (actually a form of works) and that God helped them complete the act.

The Arminian or freewillist is patently wrong, and in my observations and listening to their soteriology, there is an arrogant self-righteousness that insists that it has the final say in salvation. This intrusion of man into the work of salvation is in fact a work, and the humanistic philosophy that accompanies it makes sovereign grace to cease existing (Descriptive Present tense) as the grace taught in Scripture. Sovereign grace in salvation loses its character and its meaning is distorted into some kind of cooperative effort between man and God. The middle voice in this verse points emphasizes sovereign grace as a special function in God’s elective decrees. Any intrusion of man’s free will destroys that special function in God’s elective decree and replaces it with self-effort.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If man contributes anything whatsoever to his salvation, even his own responsiveness of heart or the exercise of his own faith, then salvation is no longer by grace. For it becomes a co-operative effort between man and God in which the decision of man and not God determines the issue ... For if man contributes anything whatsoever, and that contribution is essential to his salvation, he is in the final analysis saved by his contribution. If we are saved by any kind of co-operative effort between man and God, no matter how little is man's contribution and how much is God's, then grace is no longer grace. It is an all or nothing situation. But some say: Man's contribution need not be in the form of actual deeds to his credit, it could be merely that he decides to respond favorably to the moving of the Holy Spirit in his heart. Others don't, and they are lost. He does, and he is saved. The decision is his. His responsiveness is his contribution. But Paul is clear on this, too. It would make the salvation of the individual a joint effort and immediately raises the question of why one man responds and another does not. Does not the responding individual thereby demonstrate a superior soul? Is salvation then limited to those of superior nature? Paul says, No! "It is not of him that wills, nor of him who runs, but of God Who shows mercy." "By His own will begat He us." The same is true of faith. It is not even *our* faith that saves, but the faith *of* Jesus Christ - not the faith *in* Jesus Christ as some translators would like it to be and interpret it accordingly. Gal. 2:16: "A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith *of* Jesus Christ." Gal.3:22: "The Scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise *of* the faith *of* Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Man is not saved by his own faith any more than he is saved by his own decision not to resist the Holy Spirit. Because the moment we allow such a thing, we give credit to those who have this ability in distinction to those who do not. And the fortunate ones achieve salvation simply because they are in some way different in themselves. They would have every right to boast in heaven. But we do not even contribute our own saving faith. And so boasting is excluded indeed. (A. Custance)

After "charis" (grace) the Textus Receptus and later manuscripts, adds (in Greek as well as English) "But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work". There appears to be no reason why, if the words were original, they should have been deleted. The existence of several forms of the addition likewise throws doubt upon the originality of any of them. (B. Metzger) Grace demands that God be perfectly free to bestow His favor on whomever He chooses. But if God's election were based on what human beings do, His freedom would be violated and He would no longer be acting in grace. For Paul, however, the gracious character of God's activity is a theological axiom, automatically ruling out any idea that would conflict with it. (D. Moo) To make election ultimately depend on the human decision to believe violates Paul's notion of the grace of God. God's grace is the efficient cause of salvation, human faith being not its basis but its result. (L. Morris)

Every departure from the doctrine of election in any degree has been a departure from the Gospel, for such departure always involves the introduction of some obligation on man's part to make a contribution towards his own salvation, a contribution he simply cannot

make. This is unrealistic with respect to man and dishonoring with respect to God. There are no shades of truth here. This is an all or nothing doctrine. Election and the Gospel are alike in this. There are no halfway positions that are not a total betrayal of the truth of God. Paul is every explicit and completely logical when he says regarding the method by which man is saved, “If by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise work is no more work.” There is simply no way out of this equation. If man contributes anything whatever to his salvation, even his own responsiveness of heart or the exercise of his own faith, then salvation is no longer by grace. For it becomes a cooperative effort between man and God in which the decision of man and not of God determines the issue. (A. Custance)

Today we have many evangelicals who argue for salvation by grace apart from works. But if they are asked why some are saved instead of others, they do not give Paul’s answer, which is the electing grace of God, but say rather that it is because of something God sees or foresaw as being in them. Either foresees their good works, justifying them on that basis. Or else, He foresees their faith. He knows they will believe; therefore, He elects them. The first supposition is a repudiation of the gospel. It means salvation by works instead of faith. The second supposition makes “faith” a work, and thereby excludes grace. What shall we say about faith, then? Where does it come in? The answer is that faith is a result of regeneration or the new birth and is therefore the product and not the cause of God’s election. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:6 Now (transitional particle) if (1st class condition, and “it is”) by means of grace (Instr. Means; which produces humility), then (logically, not temporally) not (neg. adv.; mutually exclusive, no co-existence possible) by means of works (Abl. Means, Source/Origin; which produces arrogant self-righteousness), otherwise (inferential conj.) grace (Subj. Nom.) itself (middle voice emphasizes grace as a special function in God’s elective decrees) exists (γίνομαι, PMI3S, Descriptive, Deponent) nolonger (neg. adv.; temporal) as grace (Pred. Nom.; has lost its meaning and character).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:6** εἰ δὲ χάριτι οὐκέτι ἐξ ἔργων ἐπεὶ ἡ χάρις οὐκέτι γίνεται χάρις

^{VUL} **Romans 11:6** si autem gratia non ex operibus alioquin gratia iam non est gratia

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:7** What then? Israel continued to seek for [pursued salvation by works] that which she did not obtain [self-effort didn’t work]; meanwhile, the election [chosen ones] obtained it [salvation by grace as opposed to works] and the others [the non-elect] were judicially hardened,

^{KW} **Rom. 11:7** What then? That which Israel is constantly seeking, this it did not obtain. But those chosen out obtained it. And the rest were hardened.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:7** What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The interrogative pronoun combined with an inferential particle is an idiom for “To what conclusion are we forced?” The conclusion is that Israel continued to seek for (Durative Present tense) salvation by works, but she was unable to obtain salvation (Constative Aorist tense) by human self-effort. Meanwhile, the elect (chosen by God) obtained salvation by grace (Constative Aorist tense) without human self-effort. And all the non-elect, those not chosen by God, were judicially hardened (Dramatic Aorist tense) by God.

The Passive Voice points to the non-elect receiving this hardening by God. In other words, they did not harden themselves; that would be the Middle Voice rather than the Passive Voice. The Greek word for hardening “poroo” is where we get our word “porosis,” meaning scar tissue in a medical sense. The breathing apparatus of their souls (inhale: hearing the gospel, exhale: believing in Christ) were covered with scar tissue so they could not respond to the gospel message. Why? Because they were not one of God’s elect; He judicially hardened them by the function of His sovereignty and wisdom.

The passive voice makes it *impossible* to assert that the non-elect blinded themselves (middle voice) or blinded each other (active voice); they received the blinding from above (God) because they were not selected (chosen instruments). The passive voice represents the subject (unbelievers) as being acted upon by someone else (God). Therefore the subject (the unbelievers) receives the action of the verbal idea (hardened).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Now if the elect remnant obtained the righteousness for which the others were seeking, what happened to the majority? God’s answer is direct. They were hardened. The word is *hardened* and not *blinded*. The Greek word is one that means to cover with a thick skin. Their minds have been covered over with scar tissue. It is the same word used in 2 Corinthians to describe the inability of any child of Israel to understand the Old Testament. (D.G. Barnhouse) Note carefully that each time the solemn Sixth of Isaiah is quoted, the sovereignty of God in hardening whom He will is increasingly emphasized. (W.R. Newell) It is judicial hardening and finds its judicial ground in the unbelief and disobedience of its objects. This does not, however, interfere with the sovereign will of God as the cause of the differentiation. (J. Murray)

A good teacher knows when enough information has been given out and it is time for a summary, and since Paul was a good teacher he seems to have been aware that a summary was needed at precisely this point in his letter. First, there is his teaching about election, showing that God’s purposes in salvation have not failed. Second, there is his teaching about reprobation, the doctrine that God passes by the many who are not saved, sovereignly declining to elect them to salvation. Third, there is the reason for man’s

rejection of the gospel. People reject the gospel because they want to establish their own righteousness and do not want to submit to the righteousness that comes from God. Fourth, there is the teaching that what has happened historically in the overall rejection of Christ by Israel had been foretold by God and therefore was no surprise to God, nor did it cause a departure from His plan. (J. Boice)

The passive voice, were hardened, is clearly a divine passive, meaning God's hardening of Israel. (J. Edwards) It is incorrect to stress the use of the passive voice as if Paul were unwilling to commit himself to the view that God Himself had hardened men. If they were hardened, it was because someone hardened them, and there is no doubt who is the subject of the active verb in the next verse. Moreover, the use of a passive instead of an active verb with God as subject is a common Jewish reverential expedient for avoiding the use of the divine name. Paul does not shrink from the conclusion that it was God's will (determined ultimately by His mercy) that this should be so, and confirms the conclusion by OT quotations. (C.K. Barrett)

Some who have trouble with the doctrine of election accept the word but try to reduce its force by arguing for what they call "conditional election." This means that God bases His election of an individual on foresight, foreseeing whether or not a particular individual will have faith. This destroys the very meaning of the word, of course, for such election is really not election at all. It actually means that men and women elect themselves, and God is reduced to a bystander who responds to their free choice. If election is based on what God foresees an individual might do, what could He possibly foresee in a spiritually dead sinner other than rejection of the gospel? To suppose that God could see something that is impossible apart from His determining will is irrational. On the other hand, to suppose that faith actually could be there denies the doctrine of man's radical depravity. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:7 What (Interrogative pronoun) then (inferential particle; idiom for "To what conclusion are we forced?")? Israel (Subj. Nom.) continued to seek for (ἐπιζητέω, PAI3S, Durative, Historical Ind.; strives after, pursues salvation by works) that (Acc. Dir. Obj., relative pronoun for *salvation by works*) which (Acc. Gen. Ref., demonstrative pronoun) she did not (neg. adv.) obtain (ἐπιτυγχάνω, AAI3S, Constative; attain, human self-effort); meanwhile (temporal particle), the election (Subj. Nom.; *metonym* for the elect or chosen ones, selected instruments) obtained (ἐπιτυγχάνω, AAI3S, Constative) it (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied; salvation by grace as opposed to works), and (connective conj.) the others (Subj. Nom.; the non-elect, those remaining, the rest) were judicially hardened (πωρώω, API3P, Dramatic; blinded, covered with scar tissue),

^{WHO} **Romans 11:7** τί οὖν ὃ ἐπιζητεῖ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐπέτυχεν ἢ δὲ ἐκλογή ἐπέτυχεν· οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ἐπωρώθησαν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:7** quid ergo quod quaerebat Israhel hoc non est consecutus electio autem consecuta est ceteri vero excaecati sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:8** Just as it stands written [in Isaiah 6:9-10]: “God [Jesus Christ] has given to them [non-elect Jews] a stupefied state of mind [massive scar tissue of the soul], eyes so that they would not see and ears so that they would not hear [inability to understand the gospel], up to and including this very day.”

^{KW} **Rom. 11:8** Even as it stands written, God gave them a spirit of insensibility, eyes for the purpose of not seeing, and ears for the purpose of not hearing, until this day.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:8** (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It stands written (Intensive Perfect tense) in Isaiah 6:9-10, Deuteronomy 29:4, and Isaiah 29:10 that God handed the non-elect Jews (Culminative Aorist tense) over to a stupefied state of mind. They were so hindered by scar tissue of the soul from God’s judicial hardening that they were unable to properly hear and believe the gospel message. The metonym “pneuma” is used to represent “state of mind” in this verse. Because of God’s hardening, their minds were dull, scarred, insensible and completely apathetic to the message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

This stupefied state of mind is further described by two figures of speech, eyes and ears, which point to the perceptive abilities of human beings. The non-elect Jews were given eyes and ears, but the eyes and ears they received from God did not have the ability to understand or believe (Historical Present tense) the gospel. The two infinitives are a blending of Purpose and Result; it was God’s purpose to give them defective eyes and ears, and as a result they were unable to hear and believe in the gospel. Three witnesses are used in this attestation of God’s sovereignty in election: Isaiah quotes Moses, and Paul quotes Isaiah.

Up to this very day, during the dispensation of the Church Age, these defective eyes and ears are in place for the non-elect. The primary reference is to the non-elect of Israel; the secondary reference is to non-elect Gentiles. In both cases, God hardens the non-elect because He is the Potter Who is free to dispense with His grace and mercy as He sees fit. Again, the purpose and result of this hardening, this stupefied state of mind, these defective eyes and ears, is so the non-elect are unable to believe. There is nothing in this verse that remotely hints that the non-elect will ever believe the gospel message.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The intellectual and aristocratic genius of Moses, Isaiah and Paul combine in this verse, each mind in harmony, each witness in agreement: verbal plenary inspiration. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This blindness and hardness were not mere calamities, nor were they simply the natural effects of the sins of the people. They were punitive afflictions. They are so denounced. God says, I will give you eyes so that you do not see. The strokes of His justice blind, bewilder, and harden the soul. (C. Hodge) Just as God left the nation Israel for 400 years in Egypt and later for many years in Babylon, so He has left them now as a nation in a state of judicial blindness. (E. Hulse)

Although Scripture is understandably reticent to dwell upon God's ultimate will that some of His creatures be consigned to destruction, one can only with difficulty deny that Scripture expressly ascribes actions of hardening, blinding, rejection, and even destruction to God; they are not merely acts of response. The rejection is purposeful. (T. Schreiner) Paul's infinitival constructions are difficult to classify, but they are probably adjectival: God has given the people "not seeing" eyes and "not hearing" ears. (D. Moo) The spirit of stupor is that of mental and moral dullness or apathy. The giving of this spirit describes the divine hardening process. The stupor resembles a deep sleep in which a person is insensitive to the impressions that come to him from the outside; hence, no seeing and hearing. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 11:8 Just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; a compilation of documentation from Deut. 29:4, Isaiah 29:10, and Isaiah 6:9-10): God (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ) has given (δίδωμι, AAI3S, Culminative; handed over, bestowed) to them (Dat. Disadv.; non-elect Jews) a stupefied (Descr. Gen.; insensible, scar tissue of the soul, the result of too much sensation, dulled by excitement into apathy) state of mind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; metonym of spirit), eyes (Acc. Gen. Ref.) so that they would not (neg. adv.; never) see (βλέπω, PAInf., Historical, Purpose/Result, Articular) and (conective conj.) ears (Acc. Gen. Ref.) so that they would not (neg. adv.; never) hear (ἀκούω, PAInf., Historical, Purpose/Result, Articular), up to and including (improper prep.; until) this very (temporal adv.; current, present) day (Adv. Gen. Time)."

^{WHO} **Romans 11:8** καθάπερ γέγραπται Ἐδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα κατανύξεως ὀφθαλμοῦς τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν καὶ ὠτα τοῦ μὴ ἀκούειν ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας

^{VUL} **Romans 11:8** sicut scriptum est dedit illis Deus spiritum conpunctionis oculos ut non videant et aures ut non audiant usque in hodiernum diem

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:9** Even David said [in Psalm 69:22-23]: "Let their table [false system of spirituality] become a snare [camouflaged noose], even a net [hidden trap], and a stumblingblock [hindrance to understanding], even a punishment [divine retribution] to them;"

κω **Rom. 11:9** Even David says, Let their table become for a snare and a trap, and a stumbling block and a just retribution to them.

κ^{JV} **Romans 11:9** And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By today's humanistic standards, David would be counted as one of the world's worst evangelists. He surveyed the people of Israel and uttered an imprecatory prayer in Psalm 69:22-23 that the false spirituality of the Jews might become (Imperative of Entreaty) a cleverly disguised snare to them. The Gnostic Aorist tense points to this ensnarement as what David is praying will be the outcome of their false spiritual heritage. The word "table" represents the details of life, the entire work or career of the Jews trying to obtain salvation by works. It brings to mind the money-changers who were dealing in foreign currency translation for a profit, and those who sold birds and animals for sacrificial purposes.

Not only does David pray they will fall into a snare by adhering to these empty practices, he also uses the picture of a deceptively hidden hunter's trap. In other words, to the unknowing and unsuspecting, the system of human self-effort sounds plausible. But there is a cleverly hidden deception in the theory, which is that it makes sense that man must do something to obtain salvation. But that is humanism, not Christianity. Salvation is of God, not man. Man does not contribute anything to salvation, he passively receives it from God. All of the legalistic Jewish activity looks spiritual on the outside, but it is a snare that grabs them by the feet, and a net that completely captures them in falsehood.

David also prays that this false system of salvation by works will become a stumblingblock to them, a sense of false security that actually prevents them from hearing and understanding the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ. A stumblingblock (Latin: scandal) is a temptation to sin, an enticement to apostasy, and a revulsion to the gospel truth. Paul then prays that all this pseudo-spiritual activity becomes a punishment to them, a repayment for their stupidity, just retribution for rejecting divine grace protocol in favor of human self-effort. I dare say David's prayer does not sound like the caterwauls we hear today in the name of evangelical fervour!

The use of the ascensive particle "even" emphasizes the contrast, the *matter of degree*, between the two statements. By way of application, this means a case could be built for an experiential teaching in this verse, though as a secondary meaning and not the primary intention of the quote. Following a false system of spirituality for experiential growth is just as bad as following a false system of spirituality and missing salvation entirely. The Jews were following a false system of spirituality not only with the hopes of obtaining justification-salvation, but they also thought the continued practice of such legalistic rituals would cause them to grow in sanctification-salvation.

Following the sanctification idea, a single rope (noose) portrays the initial failure due to a bad decision, while a trap consisting of many strands of rope (net) portrays a series of repeated failures, which leads to the ultimate conclusion. A single sin (stumblingblock) represents the initial failure due to a bad decision, while retribution for many sins (punishment) represents a lifestyle of failure due to many bad decisions. Paul partially quotes from Psalm 69 in a positional vein, but also adds an interesting element of degree.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Men are commonly ruined by things (or people) in which they put their trust or take most delight. Misimproved or perverted blessings are made the severest curses. (C. Hodge)
Paul is in effect saying: Reversionists in prosperity should be *punished*. Their well laid system of conspiracy should ultimately fail. Their willingness to destroy legitimate authority in order to build upon their own prosperity should eventually destroy them. Their life of rejecting establishment principles through the interlocking systems of arrogance should catch up with them. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 11:9 Even (ascensive conj.) David (Subj. Nom.) said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; imprecatory prayer from Psalm 69:22,23): "Let their (Poss. Gen.) table (Subj. Nom.; their rejected spiritual heritage, fellowship entertained on a false basis; life's work or career, prosperity, their *details of life*; money-changers bench where foreign currencies were exchanged for a fee and interest was earned on investment loans) become (γίνομαι, AMImp.3S, Gnostic, Permission/Entreaty) a snare (Acc. Dir. Obj.; cleverly camouflaged noose), even (adjunctive particle) a net (Acc. Gen. Ref.; deceptively hidden hunter's trap), and (connective conj.) a stumblingblock (Acc. Dir. Obj.; temptation to sin, enticement to apostasy, revulsion, offense), even (adjunctive particle) a punishment (Acc. Gen. Ref.; repayment, revenge, retribution) to them (Dat. Disadv.);

^{WHO} **Romans 11:9** καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει Γενηθήτω ἡ τράπεζα αὐτῶν εἰς παγίδα καὶ εἰς θήραν καὶ εἰς σκάνδαλον καὶ εἰς ἀνταπόδομα αὐτοῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 11:9** et David dicit fiat mensa eorum in laqueum et in captionem et in scandalum et in retributionem illis

LWB Rom. 11:10 Let their eyes become darkened [organs of spiritual perception malfunction] so that they cannot see [blackout of the soul]; in the same manner, may You [the Father] constantly bend their backs [enforced humility].”

κω Rom. 11:10 Let their eyes be darkened in order that they may not see and in order that they may always bow their back.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:10** Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

David continues his prayer (Imperative of Entreaty) to the Lord that the eyes of the Jews might become darkened (Constative Aorist tense), meaning their organs of spiritual perception malfunction (Latin: obscured). The result he prays for is that they are unable to see (Historical Present tense), because they have blackout of the soul. The Greek word “skotizo” means blackened to the point of uselessness. The Active Voice would mean the non-elect Jews perform the darkening; the Middle Voice would mean the non-elect Jews darken themselves. But the Passive Voice is used here, which means the non-elect Jews receive the darkening from the Lord. David continues his prayer (Imperative of Entreaty) by asking God the Father to continually bend (Constative Aorist tense) the backs of the non-elect Jews.

This phrase is a representation of enforced humility. David wants the unbelieving Jews to suffer retribution for their unbelief; he wants them to live in a continued state of slave mentality, an unhappy, miserable existence without God. This isn't a very evangelical prayer on David's part, is it? From an Arminian perspective, we would say, No it isn't very nice. But David understood God's sovereign grace in election, so he knew he was praying against those who did not (and never would) belong to the Lord by divine decree. Again, the passive voice makes it *impossible* to interpret this verse as saying they darkened their own eyes (middle voice) or darkened each other's eyes (active voice); they received the darkening of their eyes from above (God) because they were not selected.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The rebellious majority is a monument of divine justice. This is a word of caution. Their fate should be a warning to us. Neglect of God and His truth is a terrible sin. It is only too possible to become “Gospel-hardened,” and familiarity with divine truth is perhaps one of the most serious and hopeless of positions. Our responsibility is heightened in proportion to our knowledge, and God must deal with neglect and contempt. (W.H.G. Thomas) The application is clear. Those who seek their own righteousness must bend their backs to the bondage of sin. But those who seek the righteousness of Christ and receive it by grace become a part of the believing remnant of God. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 11:10 Let their (Poss. Gen.) eyes (Subj. Nom.) become darkened (σκοτίζω, APImp.3P, Constative, Permission/Entreaty; their organs of spiritual perception malfunction, blackout of the soul) so that they (Subj. Gen.) cannot (neg. adv.; are unable) see (βλέπω, PAInf., Historical, Purpose/Result; the functions of spiritual perception are shut down); in the

same manner (correlative conj.; as a function of divine sovereignty), may You (God the Father) constantly (Adv. Idiom; always, continually) bend (συγκάμπω, AAImp.2S, Constativ, Permission/Entreaty) their (Poss. Gen.) backs (Acc. Dir. Obj.; enforced humility, slave mentality).”

^{WHO} **Romans 11:10** σκοτισθήτωσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν καὶ τὸν νῶτον αὐτῶν διὰ παντὸς σύγκαμψον

^{VUL} **Romans 11:10** obscurentur oculi eorum ne videant et dorsum illorum semper incurva

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:11** I say then: They did not stumble with the result that they have fallen into ruin, did they? May it not be so! Rather, by their defection [unbelief], salvation belongs to the Gentiles [Israel’s loss of client nation status opens the door to Gentiles], for the purpose of provoking them [Israel] to emulation [antagonize them to believe in Jesus Christ].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:11** I say then, Surely, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? Away with the thought. But through the instrumentality of their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles with a view to provoking them [Israel] to jealousy.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:11** I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Using rhetorical debater’s technique, Paul asks (Static Present tense) a question. The nation Israel did not make a fatal mistake and stumble (Constativ Aorist tense) with the result that they have fallen into condemnation (Culminative Aorist tense), did they? That was the conclusion of many in Paul’s day, and in some theological circles, it is still the conclusion today. However, Paul says, “Absolutely not!” It’s amazing how some students of the Bible fly right past this negative answer. There always seems to be some individuals who believe in a theory or philosophy even when it is the opposite of what Paul is teaching. Instead of this erroneous conclusion, the defection of Israel brought in salvation to the Gentiles as a parenthesis.

What do I mean by parenthesis? I mean a break in God’s policy towards Israel for the purpose of global evangelization. Israel’s defection is a reference to the sin of unbelief. Paul is pointing to Israel’s loss of client nation status and the resultant offer of salvation to the Gentiles. The purpose in turning His attention away from Israel and towards the nations is because Israel failed in her evangelistic endeavors, and because Gentiles who believe during the Church Age provoke (Culminative Aorist tense) Israel to emulation. In other words, when Israel sees the Gentiles obtaining salvation, God’s purpose in this change in policy is to make them want to believe in Jesus Christ, too. The intended result is that Israel will become jealous, observing God’s blessing on Christians instead of the nation Israel, and she (nationally and individually) will want to become believers as well.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The rejection of Christ by some of the Jews did not stop the plan of God. Israel has not completely alienated themselves from the commonwealth of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) God has overruled Israel's defection to make known His riches of grace toward the Gentiles, and this, in turn, will be used eventually to provoke Israel to jealousy and to turn them back to the God of their fathers and to the Christ Whom they have rejected. (H. Ironside) The temporary nature of Israel's defection is strikingly illustrated by the figure of a man who trips yet recovers himself before he falls prostrate. Israel has not fallen. (A.E. Knoch)

Israel has stumbled, but their stumble is not final. Their stumble had a purpose: it would be used by God to bring salvation to the Gentiles. The salvation of the Gentiles will lead in time to the fullness of Israel, that is, to the salvation of the Jews as a nation, and this in turn will lead to even greater Gentile blessing. The way this will happen is by the spiritual riches of the Gentiles making Israel envious. (J. Boice) God purposed to bring the Jewish nation finally to submit to Him, in order that they might receive His blessing; and thus in His sovereignty He overrules the fall and ruin of some for the salvation of others. (R. Haldane) When the Jews see the Gentiles feasting on bread from the banquet table of God and enjoying the salvation that could have been theirs, they will be convinced of their apostasy and foolish rejection of Jesus as their Messiah. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 11:11 **I say** (λέγω, PAI1S, Static; rhetorical debater's question) **then** (inferential particle): **They did not** (neg. adv.) **stumble** (παίω, AAI3P, Constative, Historical Ind., Articular; go astray, make a mistake) **with the result that they have fallen into ruin** (πίπτω, AASubj.3P, Culminative, Contemplated Result Clause; collapsed into pieces, into condemnation), **did they** (function of the Interrogative Ind.)? **May it not** (neg. adv.) **be so** (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Culminative, Voluntative; "I hope not!")! **Rather** (adversative particle), **by their** (Poss. Gen.) **defection** (Instr. Means, Dat. Disadv.; fall, transgression, sin of unbelief, apostasy, false step, offense, blunder), **salvation** (Ind. Nom.; evangelization) **belongs** (ellipsis, loss of verb points to Paul's genius grammatical ability in pointing to Israel's loss of client nation status and the resultant offer of salvation to the nations) **to the Gentiles** (Dat. Adv.), **for the purpose of provoking them** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Israel) **to emulation** (παραζηλώω, AAInf., Culminative, Purpose, Articular; antagonize them to the point of believing in Jesus Christ; envy, jealousy).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:11** Λέγω οὖν μὴ ἔπταισαν ἵνα πέσωσιν μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ τῷ αὐτῶν παραπτώματι ἢ σωτηρίᾳ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰς τὸ παραζηλώσαι αὐτούς

^{VUL} **Romans 11:11** dico ergo numquid sic offenderunt ut caderent absit sed illorum delicto salus gentibus ut illos aemulentur

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:12** Now if their defection [sin of unbelief] has provided a magnificent spiritual benefit [gift of salvation] for the world and their failure [loss of client nation status] a magnificent package of spiritual benefits for the Gentiles, how much greater will be their [Israel's] superabundance of spiritual benefits?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:12** But since their fall is the enrichment of the world, and their defeat and loss the enrichment of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness?

^{KJV} **Romans 11:12** Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Grace brings life out of death, for both individuals and nations. Using a fortiori logic and a 1st class conditional clause, Paul affirms that the unbelief of Israel has indeed provided the magnificent spiritual benefit of salvation to the Gentile world. Israel's failure as a client nation to believe in Jesus Christ as Messiah has provided a magnificent package of spiritual benefits to Gentile believers. What used to be blessings reserved for the nation Israel has now been extended to Gentile nations. The purpose of God was for Israel to evangelize the nations, but when she failed to do so, God got the job done in another manner.

But that does not mean Israel is finished in God's plan, as Paul emphatically stated in the prior and other verses. Instead, the spiritual blessings of the Gentiles will in turn provide a superabundance of spiritual benefits to Israel. This will happen in the future, when all Israel will be saved. But it is also happening today. Those nations who have a strong Christian presence are blessed by befriending Israel, and Israel is blessed by being friends in return. There is a blessing by association between Christians and the nation Israel; there is a cursing by association between nations who become enemies of Christians and the nation Israel.

Paul is referring either to (a) the restoration of Israel's client nation status during the Millennium with its full complement of spiritual blessings, (b) rewards for mature Gentile believers during the Millennium, or (c) both. The package of spiritual benefits can be applied to individual believers as part of their portfolio of invisible assets which they are called upon to use in their daily spiritual walk. This same package of spiritual benefits can be applied to a nation which has a large number of believers living within its borders. This package of spiritual benefits can be applied to the experiential sanctification of believers living today, and it can be applied to those who will be living in future dispensations.

But one of the key words in this verse is important is Paul's continued defense of Israel in God's plan. While Gentile believers receive the magnificent spiritual gift of positional salvation, as well as a magnificent package of spiritual assets to utilize experientially in their daily walk, Israel will receive a superabundance of spiritual benefits in the end. The Greek word "ploutos" refers to the abundant blessings to Gentiles, while the Greek word "pleroma" refers to the superabundance blessings to Israel. God is not finished with the nation Israel. Israel will return to the center of God's plan during the Tribulation and Millennium. First she will receive severe divine discipline; then she will receive a superabundance of spiritual blessings.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Israel is God's appointed channel of blessing to the nations. If, then, their failure brings the storehouse of God's grace to the world, what will occur when they take their true place? Then the world will be blessed far beyond what is possible now. (A.E. Knoch) If the blindness which has fallen upon Israel nationally during this present age was the occasion for great blessing for the Gentiles, the "fullness" of Israel will bring a richness of blessing which will be "much more." Now, obviously, there can be no fullness of Israel if they have no future. Their fullness will come when the present condition of blindness is lifted. (J. Walvoord)

It is almost inconceivable how some Reformers could have held out obstinately, as they have done, against a thought so clearly expressed ... When Israel shall see the promises of the OT, which ascribe to the Messiah the conversion of the Gentiles to the God of Abraham, fulfilled throughout the whole world by Jesus Christ, and the Gentiles through His mediation loaded with the blessings which they themselves covet, they will be forced to own that Jesus is the Messiah. (Godet) It was inconceivable to Paul that God would cast Israel off, because to do so would mean that God would be breaking His covenant promises, and He could not do that and remain a truth-keeping, faithful God. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:12 Now (transitional particle), if (1st class condition, "and it's true") their (Poss. Gen.; Israel's) defection (Subj. Nom.; fall, apostasy, transgression, reversionism, sin of unbelief) has provided (ellipsis, verb supplied) a magnificent spiritual benefit (Nom. Appos.; gift of salvation) for the world (Obj. Gen.; evangelization opportunities) and (connective conj.) their (Poss. Gen.) failure (Subj. Nom.; loss of client nation status) a magnificent package of spiritual benefits (Nom. Appos.; portfolio of invisible assets) for the Gentiles (Obj. Gen.), how much (correlative pronoun, "a fortiori" logic) greater (comparative adv.) will be (ellipsis, future tense verb supplied) their (Poss. Gen.; Israel's) superabundance of spiritual benefits (Ind. Nom.)?

^{WHO} **Romans 11:12** εἰ δὲ τὸ παράπτωμα αὐτῶν πλοῦτος κόσμος καὶ τὸ ἥττημα αὐτῶν πλοῦτος ἔθνῶν πόσω μᾶλλον τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:12** quod si delictum illorum divitiae sunt mundi et deminutio eorum divitiae gentium quanto magis plenitudo eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:13** (I am speaking to you as Gentiles [turns his attention to Gentile believers], inasmuch as, to be sure, indeed, I am the apostle to the Gentiles [in contrast to Peter being the apostle to the Jews]; I am magnifying my ministry [rather than his person],

^{KW} **Rom. 11:13** But to you I am speaking, the Gentiles. Inasmuch then, as for myself, as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I do my ministry honor,

^{KJV} **Romans 11:13** For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul turns his attention to the Gentile believers in the midst of his revelation concerning the past and future of the nation Israel. Verses 13 and 14 are a parenthesis. He says he is speaking to them (Static Present tense) in particular, because they are Gentile believers. Why does he single out the Gentile believers? Because he is (Descriptive Present tense) the apostle to the Gentiles. The anarthrous construction means he is not just “an” apostle to the Gentiles, but he is “the” apostle to the Gentiles. This is in contrast to Peter, who is called the apostle to the Jews. Paul is not magnifying himself through arrogance, but is rather magnifying (Customary Present tense) the quality and honor of his spiritual office.

He uses a quite unusual string of pronouns and conjunctions to make sure we understand that he is showing respect to his God-given ministry, and not to his person. He honors this grace gift and its resultant responsibility on his part: (a) by a correlative relative pronoun (“inasmuch as” I am the apostle to the Gentiles), (b) by an emphatic conjunction (“to be sure” I am the apostle to the Gentiles), and (c) an affirmative anacoluthon (“indeed” I am the apostle to the Gentiles). Again, Paul is not bragging about his person, but is communicating with humility the fact of his important spiritual responsibility to the Gentiles. If you study the ministries of Paul and Peter, you will find that each had his own specific sphere of operation and they were successful as long as they remained primarily in that sphere. When they tried to enter the other person’s sphere of influence, they were not successful.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

His mission to the Gentiles has an indirect bearing on his own countrymen: the more successful he can make it, the greater is the prospect that some of the Jews may be provoked to jealousy and saved. (K. Wuest) Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, and by

uttering this prediction with regard to the Gentiles, at the period of the restoration of the Jews, he says he magnifies his office. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 11:13 [] (trans. particle used as a parenthesis) I am speaking (λέγω, PA11S, Static) to you (Dat. Adv.) as ("because you are") Gentiles (Dat. Ind. Obj.; an *apostrophe*, where he turns to address the Gentiles in the midst of his revelation concerning the past and future of Israel), inasmuch as (correlative relative pronoun), to be sure (emphatic conjunction) indeed (anacaluthon, serves to emphasize the subject in clauses which contain a report made by the speaker concerning the state of his own being, esp. intellectual or emotional), I am (είμι, PA11S, Descriptive) the apostle (Pred. Nom., anarthrous) to the Gentiles (Obj. Gen.), I am magnifying (δοξάζω, PA11S, Customary; honoring, respecting without sin or arrogance) my (Poss. Gen.) ministry (Acc. Dir. Obj.; office, "rather than my person"),

^{WHO} **Romans 11:13** Ὑμῖν δὲ λέγω τοῖς ἔθνεσιν· ἐφ' ὅσον μὲν οὖν εἰμι ἐγὼ ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος τὴν διακονίαν μου δοξάζω

^{VUL} **Romans 11:13** vobis enim dico gentibus quamdiu quidem ego sum gentium apostolus ministerium meum honorificabo

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:14** **If in some way I might stimulate to emulation [by evangelism] those who are my flesh [racial Jews] and save certain ones [the elect] out from them [the mass of unregenerate Jews].**

^{KW} **Rom. 11:14** If by any means, possibly, I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh, and save some of them.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:14** If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses another 1st class conditional clause in which he assumes that somehow, someway, he might be able to stimulate (Gnomic Future tense) his brethren, the racial Jews, to believe in Jesus Christ. He hopes his ministry of evangelism will also save (Predictive Future tense) the elect of Israel. Paul knows his ministry is to the Gentiles, but he hopes that his ministry might bring some Jews into the Christian fold as well. The enclitic definite pronoun "certain ones" points to the elect of Israel, not an undistinguished blob of humanity. It is a definite, pre-selected group of Jewish believers, chosen in eternity past. Paul would like the occasional honor of preaching to them, too.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The cultivated olive is Israel, the people of God; the wild olive is the Gentile world. But the olive began to grow weak and unproductive; old branches were therefore cut away and a graft was made from the wild-olive. The graft from the wild-olive is the sum-total of Gentile believers, now incorporated into the people of God; the old branches which were cut away are those Jews who declined to accept the gospel. (F.F. Bruce) My concern for my fellow-Jews is not derogatory to or inconsistent with my office; in fact, my work among Gentiles – because it is a work among Gentiles – is connected with the Jews. The more I make of my Gentile mission the more jealous will the Jews become, and this will lead in the end to what I desire – their salvation. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 11:14 If (1st class condition, "assumes it is true") in some way (enclitic particle; perhaps, somehow) I might stimulate to emulation (παραζηλώω, FAILS, Gnostic, Potential Ind.; function of evangelism) those who are (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. and Verb supplied) my (Gen. Rel.) flesh (Acc. Association; racial Jews) and (connective conj.) save (σώζω, FAILS, Predictive) certain ones (Acc. Dir. Obj., enclitic definite pronoun; someone important - the elect) out from them (Abl. Separation, relative pronoun; the mass of unregenerate Jews)].

^{WHO} **Romans 11:14** εἴ πως παραζηλώσω μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ σώσω τινὰς ἐξ αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:14** si quo modo ad aemulandum provocem carnem meam et salvos faciam aliquos ex illis

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:15** For if their rejection has become the reconciliation of the world [end of the Jewish dispensation and beginning of the Church Age], what shall their acceptance be [God's grace and mercy towards Israel during the Millennium] if not life out from death?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:15** For, in view of the fact that their repudiation results in the world's reconciliation, what will the receiving of them result in if not in life from among the dead?

^{KJV} **Romans 11:15** For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but life from the dead?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The rejection of the Messiah by the Jews has become the reconciliation of the Gentile world to Jesus Christ. The chosen people were set aside, and those who were not the chosen people were brought into the realm of reconciliation. The 5th cycle of discipline was administered to Israel, scattering the Jewish people around the globe with no homeland. The Jewish dispensation ended and the Church Age began. However, during

the Millennium, God's grace and mercy towards Israel will return. There will be "life out of death" for all Israel when Jesus Christ returns.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This must refer to Israel as a whole and implies that this restoration is commensurate in scale with Israel's rejection, the restoration of the mass of Israel in contrast with the casting off. Again the accent falls on the action of God, in this case that of grace in contrast with judgment, and on the changed attitude of God to the mass of Israel. This restoration of Israel will have a marked beneficial effect, described as "life from the dead." Whatever this result may be it must denote a blessing far surpassing in its proportions anything that previously obtained in the unfolding of God's counsel. (J. Murray)

The casting away of Israel the nation, refers to the act of God setting Israel aside temporarily as a channel through which to bring the good news of salvation to the world, and the substitution of the Church, this with a view to bringing Israel back into fellowship with Himself and service in the millenium. This resulted in a direct ministry to the Gentiles and the rise of the latter as the heralds of salvation. This occurred actually AD 70 when God dispersed Israel over the then known world. Through the acceptance of the gospel message, the unsaved are reconciled to God in the sense that their attitude of unbelief and hatred is turned to one of trust and love. The receiving of Israel refers to that wonderful moment when, as the Messiah returns to the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14) all Israel shall be saved (Romans 11:26). This will be "life from among the dead" in that the nation will be saved by the sovereign grace of God out from a spiritually dead state and from among those who remain spiritually dead. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 11:15 **For** (explanatory conj.) **if** (1st class condition, "and it's true") **their** (Poss. Gen.) **rejection** (Subj. Nom.; the 5th cycle of discipline) **has become** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **the reconciliation** (Pred. Nom., anarthrous) **of the world** (Gen. Rel.; the end of the Jewish dispensation and the beginning of the Church Age), **what** (interrogative pronoun) **shall their acceptance** (Ind. Nom.; God's grace and mercy towards Israel during the Millenium) **be** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **if** (1st class condition, "and it's true") **not** (neg. adv.) **life** (Ind. Nom.) **out from death** (Abl. Separation)?

^{WHO} **Romans 11:15** εἰ γὰρ ἡ ἀποβολὴ αὐτῶν καταλλαγὴ κόσμου τίς ἢ πρόσλημις εἰ μὴ ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:15** si enim amissio eorum reconciliatio est mundi quae adsumptio nisi vita ex mortuis

LWB Rom. 11:16 Moreover, if the firstfruit [the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac & Jacob] are holy [saved], then also the lump [believing Jews during the Age of Israel]; and if the root [Jesus Christ] is holy, then also the branches [believing Jews during the Church Age].

KW Rom. 11:16 Now, in view of the fact that the firstfruit is holy, also the lump, and since the root is holy, also the branches.

KJV Romans 11:16 For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the respective heads of two dispensations in this elliptical verse with no verbs. If he had a chalkboard handy, he might have arranged this contrast by placing the elements in opposing, comparative columns. The firstfruits in the OT were the patriarchs of Israel: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The root in the NT was Jesus Christ in hypostatic union. The lump in the OT was Jews who believed in Jesus Christ as their Messiah. The branches in the NT are Jews who believe in Jesus Christ during the Church Age. Holy in both instances means integrity.

So we have a contrast and comparison between dispensations (Israel and the Church), between the firstfruit and the root (the patriarchs over Israel, Christ over His Church), and between the lump and the branches (Jewish believers in the OT, Jewish believers in the NT). True Israel in the OT dispensation was those who had both the ritual and the reality behind the ritual. True Israel in the NT dispensation is those who have the reality of Jesus Christ. The 1st class conditional clause means this is a true comparison. Holy (Latin: sanctify) means the Jewish believers in both dispensations are set apart to God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The words “first-fruit” refer to the patriarchs of Israel. First-fruit does not apply exhaustively to harvest, but is the general term for the first portion of everything which was offered to God. There is no reference here to the quality of the life of the patriarchs, but to the fact that they, and thus Israel, have been set apart for God as a chosen nation through which salvation could be produced and channeled to the rest of the human race. (K. Wuest)

The root stands for the patriarchs of Israel, the natural olive with its many branches stands for the nation Israel, and the wild olive tree stands for the Gentile peoples. In Paul’s development of the idea, the natural branches, representing individual Jews or successive generations of Jews, are broken off in order that the branches from the wild tree, representing individual Gentiles or successive generations of Gentiles, are grafted in. The bottom line of the illustration is that in time God is going to graft the original or natural branches back into their own olive tree. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:16 **Moreover** (transitional particle), **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and they are") **the firstfruit** (Subj. Nom.; Israel reserved the first of their dough as a heave-offering to the Lord Who prospered their harvest; the patriarchs of Israel: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) **are** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **holy** (Pred. Nom.; integrity), **then also** (apodosis, adjunctive conj.) **the lump** (Ind. Nom.; of kneaded dough - true Israel during the OT dispensation of Israel, who had both the ritual and the reality); **and** (connective conj.) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and He is") **the root** (Subj. Nom.; the Lord Jesus Christ in hypostatic union) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **holy** (Pred. Nom.; integrity), **then also** (apodosis, resultant conj.) **the branches** (Ind. Nom.; believing Jews during the Church Age).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:16** εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀπαρχὴ ἁγία καὶ τὸ φύραμα· καὶ εἰ ἡ ῥίζα ἁγία καὶ οἱ κλάδοι

^{VUL} **Romans 11:16** quod si delibatio sancta est et massa et si radix sancta et rami

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:17** **Moreover, if some of the branches [unbelieving Jews] were broken off [by the sovereignty of God], and you [as a Gentile believer], being a wild olive tree [outside the covenant of God], were grafted in among them [Jewish believers] and have become fellow-partakers of the Root [Jesus Christ] and the prosperity of the olive tree [blessings reserved for Church Age believers],**

^{KW} **Rom. 11:17** Now, since certain of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a joint-partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive,

^{KJV} **Romans 11:17** And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his contrast between believing Jews, unbelieving Jews, and Gentile believers. Some of the unbelieving Jews during all dispensations (branches) were broken off (Constative Aorist tense), meaning the sovereignty of God broke them off. The passive voice points to these broken off Jews receiving the action from God; they did not break themselves off - that would be the middle voice. Gentile believers, represented as a wild olive tree (Descriptive Present tense), were grafted in (Culminative Aorist tense) among the Jewish believers. Gentiles were outside the covenant of God, found in the open field, so to speak. They were grafted in (Latin: inserted) by God; the passive voice again points to the Gentile believers receiving this grafting in by God. They did not graft themselves in.

So far, the breaking off of unbelieving Jews and the grafting in of believing Gentiles is a representation of positional truth. The passive voice leaves salvation and reprobation in God's hands, with no opinions, consultations, or works on our part. The second half of this verse switches to the Middle Voice, meaning believers participate in their spiritual growth. Gentile believers only become "fellow partakers" of divine prosperity if they are growing experientially according to God's protocol plan for their dispensation. They are "in Christ" positionally by the grace of God only, but if they want to then "partake" of Christ and the spiritual blessings, they must participate in their own sanctification.

All believers, Jewish and Gentile, are in Christ and are saved positionally. But not all believers become (Culminative Aorist tense) partakers of Christ and His blessings. Positionally, God is sovereign over His creatures in both salvation and reprobation. Experientially, man is responsible to utilize divine assets to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive an abundance of blessings. Even though there are different protocols to follow in different dispensations of God, this positional and experiential framework permeates His plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Some of the branches broken off" refers to the rejection of the apostate nation, its dispersion in AD 70, and God's act of setting it aside temporarily as the channel through which He could work. The wild olive tree grafted in refers to the act of God breaking down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile at the Cross by the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, and the inclusion of the Gentile with the Jew in one body, the Church. (K. Wuest) *Hendiadys*, or two words used to portray one element; the first word expresses the Person Christ Jesus, and the second word intensifies the concept by adding an adjective of the superlative degree, which makes it emphatic - the Lord and the blessings which come from fellowship with Him. (E.W. Bullinger)

The Gentile Christian is not to condemn the race of Israel because so large a portion of it is at present apart from the Church and under judgment. For it is, after all, from the stock of Israel, into which he has been grafted, that he derives all his own fertility. (J. Barmby) It is a remarkable fact, generally unknown, that a very old olive tree, no longer capable of bearing, may be rejuvenated by a wild graft. This has been done only in those Mediterranean countries where the olive has been cultivated for many centuries. Israel is the old olive tree which becomes almost incapable of bearing the olives from which the light-giving oil was obtained. Some of the branches were broken out and the nations were grafted in, and, through living with its root, become God's testimony in the earth. (A.E. Knoch)

Rom. 11:17 **Moreover** (transitional particle), **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it happened") **some** (Subj. Nom., definite pronoun; specific, someone important) **of the branches** (Descr. Gen.; unbelieving Jews during the Church Age) **were broken off** (ἐκκλάω, API3P, Constativ; passive voice emphasizes the sovereignty of God in the process of

breaking them off; fractured), and (transitional conj.) you (Subj. Nom.; as a Gentile believer), being (εἰμί, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Modal) a wild olive tree (Pred. Nom.; found in the open field; outside the covenant of God), were grafted in (ἐγκεντρίζω, API2S, Culminative; inserted) among them (Dat. Adv.; Jewish believers) and (connective conj.) have become (γίνομαι, AMI2S, Culminative, Deponent, Middle voice emphasizes the believer's participation in spiritual growth) fellow-partakers (Pred. Nom.; joint participants, sharers, partners) of the root (Gen. Rel.; the Lord Jesus Christ) and (legitimate insertion of a connective conj.) the prosperity (Obj. Gen.; fatness, rich, fertile) of the olive tree (Descr. Gen.; God's plan for the Church Age, X+Y+Z=PPG).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:17** Εἰ δέ τινες τῶν κλάδων ἐξεκλάσθησαν σὺ δὲ ἀγριέλαιος ὧν ἐνεκεντρίσθης ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ συγκοινωνὸς τῆς ρίζης τῆς πιότητος τῆς ἐλαίας ἐγένου

^{VUL} **Romans 11:17** quod si aliqui ex ramis fracti sunt tu autem cum oleaster esses insertus es in illis et socius radicis et pinguidinis olivae factus es

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:18** Stop assuming arrogant superiority [boasting and gloating] over the branches [warning against anti-Semitism]. For when you are assuming arrogant superiority [boasting and bragging] over them, you are not supporting the Root [Jesus Christ]; actually, the Root [Jesus Christ is supporting] you.

^{KW} **Rom. 11:18** Stop boasting against the branches. But, assuming that you are boasting, you are not sustaining the root, but the root you.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:18** Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul issues a warning, a prohibition in the imperative mood, against any form of anti-Semitism. He tells the Gentile believers to stop assuming (Gnomic Present tense) they are superior to the Jews because Israel has been temporarily set aside and the Gentiles are now in the forefront of God's grace. Some Gentile believers are prone to boasting, gloating and bragging over their new-found salvation. This comes from involvement in the arrogance complex of sins. For when a Gentile believer assumes he is superior to the Jew (Static Present tense), he is not supporting (Customary Present tense) the Root, Jesus Christ. The Root, Jesus Christ, is supporting them.

The arrogant, Gentile believer is presumed to be involved in gloating over the Jewish predicament, but by doing so, he is actually fighting rather than supporting Jesus Christ. The Imperative of Prohibition and the Middle Voice point to this assumption as having a basis in fact. There are some believers who "lock into a superiority mindset" in the

arrogance complex of sins. They enjoy bragging or gloating over the adversities and calamities experienced by Israel in particular and Jews in general. Antisemitism is anti-Christ and anti-God no matter where it is found. Do you want to destroy your soul? Just become anti-Semitic and see what happens. Do you want to destroy our nation? Just contribute to anti-Semitic social and foreign policy.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The branches broken-off are of course unbelieving Jews; the wild olive branches grafted in are believing (i.e. Christian) Gentiles, who henceforth belong to the main stock of the people of God. These privileges, however, give the Gentile Christian no ground for boasting over the unbelieving Jew, for he possesses them by grace, not by right, still less by merit. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 11:18 Stop (neg. adv., apodosis; never) assuming arrogant superiority (κατακαυχάομαι, PMImp.2S, Gnomic, Prohibition; boast, gloat, exult over, brag to, triumph over) over the branches (Obj. Gen.; warning against antisemitism). For (explanatory conj.) when (1st class condition, temporal clause, "assumes you are doing this") you are assuming arrogant superiority (κατακαυχάομαι, PMI2S, Static; exult over, brag to, triumph over) over them (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied), you (Subj. Nom.; the arrogant believer) are not (neg. adv.) supporting (βαστάζω, PAI2S, Customary; bearing up) the root (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ); actually (contrast conj.; rather), the root (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:18** μή κατακαυχῶ τῶν κλάδων· εἰ δὲ κατακαυχᾶσαι οὐ σὺ τὴν ῥίζαν βαστάζεις ἀλλὰ ἡ ῥίζα σέ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:18** noli gloriari adversus ramos quod si gloriaris non tu radicem portas sed radice te

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:19** You may then reply: The branches [unbelieving Israel] were broken off so that I might be grafted in [a position of arrogance, not genuine humility].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:19** You will say then, Branches were broken off in order that I might be grafted in.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:19** Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Instead of boasting and bragging from arrogant superiority, Paul recommends (Potential Indicative) a reply from a position of genuine humility. The branches (unbelieving Israel) were broken off (Latin: fractured) so that the believing Gentile might be (Culminative Aorist tense) grafted in. The Passive Voice in both verbs points to the unbelieving Jew

being broken off by God and the believing Gentile being grafted in by God. The unbelieving Jew did not break himself off; the believing Gentile did not graft himself in. Since the crucial doctrine of salvation and reprobation came solely from the sovereignty of God, what grounds does the Gentile believer have in bragging, gloating and boasting? Both salvation and reprobation are part of God's sovereign plan (Purpose Subjunctive mood) and have nothing to do with the individuals involved on either side.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a combination of an *epitrophe*, or an admission of something that is right (or wrong) for the sake of argument, and an *synchoresis*, a concession of what was right, but an admission that the conclusion is wrong. The branches were broken off, that is true; but that I might be grafted in, that is not true. That was not the object! That was not the cause why the Jews were broken off. It was "because of unbelief," that is the true reason. (E.W. Bullinger) The apostle is dealing with Israel and the nation, not individuals. No individual believer will be broken out of the olive tree. The nations, however, as such, no longer believe, and are due to be cut out of the olive tree. Yahweh is already gathering Israel back to her land with a view of once more grafting them into their own olive tree. (A.E. Knoch)

Rom. 11:19 You may then (inferential particle) reply (λέγω, FAI2S, Predictive, Potential Ind.): The branches (Subj. Nom.; Israel) were broken off (ἐκκλάω, API3P, Constative; fractured) so that (purpose conj.) I (Subj. Nom.) might be grafted in (ἐγκεντρίζω, ASubj.1S, Culminative, Purpose Clause; Passive voice emphasizes that the believer receives the grafting in from God - he doesn't graft himself in).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:19** ἐρεῖς οὖν Ἐξεκλάσθησαν κλάδοι ἵνα ἐγὼ ἐγκεντρισθῶ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:19** dices ergo fracti sunt rami ut ego inserar

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:20** Correct [true]. They [unbelieving Israel] were broken off due to unbelief, while you [as a Gentile believer] stand due to belief. Stop thinking from arrogance [superiority complex], but rather keep having respect.

^{KW} **Rom. 11:20** Well! Because of their unbelief they were broken off. But, as for you, by faith you stand. Stop having a superiority complex, but be fearing;

^{KJV} **Romans 11:20** Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul affirms the reply from genuine humility with an affirmative adverb, Correct. Unbelieving Israel, by its very definition, was broken off (Gnomic Aorist tense) due to unbelief, while the

Gentile believer stands (Intensive Perfect tense) due to belief. In both cases, unbelief and belief, we are dealing with Intermediary Means. The intermediary means of unbelief or belief are not the final determinant of salvation; the sovereignty of God is, as Paul has been repeating over and over again in Romans. The instrument is unbelief or belief, but neither is the final determinant. In this contrast, the breaking off is in the Passive Voice, not only because God does the breaking off, but because unbelief is not an activity. Standing is in the Active Voice, because the believer does the standing by the intermediate instrument of belief.

Paul then warns (Imperative of Prohibition) the Gentile believer again to stop having an attitude (Iterative Present tense) of arrogance. The Iterative Present tense points to this as being a continuous activity regardless of his prior warnings. Some of the believers he is addressing have become strongly anti-Semitic due to a sinful superiority complex. They are locked into the arrogance complex of sins, acting haughty, high and mighty, and are about to implode and explode their spiritual lives. What he prefers they do is to keep on having (Tendential Present tense) an attitude of respect and honor.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Double entendre: *respect* for those believers who are inside the divine dynasphere, *fear* for those who are in the cosmic system. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) We must not become so focused on the theology of Paul's teaching here that we miss its purpose: to criticize those of us who are Gentiles for arrogance toward believing and unbelieving Jews and to remind us that our own spiritual heritage is a Jewish one. (D. Moo)

Rom. 11:20 Correct (adv.; Right, True). They were broken off (ἐκκλάω, API3P, Gnostic) due to unbelief (Instr. Cause, Intermediary Means), while (contrast conj.) you (Subj. Nom.; as a Gentile believer) stand (ἵστημι, Perf.AI2S, Intensive; are established, confirmed) due to belief (Instr. Cause, Intermediary Means). Stop (neg. adv.) thinking (φρονέω, PAImp.2S, Iterative, Prohibition; having an attitude, be minded towards) from arrogance (Noncomplementary Acc.; haughtiness, high and mighty, superiority complex; from inside the interlocking systems of arrogance), but rather (contrast conj.; instead) keep having respect (φοβέομαι, PMImp.2S, Tendential, Command; fear, honor).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:20** καλῶς· τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἐξεκλάσθησαν σὺ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἕστηκας μὴ ὑψηλὰ φρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ·

^{VUL} **Romans 11:20** bene propter incredulitatem fracti sunt tu autem fide stas noli altum sapere sed time

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:21** For if God did not spare the natural branches [divine discipline on Israel], neither will He spare you [divine discipline on Gentiles].

κω **Rom. 11:21** For in view of the fact that God did not spare the branches which were according to nature, neither will He spare you.

κ^{JV} **Romans 11:21** For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is not denying the eternal security of the believer in this verse. It's amazing how some commentators can completely ignore context and create a false text. The 1st class condition means God did not spare (Constative Aorist tense) the Jews but applied divine discipline to them because of their arrogant superiority complex. Likewise, God will not spare (Predictive Future tense) Gentile believers but will apply divine discipline to them because of their arrogant superiority complex. If He didn't put up with that sinful attitude on the part of His chosen people, the Jews, what makes you think He will put up with that sinful attitude on the part of Gentiles? There's no double standard here! Paul is not threatening to send Gentile believers to hell; he is trying to coach them on how to live the spiritual life they are now privileged to share with Jewish believers. This is an experiential sanctification verse, not a positional justification verse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Those who deny eternal security of the saints through this verse miss entirely Paul's point. He is not threatening doom to them, but is counselling them how to walk (not highminded). This passage is not dealing with the Church, where there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but with the Jew-position and Gentile-position in God's affairs on earth. (W.R. Newell)

Verses 21-23 form an *introverted parallelism*, relating to Jew and *Gentile* in strict dispensational format; Gentile in part (b) can have *no* reference to those who are in Christ, for whom there is no condemnation and no separation.

- a) If God spared not the **natural** branches,
 - b) take heed lest He also spare not **thee**.
 - c) Behold therefore the **goodness**
 - d) and **severity** of God:
 - d) on them which fell, **severity**,
 - c) but toward thee, **goodness**, ...
- b) otherwise **thou** also shalt be cut off.

a) And **they** also (the natural branches), if they abide still not in unbelief, shall be grafted in.

Rom. 11: 21 For (explanatory conj.) if (1st class condition, "and He didn't") God (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. adv.) spare (φείδομαι, AMI3S, Constative, Deponent) the natural (Acc. Gen. Ref.; idiom: "according to the natural") branches (Obj. Gen.; divine discipline on Israel), neither (neg. adv.) will He spare (φείδομαι, FMI3S, Predictive, Deponent, Potential Ind.; divine discipline) you (Gen. Disadv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:21** εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων οὐκ ἐφείσατο οὐδὲ σοῦ φείσεται

^{VUL} **Romans 11:21** si enim Deus naturalibus ramis non pepercit ne forte nec tibi parcat

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:22** Therefore, observe the benevolent kindness [blessings] and severity [discipline] of God: on the one hand, upon those [Jewish unbelievers] who fell, severity [discipline]; on the other hand, upon you [Gentile believers], the benevolent kindness [blessings] of God, if [on the condition that] you persist in the sphere of divine integrity [Bible doctrine in the filling of the Spirit]; otherwise, you [Gentile believers] may also be cut off [negative aspect of experiential sanctification: divine discipline].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:22** Behold therefore God's benevolent kindness and His severity; on the one hand, upon those who fell, severity, and, on the other hand, upon you, God's benevolent kindness, upon the condition that you continue to remain in and abide by His benevolent kindness. Otherwise, also you will be cut off.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:22** Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It is amazing how many commentators read this verse completely out of context and try to send believers to hell. The minute they see the words "cut off" they immediately think "hell" even when Paul is not teaching anything about where we spend eternity. The first thing Paul tells us to do is to observe (focus our attention on) the blessings and discipline of God. Both His benevolent kindness and His severity in this verse refer to temporal blessings and discipline, not eternal blessings and judgment. This is an experiential sanctification verse, not a positional justification verse. Being "cut off" means loss of fellowship with God, not going to hell. It has to do with an experiential, joint participation with the Messiah in the rulership of the coming kingdom.

On the one hand, God provided discipline to those who fell (Constatative Aorist tense), a reference to Jewish unbelievers. On the other hand, God has provided blessings to us, referring to Gentile believers. But there is a condition on these blessings He has reserved for us. The 3rd class condition means maybe we will fulfill these conditions, and maybe we won't fulfill these conditions. Obtaining these blessings requires our obedience. We only receive them if we persist (Perfective Present tense) in the sphere of divine integrity. What is the sphere of divine integrity? We remain, abide, or continue to live in the sphere of divine integrity only when we combine the filling of the Holy Spirit with the intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. Outside of this sphere of operation, we are in carnality and reversionism.

If we refuse to be continually filled with the Spirit, and if we refuse to learn, metabolize and apply Bible doctrine on a daily basis, we may be cut off (Predictive Future tense). That does not mean we can lose our salvation; it means His benevolent kindness towards us in our daily life may be cut off. You can't ignore the conditions attached to receiving God's benevolent kindness. If you do, He will cut that kindness off and give you severe divine discipline instead. This applies to both the individual believer and to the community and nation in which he lives. The forfeiture of divine blessings and the incurrance of divine discipline is a serious matter, whether it is to you individually, or to the nation in which you live. But neither blessing or discipline in this context has anything to do with justification-salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Being "cut-off" does not mean losing your justification, but is a warning that it is possible to drift away and as a result receive a punishment, being "cut-off" from fellowship with God. There is nothing contingent about their ultimate destiny in this warning. The "if" is not a prerequisite for securing (the reformed doctrine of) Perseverance. This would subtly redefine the basis of salvation, making it dependent on a life of good works. It makes God out to be a liar. For if God decreed that His elect will finally persevere in holiness and if warnings are a means He uses to secure that perseverance, then God is threatening His elect with a destiny He knows will never befall them. He is telling them they might lose their salvation in order to motivate them by fear to persevere. How can a God of truth use lies to accomplish His purpose of holiness in His elect?

So God, on the one hand, knows that a particular Christian will never go to hell, but, on the other hand, He tells him he might go to hell if he does not respond to the warning!?! If so, God is lying to this Christian, telling him something God Himself knows to be false! As far as we are "illuminated by faith," we know that the calling of God is without repentance. But in our struggle with the flesh we are to fear going to hell. So, on the one hand, we are to have a consciousness that we are eternally secure, and, on the other hand, because of our flesh we are to have a consciousness that we might go to hell. How can a person hold these two contradictory states in his mind at the same time? A consciousness

of either logically and subjectively excludes the other. This used to be called schizophrenia - but now it is called the Reformed doctrine of perseverance.

This warning is real, but it is not about our eternal destiny. It is about our loss of fellowship with God in time and about the possibility of the forfeiture of our eternal rewards and of learning at the judgment seat that our lives have been wasted. From what could national Israel be cut-off? Certainly not heaven, because heaven was never offered on national grounds, only individual. One did not go to heaven because he was born a Jew, but because he believed. Rather, national Israel was temporarily cut-off from their rights to the covenants and promises. Instead of fulfilling their destiny, they are nationally under discipline until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in.

The danger then to which Paul refers is that we may individually, like Israel did nationally, forfeit our opportunity to share in that great future salvation, the Kingdom of God, joint rulership with the Messiah in the future reign of the servant kings. The wild olive tree from which we might be cut-off and onto which the Gentiles have been grafted is not heaven. It is the privilege of sharing in the Abrahamic promises made to Israel regarding the great land and the great nation. Forfeiture of personal salvation is the furthest thing from Paul's mind. Rather, he worries about their loss of reward. (J. Dillow)

Rom. 11:22 Therefore (inferential particle, "with that thought in mind"), observe (ὁράω, imperative, of mental and spiritual perception, special attention, re-focus) the benevolent kindness (Acc. Adv.; integrity, blessings from the justice of God) and (connective conj.) severity (Acc. Disadv.) of God (Poss. Gen.): on the one hand (comparative particle), upon those (Acc. Dir. Obj., Jewish unbelievers) who fell (πίπτω, AAPTc.APM, Constative, Substantival), severity (Nom. Appos.); on the other hand (contrast conj.), upon you (Acc. Dir. Obj., Gentile believers), the benevolent kindness (Nom. Appos.; integrity, blessings from the justice of God) of God (Poss. Gen.), if (3rd class condition; maybe you will, maybe you won't) you persist (ἐπιμένω, PASubj.2S, Perfective, Potential; abide, remain, continue) in the sphere of divine integrity (Loc. Sphere; Bible doctrine); otherwise (causal conj.), you (Gentile believers in a client nation) may also (comparative conj.) be cut off (ἐκκόπτω, FPI2S, Predictive, Potential Ind.; both the reality of divine discipline to reversionistic believers and the five cycles of discipline to the reversionistic client nation).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:22** ἴδε οὖν χρηστότητα καὶ ἀποτομίαν θεοῦ· ἐπὶ μὲν τοὺς πεσόντας ἀποτομία ἐπὶ δὲ σὲ χρηστότης θεοῦ ἔαν ἐπιμένης τῇ χρηστότητι ἐπεὶ καὶ σὺ ἐκκοπήσῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:22** vide ergo bonitatem et severitatem Dei in eos quidem qui ceciderunt severitatem in te autem bonitatem Dei si permanseris in bonitate alioquin et tu excideris

LWB Rom. 11:23 And they also, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able [divine omnipotence controls history] to graft them in again [the believing Jew is returned to his spiritual heritage, but now finds himself part of the royal family of God during the Church Age].

KW Rom. 11:23 And, moreover, those also, if they do not remain in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to again graft them in.

KJV Romans 11:23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Believing Jews during the Church Age will be grafted back into the spiritual heritage, but as part of the royal family of God with Gentile believers. The 3rd class conditional clause and the Potential Subjunctive mood means they are only grafted back in if they do not persist (Durative Present tense) in a state of unbelief. Unbelieving Jews are not grafted back into their spiritual heritage. If they believe, however, the divine omnipotence of God is willing and able to graft them (Constative Aorist tense) in again. The Latin also points to this future “insertion” back into the divine plan. The sovereignty of God will accomplish the insertion at the point of belief in Christ. Those Jews who believe in Christ during the Tribulation and who live through it will become evangelists during the Millennium.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Israel as a nation will in the sovereign grace of God be regenerated and filled with the Spirit to become again the channel through which God will operate for one thousand years to bring salvation to a Christ-rejecting world. (K. Wuest) This passage (series of verses) does not teach that the national promises to Israel have been abrogated and are now being fulfilled by the church. This idea, taught by amillenarians, is foreign to Paul’s point, for he said Israel’s fall is temporary. While believing Gentiles share in the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant as Abraham’s spiritual children, they do not permanently replace Israel as the heirs of God’s promises. (J. Witmer)

Rom. 11:23 And (connective conj.) they also (crasis), if (3rd class condition, “maybe they will, maybe they won’t) they do not (neg. adv.) persist (ἐπιμένω, PASubj.3P, Durative, Potential; continue, abide) in unbelief (Loc. Sph.), will be grafted in (ἐγκεντρίζω, FPI3P, Predictive), for (explanatory conj.) God (Subj. Nom.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) able (Pred. Nom.; willing and able; divine omnipotence controls history) to graft (ἐγκεντρίζω, AAInf., Constative, Result; insert) them (Acc. Adv.) in again (Adv. Repetition;

the believing Jew is returned to his spiritual heritage, but now finds himself part of the royal family of God).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:23** κάκεινοι δέ ἐάν μὴ ἐπιμένωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἐγκεντρισθήσονται· δυνατὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς πάλιν ἐγκεντρίσαι αὐτούς

^{VUL} **Romans 11:23** sed et illi si non permanserint in incredulitate inserentur potens est enim Deus iterum inserere illos

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:24** For since you [Gentile believers] were cut off a wild by nature olive tree, and were grafted [baptism of the Holy Spirit into the Church] contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these [Jewish believers], who are according to the natural order, be grafted into their own olive tree [returned to the forefront of God's plan during the Tribulation]?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:24** For, as for you, in view of the fact that you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into the good olive tree, how much more will these who are according to the nature be grafted into their own olive tree.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:24** For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the Gentiles with Israel, calling the Gentile believers branches broken off (Culminative Aorist tense) a wild olive tree, and Israel as a cultivated olive tree. A cultivated olive tree means God took special care of them during the dispensation of Israel, while a wild olive tree means the Gentiles were not central in His plan at that time. Some branches of the wild, Gentile olive tree were grafted into (Culminative Aorist tense) the cultivated olive tree. This doesn't mean Gentile believers became part of the nation Israel. It means they left their former status on the "sidelines" and became part of God's central plan as members of the body of Christ.

In the dispensation of Israel, Jewish believers were in the center of God's plan. Gentile believers were not part of the nation of Israel, so they were wild by nature, having an unnatural disposition. This doesn't mean they behaved "wildly;" this means they were found in an open field, growing on their own outside the commonwealth of Israel. Gentiles believers became part of God's central plan, however, when they were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Church. By comparison, since wild Gentile believers were outside of God's special care, but were brought into His care ... and since Jewish believers were in God's special care, but were broken off when Israel was no longer in the center of God's special care ... it only makes sense that Jews who believe in Christ will be grafted back into (Predictive Future tense) their own olive tree.

The combination of a correlative pronoun and a comparative adverb create an “a fortiori” direct question. That means “it follows logically” that the natural branches, Jews, will be grafted back into their own olive tree “much more” than the miracle of Gentiles being grafted into the natural olive tree. If God can stop the dispensation of Israel, and insert the dispensation of the Church ... He can also stop the dispensation of the Church, and insert the dispensation of Israel back in again. And this is exactly what He will do. The Church Age in which we live will come to a close at the rapture, and Israel will once again become the centerpiece of God’s plan during the Tribulation and Millennium.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If a wild graft can be introduced into a cultivated tree with good results, how much better will it be to graft back the good branches! (A.E. Knoch) Temporarily alienated for the advantage of the Gentiles, they are eternally the object of God’s electing love because His promises, once made to the patriarchs, can never be revoked. (F.F. Bruce) God’s power to engraft the Jews again into the stock of His people proved *a fortiori* by comparison with what He has done for the Gentiles. To restore His own is more natural, conceivable, and one many even say easy, than to call those who are not His own. (W.R. Nicoll)

Almighty God chooses a people to be His own: to know and serve Him, and to represent Him in the world. His relations with them are determined entirely by grace, but they use the law he has given them to pervert these relations; legal relations, they think, will give them greater freedom. Accordingly, when God, in fulfillment of His promise, sends them His Son, they reject and kill Him. The message of this gracious act is now taken beyond the chosen people to the Gentiles, some of whom accept it, and take advantage of the universal act of grace performed in the death and resurrection of Jesus to enter into gracious relations with God (that is, to be justified by faith). The chosen people who have now (with few exceptions) lost their position see Gentiles standing in that relation with God which they once enjoyed, are stung to envy and to repentance, and so return not to supplant but to join the Gentiles in the relation of grace. All these events are to be regarded as due to the sovereign freedom and elective purpose of God Himself. (C.K. Barrett)

Rom. 11:24 **For** (explanatory conj.) **since** (1st class condition, “and you were”) **you** (Subj. Nom.; Gentile unbelievers) **were cut off** (ἐκκόπτω, API2S, Culminative; broken off branches) **a wild** (Descr. Gen.; found in an open field) **by nature** (Abl. Separation; natural disposition) **olive tree** (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied), **and** (continuative conj.) **were grafted** (ἐγκεντρίζω, API2S, Culminative; baptism of the Holy Spirit into the church, i.e. the body of Christ) **contrary to nature** (unnatural disposition) **into a cultivated olive tree** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **how much** (Abl. Comparison, correlative pronoun used in a direct question) **more** (comparative adv., “a fortiori”) **shall these** (Subj. Nom.,

immediate demonstrative pronoun; Jewish believers), who (Nom. Appos.) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) according to the natural order (Acc. Dir. Obj., natural branches), be grafted into (ἐγκεντρίζω, FPI3P, Predictive) their own (Dat. Poss.) olive tree (Loc. Sph.; when they believe in Christ)?

^{WHO} **Romans 11:24** εἰ γὰρ σὺ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐξεκόπης ἀγριελαίου καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ἐνεκεντρίσθης εἰς καλλιέλαιον πόσω μᾶλλον οὗτοι οἱ κατὰ φύσιν ἐγκεντρισθήσονται τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐλαίᾳ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:24** nam si tu ex naturali excisus es oleastro et contra naturam insertus es in bonam olivam quanto magis hii secundum naturam inserentur suae olivae

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:25** By all means, brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant [lack of Bible doctrine produces ignorance] of this mystery [the Church Age], with the unfortunate result that you might become wise in yourself [thinking you are better than the Jews]: that spiritual blindness [scar tissue of the soul] in part [except for a remnant] has happened to Israel until which time the full measure [from Pentecost to the rapture] of the Gentiles has come in [when the last believer terminates the Church Age],

^{KW} **Rom. 11:25** For I do not desire you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning this mystery, in order that you may not be wise in yourselves, that hardening in part has come to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:25** For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul addresses the members of the royal family of God when he uses the term “brethren.” He does not want (Historical Present tense) any of us to be ignorant (Descriptive Present tense) of the mystery of the Church Age. Lack of Bible doctrine in the soul produces ignorance, which brings the unfortunate result that a person might become (Potential Subjunctive mood) unrealistically optimistic about his condition. The believer without doctrine becomes ignorant and has an arrogant estimation of himself. The unbeliever, by definition (Greek: agnostic), is also spiritually blind. Paul wants all believers to understand the doctrine of the mystery of the dispensation of the Church Age.

On a national level, the exact same ignorance has occurred to Israel. Spiritual blindness from scar tissue of the soul has hardened Jews towards Christ Jesus. This blindness is only in part, however, because there is a remnant of Jews who have escaped this spiritual blindness, i.e. they believe in Christ. This national blindness is only temporary, because in God’s plan it comes to an end at the rapture of the Church. When the full measure of Gentiles have entered into the body of Christ (Culminative Aorist tense), the Church Age

will be terminated and the Age of Israel will return. The body of Christ will be completed when the last believer brings in the rapture.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Continued rejection of the Truth leads to hardening of the heart. When the heart becomes hard the mind closes. All evidence then, no matter how graciously and lucidly presented, is rejected. That is the blindness spoken of here. (E. Hulse) The parable of the hid treasure parallels the mystery of Israel's blindness. (D. Pentecost) The hardening of Israel extends to the time when the last sinner elected to salvation for this Age of Grace, by his introduction into the Body of Christ, completes that Body. The Rapture occurs, the Seventieth Week of Daniel comes some time after this event, and at the Second Advent, the salvation of Israel. (K. Wuest)

How do you avoid anti-Semitism? Through knowledge of Bible doctrine, which is indispensable to the Christian life. Bible doctrine will make improvements in your soul, weeding out the arrogance, prejudice, and intolerance. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The "fullness of the Gentiles" is the completion of the work among the nations which has been going on ever since Israel's rejection. This "fulness" will come in when our Lord calls His Church to be with Himself. (H. Ironside) "All Israel" does not necessarily mean every individual Israelite, but the whole nation, a future national conversion, as distinct from the present conversion of individuals. (W.H.G. Thomas)

This mystery was opened to prevent the Gentiles from being wise in their own conceits, that is, from being puffed up on account of the preference they now enjoyed. Ignorance of the Scriptures is the cause of high-mindedness in Christians. They are often arrogant and contemptuous through want of knowledge. In the absence of real knowledge, they often suppose that they have a true understanding of things with which they are still unacquainted, and are thus vain and conceited. (R. Haldane)

So what does this mean for the future? Eschatologically the nation of Israel will remain hardened to the gospel until God's Church is complete and NT saints are raptured to heaven at the close of this present age. Then, during the Tribulation period, God will again focus His attention on Israel in order to restore the Jewish people to a place of blessing. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 11:25 By all means (inferential conj.), brethren (Vocative; royal family of God), I do not (neg. adv.) wish (θέλω, PA1S, Historical) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be ignorant of (ἀγνοέω, PAInf., Descriptive, Dir. Obj. of a Verb; lack of Bible doctrine in the soul produces ignorance) this (Acc. Gen. Ref.) mystery (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Church Age), with the unfortunate result that (result clause with a neg. adv.) you might become (εἰμί, PASubj.2P, Descriptive, Potential) wise (Pred. Nom.) in yourself (Loc. Sph.; ignorance of doctrine produces an unrealistic, arrogant

estimation of yourself): that (conj. after stmt. of perception) spiritual blindness (Subj. Nom.; hardness of heart, scar tissue of the soul, the big blot-out) in part (Loc. Sph.; a remnant of Jews escape this blindness by believing in Christ) has happened (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic; occurred) to Israel (Dat. Disadv.) until (conj.) which (Adv. Gen. Time) time (Attic Gk. insertion) the full measure (Subj. Nom.; completion, entirety, totality, complement; time from Pentecost to the Rapture) of the Gentiles (Descr. Gen.) has come in (εἰσέρχομαι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Temporal; when the last believer brings the rapture into play and terminates the Church Age),

^{WHO} **Romans 11:25** Οὐ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ἀδελφοί τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο ἵνα μὴ ᾗτε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς φρόνιμοι ὅτι πῶρωςις ἀπὸ μέρους τῷ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν ἄχρις οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:25** nolo enim vos ignorare fratres mysterium hoc ut non sitis vobis ipsis sapientes quia caecitas ex parte contigit in Israhel donec plenitudo gentium intraret

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:26** **And as follows, all Israel [true Israel, not national or racial Israel] shall be delivered, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 59:20]: He Who delivers [Jesus Christ] will come from Zion [at the 2nd advent], removing [slaughtering] the impious ones [unbelievers at the baptism of fire] from Jacob [future restoration of Israel].**

^{KW} **Rom. 11:26** And thus all Israel shall be saved, even as it stands written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:26** And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The term “all Israel” refers to true Israel, not national or racial Israel. Only Jewish believers are part of “true Israel.” All Jewish believers during the tribulation, Daniel’s 70th week, will be delivered (Predictive Future tense) from wrath. The tribulation or Jacob’s Trouble will be the greatest anti-Semitic movement in history, but the Lord will deliver all Jewish believers from this coming holocaust. Paul then quotes from Isaiah 59:20 in order to elaborate on the destruction of all unbelievers.

Jesus Christ is the One Who delivers (Futuristic Present tense) at this time. He will come (Predictive Future tense) from Zion at the 2nd advent and will slaughter all unbelievers at the end of the tribulation. This “removing” of all Jewish unbelievers from the earth is also called the baptism of fire. Paul’s use of the term “Jacob” narrows his reference to Jewish believers only; Gentiles are never called Jacob. The impious ones are irreverent,

Jewish unbelievers. Since they never believe in Christ, they will not be part of the future restoration of Israel that occurs after the tribulation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “all” in “all Israel” should not stumble us. Throughout the Bible the word “all” is used in a general sense and does not necessarily mean every single person. For instance, in Matthew 4:24 we read “that they brought unto Him *all* sick people.” This does not mean every sick person without exception. It means a great many, or the majority of sick people in that area where Jesus was ministering. (E. Hulse) This individual cleansing from sin will be followed by a national restoration to the Messianic kingdom with Messiah reigning on the throne of David in Jerusalem as King of kings and Lord of lords for one thousand years. (K. Wuest) Only a few, comparatively, are being saved among the nations, but when Israel again regains its proper place, all Israel shall be saved. Then the whole nation, from the least to the greatest, will know God. And they will become the light of the world, as they were always intended to be. (A.E. Knoch)

The unconditional nature of the Abrahamic blessing is available for each generation of Israelites. But only that generation which appropriates it by faith will enter into those blessings. God never promised anything to a generation of rebels. It is to the “Israel of God” (Gal.6:16), the believing remnant of the last days, that the promises will finally be fulfilled. (W.C. Kaiser) The physical descendents of Abraham through Jacob who are alive at that time will occupy the land and will truly be the seed of Abraham, because there will then be an intervention of and response to the Word of God in which God banishes ungodliness from Jacob. According to Zechariah 12:10, God promised, “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that when they look on Him Whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child ...” (D.P. Fuller)

The word “all” in this verse refers to Jew and Gentile viewed in the mass, and not individually. It is necessary to keep in mind the fact that “all” in some passages means “all without exception” and in others “all without distinction.” It has the latter meaning here. (W.H.G. Thomas) Israel must mean the Jewish people, and all Israel, the whole nation. The Jews, as a people, are now rejected; as a people, they are to be restored. As their rejection, although national, did not include the rejection of every individual; so their restoration, although in like manner national, need not be assumed to include the salvation of every individual Jew. (C. Hodge) When Christ establishes His millennial reign, the fortunes of the Jews will change. As believers who are restored to the land, they will be the most admired, the most sought-after and respected people in the world. Never again will anti-Semitism erupt; never again will the land be cursed. Messiah Himself will insure the lasting peace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

First, although the words cannot imply universal salvation for Israel, they must nevertheless refer only to Israel as a special entity. And second, the word must apply to particular individuals within that special entity (a future election of God’s grace) as opposed to the group as a whole. The “all” in this verse should be taken to mean Israel as

a whole and not every individual Israelite. This clearly is the way the Jews used the phrase “all Israel.” The Mishnah tractate Sanhedrin X.I. says, “All Israel has a portion in the age to come,” and then proceeds immediately to name the Israelites who have no portion in that age.” “All Israel will be saved” does not mean every Jew will come to Christ; there will be a large evangelistic movement among the Jews in the future. Still, only elect Jews will come to faith during that evangelistic movement. That’s the lesson of Romans 9. Just as there is an election of grace among Jews in this age (the remnant), there will be an election of grace in the days to come. (W. Kroll)

During the tribulation period Satan will attempt to destroy Israel (Rev. 12). Zechariah announced that two-thirds of the Jewish population will die during this time (13:8) ... While the Jewish population will be dramatically reduced during the tribulation period, God will protect and preserve a remnant. The prophet Zechariah declared that the remaining one-third of the Jewish people will go through a period of intense suffering that will result in their turning to the Lord ... The surviving remnant of Jewish people alive at the end of the tribulation will constitute the entire nation of Israel. (S. Kreloff, W. Kroll)

Rom. 11:26 and (connective conj.) as follows (resultant adv.), all (Nom. Spec.; true Israel, not national or racial Israel) Israel (Subj. Nom.; Jewish believers during the tribulation, Daniel’s 70th week) shall be delivered (σώζω, FPI3S, Predictive; delivered from the greatest antisemitic movement in history during the tribulation, Jacob’s Trouble), just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Isaiah 59:20): He Who delivers (ἦκω, PMPTc.NSM, Futuristic, Substantival, Articular; Jesus Christ) will come (ῥύομαι, FAI3S, Predictive, Deponent) from Zion (Abl. Source; at the 2nd Advent), removing (ἀποστρέφω, FAI3S, Predictive; baptism of fire, the slaughter of all unbelievers at the end of the tribulation) the impious ones (Acc. Dir. Obj.; irreverent unbelievers) from Jacob (Abl. Source; future restoration of Israel after the removal of all unbelievers);

^{WHO} **Romans 11:26** καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται· καθὼς γέγραπται Ἦξει ἐκ Σιών ὁ ῥυόμενος ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ·

^{VUL} **Romans 11:26** et sic omnis Israhel salvus fieret sicut scriptum est veniet ex Sion qui eripiat avertet impietates ab Iacob

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:27** Also, this is the [new] covenant from Me to them [Israel], at a time [2nd advent] when I have taken away their punishment for sin [removal of the 5th cycle of discipline during the Millennium].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:27** And this to them is the covenant from me when I shall take away their sins.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:27** For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

At the beginning of the 2nd advent, Jesus Christ will give a new contract to Israel which will cover the Millennial Reign. This new covenant is referenced in Jeremiah 31:33. At that time, Jesus Christ will remove (Culminative Aorist tense) the 5th cycle of discipline from Israel, effectively ending their punishment for sin. Israel will become a client nation to God once again. This covenant is one way, meaning God fulfills both sides of the contract. Israel does absolutely nothing on her part to receive the benefits of this covenant, classifying it as one of the unconditional covenants from God to man.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The New Testament teaches that the new covenant with Israel is yet future and that the promises are in no way abrogated or assigned to the Church, i.e. Hebrews 8:6-13. (C. Ryrie) This covenant is made with Israel, not with us. The gospel is not a covenant, but the revelation of the salvation of God. The new covenant will be established formally with Israel in the millennium. This new covenant is to be equated with the covenant in Jeremiah 31 and has no reference whatever to the church in this age, although this new covenant was also made possible by the death of the Mediator, Jesus Christ. (J.N. Darby) This new covenant was originally made with the houses of Israel and Judah and will be fulfilled in them literally in the millennium. The covenant can only be fulfilled literally by those with whom it was made and, since the church is not Israel, the church can not fulfill that covenant. (D. Pentecost)

We must remember that God is speaking here explicitly of His earthly people, and not of any heavenly one. (F.W. Grant) The covenant in Jeremiah 31, as reaffirmed here, was a literal covenant made with the physical seed of Abraham; it stands as yet unfulfilled and awaits a future literal fulfillment. (D. Pentecost) According to this passage the new covenant will have its fulfillment as a result of the second advent. This is absolutely contrary to the amillennial thought that the new covenant is in force for Israel now. (J. Walvoord) The period of the new covenant was still future at the time of the apostle Paul. Israel's covenant with Messiah is yet to be accomplished and that only when their iniquity has been purged by the return of Messiah. The NT instead of assigning the new covenant a present fulfillment in the Church, teaches not only that it is as yet unfulfilled, but also that it will be fulfilled to Israel as the 2nd Coming of Christ. (C. Ryrie)

This new covenant is to be made with Israel and Judah and, therefore, is not to be confused with the covenant of grace which God already has made with the Church. This new covenant will be unconditional, and thus will not be dependent upon Israel's obedience. A nation will be born in a day. God will put His law into their inward parts and write it in their hearts. He will be their God and they will be His people. God will manifest His sovereign electing grace on a national scale on behalf of Israel, even as He

showed His sovereign electing grace on a personal scale to those who believed in Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord. (D.G. Barnhouse)

Rom. 11:27 also (adjunctive particle), this (Subj. Nom.; immediate demonstrative pronoun) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) the covenant (Pred. Nom.; the new contract given to Israel which will begin at the 2nd advent and which will cover the Millennial Reign of Christ; in Jeremiah 31:33) from Me (Abl. Source) to them (Dat. Adv.; client nation Israel), at a time when (conditional temporal particle; refers to the 2nd advent) I have taken away (ἀφαιρέω, AMSubj.1S, Culminative, Potential, Temporal clause; remove, detach) their (Poss. Gen.) punishment for sin (Acc. Dir. Obj.; removal of the 5th cycle of discipline from Israel, not a political deliverance).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:27** καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ ἐμοῦ διαθήκη ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:27** et hoc illis a me testamentum cum abstulero peccata eorum

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:28** On the one hand, with reference to the gospel, they [Jewish unbelievers] are hostile towards you [Gentile believers]; but on the other hand, with reference to the election, they [believing Jews] are beloved [members of the royal family of God] because of the fathers [Jewish believers during the dispensation of Israel],

^{KW} **Rom. 11:28** On the one hand, with reference to the gospel they are enemies for your sakes; on the other hand, with reference to the selected-out ones they are beloved ones for the father's sake;

^{KJV} **Romans 11:28** As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses affirmative and comparative particles in classic debate format to contrast the differing relationships between Gentile believers and believing and unbelieving Jews. This is represented by the words “on the one hand (Jewish unbelievers), on the other hand {Jewish believers}.” Unbelieving Jews are hostile to Gentile believers because they reject the gospel. In many cases, this hostility is antagonistic to the point of enemyship. Believing Jews, however, are part of the election of Christ, meaning they are members of the royal family of God. They are beloved by God because of their relationship to the Jewish fathers who believed in Christ during the dispensation of Israel. In this verse, “fathers” is a reference to OT Jewish believers, not God the Father.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Israel's present estrangement from God has been the occasion for the Gentiles to embrace the blessings of the gospel and be reconciled to Him. Paul means that the promises which God made to the patriarchs when He called them are secured to their descendants, not on the ground of merit, but on the ground of God's fidelity to His word of grace. (F.F. Bruce) God's determination to choose a particular people through whom to display His faithfulness to His promises, Paul reiterates, explains why one cannot conclude that God has abandoned Israel despite all distressing appearances. (T. Schreiner)

Paul has been arguing for God's faithfulness to the Jews as being consistent with His faithfulness to us, and now, having shown that "all Israel will be saved," he breaks into praise of God's gracious attributes, since they affect us also. (J. Boice) God's life does not change. God's character does not change. God's truth does not change. God's ways do not change. God's purposes do not change. God's Son does not change. (J.I. Packer) God is faithful in preserving His people. God is faithful in disciplining His people. God is faithful in glorifying His people. How refreshing and how blessed to lift our eyes above this scene of ruin, and behold One who is faithful, faithful in all things, at all times. (A.W. Pink) Israel are both enemies and beloved at the same time, enemies as regards the gospel, beloved as regards the election. (J. Murray)

Rom. 11:28 On the one hand (affirmative particle), with reference to (as concerns) the gospel (Acc. Gen. Ref.), they are (ellipsis, subject and verb supplied; Jewish unbelievers) hostile (Pred. Nom.; antagonistic, enemies) towards you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Gentile believers); but on the other hand (comparative), with reference to (as concerns) the election (Acc. Gen. Ref.), they are (ellipsis, subject and verb supplied; Jewish believers) beloved (Pred. Nom.; members of the royal family of God) because of the fathers (Causal Acc.; Jewish believers during the dispensation of Israel),

^{WHO} **Romans 11:28** κατὰ μὲν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἐχθροὶ δι' ὑμᾶς κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ἀγαπητοὶ διὰ τοὺς πατέρας·

^{VUL} **Romans 11:28** secundum evangelium quidem inimici propter vos secundum electionem autem carissimi propter patres

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:29** For the grace benefits [blessings] and the election from God are irrevocable.

^{KW} **Rom. 11:29** For the gifts in grace and the calling of God are with respect to a change of mind irrevocable.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:29** For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul supports his explanation of the Jewish believer by referring to the irrevocable logistical and supergrace blessings bestowed upon them by God. The Lord also does not regret His election of them in eternity past. He does not change His mind somewhere along the way. He sticks to His plan. Just like Gentile believers, He elected Jewish believers in eternity past and He called them by His Spirit in time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

An election which is the same in all dispensations, but many grace benefits which are different in each dispensation, i.e. blessings to Israel are *not* the same as those to the church. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) No individual or nation whom He calls ever disappoints Him, for He knows full well what they are and what they will do. This alone proves that Israel will yet fulfill the part He has prepared for it. (A.E. Knoch) The idea is that the gifts and calling of God are not subject to a change of mind on His part. That is, he will not change His mind regarding His chosen people, the Jews, and their God-ordained mission and destiny. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 11:29 for (explanatory conj.) the grace benefits (Subj. Nom.; both logistical and supergrace blessings) and (connective conj.) the election (Subj. Nom.; calling) from God (Abl. Source) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) irrevocable (Pred. Nom.; anthropopathism; without regret or repentance).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:29** ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:29** sine paenitentia enim sunt dona et vocatio Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:30** For just as you [Gentiles] did not believe God in times past, but now you have obtained mercy because of their [unbelieving Israel's] unbelief,

^{KW} **Rom. 11:30** For, even as you formerly disbelieved God, yet now have been made recipients of mercy through the occasion of the unbelief of these,

^{KJV} **Romans 11:30** For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Just as Gentiles did not believe (Constative Aorist tense) God during earlier dispensations, many Jews did not believe in prior dispensations. But now during the Church Age, Gentile believers have obtained mercy (Culminative Aorist tense) because of Israel's unbelief. And it follows that many Jews who do not believe in Christ during the Church Age, may become believers during the tribulation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The past unbelief of the Gentiles and the mercy they presently enjoy, the present unbelief of the Jews and the mercy they are destined to enjoy in the future – these things not only correspond to each other, but they are parts of a system which God controls, and in which every element conditions and is conditioned by all the rest: there is a Divine necessity pervading and controlling all the freedom of men – a Divine purpose mastering all the random activity of human wills. (W. R. Nicoll)

Rom. 11:30 For (explanatory conj.) just as (comparative protasis) you (Subj. Nom.; Gentiles) did not believe (ἀπειθέω, AAI2P, Constative) God (Dat. Disadv.) in times past (enclitic particle; formerly, during some earlier dispensation, i.e. the age of Israel), but (contrast conj.) now (Adv. Time; during the Church Age) you (Gentiles) have obtained mercy (ἐλέεω, API2P, Culminative) because of (through, by means of) their (Poss. Gen.; unbelieving Israel's) unbelief (Instr. Cause, Means),

^{WHO} **Romans 11:30** ὡςπερ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ποτε ἠπειθήσατε τῷ θεῷ νῦν δὲ ἠλεήθητε τῇ τούτων ἀπειθείᾳ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:30** sicut enim aliquando et vos non credidistis Deo nunc autem misericordiam consecuti estis propter illorum incredulitatem

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:31** In a similar manner, also, these [unbelieving Jews] have not believed in your time [during the Church Age] of received mercy, so that they also may yet [during the tribulation] receive mercy,

^{KW} **Rom. 11:31** Thus also these now have disbelieved in order that through the occasion of the mercy which is yours, they themselves also might now become the recipients of mercy,

^{KJV} **Romans 11:31** Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Reversing the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, the unbelieving Jews have not believed (Culminative Aorist tense) during the Church Age. However, during the tribulation, they will be given yet another opportunity (Potential Subjunctive mood) to receive mercy (Culminative Aorist tense) by believing in Christ. The comparative apodosis is an inversion of the prior status of the dispensation of Israel when Jews believed, but Gentiles did not. The centerpiece of God's plan switched from Israel to the Church, and this centerpiece is represented by the majority of believers from each time: Jews in the dispensation of Israel and Gentiles in the dispensation of the Church Age.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When Paul says that Israel was disobedient “in order that” Gentiles might get the benefits of the gospel, whose purpose does he have in mind? It can only be God’s. The point of Romans 11:31 is that God’s hardening of Israel is not an end in itself, but is part of a saving purpose that will embrace all the nations. (T. Schreiner) From our perspective, the workings of God are irregular, and we like events to run like a train on fixed timetables and along predictable tracks. Because they do not, we are always thinking of how we would be able to do things better: What this means is that in the final analysis, we do not trust God to order both the ends and the means to them. How foolish, when in the matter of salvation God has ordered the ends and the means to that end so perfectly! That is a far more complicated matter than the details of our little lives. So we need to repudiate our folly, seek wisdom in the Bible, where alone it may be found, and then seize every opportunity to live for and witness to our all-wise God and heavenly Father. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:31 In a similar manner (comparative apodosis; inversion, reversal of relationship), also (adjunctive part.), these (Subj. Nom.; unbelieving Jews) have not believed (ἀπειθέω, AAI3P, Culminative) in your (Poss. Gen.) time (Loc. Time; during the Church Age) of received mercy (Instr. Means), so that (purpose conj.) they (Nom. Appos.) also (adjunctive particle) may yet (Temporal adv.; during the Tribulation) receive mercy (ἐλέεω, APSbj.3P, Culminative, Potential; belief in Christ will still be the issue);

^{WHO} **Romans 11:31** οὕτως καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπειθήσαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ νῦν ἐλεηθῶσιν·

^{VUL} **Romans 11:31** ita et isti nunc non crediderunt in vestram misericordiam ut et ipsi misericordiam consequantur

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:32** For God has locked them all up [both Jew and Gentile] in unbelief [total inability], so that He might have mercy [by the exercise of His sovereign will] on them all [both Jew and Gentile].

^{KW} **Rom. 11:32** For God included all within the state of unbelief in order that He might have mercy upon all.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:32** For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God has imprisoned (Constative Aorist tense) both Jew and Gentile in unbelief. As unbelievers, they are both incapable of believing in Christ until the Holy Spirit

regenerates their mind. Their state of unbelief is due to the imputation of Adam's sin, and their belief is due to the imputation of the Spirit of Christ. The reason He confined them to a state of unbelief is so He could then show mercy upon His elect, both Jew and Gentile. The Greek word "pas" is grossly translated as "all without exception" when in the majority of cases the context determines the usage, i.e. both Jews and Gentiles in this passage. This is not a verse about evangelism, but a verse about the elect receiving mercy according to God's plan. This is not a verse which opens the option to all mankind to save himself, but a verse in which the Lord applies mercy to His chosen few.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The grace of God does not search for men who are willing to accept it; the grace of God *makes* men willing, not *finds* men willing. Nor are some men elected to salvation because God *forsees* that they will believe, but because He *foreknows that none will*. But for the election of God the Lord would have died in vain. (A. Custance) The grace of God does not find men fit to be chosen, but makes them fit. (J. Calvin) Man is converted not because he wills to be, but he wills to be because he is ordained to election. (Augustine) Where the Arminian says "I owe my election to my faith," the Calvinist says "I owe my faith to my election." (J.I. Packer)

Nothing could be clearer than that the reference of the twofold "all" is exhausted by the two classes, Jews and Gentiles, discussed in the immediate context. (R.B. Kuiper) Here we have the real reason why all, in turn, become stubborn. God Himself locks them up to it, not that He may condemn them, but that He may have occasion to manifest His mercy. (A.E. Knoch) That He may have mercy upon all. That is, on all without distinction rather than all without exception. (F.F. Bruce)

Rom. 11:32 **For** (inferential conj.) **God** (Subj. Nom.) **has locked** (συγκλείω, AAI3S, Constative; confined, imprisoned) **them** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **all up** (Acc. Spec.; both Jew & Gentile) **in unbelief** (Adv. Acc.; total inability, disobedience, refusal to believe in the Gospel, imputation of Adam's sin), **so that** (purpose conj.) **He might have mercy** (ἐλέεω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Purpose; if that was His desire, but it wasn't-only His elect received mercy) **on them** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **all** (Acc. Spec.; both Jew & Gentile).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:32** συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπίθειαν ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσει

^{VUL} **Romans 11:32** conclusit enim Deus omnia in incredulitatem ut omnium misereatur

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:33** Oh the inexhaustibility of the wealth of both the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable [beyond our comprehension] His decrees and untrackable [can't always follow them] His policies!

κω Rom. 11:33 O the depth of the wealth and wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments, and how untraceable the paths He takes;

κJV Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul gets quite emotional when He contemplates the sovereignty of God and His plan to bring the elect into the royal family. He cannot help but be awestruck by the wonder of His mercy. He expresses the abundance of the wisdom and knowledge of God with an exclamatory “bathos,” meaning neither can be probed by the limits of man’s faculties. The extent of His wisdom and knowledge (Latin: altitude) is beyond our comprehension. His divine decrees are unscrutable, unfathomable, beyond our ability to estimate them (Latin: incomprehensible). His divine policies are untrackable – they cannot be followed (Latin: investigate) and they are past finding out.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Wealth is not money, or power, or material belongings - it is thought, Bible doctrine in the soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) For years I sought to reconcile divine sovereignty and human responsibility, eternal security and free moral agency. I pondered them, but I found it futile to search the judgments of God. God never asked us to reconcile sovereignty with responsibility, so I don’t have to. I just accept and believe in these truths which remain to me irreconcilable. God is absolutely sovereign and can do whatever He wants. He can harden my heart, show me mercy, damn me, or save me. I believe that I can choose to call upon the Lord and be saved. He is sovereign, yet I have the choice. Though I cannot reconcile it, I believe it. (C. Smith)

As applied to human acquaintance with divine things, “gnosis” knowledge is the lower, “sophia” wisdom the higher stage. Knowledge may issue in self-conceit. It is wisdom that builds up the man. As attributes of God, the distinction appears to be between general and special: the wisdom of God ruling everything in the best way for the best end; the knowledge of God, his wisdom as it contemplates the relations of things, and adopts means and methods. The wisdom forms the plan; the knowledge knows the ways of carrying it out. (M. Vincent)

Why is it that Paul stands in such awe of God’s decrees? The decrees are for God’s glory. The decrees are one, since He sees all things as a whole and from the beginning. The decrees are eternal; everything in all its details, even the most minute, is but the evolution of the eternal purposes of God. The decrees are wise. The decrees are free. We are free, yet our freedom is within a framework of space/time limitations. In God’s case, His will determines the framework. The decrees are absolute and unconditional. What God determines to do is not suspended upon any condition that may or may not come to be, or upon any act that you or I may or may not do. Nothing can arise to cause Him to do

things differently or thwart His design. The decrees are effective. Whatever God ordains, whether actively or passively, is certain. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:33 Oh (*thaumasmos*, an emotional feeling of wonder) the inexhaustability (Nom. Exclamation; can't be probed) of the wealth (Descr. Gen.; abundance) of both (connective conj.) the wisdom (Obj. Gen.) and (connective conj.) the knowledge (Obj. Gen.; thought) of God (Poss. Gen.)! How (an exclamatory adverb which introduces a synonymous parallelism) inscrutable (Nom. Exclam.; unfathomable, unsearchable, beyond our ability to estimate) His (Poss. Gen.) decrees (Subj. Nom.; evaluations, judgments) and (continuative conj.) untrackable (Nom. Exclam.; can not be followed, past finding out) His (Poss. Gen.) policies (Subj. Nom.; methods, plans, ways)!

^{WHO} **Romans 11:33** ὅτι βάθος πλούτου καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως θεοῦ· ὡς ἀνεξεραύνητα τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:33** o altitudo divitiarum sapientiae et scientiae Dei quam inconprehensibilia sunt iudicia eius et investigabiles viae eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:34** For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:34** For whoever knew the Lord's mind? Or who became His counselor?

^{KJV} **Romans 11:34** For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul quotes a verse from Isaiah 40:13-15 - two interrogatives that should be answered by the pronoun “nobody.” Who has known (Dramatic Aorist tense) the mind of the Lord? Nobody. Who has been (Dramatic Aorist tense) His advisor? Nobody. It is possible to have the “mind of Christ,” but it is not possible to completely know His mind. The Greek word “nous” means right lobe of the soul, where our thinking occurs. If we can hardly know our own “mentality” of the soul, how can we presume to understand the mentality of the Lord? His plans and policies, especially related to His sovereignty and omnipotence, are beyond our ability to understand. And because they are beyond us, we are incapable of being His counselor or advisor.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Nous refers to the higher mental part of natural man which initiates his thoughts and plans. It is also used to describe the “mind” of God in this verse and the “mind” of Christ in I Cor. 2:16. (R.A. Morey) Man does not know God's mind, nor has he been called to give advice to the Almighty. (T. Nettles) We are to trust God, work to develop our minds,

and grow in true spiritual wisdom and understanding. How? Learn that there is no true wisdom except in God. Learn that even though you begin with God, you will never fully understand God and therefore you will never fully understand His ways. Finally, learn to trust God and follow hard after Him. If you acknowledge your foolishness and ignorance and learn to trust God, you will find that God will provide all the knowledge you need – you will find it in Scripture – and if you ask Him, He will give abundant wisdom, too. (J. Boice)

Rom. 11:34 For (explanatory conj.; as is stated in Isaiah 40:13-15) who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun, affirmative negation: "Nobody") has known (γινώσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic) the mind (Acc. Dir. Obj., anthropomorphism, left lobe) of the Lord (Poss. Gen.)? Or (disjunctive particle) who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) has been (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Dramatic, Deponent) His (Poss. Gen.) counsellor (Pred. Nom.; advisor)?

^{WHO} **Romans 11:34** Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου ἢ τίς σύμβουλος αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο

^{VUL} **Romans 11:34** quis enim cognovit sensum Domini aut quis consiliarius eius fuit

LWB Rom. 11:35 Or who has given in advance to Him [giving as a form of worship], and it shall not be repaid to him?

^{KW} **Rom. 11:35** Or who has previously given to Him and it will be recompensed to him?

^{KJV} **Romans 11:35** Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now quotes a verse from Job 41:11, saying: Who has given in advance (Constative Aorist tense) to the Lord? This is a picture of giving as a form of worship. And when this grace giving is done, will the giver not be compensated (Predictive Future tense) by God? After all, everything under heaven belongs to God. The interrogative pronouns assume a negative answer: nobody.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The questions in these verses are obviously rhetorical, expecting the answer, “no one.” The first two stress that no human being can understand what God is doing in the world. But, as the wisdom tradition from which these questions are drawn teaches, what no human being can understand, “wisdom” can. The third question moves from the issue of our knowledge of God’s plan to the way in which we experience it. No one, Paul claims, is ahead of God in giving, as if to earn a recompense from Him. Paul thus reminds us that it is only by God’s grace that we can experience the “depth of riches” that His plan is

designed to communicate. (D. Moo) God is debtor to none, His favor is never compensation, merit places no constraint upon His mercy. The three rhetorical questions, all implying a negative answer, have their positive counterparts in the self-sufficiency, sovereignty, and independence of God. (J. Murray)

Rom. 11:35 Or (disjunctive particle; as in Job 41:11) who (Subj. Nom., interrogative pronoun) has given in advance (προδίδωμι, AAI3S, Constative, Potential; hand over money, true giving as a form of worship) to Him (Dat. Ind. Obj.), and (connective conj.) it shall not be repaid (ἀνταποδίδωμι, FPI3S, Predictive; "and has not been compensated by God") to him (Dat. Ind. Obj.; everything under heaven belongs to God, the Source)?

^{WHO} **Romans 11:35** ἢ τίς προέδωκεν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνταποδοθήσεται αὐτῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 11:35** aut quis prior dedit illi et retribuetur ei

^{LWB} **Rom. 11:36** Because the all things [spiritual blessings] are from Him [the source] and through Him [the mechanics] and for Him [the ultimate end], to Whom [Jesus Christ] is the glory unto the ages [forever]. Acknowledge it.

^{KW} **Rom. 11:36** Because out from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

^{KJV} **Romans 11:36** For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The "all things" is a reference to the spiritual blessings available to the believer in Christ, both positional and experiential in type, whether Jew or Gentile. They are from Him as the ultimate source, they are through Him as the mechanics for receiving them, and they are for Him as the ultimate end. Spiritual blessings start from the Lord, flow through the Lord, and in the end they return to the Lord. Understanding these things, Paul completes his doxology by giving all the glory to Jesus Christ. From eternity past to eternity future, encompassing all dispensations, the glory always belongs to the Lord. The genuinely humble believer acknowledges this fact.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is an example of a *polyptoton*, or the repetition of the same part of speech (noun) in different inflections or cases. (E.W. Bullinger) *Aion* is frequently used in the sense of eternity, the sum total of all the ages. It is also used frequently in regard to the separate ages of God's dealing with men, i.e. dispensations. (D. Pentecost) This is the most comprehensive statement which can be uttered. God is the source of all, the channel of

all, and the object of all. The universe sprang out of Him, it has its course in Him and He will be its ultimate. This settles all speculation as to the origin of all things. Creation is out of God, not out of nothing. This explains universal history. God is the One back of all the movements of mankind. This reveals the goal of all things. God is so guiding all His creatures that, eventually, He will become their All. (A.E. Knoch)

Here God is described as His own last End in everything that He does. Judging of God as such a one as themselves, they were at first startled at the idea that He must love Himself supremely, infinitely more than the whole universe, and consequently must prefer His own glory to everything besides. But when they were reminded that God in reality is infinitely more amiable and more valuable than the whole creation, and that consequently, if He views things as they really are, He must regard Himself as infinitely worthy of being most valued and loved, they saw that this truth was incontrovertible. The manifestation of the glory of God is the great end of creation. He has Himself chiefly in view in all His works and dispensations; it is a purpose in which He requires that all His intelligent creatures should acquiesce, and seek to promote as their first and paramount duty. (J. Barmby)

The complete supremacy of God over the future, His complete freedom from the vagaries of contingency, is the necessary condition for God's absolute guarantee to keep His promises. (T. Schreiner) This is an obvious transition at the end of this chapter to concrete and practical application in the spheres of Christian life and behavior. The doxology is a fitting conclusion to all that precedes. (J. Murray)

Rom. 11:36 **Because** (causal conj. which introduces condensation by variation) **the all** (Nom. Spec.; back to Romans 8) **things** (Subj. Nom.) **are** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **from Him** (Abl. Source; the source of logistical and supergrace blessings) **and** (connective conj.) **through Him** (Abl. Means, Agency; the mechanics of logistical and supergrace blessings) **and** (connective conj.) **for Him** (Acc. Rel., Goal; the end of all things), **to Whom** (Dat. Adv.; Jesus Christ) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **the glory** (Ind. Nom.) **unto the ages** (Adv. Acc. Time; forever). **Acknowledge it** (end of doxology).

^{WHO} **Romans 11:36** ὅτι ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα· αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Romans 11:36** quoniam ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso omnia ipsi gloria in saecula amen

CHAPTER 12

LWB Rom. 12:1 I urge you, therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], by the rational mercies [unemotional compassion] from God, to place your bodies [persons] under orders [filling of the Spirit] as a living [as opposed to animal] sacrifice, holy [spiritual], acceptable [well-pleasing] to God: your rational and spiritual [mental] worship;

KW Rom. 12:1 I therefore beg of you, please, brethren, through the instrumentality of the aforementioned mercies of God, by a once-for-all presentation to place your bodies at the disposal of God, a sacrifice, a living one, a holy one, well-pleasing, your rational, sacred service, [rational, in that this service is performed by the exercise of the mind].

KJV Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul encourages all members of the royal family of God (Dramatic Present tense) like a commanding officer might call his soldiers to his side for a briefing. He is closing the parenthesis of chapters 9-11 with this admonition, as noted by the Cohortative Indicative mood. He calls us to place our persons (Constative Aorist tense) under orders to God. This urging is followed by an Imperative Infinitive, a command to place (Latin: exhibit) ourselves at God's disposal. A military equivalent for this command would be, "Present Arms!" The word "bodies" is a synecdoche, a figure of speech in which a part (body) is used for the whole (our entire being or person).

"Rational mercies" (Latin: rational) is an anthropopathism for the unemotional compassion and sympathy from God. For believers, members of the royal family, it represents grace blessings coming from the justice of God. In other words, this is the beginning of a portion of Scripture dedicated to experiential sanctification (Latin: *modus vivendi*). Many grace blessings depend on us and our spiritual walk in time, in contrast to our positional justification which depends entirely on the sovereignty of God. We are to place ourselves under orders to God by the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) and by the resultant filling of the Spirit. We are to become a living sacrifice (Descriptive Present tense) as opposed to the animal sacrifices dedicated to the Lord in prior dispensations.

We are also to live a life of holiness, meaning with honor and integrity according to divine standards. This can only be accomplished by walking in the Spirit, the goal of our interim life on earth. We are also to live a life acceptable to God, which means it should be well-pleasing to Him like the sweet smell of sacrifices was in OT days. This service or worship is not some emotional effort we work up in the flesh. It is our rational and spiritual worship Paul is commanding us to live. The only way to obey this command is by the intake, metabolization, and

application of Bible doctrine in the filling of the Spirit. It always pertains to the mind, not the emotions. Christian worship is mental, not emotional, though emotions may follow the mind.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In Chapters 1-8, Paul explains the doctrines of condemnation, justification, sanctification, and glorification. In Chapters 9-11, he explains to Israel why the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants have not been fulfilled. Now, in Chapters 12-16, the apostle exhorts to a life in conformity with the exalted position in which chapters 1-8 place the believer, and in view also of the God-given ability which the believer has to live such a life. Doctrine must always precede exhortation to a holy life, a reasonable one, and in doctrine, the saint is informed as to the resources of grace he possesses with which to obey the exhortations. (K. Wuest) Many Christians render to Christ an imperfect sacrifice in this respect: they keep back part of their life from Him. They allow themselves to be dominated by feelings which are inconsistent with His spirit and precepts. They will excuse themselves from some besetting sin by saying, "That is my nature; I can't help it." The evil nature is still with us, but it is our duty to strive against it, to overcome it. (C. Irwin)

The effect produced upon us by the mercies of God, in redemption and in His providence, affords an excellent criterion of character. If they lead us to devote ourselves to His service, they produce the effect for which they were designed, and we may conclude that we are of the number of His children. But if they produce indifference to duty, and cherish the idea that we are the special favorites of heaven, or that we may sin with impunity, it is evidence that our hearts are not right in the sight of God. (C. Hodge) Israel preached the gospel through the use of object lessons: the Tabernacle, Priesthood and Offerings. The Church preaches the same gospel in abstract terms. (K. Wuest) Formerly animals destitute of reason were offered unto God, but now men possessed of a rational soul. Also, this is mental or spiritual service, in opposition to ceremonial and external observations. (C. Hodge)

Sanctification involves the concentration of thought, of interest, of mind, will, and purpose upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and the engagement of our whole being with those means which God has instituted for the attainment of that destination. (J. Murray) Beyond his exposition of the truth for its own sake, Paul always has a further practical aim. Saving faith is ever with him a living faith, to be shown by its fruits. Nor, according to him, will these fruits follow, unless the believer himself does his part in cultivating them: else were these earnest and particular exhortations needless. All was of grace, but he himself had laboured, assisted by grace working with him. (J. Barmby) The proper spiritual priority places doctrine before the influence of any personal relationship, even beneficial relationships built on doctrine. As a result of spiritual growth, we leave behind entanglements that would impede our continued advance. Loyalty to the truth supercedes but does not eliminate loyalty to people and organizations. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We live in mindless times ... but we need to think, and we need to think biblically. In our day people do not think deeply and seldom think about the truths of Christianity. Unbelievers move through life in a spiritual daze unaware that they have precious but impoverished and dying souls. Believers are often in a daze, too. There is very little measurable difference in thought and action between believers and their unbelieving counterparts. One observer of the contemporary scene says that God lies weightlessly upon them and that Christian doctrines seem to have no consequences. Doctrine is practical, and practical material must be doctrinal if it is to be of any help at all. The way our minds become renewed is by study of the life-giving and renewing Word of God. Without that study we will remain in the world's mold, unable to think and therefore also unable to act as Christians. (J. Boice)

“Body” can, of course, refer to the physical body as such, and the metaphorical associations with sacrifice make it an appropriate choice here. But Paul probably intends to refer to the entire person, with special emphasis on that person's interaction with the world. Christian worship is not confined to one place or to one time, but involves all places and all times. Christian worship does not consist of what is practiced at sacred sites, at sacred times, and with sacred acts. It is the offering of bodily existence in the otherwise profane sphere. Regular meetings together of Christians for praise and mutual edification are appropriate ... but such special times of corporate worship are only one aspect of the continual worship that each of us is to offer the Lord in the sacrifice of our bodies every day. (D. Moo)

Very plainly the Jewish psalmist recognizes that it is the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart that is most acceptable to God, and that without this it is vain to offer the blood of bulls and goats. But the high precepts of their religion were sadly neglected by the Jews in later years. In the time of Jesus Christ on earth, the religion of most of them was a religion of ritual and routine. But the worship that He demands is worship in spirit and in truth. The sacrifice that He requires is a sacrifice of our life. He wants the activities and energies of body, soul, and spirit to be consecrated to His service. This is what the apostle means when he speaks of presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice. (C. Irwin) Doctrine is never taught in the Bible simply that it may be known; it is taught in order that it may be translated into practice. Hence Paul follows up an exposition of doctrine with an ethical exhortation, the latter being linked to the former. (J. Murray)

Rom. 12:1 **I urge** (παρακαλέω, PAI1S, Dramatic, Cohortative Ind.; exhort, encourage, admonish, a commanding officer calling his soldiers to his side) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **therefore** (inferential conj.; closing the parenthesis of chapters 9-11), **brethren** (Vocative Address; a royal family matter), **by the rational mercies** (Abl. Source; anthropathism for unemotional compassion and sympathy; grace blessings coming from the justice of God) **from God** (Abl. Source), **to place your** (Poss. Gen.) **bodies** (Acc. Dir. Obj., synecdoche: when a part is used for the whole - “yourselves”; which contain the OSN) **under orders** (παρίστημι,

AAInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Imperative; place at someone's disposal, "Present arms!"; this command is executed by rebound and the filling of the Spirit) **as a living** (ζάω, PAPtc.ASF, Descriptive, Adjectival; as opposed to animal sacrifices in a prior dispensation) **sacrifice** (Acc. Appos.; function of the "interim life"), **holy** (Compl. Acc.; sanctified, integrity, honor code, royalty, without blemish), **acceptable** (Compl. Acc.; well pleasing, satisfying, a sweet smelling savour) **to God** (Dat. Ind. Obj.): **your** (Poss. Gen.) **rational and spiritual** (Acc. Absolute, anacoluthon; reasonable, rational, pertaining to the mind) **worship** (Acc. Appos., epexegetical; service);

^{WHO} **Romans 12:1** Παρακαλώ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν τῷ θεῷ εὐάρεστον τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν·

^{VUL} **Romans 12:1** obsecro itaque vos fratres per misericordiam Dei ut exhibeatis corpora vestra hostiam viventem sanctam Deo placentem rationabile obsequium vestrum

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:2** Also, stop being conformed [you do it to yourself] to this age [practices and thinking of Satan's cosmos diabolicos], but be continually transformed [allow the intake and metabolization of Bible doctrine to change your thoughts] by the renewal of the mind [divine guidance through daily Bible study], for the purpose of proving what the will of God is: intrinsically good [divine attributes] and acceptable [well pleasing] and complete [nothing is missing from His plan].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:2** And stop assuming an outward expression that does not come from within you and is not representative of what you are in your inner being but is patterned after this age; but change your outward expression to one that comes from within and is representative of your inner being, by the renewing of your mind, resulting in your putting to the test what is the will of God, the good and well-pleasing and complete will, and having found that it meets specification, place your approval upon it.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:2** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now issues a negative command (Imperative of Prohibition) to stop being continually conformed (Iterative Present tense) to the world system in which we live. Paul knows this is happening and he wants it stopped immediately. Each one of the Roman believers was doing this to themselves, just like we do it to ourselves. There may be a difference in the emphasis of cosmic involvement in each age, but the negative conforming is basically the same. Adherence to worldly thinking in each age or dispensation is an evil distraction that destroys forward momentum in the Christian life. It always produces self-induced misery, discontent and unhappiness. There is nobody to

blame for our unhappiness and worldly attitude but ourselves. We allow ourselves to be slaves to the passing fashions, practices and thinking of *cosmos diabolicos* (Satan's world system) by constantly feeding these concepts into our thoughts. Paul says, "Stop it!" We are supposed to mold our thinking to Bible doctrine, not the world's empty propaganda.

Paul now issues a positive command (Imperative mood) in contrast to the former prohibition. What we are supposed to be doing is being continually transformed (Iterative Present tense) by the renewal of our minds. The customary practice of a growing and maturing believer is the daily intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. Unfortunately, very few of us are following this divine plan. The purpose of His divine plan is to change our thoughts (Latin: reformed) to become His thoughts. There is no substitute plan; there is no assistance needed from any system or person. Bible doctrine is the only thing that will renovate our thinking according to His will. Philosophy is satanic; psychology is satanic; religion is satanic. Bible doctrine, and Bible doctrine only, is divine. You will not find the "mind of Christ" in books or lectures on religion, philosophy, psychology or any other cosmic panaceas.

This transformation (Greek: metamorphosis) of our thinking is something that occurs over time as we learn and apply Bible doctrine. It is a daily, continuous process, not an instantaneous act. God does not "download" the contents of His thinking into our brain. One service a week on Sunday is not going to cut it either. Iterative means daily, over and over again. If all you learn about the Word of God is the snippet you hear once a week on Sunday, you will spend the majority of your life in ignorance of His plan. Neither does God renovate our minds through emotional experiences. Divine transformation and guidance is mental, not emotional. It is an inward transformation that occurs only through the daily inculcation of the Word of God. There are no substitutes. Anything else you add to His precise plan of inculcation is worldly (cosmic).

What is the purpose of this daily intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine? If God's plan for our experiential sanctification is followed according to His precisely correct protocol, we will become witnesses to the rest of the world to the success of His system. We will become the proof (Perfective Present tense) of His plan by becoming the spiritually mature individuals we are supposed to be. The Bible doctrine resident in our soul will eventually reveal the plan of God to the outside world. Most of the time our spiritual life will be invisible to others, but if we follow His plan correctly, eventually our thinking and living will reveal His divine influence to others. This is how we become a "light" to the world around us. If we fill our thinking with cosmic panaceas and if we live an emotional roller-coaster life, we will be unrecognizable from an unbeliever. This is not God's plan for our life; this is not the fulfillment of our spiritual destiny.

If we follow God's protocol for transforming our minds with Bible doctrine, as opposed to being molded by the world, Paul lists three things that our lives will reveal about His will. First, our lives will reveal to others that the plan we are living by is empowered by divine attributes. God's will and plan is intrinsically good because it is derived from His

divine attributes. Second, our lives will also become increasingly acceptable to God, well pleasing according to His divine norms and standards. The third thing our spiritual lives will display is that His will and plan is absolutely perfect and complete. Nothing from the world is required to in some way “enhance” or “speed up” our growth to maturity. Only strict adherence to divine protocol will lead to spiritual maturity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Aion is used to speak of this present evil age or world system. (R.A. Morey) The subtle informing spirit of the *kosmos* or world of men who are living alienated and apart from God. (Bengel) The current mood (cultivated in some Christian groups) of anti-intellectualism is not true piety at all, but part of the fashion of the world and therefore a form of worldliness. To denigrate the mind is to undermine foundational Christian doctrines. Has God spoken to us, and shall we not listen to His Words? Has God renewed our mind through Christ, and shall we not think with it? Is God going to judge us by His Word, and shall we not be wise and build our house upon this Rock? (J.R.W. Stott) Magnificent Christians represent a special group. Once they understand the objective of the Christian way of life, they do not waver. Instead, they organize their lives and priorities for the purpose of glorifying God to the maximum. As a result of passing that portion of momentum testing classified as thought testing, the mature believer has fulfilled the biblical mandates related to divine viewpoint mental attitude. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

To “prove” means to prove and approve, to test and attest. It refers to spiritual discernment, which is the inevitable result of inward transformation. The result of this purification is to make the intellect, which is the seat of moral judgment, true and exact in judging on spiritual and moral questions. The NT makes much of spiritual discernment. (W.G. Thomas) The renovation of one’s thought is accomplished over a period of time by giving Bible doctrine number one priority, by organizing one’s life around the daily perception of the Word of God. “The good, the well-pleasing, and the complete” is the protocol plan of God, executed in the palace of the divine dynasphere. Only in the divine dynasphere can the believer receive all the blessings God has prepared for him – in prosperity or adversity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

All the doctrines of justification, grace, election, and final salvation, taught in the preceding part of this epistle, are made the foundation for the practical duties that follow. (C. Hodge) The change of outward expression is dependent upon the renovation, the complete change for the better of the believer’s mental process. This is accomplished through the ministry of the Holy Spirit ... by controlling the mental processes of the believer. (K. Wuest) Only gradually can a doctrinal thought pattern, usable by the filling of the Spirit, displace the old thought pattern developed since childhood. The believer’s inner conflict is as much a conflict between the thought pattern of evil and the thought pattern of doctrine as it is between the sin nature and the Holy Spirit. Through the filling of the Spirit and the consistent perception of Bible doctrine, the battlefield is under God’s control, and He is free to provide the fantastic blessings of supergrace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The transformation here spoken of consists in the renewal of the mind, which denotes the understanding, or thinking power, regarded as to its moral activity. And Christian renewal imparts not only the will and power to do God's will, but also intelligence to discern it. The perfect Christian character is not formed all at once on conversion. (J. Barmby) Among much of Christianity there is, if not a skepticism about the intellect, an uncertainty about it. A greater premium is placed on right actions than on right thought, on proper behavior than on the reasons and motives for it. The renewed mind must be understood against the depraved mind. A depraved mind does not regard itself as depraved any more than a hypochondriac regards his or her illnesses as imagined. The new management of life by the Spirit may call for changes that at first do not seem right. (J. Edwards)

In spite of Christ's work in freeing us from the power of the sin nature, many believers continue to operate on the old program. They are full of human good as they serve their sin natures and sincerely advocate the various programs for making Satan's kingdom a "better place to live." They talk about unrealistic schemes for promoting equality, brotherhood, world peace, preserving the environment. Although determined to "do great things for God," they fall right into line behind Satan, the greatest genius and deceiver in the world. As the only solution to this tyrannical dilemma, we are commanded to reprogram the computer of our mind – to renovate our thinking. We must know the difference between essentials and nonessentials. We are to be absolutely inflexible on the essentials of life. But when some nonessential is at stake, we should be as flexible as necessary. Thus we avoid pettiness, self-righteousness, and judging – and going off "half-cocked – while permitting other believers the freedom to live their own lives before the Lord. We are not called upon to change or reform others; Bible doctrine renovates, from the inside out. Our prodding from the outside creates a false situation in the "victim's soul." It coerces his volition and usually drives him away from the only true source of growth, the essential, the infallible Word of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Our conduct is not to look like that of the world. There is to be a transformation wrought by means of our minds, through the influence of God's revelation. We can never be like the world at heart, so we are not to appear to be like it. We are to become more and more unlike it by contact with the mind of God. (A.E. Knoch) After doctrine comes duty; after revelation, responsibility; after principles, practice. We must enter into fellowship with Christ, and then abide in Him by using the resources made available for us in order that we may reproduce in life the character and conduct of our Master. Christ expiated that the Christian might be dedicated. The Holy Spirit is to be allowed continually to work in the realm of our intellectual and moral knowledge and thought. It is very important to ponder this idea of moral transformation by means of what we think. "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (W.G. Thomas) Men cannot practice unless they know, and they know in vain if they practice not. (J. Hall)

Paul was great both in theoretical and in practical thought. Truth and duty were equally his themes. He could introduce new ideas into men's minds, and that with a force which made the ideas part of the minds into which they were introduced. Accordingly we go to

him for the loftiest representations of Christian truth, for the most elaborate expositions of Christian doctrine, and also for the counsel we need in circumstances of difficulty, and the instructions we need in the development of social and individual life. The apostle does not take it for granted that those living in a Christian community must, as a matter of course and necessity, attain to the Divine ideal. There is a temptation, a danger, against which it is prudent to be warned. (J. Barmby) Later epistles place great emphasis on “knowledge,” that is, spiritual discernment. Indeed, a favorite word of Paul’s means “full knowledge,” implying maturity of perception which is a mark of the ripening believer. Peter’s 2nd epistle also reveals the same characteristic, for in the short space of three chapters the thought of “full knowledge” appears several times. (W.G. Thomas)

Renewing of the mind is a process. The happiest person in the world is a Christian who is surrendered to the Lord and is continually renewing himself through the study and meditation of Scripture and yielding himself to the Holy Spirit. (W.E. Best) As a result of the Spirit’s control of the mental processes of the saint, the latter is enabled to put his life to the test for the purpose of approving it, the specifications being that it conform to the Word of God, and thus, experiencing what obedience is to the Word, and finding out what it feels like to have the Word saturate and control the life, he sees that it really is the Word of God and puts his approval upon it. (K. Wuest) Conformity to this age is no superficial matter. Christians are to adjust their way of thinking about everything in accordance with the newness of their life in the Spirit. This re-programming of the mind does not take place overnight, but is a lifelong process by which our way of thinking is to resemble more and more the way God wants us to think. (D. Moo)

Today there is a strong tendency toward a mindless or anti-intellectual form of Christianity. This anti-intellectualism is unfortunate because it is through the mind that God speaks to us (as we study His Word and think about it), causes us to grow in grace (by the renewing of your mind), and allows us to win others by giving a defense for our Christian hope. The current mood (cultivated in some Christian groups) of anti-intellectualism is not true piety at all, but part of the fashion of the world and therefore a form of worldliness. To denigrate the mind is to undermine foundational Christian doctrines. Clearly, Christians should allow God to develop them intellectually to the fullest extent, thereby becoming known as thinking men and women. And we should take care of our physical body, too, not allowing it to be corrupted by physical laziness, overeating, habit-forming drugs, or any other physically debilitating practice ... What the secular mind is ill-equipped to grasp is that the Christian faith leaves Christians with no choice at all on many matters of this kind. We are people under God’s authority, and that authority is expressed for us in the Bible. (J. Boice)

If all our calculations, plans, ambitions are determined by what falls within life here, then we are children of this age. (J. Murray) The verb used is in the passive voice. Paul does not say, “transform yourselves,” but “let yourselves be transformed.” Transformation is basically the work of the Holy Spirit. It amounts to progressive sanctification. Nevertheless, the verb is in the imperative mood. Believers are not completely passive. Their responsibility is not canceled. They must allow the Spirit to do His work within

their hearts and lives. Their duty is to co-operate to the full. (W. Hendriksen) According to the principle of retroactive positional truth, Christ rejected human good and evil at the cross and was separated from them in His burial. Human good and evil remain issues in the Christian life. Under the present rulership of Satan the world is filled with satanic propaganda espousing human good. Christians, therefore, are forbidden either to love the world or to conform to the world. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The discovery and realization of “good works” is not experienced by all believers, but only by those who have presented their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. (L. Chafer) As Christians we are commanded to “renovate our thinking with divine viewpoint thinking” so God’s gracious purpose can be fulfilled in and through our lives. The means of spiritual growth is the believer’s consistent reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine through all the circumstances of his life. It is the content of the Word of God, which God designed to be communicated to the believer so that it becomes the measure of his thinking and the source of his mental attitude. Every day he learns and applies doctrine; his inner person is renewed day by day. His thinking is renovated according to the pattern of divine thinking in Bible doctrine. He gradually acquires the virtues of Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:2 Also (adjunctive), stop (neg. adv.) being conformed (συσχηματίζω, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Prohibition, Deponent; molded, you do it to yourself) to this (Dat. Spec.) age (Instr. Assoc., metonymy: when a period of time is used for what takes place in it; to the passing fashions, practices and thinking of cosmos diabolicus in each age), but (contrast conj.) be continually transformed (μεταμορφώω, PPImp.2P, Iterative & Customary, Command, Deponent; allow the process of GAP to make changes in your thoughts) by the renewal (Instr. Change; Bible doctrine renovates your thinking) of the mind (Obj. Gen.; divine thought guidance through daily inculcation, an inward transformation), for (changing from direct to indirect discourse) the purpose of proving (δοκιμάζω, PAInf., Perfective, Purpose, Articular) what (Acc. Dir. Obj. & Subj. Nom) the will (Pred. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.; Bible doctrine reveals the plan of God) is (ellipsis, verb supplied): good of intrinsic value (Acc. Appos.; divine attributes) and (connective conj.) acceptable (Acc. Appos.; well pleasing to God) and (connective conj.) complete (Acc. Appos.; perfect, leads to spiritual maturity).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:2** καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον

^{VUL} **Romans 12:2** et nolite conformari huic saeculo sed reformamini in novitate sensus vestri ut probetis quae sit voluntas Dei bona et placens et perfecta

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:3** For I say to everyone who is among you [members of the royal family], through the grace which has been given to me: Stop thinking of self in terms of arrogance, beyond what he ought to think, but make it a practice to think in terms of sanity for the purpose of being rational without illusion [spiritual common sense], because God has assigned [allocated] to each person a standard of doctrinal thinking.

^{KW} **Rom. 12:3** For I am saying through the grace which is given me, to everyone who is among you, not to be thinking more highly of himself, above that which the necessities in the nature of the case impose upon him to be thinking, but to be thinking with a view to a sensible appraisal of himself according as to each one God divided a measure of faith.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul issues another combination of a prohibition and a command to all the Roman believers who are (Static Present tense) members of the royal family. He has the authority to issue these commands and prohibitions because of the grace gift or office of apostle which the Lord has given (Dramatic Aorist tense) to him. The prohibition (Imperative mood) is to stop the arrogant thinking process (Progressive Present tense) which continues to unrealistically think we are “bookster hooey.” What does bookster hooey mean? It refers to the subjective, perhaps even hallucinogenic, idea that we are really cool, awesome, unusually neat, hot stuff, whatever descriptive term you want to use. It’s a function closely related to a psychopathic personality. It’s a description of a person who thinks he or she is the center of the universe.

Paul says, “Stop it!” We are not supposed to think we are hot stuff. We are not supposed to think we are the cat’s meow. This way of thinking and self-assessment is anti-Christian and anti-God. We are supposed to have an accurate, genuine assessment of our worth. We are supposed to exhibit genuine humility. We are not to think in terms of pride and arrogance. We are supposed to (Tendential Present tense) think in terms of sanity (Iterative Present tense) and objectivity. God commands us (Imperative mood) to do so through the Apostle Paul! We are supposed to (Infinitive of Intended Result) be rational and without illusions (Descriptive Present tense) about ourselves. We should exhibit sober, sound, spiritual common sense. This objective thinking and self-assessment only makes sense because God has distributed (Culminative Aorist tense) to each one of us a standard of divine thinking to live by, doctrinal thinking from the Word of God.

Our standard of thinking is Bible doctrine, the Word of God, the mind of Christ. This divine standard is superior to anything the world offers as a substitute or enhancement.

What is today classified as psychology is grossly inferior to this divine standard and in most cases is satanic to the core. The vast majority of psychological concepts that seem plausible to man today is nothing but pride and arrogance. God calls us to genuine humility, not human self-esteem. God does not call us to feel good about ourselves when we are living in a state of sin. God does not tell us that we are OK when we are locked into a sphere of pride and arrogance. God says the unbeliever is dead in trespasses and sins and needs to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior; He does not say I'm OK, you're OK, everybody is OK. God tells the believer out of fellowship that he is locked into some gate of Satan's cosmic system; this is a state of sin, not a state of "healthy self-esteem."

The spiritual life is divine; the psychological life is satanic. The spiritual life is centered around Bible doctrine, the Word of God. The psychological life is centered around arrogant, cosmic panaceas. The spiritual believer assesses himself and the world around him with objectivity according to the mind of Christ. The psychological believer assesses himself and the world around him with subjectivity according to the mind of Satan. The spiritual life and the psychological life are mutually exclusive. The life of genuine humility and arrogant self-esteem are diametrically opposed to each other. The believer who is filled with the Spirit and Bible doctrine resides in the sphere of God's love complex. The believer who is filled with psychological precepts is not filled with the Spirit, but resides in one of Satan's two spheres of cosmic activity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Both humility and arrogance are patterns of thought, but a humble person is oriented to reality whereas an arrogant person is divorced from reality. A genuinely humble man acknowledges his weakness and depends on a strength greater than his own, the power of the divine dynasphere. Since he recognizes and submits to truth, he thinks and acts from a position of strength. Paradoxically, an arrogant person places himself in a position of weakness by overestimating his strengths. He lives in a house of cards built on illusions of self-importance. He can neither think rationally nor make wise decisions, but succumbs to flattery or subjectivity, allowing his soul to be dominated by the old sin nature. Nearly every sin that man can commit expresses some form of arrogance, whereas the relaxed mental attitude of basic impersonal love demonstrates humility. No one can build the virtue of impersonal love except on the foundational virtue of humility. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

It is a question here, whether the thinking ought to be limited by the insertion of the word "self," as there is no limitation in the Greek. The verb occurs only in this passage, and it means "to think more than one ought," not merely of one's self, but of anything. It denotes especially a highmindedness about any subject, which makes one proud, arrogant, boastful or insolent. (E.W. Bullinger) Paregmenon: where several words of a common origin are used in the same sentence - "not to THINK more highly than he ought to THINK, but to THINK so as to THINK soberly." (E.W. Bullinger) It is a besetting temptation of human nature to think too highly of ourselves. Men are prone to exaggerate their own abilities and merits, and to extenuate their own faults; and, at the same time, to

depreciate the gifts and deserts of their neighbors, and to magnify their failings. It is the infirmity of selfishness, of self-importance, of self-glorification. (J. Barmby)

It is not self-depreciation which is here commanded. Proper humility is to be confounded with mock modesty and diffidence on the one hand, nor on the other hand with arrogance and pride. He acts injuriously to himself who, comparing himself with others, despises what he is and can do, because higher and larger gifts have been bestowed on his fellows. Such self-despising is ingratitude to God, and casts a slur on the Divine equity. We dare not make light of any post He enables us to fill, or of the simplest service He permits us to render. The apostle implies that there is a way in which each ought to think of himself, ought to honor his position and abilities. It is undue self-esteem which is reprov'd. (S. Aldridge)

There is a grim irony in arrogance. A person who thinks more of himself than he has a right to think is actually depriving himself of his greatest advantages, the benefits that come with the fulfillment of God's plan for his life. Arrogance is illusion, unreality, and when perpetuated, arrogance becomes insanity. The preventative is the truth of Bible doctrine ... The royal family honor code is not just for brilliant or accomplished people. Simply because the royal code is superior to all other approaches to life is no excuse for arrogance. It is God's system, His code, not yours. Both the divine laws of establishment and the royal family honor code sustain your advance, blessing, and happiness. All believers, including you, rely on these two divine systems. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The majority of interpreters think that faith here is not our act of believing, but that which we believe: Christian teaching. It would certainly make good sense for Paul to insist that prophets assess what they are saying against the standard of Christian truth. And "faith" can have this objective sense in Paul. (D. Moo) The things we believe and the things we do fall apart with perilous ease. Too often doctrine belongs to a theoretical world, remote from life and powerless to affect our daily conduct. Paul knows nothing of any such divorce. (J. Knox) Truth creates a mirror in the soul in which you can accurately and objectively evaluate yourself and your circumstances from divine viewpoint. When you are inculcated with doctrinal norms and standards, you rely on the Lord, make good decisions, and resolve the dilemmas of life God's way. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Our experience is to be ever progressive, rising from the positive to the comparative and superlative. We are to seek the very best that God can give, and the normal attitude of the spiritual life is that it is at once full and yet always craving for more. Our new experience deepens our capacity for greater blessing and as we yield ourselves continually to the grace of God, we find His will essentially good, and our obedience well-pleasing to Him, and ethically realizing the end for which we are intended. And so the renewed mind obtains a discernment for daily living which leads it to a gladsome service in correspondence with the will of God. The mind of Christ takes the place of the mind of self. (W.G. Thomas) Some believers who seem to be positive (and who think themselves to be positive) have the tragic flaw of basing their intake of doctrine on their personal problems. They concentrate only on the points that apply or that can be distorted to apply

to their immediate difficulties. Instead, under the filling of the Spirit, we should practice a neat little trick when we come to Bible class: Leave personal problems at the door.
(R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:3 For (illative conj.) I say (λέγω, PAI1S, Aoristic) to everyone (Dat. Adv.) who is (εἰμι, PAPtc.DSM, Static, Substantival, Articular) among you (Dat. Assoc.; members of the royal family), through the grace (Abl. Means) which has been given (δίδωμι, APPTc.GSF, Dramatic, Circumstantial, Articular) to me (Dat. Ind. Obj.; beginning of paranomasia): stop (neg. adv.) thinking of self in terms of arrogance (ὑπερφρονέω, PAInf., Progressive, Prohibition; pride, subjectivity, hallucination, operation overthink), beyond what (Acc. Comparison, Excess; function of the psychopathic personality) he ought (φρονέω, PAI3S, Tendentia) to think (φρονέω, PAInf., Tendentia, Intended Result; paranomasia: three words that sound the same and have similar sense), but (contrast conj.) make it a practice to think in terms of sanity (φρονέω, PAInf., Iterative, Command; objectivity, sober-minded) for the purpose of being rational without illusion (σωφρονέω, PAInf., Descriptive, Purpose & Intended Result; sound, sober, common sense), because (causal; correlative, "as") God (Subj. Nom.) has assigned (μερίζω, AAIS, Culminative; apportioned, distributed, allocated) to each person (Dat. Adv.) a standard (Compl. Acc.; quality) of doctrinal thinking (Abl. Source).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:3** Λέγω γὰρ διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι παντὶ τῷ ὄντι ἐν ὑμῖν μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἐκάστῳ ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἐμέρισεν μέτρον πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 12:3** dico enim per gratiam quae data est mihi omnibus qui sunt inter vos non plus sapere quam oportet sapere sed sapere ad sobrietatem unicuique sicut Deus divisit mensuram fidei

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:4** **For just as we [members of the royal family] have many members in one body [due to the baptism of the Spirit], and all members do not have the same function [activities and responsibilities],**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:4** For even as in one body we have many members but all the members do not have the same function,

^{KJV} **Romans 12:4** For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is beginning a set of comparisons between the individual believer and the aggregate body of believers in the royal family of God. The royal family of God has (Static Present tense) many individual members, but the baptism of the Spirit brings them all into one body, the bride of Christ. And just as each individual member of the royal family is different in thoughts and personality, each member does not have (Static Present tense) the same function, activities and responsibilities inside the body of Christ. Each of us individually has a spiritual gift(s) that we should cultivate as we grow to spiritual maturity. Our spiritual gift(s) benefit both ourselves and the body of believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is an example of an anacoluthon: a breaking off of the sequence of thought. In this case, when two equivalent constructions are united in the same proposition. (E.W. Bullinger) Diversity, not uniformity, is the mark of God's handiwork. It is so in nature; it is equally so in grace, and nowhere more so than in the Christian community. Here are many men and women with the most diverse kinds of parentage, environment, temperament and capacity. Not only so, but since they became Christians they have been endowed by God with a wide variety of spiritual gifts as well. Yet because and by means of that diversity, all can cooperate for the good of the whole. (J. Murray)

It is an instructive thought, impressing lessons of modesty and mutual esteem, that Christ has a use for every one of us. Instead of fretting that you have not your neighbor's gift, rather rejoice that he has it. Instead of thinking so much of your own work as to fill up the whole horizon of your vision with what is yours, turn an interested and kindly eye upon the ministry of your neighbor. Almost all men are prone to be one-sided. There is room in the Church for the Christian scholar, the Christian preacher, the Christian man of business, the Christian man of science, the Christian workman; for those who give themselves to healing, to education, to domestic life, to civil government, to social amelioration. In fact, there is room for all whom Christ has called and qualified for his own service. The great Maker has fashioned no two alike; let each be content to be himself – to be just what the Lord of the body intended him to be. (J. Barmby)

Some believers choose to advance; most do not. Furthermore, equality does not extend into the realm of personnel assets, or spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts create differences in function within the Body of Christ. The individual's spiritual gift is part of what gives him a personal destiny within the royal family of God. The fulfillment of this destiny is a Christian's unique contribution to resolving the angelic conflict. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) By applying this similitude he proves how necessary it is for each to consider what is suitable to his own nature, capacity, and vocation. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 12:4 **For** (explanatory conj.) **just as** (comparative conj.) **we** (the royal family of God) **have** (ἔχω, PAI1P, Static) **many** (Acc. Spec.) **members** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; believers only) **in one** (Dat. Measure) **body** (Loc. Sph.; due to the baptism of the Spirit), **and** (transitional conj.) **all** (Nom.

Spec.) **members** (Subj. Nom.) **do not** (neg. adv.) **have** (ἔχω, PAI3S, Static) **the same** (Acc. Spec.) **function** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; office, business, activities, responsibilities, office),

^{WHO} **Romans 12:4** καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι πολλὰ μέλη ἔχομεν τὰ δὲ μέλη πάντα οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει πράξιιν

^{VUL} **Romans 12:4** sicut enim in uno corpore multa membra habemus omnia autem membra non eundem actum habent

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:5** So we [believers in Jesus Christ], the many, are one body in Christ [the Church operating in organic harmony], and individually, parts [members], one belonging to others of the same kind [fellow believers].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:5** Thus we, the many, are one body in Christ, and members severally one of another.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:5** So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to compare and contrast the many believers in Jesus Christ to the one body in which we belong (Perfective Present tense) and operate as an organic whole. Does that mean we all know each other and work together without a disagreement or problem? Not hardly! Geographically, believers are scattered all over the globe. And doctrinally, there are a significant number of disagreements, although a few basics bind us all together – a least common denominator, so to speak. In many places in this verse, the contrasts can be punctuated with either commas or colons, whichever makes the contrast and comparisons clearer to the reader.

Not only does the Church as a unified body represent Christ, but each believer individually represents Christ as well. We are members of the Church organically and spiritually, and we are related one to another by the baptism of the Spirit. The Greek word “allos” means we are related to “others of the same kind,” a reference to believers only. Is this an exclusive organization? Yes, it is. Membership requires that you believe in Jesus Christ in order to be part of the body of believers. Just because we are different in gifts, personalities, and activities does not mean we are not part of the same body.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This verse presents a diaeresis: the obvious use of hyphens, colons or apostrophes to represent elision. (AT Robertson) Paul tells his audience that they should be humble, and not allow the diversity of their gifts to destroy the sense of their unity as one body in

Christ. (C. Hodge) We do not all have the same commission. There is no diminishing of quality, only a difference in responsibility. (K. Lamb)

Whatever our special role may be, our service will be marked by concentration on the task committed to us, by zeal in discharging it adequately, and by that gladness of spirit which comes from accepting our proper place in the service of God. We realize that anything we can do is owing to the fact that God has qualified us to do it; we see that the various tasks which illustrate the range of our possible labors are all of such a kind as to minister to the well-being, in spirit of in body, of our fellows. (J. Knox)

Rom. 12:5 So (comparative adv.) we (Subj. Nom.; believers in Jesus Christ): the many (Nom. Appos., the *hoi polloi*): are (είμι, PA1IP, Perfective) one (Nom. Spec.) body (Pred. Nom.; the Church operating in organic harmony) in Christ (Loc. Sph.; the Church as the representative body of Christ), and (connective conj.) individually (Distributive Nom.): parts (Pred. Nom., Partitive; members): one (Nom. Appos.) belonging to others of the same kind (Poss. Gen., Reciprocal).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:5** οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἐν σώμα ἔσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ τὸ δὲ καθ εἷς ἀλλήλων μέλη

^{VUL} **Romans 12:5** ita multi unum corpus sumus in Christo singuli autem alter alterius membra

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:6** **Therefore, we have different spiritual gifts [God-given talents or ability] according to the grace which has been given [sovereignly bestowed] to us. If public communication, then communicate publicly according to the appropriate word of doctrine;**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:6** Having therefore gifts differing according to the grace given us, whether that of prophecy, prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:6** Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul rightly concludes that we all have (Descriptive Present tense) different spiritual gifts according to the grace which God has sovereignly bestowed to us (Latin: donated). We do not choose our spiritual gift; God decides which gift(s) to give to us. As we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God-given talent of ability that was given to us will manifest itself. If we remain in carnality, however, we might never know what gift(s) He has given us. Each spiritual gift has a responsibility that goes along with it. For instance, if the spiritual gift is public communication, a translation of “propheteo” rather than a transliteration, then the possessor of that gift is required to communicate publicly (ellipsis: the verb must be supplied) in agreement with Bible doctrine. Any

public communication that contradicts the Word of God is false and does not come from God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul seems to grow impatient with the fetters of a long sentence and breaks away in anacoluthon which mars the fulness and symmetry of the sentence as a period. There is a striking similarity between the third person plural indicative and the participial in Indo-Germanic tongues. The frequent ellipsis of *est* in the Latin perfect and passive is to be noted also. The probability that the Latin second plural middle indicative is really a participle which has been incorporated into the verb inflection is also suggested. This fact may point to the prehistoric time when the Latin used the participle as indicative. The papyri re-enforce the argument strongly. This verse also has an anacoluthon, where participles are scattered along in an “unending series” mingled with infinitives and imperatives, many in antithesis. (AT Robertson)

God has before ordained a very special service for each individual to perform, and the doing of these particular and individual ministries constitutes “good works” according to the divine estimates. Any service other than that which was foreordained for the individual, though valuable in itself, cannot be called “good works” because it is not the personal outworking of the will of God. (L.S. Chafer) No man’s usefulness is increased by going out of his sphere. It is a great mistake to suppose because one possession or employment may, in itself considered, afford better opportunity of doing good than another, that therefore any or every man would be more useful in the one than in the other. The highest improvement of the individual, and the greatest good of the whole, are best secured by each being and doing what God sees fit to determine. (C. Hodge)

The drift is that the various members of the body having various gifts, each is to be content to exercise his own gift in the line of usefulness it fits him for, and to do so well. The references are not to distinct orders of ministry in the Church, but rather to gifts and consequent capacities of all Christians. The gift of prophesy, which is mentioned first, being of especial value and importance, was the gift of inspired utterance, not of necessity in the way of perdition, but also, and especially, for “edification, and exhortation, and comfort,” for convincing, and for making manifest the secrets of the heart. (J. Barmby) This has been interpreted, as a literal rendering might suggest, according to the analogy of faith, faith being taken in the objective sense as the truth revealed and believed. This view would correspond to the expression, the analogy of Scripture, which means that Scripture is to be interpreted in accord with Scripture, that the infallible rule of the interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself. Much can be said in support of this interpretation. (J. Murray)

The concept of the analogy of faith comes into play in the interpretive process after one has established the meaning of a particular passage from its immediate context. The apostle here is concerned with the agreement of Christian discourse with the whole body of teaching given by inspiration of God. (W. Kaiser, M. Silva) A man’s gifts depend on the measure of faith allotted to him by God, and so he must use and exercise these gifts in

proportion to the faith that is in him. If he be “sophron” and his mind is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he will judge rightly his capacity and power; if, on the other hand, his mind be carnal, he will try to distinguish himself vain-gloriously and disturb the peace of the community. (Sanday & Headlam)

The word “gifts” includes those gifts that are given in providence, or conferred by constitution, talent, birth, education, and other circumstances, as well as the extraordinary gifts immediately conferred by the Holy Spirit. Riches and natural eloquence are gifts as well as the miraculous. (J. Murray) God uses ambassadors in every walk of life. He has ambassadors in business, in the professions, in labor. No matter what you do for a living or in what circles you move, that is the sphere in which you represent Christ. You are to be an ambassador where you are, to make a pulpit out of your circumstances, whatever they might be. Thus, social change and the solving of social problems is not the issue in the spiritual life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:6 Therefore (illative conj.), we have (ἔχω, PAptc.NPM, Descriptive, Circumstantial: used as an Indicative to initiate ‘violent anacoluthons’: Wescott-Hort boldly start a new sentence) different (Adv. Comparison) spiritual gifts (Acc. Dir. Obj.; God-given talent or ability) according to the grace (Adv. Acc.) which has been given (δίδωμι, APptc.ASF, Gnostic, Attributive; sovereignly bestowed) to us (Dat. Adv.; God determines what spiritual gift(s) you have received). If (conditional particles, aposiopesis; strong possibility) public communication (Acc. Gen. Ref.), then communicate publicly (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) according to the appropriate word (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in agreement with) of doctrine (Adv. Gen. Ref.);

^{WHO} **Romans 12:6** ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν διάφορα εἶτε προφητείαν κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως

^{VUL} **Romans 12:6** habentes autem donationes secundum gratiam quae data est nobis differentes sive prophetiam secundum rationem fidei

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:7** **If service [most common spiritual gift], then serve by means of service [attendant, deacon]; If teaching [variations within the gift], then teach by means of accurate doctrine.**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:7** Or serving, exercise that gift within the sphere of service; or teaching, within the sphere of teaching;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:7** Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his enumeration of spiritual gifts, along with an elliptical exhortation to utilize those God-given gifts in an honorable and responsible manner. If the spiritual gift is that of service, the most common spiritual gift, then we are to serve by means of serving. This is the function of an attendant, deacon, or janitor in the local church. If the spiritual gift is teaching, a rare gift compared to others, then our teaching should be aligned with accurate Bible doctrine. This spiritual gift is not restricted to the pastor-teacher per se, but includes a variation within the gift. It includes those who teach in public schools, Sunday school for children, as well as the pastor-teacher gift which has other qualifications enumerated by Timothy.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The gift of ministry must be understood in a general sense, and not as having exclusive reference to the order of deacons. It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables. If any had a gift for any such kind of administrative work under others, they were to devote themselves to it, and be content if they could do it well. It is presumed that every member not only refrains from disparaging or envying the offices of fellow-members, but fulfills his own office. And it is also presumed that, as there is no member in the human body without a function, so, in Christian society, the Creator and Lord has assigned to every individual a place to fill, a work to do, and service to render as well as to receive. You may not be gifted with much power of teaching, but you may be able to show mercy. You may have little to give, but you may, if you will exercise your gift, prove able to console and sympathize. In any case, let us not fall into the error of supposing that, because we cannot do everything, therefore we can do nothing. The fact is, wherever the gift has been bestowed and the opportunity for its exercise provided, there the responsibility lies, and there the service is required. (J. Barmby)

This is the work of ministers of the gospel, of professors in colleges, of teachers in daily schools and in Sunday schools. There could be no more important work than that of instructing others, moulding immortal souls, inspiring old and young with the power of great principles. How important that all who engage in any department of teaching should realize the abiding consequences of their work, and should devote their best energies to it. (C. Irwin) Perhaps Paul is also concerned that those who have a certain gift might seek to minister in areas outside their sphere of giftedness and so neglect the gift they have been given. (D. Moo) Many of the permanent spiritual gifts, still functional, are explicitly mentioned in Scripture; some pertain to the operation of the local church, others outside the local church. Of course, no one is aware of his gift when he is saved; he recognizes it only as a result of spiritual growth. (R.B.Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:7 **if** (cond. part., aposiopesis) **service** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; waiter, attendant, deacon), **then serve** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) **by means of service** (Instr. Means; most common spiritual gift); **if** (cond. part., aposiopesis) **teaching** (διδάσκω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Modal; variations within the gift, but

primarily the pastor-teacher), **then teach** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun; rarest of spiritual gifts) **by means of accurate doctrine** (Instr. Means; teaching);

^{WHO} **Romans 12:7** εἴτε διακονίαν ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ εἴτε ὁ διδάσκων ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ

^{VUL} **Romans 12:7** sive ministerium in ministrando sive qui docet in doctrina

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:8** If counseling [call to one's side for the purpose of comfort], then counsel by means of encouragement [belongs to a limited group of individuals]; he who gives [pays tribute], let him give with a generous attitude [simplicity]; he who manages administration, let him manage with diligence; he who performs acts of mercy [sympathy], let him perform acts of mercy with graciousness [cheerfulness].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:8** Or he who exhorts, within the sphere of exhortation; the one who distributes of his earthly possessions, in the sphere of an unostentatious simplicity; the one who is placed in a position of authority, with intense eagerness and effort; the one who shows mercy, with a joyous abandon.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:8** Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If counseling is the spiritual gift in question (Perfective Present tense), then Paul says this person should counsel by means of encouragement. The Greek word for “counseling” has nothing to do with psychiatry or psychology. It means “to call to one’s side for the purpose of comforting.” It is a spiritual gift that belongs to a very limited group of individuals, and uses the Bible as the means of comforting, not cosmic panaceas. The Psalms and Proverbs are quite often used by these individuals to assist someone in a time of need, by helping them regain proper perspective.

The person who has a gift of giving (Perfective Present tense) should give with a generous attitude. It should not be done grudgingly, but with liberality and simplicity. This giving is not necessarily financial; it can also be giving of time, assistance, even tribute or honor where it’s due. The person with a gift of administration (Perfective Present tense) should manage all financial, household and social affairs with diligence, caution and zeal. The person with a gift of mercy (Perfective Present tense) should perform acts of mercy with graciousness, compassion, and above all – with a cheerful attitude. Acts of mercy should include sympathy in time of need, but not to the point where the giver of mercy loses the inner happiness of a mature believer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Exhortation follows immediately after teaching. Having been taught in the Word, the disciple next needs to be encouraged to press on in the things he or she has learned. This is a pastoral responsibility. (J.M. Boice) Do not encroach on the spiritual gift that God has given to someone else. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) He that shows mercy is one who is moved by the Spirit to devote himself especially to works of mercy, such as visiting the sick and succouring the distressed. Such a one is to allow no austerity or gloominess of demeanor to mar the sweetness of his charity. (J. Barmby) The locative of sphere means the exhortation is that the one who renders service should render service in the realm or sphere in which God placed him and for which He gave him that gift. It is a wise man who stays within the sphere of service for which God the Holy Spirit has fitted him, and does not invade some other field of service for which he is not fitted. (K. Wuest)

The sick, dying, and bereaved are in need of visits by someone who knows how to impart genuine Christian sympathy and understanding, someone who shows mercy with cheerfulness. For as nothing gives more solace to the sick or to anyone otherwise distressed, than to see those cheerful and prompt in assisting them; so to observe sadness in the countenance of those by whom assistance is given makes them feel themselves despised. I would only add to this that a brief, cheering visit by a wise and sympathetic fellow-member, who is willing to help in every possible way, is certainly of far more benefit than the almost endless recital of all the horrendous details of the operation recently performed on the caller, namely, Mr. Sad. Truly, a cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. This holds both for the patient and the visitor. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 12:8 **If** (cond. part., aposiopesis) **counselling** (παρακαλέω, PAPtc.NSM, Perfective, Modal, Articular, Subordinate Clause; call to one's side for the purpose of comfort), **then counsel** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) **by means of encouragement** (Instr. Means; belongs to a very limited group of individuals); **he** (Subj. Nom.) **who gives** (μεταδίδωμι, PAPtc.NSM, Perfective, Substantival, Articular; pays tribute), **let him give** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) **with a generous attitude** (Instr. Manner; simplicity, liberality); **he** (Subj. Nom.) **who manages administration** (προΐστημι, PMPTc.NSM, Perfective, Substantival, Articular; leader, ruler), **let him manage** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) **with diligence** (Instr. Manner; caution, apprehension, zeal); **he** (Subj. Nom.) **who performs acts of mercy** (ἐλέω, PAPtc.NSM, Perfective, Substantival, Articular; sympathy), **let him perform acts of mercy** (ellipsis, where the verb is to be supplied from the noun) **with graciousness** (Instr. Manner; compassion, cheerfulness);

^{WHO} **Romans 12:8** εἶτε ὁ παρακαλῶν ἐν τῇ παρακλήσει· ὁ μεταδιδούς ἐν ἀπλότῃ ὁ προϊστάμενος ἐν σπουδῇ ὁ ἐλεῶν ἐν ἰλαρότητι

^{VUL} **Romans 12:8** qui exhortatur in exhortando qui tribuit in simplicitate qui praeest in sollicitudine qui miseretur in hilaritate

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:9** Let your virtue love be without hypocrisy [not phony]. Detest evil [Satan's policy for this world]; adhere to the good [advance to maturity, live the royal family honor code].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:9** Love, let it be without hypocrisy. Look with loathing and horror upon that which is pernicious. Stick fast to that which is good.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:9** Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Let your virtue love be without hypocrisy, genuine, not an imitation. The ellipsis assumes an Imperative of Entreaty. The next imperative is more of a command: Detest evil (Perfective Present tense). This is a command to avoid being swallowed up by Satan's policy over this world. Avoid falling into his traps and entering his cosmic system. Instead, we are commanded to cling to (Perfective Present tense) the good. This means we should stay inside the sphere of the love complex and advance to maturity by the intake, metabolism, and application of Bible doctrine. We are to live by the royal family honor code.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The papyri and the NT show that sometimes the participle was loosely used to carry on the verbal function in independent sentences, i.e. where we have a complete sentence without connection to anything else. (AT Robertson) There must be no hiding of what we are, or pretending to what we are not. Feigned love is the most horrible thing in life, and a pretence to brother-love is wholly harmed to self, to our brother, and to the world. (W.G. Thomas) The Christian is to express his hatred of evil by a withdrawal from it and a loathing of it. (K. Wuest) Evil is the manifestation of Satan's arrogant, distorted genius in opposition to Bible doctrine, which is the manifestation of God's grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

If we love as God loves – and we must if we are Christians – then there will be things for us to hate, just as there will also be things we must love. We will hate lying, especially by those who are in important positions – CEOs and other heads of corporations, political figures, presidents, and even ministers. We will hate what their lies do to others. Yet we will love the truth. (J. Boice) Evil is Satan's self-destructive policy as ruler of the world. The cosmic system is his vehicle for administering this sinister policy. God warns against evil and restrains evil in human history through timely divine judgments. God will

ultimately destroy all evil, but to discredit Satan, God permits the devil's policy to run its course in human history. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The believer is called upon to hate what is evil. Love, if it is not to degenerate into sentimentality, must include a strict objectivity: hatred against evil, faithful adherence to what is good. To love God is to regard evil with horror. Unfortunately, familiarity with a culture that is shaped by the forces of Satan has lulled too many believers into a state of general tolerance for whatever deviant behavior is in vogue at present. We are to abhor evil because it is the enemy of all that leads to Christlikeness. It is worth mentioning that all ten principles, beginning with this clause, are present continuous. What God seeks in the believer is not so much a single worthy act as it is a continuing quality of life. (R. Mounce) No vice is more reprehensible than hypocrisy. No vice is more destructive of integrity because it is the contradiction of truth ... The particularity of the love believers bear to one another is hereby indicated and sanctioned. Even love on the highest level of exercise is discriminating in quality. This discrimination is exemplified in Paul's word elsewhere, do good to all men, and especially to them who are of the household of faith. (J. Murray)

The only love you can possess for most individuals is based, not on their weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, or incompatibility with you, but on the strength of your own character. Through impersonal love your attitude toward everyone will be basically the same, manifested in courtesy, thoughtfulness, sensitivity to the feelings of others, tolerance, and flexibility in nonessential areas of disagreement or dispute. Such attitudes can be consistently maintained toward any believer, regardless of how incompatible your personalities or modus vivendi may be. Christian love is not condescending, hypocritical, or self-righteous. Impersonal love is not a stoic, artificial, emotionless façade, but rather a gracious attitude consistent with the doctrine in your soul. The policy of impersonal love is simply this: integrity toward all, no matter who or what they are. Through this attitude your spiritual aristocracy is revealed as you honorably represent Christ in the devil's world. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Hate is a strong word (*apostugeo*), and in the original this particular word is used only here in the NT. It means to abhor or have an absolute horror at something. It is used of anything we find despicable, anything that causes us to turn our head away in revulsion. Most Christians do not abhor evil. We dislike it, we do not condone it – but hate it? We don't often find what turns God's stomach turning ours. The kinds of 1st-century sins enumerated in Romans 1 are present in the 21st century too, but we tolerate them; we don't abhor them. There is no horror at sin anymore. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 12:9 Let your (Poss. Gen.) virtue love (Subj. Nom.) be (ellipsis, verb supplied) without hypocrisy (Pred. Nom.; phoney, imitation). Detest (ἀποστύγῃω, PAPtc.NPM, Perfective, Imperative; abhor, despise, avoid) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the policy of Satan over this world); adhere to (πονηρός, PPpTc.NPM, Perfective, Imperative, Deponent; joining, clinging, copulating, devoting oneself to) the good (Dat.

Adv.; the advance to maturity through GAP, the royal family honor code).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:9** Ἡ ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος ἀποστυγοῦντες τὸ πονηρὸν κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 12:9** dilectio sine simulatione odientes malum adherentes bono

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:10** **With brotherly love [relaxed mental attitude] be devoted one to another [fellow believers], with honor [integrity from the royal family honor code] esteeming others of the same kind [fellow believers] more highly than yourself,**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:10** In the sphere of brotherly love have a family affection for one another, vying with one another in showing honor;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:10** *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Be devoted (verbal imperative) one believer to another believer with brotherly love (Greek: philadelphia). Why Christian to Christian? Because the Greek word “allos” means another of the same kind, a fellow believer. It’s not difficult to be devoted to fellow believers when they are our friends. But how do we regard our fellow believers with brotherly love when they sometimes walk all over us, oppose us every step of the way? Yes, believers do this every day. The way we can fulfill this command is by maintaining a relaxed mental attitude towards those persons.

We are also commanded to show increasing consideration (Progressive Present tense) to our fellow believers with honor and integrity from the royal family honor code. How far are we asked to take this esteem? We are to regard them as having a place of honor above even ourselves. As leaders, functioning inside the sphere of virtue love, we are to set an example by treating our fellow believers with honor, more highly than we consider ourself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The absolute participle, being (so far as regards mood) neutral in itself, takes its color from the general complexion of the sentence. (Lightfoot) The participle is not technically indicative, subjunctive, optative or imperative. The context must decide. In itself the participle is non-finite (non-modal) like the infinitive, though it was sometimes drawn out into the modal sphere. (AT Robertson) A fellow feeling with grief comes to us naturally, while appreciation of other people’s success demands real nobility of soul. It may be that in the one case our instinctive response is not distorted by selfishness or jealousy. We are apt to envy the good fortune of our friends; we have no desire to displace them in their grief. (J. Knox)

Rom. 12:10 With brotherly love (Instr. Manner; a completely relaxed mental attitude) be devoted (Nom. used as verbal imperative; value, regard, family affection) one (numeric) to another (Acc. Dir. Obj.; "of the same kind", fellow Christians), with honor (Instr. Manner; integrity from the royal family honor code) esteeming (προηγέομαι, PMPTc.NPM, Progressive, Imperatival; considering, preferring; being a leader by setting an example first) others of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow Christians) more highly than yourself (combination of ellipsis and middle voice from verb),

^{WHO} **Romans 12:10** τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι τῇ τιμῇ ἀλλήλους προηγούμενοι

^{VUL} **Romans 12:10** caritatem fraternitatis invicem diligentes honore invicem praevenientes

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:11** **With reference to application [of doctrine], do not be negligent [fulfill your priestly function]; with reference to the Spirit, be eager [make the most of every opportunity]; when serving the Lord [as an ambassador of Christ],**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:11** With respect to zeal, not lazy; fervent in the sphere of the Spirit; serving the Lord;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:11** Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

With reference to the application of Bible doctrine in your life, be attentive. Do not be negligent, lazy, or sluggish when it comes to your spiritual life, but take care of business. This is an entreaty or command to fulfill your priestly function delegated to you by Christ. All believers are priests unto God and have a responsibility to fulfill that role. And with reference to the filling of the Spirit, we are commanded to be increasingly eager (Progressive Present tense) every day to live the spiritual life (Latin: fervent). We are to be continually filled with the Spirit and should make the most out of every opportunity to stay in that sphere of delegated power. This isn't a burden, this is great!

It is unfortunate that the verse was cut-off here, because the next phrase in verse 11 actually goes with the first phrase in verse 12. When serving the Lord (Iterative Present tense) as His royal ambassadors, we are to maintain a state of inner happiness. The secret to maintaining inner happiness is to stay in fellowship and apply Bible doctrine to all facets of our life. When we avoid mental, emotional and verbal sins, the Spirit is given permission to operate in and through us, assisting us in maintaining inner happiness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Each man should have some definite work or business in life. Especially should the Christian be free from the sin of idleness. Whatever our work is, let us be diligent in the performance of it. The Christian should be full of joyousness. Why should we groan under life's heavy burdens when we think of the rest that remains to the people of God? Why should we be unduly distressed by life's trials when we remember that they that are tried shall receive the crown of life? This, too, is a duty the Christian owes to himself. Work becomes no longer a burden when it is done with hopefulness and joy. (C. Irwin) The temptation to "lose steam" in our lifelong responsibility to reverence God in every aspect of our lives, to become lazy and complacent in our pursuit of what is "good, well pleasing to God, and perfect," is a natural one – but it must be strenuously resisted. (D. Moo)

When discouragement overtakes the Christian and fainting of spirit as its sequel, it is because the claims of the Lord's service have ceased to be uppermost in our thought. (J. Murray) Observe that when the believer is really aglow with the Spirit, he does not show this by resorting to manifestations of religious (?) excitement, but by humbly carrying out his mandate of serving the Lord. (W. Hendriksen) Every believer is in full-time Christian service. We may not wear Prince Albert coats, striped pants, and top hats and mix with foreign nobility, but we are ambassadors nonetheless. Whatever we do, wherever we are, we are Christ's representatives. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:11 With reference to application (Dat. Ref.; "of doctrine", diligence, attentiveness), do not (neg. adv.) be (ellipsis, verb supplied) negligent (Pred. Nom.; lazy, sluggish; believer's priesthood, "taking care of business"); with reference to the Spirit (Dat. Ref.; another way of saying "get hot to the idea of being filled with the Spirit"), be eager (ζέω, PAPtc.NPM, Progressive, Imperativ; zealous, boiling, seething, fervent, making the most of every opportunity); when serving (δουλεύω, PAPtc.NPM, Iterative, Temporal; at successive intervals throughout life; believer's ambassadorship) the Lord (Dat. Ind. Obj.),

^{WHO} **Romans 12:11** τῆ σπουδῆ μὴ ὀκνηροί τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες τῷ κυρίῳ δουλεύοντες

^{VUL} **Romans 12:11** sollicitudine non pigri spiritu ferventes Domino servientes

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:12** **Maintain inner happiness associated with confidence; stand fast [faith rest drill] during pressure [undeserved suffering or divine discipline]; persevere in prayer;**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:12** Rejoice in the sphere of hope; patient in tribulation; with respect to prayer, persevering in it continually;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:12** Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When serving the Lord, we are to maintain inner happiness (Durative Present tense) by being filled with the Spirit and avoiding mental, emotional, and verbal sins. Whenever our soul is full of Bible doctrine, it will be at peace and happy in the Lord. This isn't some kind of giddy, emotional activity, which is why I prefer the translation "inner happiness," a concept used by R.B. Thieme, Jr. This inner happiness is associated with the confidence and assurance that comes from maximum Bible doctrine in the soul. This confidence comes to believers in three parts. We first received confidence at the point of salvation (Hope I); we live a life of confidence and blessings in time (Hope II) when we live according to divine protocol; ultimately, we look forward to receiving eternal life and blessings in eternity (Hope III).

We are also commanded to stand fast (Aoristic Present tense) during times of pressure. We are supposed to utilize the doctrine in our soul to weather the storm, to remain under pressure without complaint. This is what is called exercising the faith rest drill. We mix the promises of God with the filling of the Spirit and we are able to be patient and longsuffering whether we are under divine discipline or undeserved suffering (Latin: tribulation). We are also commanded to persevere (Iterative Present tense) in our prayer life. The iterative present tense points to prayer as a continuous action, a practice that never ceases. Don't think for one minute that you do not need to confess your sins to the Lord in prayer; if you do, you may remain out of fellowship indefinitely.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If Christians are weighed down and distressed by the trials of life, is it not because they fail to give heed to the admonitions of God's Word, because they neglect to use the means of grace and help which are placed within their reach? (J. Barmby) Joy is the counterpart of inner growth; it is the emotional accompaniment of a creative process. Where there is true life, there is joy; and it is well to ponder the fact that the periods of the church's greatest vitality have been the times of her greatest radiance. When she was growing in insight, in understanding, in unity within her borders and in the power to reach those outside her ranks, her constant mark, as the NT conclusively demonstrates, was a triumphant and infectious joy. (J. Knox)

Apart from His presence, we may cultivate cheerfulness, but will not know the meaning of joy; we may submit with stoic fortitude to the blows of fate, but will not understand the patience which uses adversity for the discipline of our spirits. In all his ethical precepts Paul is inculcating not a pattern of virtuous conduct such as pagan treatises often supplied, but a kind of relationship which springs from and issues in a transformed life. (J. Knox) As believers, we need more than to hear the Gospel again and again; we need to hear the whole realm of doctrine systematically taught. Once understood there is something better than to anticipate salvation, and that is to anticipate blessings in time related to our postsalvation spiritual life. But there is something even greater than to look forward to the many categories of prosperity in time, and that is to eagerly anticipate the blessings of eternity while enjoying blessings of time! (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

When you are so beset by difficulties that you cannot think clearly, you must apply the most basic form of doctrine, the promises of God. Promises urge you to cultivate a persistent and habitual trust in God, which the Bible calls perseverance or patience. Patience means you are steadfast in believing God's Word. When you are under pressure, adversity, disaster, and have hit a dead end, you must cling to God's promises until they become more real to you than your situation, experience, or emotions. When faith in the promises permeates your soul, you can rest in the tranquility and contentment acquired from divine viewpoint. Hope (confidence) is the believer's anticipation of promised blessings and his initial basis for motivation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:12 Maintain inner happiness (χαίρω, PAPtc.NPM, Durative, Circumstantial; rejoicing) associated with confidence (Instr. Assoc.; assurance; possessing Hope I, i.e. salvation, living in Hope II, i.e. blessings in time, looking forward to Hope III, eternal life and blessings in eternity); stand fast (ὑπομένω, PAPtc.NPM, Aoristic, Imperative; be patient, forbearing, longsuffering, without complaint, focused on eternity; function of the Faith Rest Drill) during pressure (Loc. Time; during undeserved suffering, testing, even divine discipline); persevere (προσκατερέω, PAPtc.NPM, Iterative, Imperative; continue in, wait on, hold fast to) in prayer (Loc. Sph.);

^{WHO} **Romans 12:12** τῇ ἐλπίδι χαίροντες τῇ θλίψει ὑπομένοντες τῇ προσευχῇ προσκατεροῦντες

^{VUL} **Romans 12:12** spe gaudentes in tribulatione patientes orationi instantes

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:13** Take an interest [participate] in the things that are lacking [spiritual needs] with reference to the saints; be pursuing hospitality [refreshment].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:13** With respect to the needs of the saints, being a sharer with them, eager for opportunities to show hospitality.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:13** Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We are commanded to have an increasing interest in (Progressive Present tense) the spiritual needs of our fellow believers. The Greek word “koinoneo” has the etymology of fellowship and participation behind it. If we have the ability or means, and we see another's lack, we are to offer our assistance in the Lord. The “things that are lacking” are primarily items that build a person up, in particular, spiritual needs. Any time we help another believer learn or apply doctrine, enabling them to grow to maturity, we are fulfilling this command. The words in the Greek may have the notion of supplying

material needs and/or money to the poor, but that is not the emphasis here. Spiritual needs are emphasized over material needs.

We are also commanded to pursue (Iterative Present tense) hospitality when the occasion arises. This is a command best fulfilled by those with the gift of refreshment, but we can all follow the idea by giving a visitor a friendly welcome. The concept of hospitality means we may offer relaxation to weary travelers or a meal at the end of a long work day. In this manner, we bless those who come into our vicinity. This also, is part of the royal family honor code.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The meaning would be that we are to identify ourselves with the needs of the saints and make them our own. We are to be active in the pursuit of hospitality and not merely bestowing it, perhaps grudgingly, when necessity makes it unavoidable. (J. Murray)

Rom. 12:13 Take an interest in (κοινωνέω, PAPtc.NPM, Progressive, Imperative; participate in, contribute to) the things that are lacking (Dat. Ind. Obj.; spiritual needs, necessary items that will build them up; get to spiritual maturity as quickly as you can) with reference to the saints (Adv. Gen. Ref.); be pursuing (διώκω, PAPtc.NPM, Iterative, Imperative; eagerly following, striving after) hospitality (Acc. Dir. Obj.; refreshment, relaxation, friendly welcome; blessing by association).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:13** ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωνοῦντες τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες

^{VUL} **Romans 12:13** necessitatibus sanctorum communicantes hospitalitatem sectantes

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:14** Speak well [maintain objectivity] of those who persecute [press on] you; keep on speaking well and stop cursing [sins of the tongue].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:14** Be constantly blessing those who are constantly persecuting you; be blessing and stop cursing.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:14** Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We are commanded to speak well of those who make it a habit to persecute you. The Iterative Present tense means we are to keep on speaking well of these individuals even as they press in on us with hostility. At a maximum, we are commanded to bless them; at a minimum, we should have a relaxed mental attitude around them. We are commanded yet again to maintain our objectivity by speaking well (Iterative Present tense) of others, as a contrast to cursing them. As a matter of fact, we are told to stop (Imperative of

Prohibition) using abusive and foul language against others. All hostility, including sins of the tongue, should be left in the Lord's hands.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Dioko” in verse 13 means to pursue or follow closely in a friendly sense; but in verse 14 it means the same in a hostile sense, to follow so closely as to persecute - an *antanaclasis*, or repetition of a word in the same sentence with different meanings. (E.W. Bullinger) God by His word not only restrains our hands from doing evil, but also subdues the bitter feelings within; and not only so, but he would have us to be solicitous for the wellbeing of those who unjustly trouble us and seek our destruction. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 12:14 Speak well of (εὐλογέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; bless, praise; relaxed mental attitude) those (Acc. Gen. Ref.) who persecute (διώκω, PAPtc.APM, Iterative, Substantival; take vengeance on, push or press on) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.); keep on speaking well (εὐλογέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; maintain your objectivity) and (connective conj.) stop (neg. adv.) cursing (καταράομαι, PMImp.2P, Static, Prohibition, Deponent; abusive, foul-mouth; sins of the tongue; leave hostility in the Lord's hands).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:14** εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς διώκοντας εὐλογεῖτε καὶ μὴ καταρᾶσθε

^{VUL} **Romans 12:14** benedicite persequentibus benedicite et nolite maledicere

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:15** Be happy with those who are happy; weep [have sympathy] with those who are weeping [hurting or suffering].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:15** Be rejoicing with those who are rejoicing, and be weeping with those who are weeping;

^{KJV} **Romans 12:15** Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We are commanded to become increasingly happy (Progressive Present tense) with those who are (Descriptive Present tense) happy. By contrast, we are also told to weep (Static Present tense) with those who are weeping. You might be thinking: I'm not much for weeping with others. In its more extreme form, the verb means to mourn or cry; it has a less extreme form, which means to have sympathy towards those who are hurting or suffering. The idea in this verse is to be respectful of other's feelings and to meet them where they are with a sympathetic ear.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a *homoeoptoton*, or the repetition of like inflections, in this case two infinitives and two participles that go together. (E.W. Bullinger) Rapport and affinity with fellow believers in your local assembly requires a relaxed mental attitude and sensitivity to the feelings of others, as well as an absence of mental attitude sins and sins of the tongue. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When we participate in a brother's feelings, a Divine law appoints that such participation shall be for his good; we relieve him of some of the burden of his grief and anxiety, or we heighten his happiness. This quality of sympathy is, perhaps, more natural to some minds than to others. (J. Barmby)

We ought to sympathize with our fellow-creatures in their happiness and afflictions. The prosperity of others ought to inspire us with joy. Their affliction ought to affect us with sorrow. Even the very semblance of this duty among the people of the world has a beneficial influence on society, heightening the joy of prosperity, and lessening the pain of adversity. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 12:15 Be happy (χαίρω, PAInf., Progressive, Imperativ, Absolute, Command; glad, delighted, joyful, cheerful) with those (Attributive ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied from clear parallel) who are happy (χαίρω, PAPtc.GPM, Descriptive, Substantival); weep (κλαίω, PAInf., Static, Imperativ, Absolute, Command; mourn, cry, sympathy towards those who are hurting or suffering) with those (Attributive ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied from clear parallel) who are weeping (κλαίω, PAPtc.GPM, Descriptive, Substantival).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:15** χαίρειν μετὰ χαιρόντων κλαίειν μετὰ κλαιόντων

^{VUL} **Romans 12:15** gaudere cum gaudentibus flere cum flentibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:16** Be of the same mind [similar opinions] one to another [fellow Christians], not setting your mind upon ambitious things, but become accustomed to [accommodate] inconsequential people. Stop being wise in your own estimation [arrogance].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:16** Having the same mind towards one another, not setting your mind upon lofty things, but associating yourselves with lowly things and lowly people. Stop being those who are wise in their own opinion,

^{KJV} **Romans 12:16** Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We are commanded to be of the same mind (Descriptive Present tense) with our fellow believers. Does this mean we are to put our doctrinal differences aside as if they aren't important? Don't be ridiculous. Those who have faithfully studied the Word are not told to put doctrine aside in order to accommodate immature believers. Being of the same mind means we should hold similar opinions on important topics; it means we should have the same mental attitude and category of thoughts on matters of crucial importance. It does not mean a mature believer is to set aside his beliefs in order to placate an immature believer. It is a call to unity on the essentials.

We are also warned not to become increasingly ambitious (Progressive Present tense), with an accompanying attitude of pride and haughtiness. Many ambitious people eventually get their power, but are destroyed by it. We are to fit in with (Customary Present tense) insignificant people, those without political or economic power. Instead of desiring power and fame, we are to be relaxed around common citizens. We are told to stop being arrogant (Iterative Present tense), thinking our opinions are equal to Bible doctrine. It's one thing to apply doctrine in your soul to current events; it is another thing to believe our words are absolute truth.

This is a verse that warns against inordinate ambition, arrogance, and snobbery. It is not a warning against applying doctrinal rationales and coming to correct conclusions, because we are all commanded to do that on a daily basis. But there is always the danger that a believer succumbs to arrogance, thinking his opinions are *ex cathedra*. There is also the danger that we associate with a certain circle of friends and become snobs toward other individuals who don't think the way we do. It is a fine line between obeying the command to utilize the doctrine in your soul and making sure we don't become snobbish and arrogant in the process. We are to acquire wisdom with genuine humility.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This precept is intimately connected with the preceding, since ambition and contempt for lowly persons and pursuits generally arise from overweening self-estimation. No species of pride is more insidious or more injurious than the pride of the intellect, or a fancied superiority to those around us, which leads to a contempt of their opinions, and a confident reliance upon ourselves. (C. Hodge) Love finds points of agreement. This spirit of disinterested thought of others is one of the finest elements of the Christian character. It is so easy to accentuate differences and to overlook elements that tend to unite. (W.G. Thomas)

Rom. 12:16 Be of the same (Compl. Acc.) mind (φρονέω, PAPtc.NPM, Descriptive, Imperative; "keep thinking", holding similar opinions, taking someone's side on an issue, having the same mental attitude and category of thoughts on a matter) one (Dat. Numeral) to another (Acc. Dir. Obj., reciprocal pronoun; "of the same kind": fellow Christians, preferably mature ones), not (neg. adv.) setting your (ellipsis) mind upon (φρονέω, PAPtc.NPM, Progressive, Circumstantial; thinking in terms of) ambitious things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; high, haughty, proud, strife; neuter people?),

but (contrast conj.) become accustomed to (συναπάγω, PPPtc.NPM, Customary, Imperative, Deponent; relaxed around, accommodated to, harmonized with, "fit in with", love from afar) inconsequential (Dat. Assoc.; apolitical, humble, undistinguished, poor, common, insignificant) people (masculine things?). Stop (neg. adv.) being (γίνομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Prohibition, Deponent) wise (Pred. Nom.; *ex cathedra*) in your own estimation (Loc. Sph.; "over yourself", arrogance, conceit; your opinions are not equal to BD).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:16** τὸ αὐτὸ εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονοῦντες μὴ τὰ ὑψηλὰ φρονοῦντες ἀλλὰ τοῖς ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι μὴ γίνεσθε φρόνιμοι παρ ἑαυτοῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 12:16** id ipsum invicem sentientes non alta sapientes sed humilibus consentientes nolite esse prudentes apud vosmet ipsos

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:17** Render [pay back] to no one evil [malice] in exchange for evil. Respect honorable things [laws of divine establishment] in the presence of all men.

^{KW} **Rom. 12:17** Requiring to no one evil in exchange for evil, taking thought in advance with regard to things that are seemly in the sight of all men.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:17** Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

We are commanded to return (Customary Present tense) evil (Latin: malice) to no one in exchange for the evil they may have done to us. Getting revenge is an understandable and customary way of thinking among men, but Christians are not to think or operate that way. Instead, we are to show respect (Customary Present tense) for honorable things in the presence of men. Christians are to be governed by the laws of divine establishment. The royal family honor code requires us to respect good and praiseworthy things, leaving justice in God's hands and not looking for objectionable things in others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To cause men to suffer, whether by persecution or maintaining the unjust structures of society, is invariably evil and worthy of condemnation. But Christians are not to pay back evil with anything but good. Jesus practiced just such a form of "politics" during His earthly life. (D.A. Carson) Revenge and retaliation is a violation of the Royal Family Honor Code. It lowers your standards to the level of a reversionist. Revenge works like a boomerang (compound discipline comes back to you, from failing to allow God the right to handle the problem from His justice) and distracts you from doctrine. It destroys capacity for life, love and happiness. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) We must never sacrifice truth to

peace, and we must be willing, if necessary, to be unpopular if thereby alone we can be faithful to the trust committed to us. (W.G. Thomas)

We may not as private citizens take upon ourselves the execution of the demands of justice in the sphere of government. (J. Murray) “Love thy neighbor as thyself” does not set up self-love as a standard; it requires that you love others from the high standards of doctrine you have in your soul. It is therefore stable and consistent. Impersonal love demands an attitude in you, the absence of mental attitude sins, the relaxed mental attitude provided under the filling of the Holy Spirit. If someone maligns you, you do not lower yourself to retaliate. With your honor code integrity you refuse to get involved in nonessential squabbles. You remain above the howling mob like the aristocrat you are. Our objective in life, the object of your hope and confidence, the source of your motivation and spiritual momentum, shines so brightly ahead that the divine commands to turn the other cheek, to feed your enemy, to bless those who persecute you, become a completely understandable part of the honor code. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 12:17 **Render** (ἀποδίδωμι, PMPTc.NPM, Customary, Imperativ; return, give back, repay) **to no one** (Dat. Disadv.) **evil** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; malice, ill) **in exchange for** (prep.; against) **evil** (Prep. Abl.). **Respect** (προνοέω, PMPTc.NPM, Customary, Imperativ; have regard for, think about beforehand, foresight, take into consideration) **honorable things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; good, noble, praiseworthy, unobjectionable in every respect, pleasant, desirable, advantageous; laws of divine establishment) **in the presence of** (improper prep.) **all** (Gen. Spec.) **men** (Obj. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:17** μηδενὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἀποδιδόντες προνοούμενοι καλὰ ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων·

^{VUL} **Romans 12:17** nulli malum pro malo reddentes providentes bona non tantum coram Deo sed etiam coram omnibus hominibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:18** **If it is possible [if you have the capacity], that is, from within you [from the doctrinal resources in your soul], be at peace with all men.**

^{KW} **Rom. 12:18** If it is possible so far as it depends upon you, with all men be living at peace.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:18** If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If it is possible, and the 1st class conditional clause means Paul assumes it is within your ability to do so, be at peace (Customary Present tense) with all men. The fact that Paul says, “if it is possible” means he knows full well that there are some people who will absolutely drive us crazy. If we have a reserve of doctrine in the soul, we should be able

to withstand the annoyance and animosity of most people. But there are some people, even Christians, who are almost impossible to be agreeable with. There are some people that are extremely difficult to live in harmony with and who are not interested in keeping the peace. Nevertheless, Paul asks us to apply all the resources we have to keep the peace with all men.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The retaliation of injuries necessarily leads to contention and strife, while peace is the natural result of a forgiving disposition. So far from resenting every offence, we should do all we can to live at peace with all men. As the preservation of peace is not always within our control, Paul limits his command by saying: *if it be possible, so far as lies in you*: the cause of conflict must not arise from you. (C. Hodge) The initiative in disturbing the peace is never to lie with the Christian. (Denney) It may sometimes be impossible to be at peace with all, but at any rate, do not increase bitterness by avenging yourselves. (J. Barmby)

There are circumstances under which the establishment or maintenance of peace is impossible. If the maintenance of peace means the sacrifice of truth and/or honor, then peace must be abandoned. There are situations that require the sacrifice peace. But we must be sure that it is not we who are to blame for such exigencies. We have done everything in our power to establish and maintain peace. The other person(s) was (were) not willing to have peace except on conditions we, as Christians, were unable to accept. In such cases God does not hold us accountable for the lack of peace. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 12:18 if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it is") it is (ellipsis) possible (Pred. Nom.; "if you have the capacity", ability to use your inner residency of power), that is (indefinite pronoun; "in so far as"), from (prep.) within you (Abl. Source, Atten. Circum., Occasion; your soul, state of mind, "out from" you), be at peace (εἰρηνεύω, PAPTc.NPM, Customary, Imperative; live in peace, keep the peace; agreeable, harmony) with all (Gen. Measure) men (Gen. Assoc., Sharing, Partaking, Fellowship).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:18** εἰ δυνατόν τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες·

^{VUL} **Romans 12:18** si fieri potest quod ex vobis est cum omnibus hominibus pacem habentes

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:19** Stop avenging yourselves [seeking justice against an opponent], brethren, but give place [an opportunity] for His wrath, for it stands written: Punishment [justice] is Mine, I will repay [retribution], says the Lord.

^{KW} **Rom. 12:19** Do not be avenging yourselves, beloved ones, but give place at once to the wrath, for it stands written, To me belongs the punishment, I will repay, says the Lord..

^{KJV} **Romans 12:19** Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Stop seeking punishment and revenge (Imperative Participle of Prohibition) against your opponent (Customary Present tense), even if you are right and he is wrong. It is only natural to champion a cause or maintain an argument (Latin: defend) when you are certain you are correct. But in the end, the personal satisfaction you get from trying to procure justice or vindication on your own is hollow and empty. Instead, we are to yield the occasion (Constative Aorist tense) to the Lord. The Lord's perfect justice will take care of the situation if we entrust it to His care and judgment.

It stands written (Intensive Perfect tense): Punishment (Latin: vindication) is Mine, I will repay (Predictive Future tense), says the Lord. Our defence against the enemy's missiles is the Lord, not our own personal revenge motivation. If we do not get in His way, the Lord will administer justice (Latin: retribution) in His Own manner, time, and place. The use of the Predictive Future tense points to the promise of the Lord to take care of the situation. We don't need to worry about avenging ourselves; God is in control and Jesus Christ will remedy any argument, cause, or petition you have a grievance about.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If punishment is due, we must leave it to the righteous God to inflict it; it is not for us to do so. (J. Barmby) By intruding we get in the way; by taking matters into our own hands we interrupt the inexorable process by which wrongdoing brings upon itself its final retribution. We are inept bunglers in a region where we do not belong, and we can safely abdicate the right we have usurped because they actually belong to God. Retributive justice – the ultimate overthrow of evil because it is evil – is in God's hands. Our eager impulse to give our enemies their due deserts should be held in check by a solemn realization of the majestic character of God's ordering of the world He has made. (J. Knox)

Tit-for-tat would only aggravate the situation and set up a vicious circle, but there is a real possibility that repaying the other party's hostility with unexpected kindness and treating him as someone in need will make him burn with pangs of guilt and remorse and realize the error of his ways; and so the breach will be healed and vengeance be transformed into the victory of love. (H.C.G. Moule) The ability to avoid mental attitude sins comes from self-discipline in applying the doctrine we know. There is a pertinent doctrine to neutralize every mental attitude sin. Vindictiveness and implacability are dispelled by taking God at His Word when He says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

And why must this be ushered in with such an affectionate compellation, rather than any other of the exhortations of this chapter? Surely because this is intended for the

composing of angry spirits, that are hot in the resentment of a provocation. He addresses himself to such in this endearing language, to mollify and qualify them. Any thing that breathes love sweetens the blood, lays the storm, and cools the intemperate heat. Would you pacify a brother offended? Call him dearly beloved. Such a soft word, fitly spoken, may be effectual to turn away wrath. (M. Henry)

Rom. 12:19 Stop (neg. adv.) avenging (ἐκδικέω, PAPTc.NPM, Customary, Imperativ: Prohibition; procure justice, seek punishment and revenge against your opponent, champion a cause, maintain an argument) yourselves (Acc. Dir. obj.), brethren (Voc. Add.; personal satisfaction is no satisfaction), but (contrast conj.) give (δίδωμι, AAImp.2p, Constative, Entreaty; grant, give back, entrust, yield) place (Acc. Dir. Obj.; occasion, opportunity, chance, possibility, room) for His (Poss. Dat.) wrath (Dat. Adv.; anger, indignation, judgment; anthropopathism), for (expl. conj.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive): "Punishment (Subj. Nom.; vengeance, justice, satisfaction; defence against the missiles of the enemy) is (ellipsis, verb supplied; "belongs to Me") Mine (Nom. Appos.), I (Subj. Nom.; emphatic) will repay (ἀνταποδίδωμι, FAI1S, Predictive; recompense, retribution, punishment)", says (λέγω, PAI3S, Customary) the Lord (Subj. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:19** μή ἐαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες ἀγαπητοί ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ γέγραπται γάρ Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω λέγει κύριος

^{VUL} **Romans 12:19** non vosmet ipsos defendentes carissimi sed date locum irae scriptum est enim mihi vindictam ego retribuam dicit Dominus

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:20** Nevertheless, if your enemy [hostile person] hungers [for spiritual food], then feed him; if he thirsts [for the Word of God], then give him a drink, for by doing this you will heap [pile up] coals of fire [burning embers] upon his head [causing him to have remorse and shame].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:20** But, if your enemy is hungry, be feeding him. If he thirsts, be giving him to drink, for doing this, you will heap burning coals of fire upon his head.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:20** Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

However, if your enemy is hungry (Pictorial Present tense) for spiritual food, then feed him (Aoristic Present tense) what spiritual food you have to offer. Paul's 3rd class conditional clause is rather sarcastic, meaning maybe your enemy is hungry for spiritual

food and maybe he isn't, but if he is currently hostile, most likely he isn't. It is possible, of course, that somebody who is antagonistic to you might truly be interested in learning about the Lord, but the likelihood is rather slim. Usually we aren't asked about spiritual matters by a hostile person; usually they are subdued and friendly when such topics are discussed.

Paul uses yet another metaphor for being interested in the Lord. If your enemy thirsts (Pictorial Present tense), then give him a drink (Static Present tense). The Pictorial Present tense follows through on these metaphors, painting a picture in the mind of eating and drinking. But the reference here is to spiritual hunger and thirst, not physical hunger and thirst. That doesn't mean you can't be hospitable and provide food and drink to someone in need, but that is not the emphasis here. The emphasis is on turning away the anger of an enemy and meeting spiritual needs that he or she might not even know exists.

Paul then quotes a verse to support these commands. For by doing these things (Customary Present tense), you will pile up (Gnomic Future tense) burning embers upon his head. Again, this doesn't mean you pluck charcoal out of your firepit (Latin: ignited carbon) and put them on somebody's head, although there is an historical precedent for such a practice in ancient times. This is an idiom for being so kind to a hostile person that he blushes with shame and remorse. Under these circumstances, your enemy might be inclined to turn to the Lord. And in the same circumstances, you benefit by leaving your hostility in His hands.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a *synecdoche* of the Part, in which two examples from a much larger list of divine mandates are given to represent the whole. (E.W. Bullinger) The expression, *feed him* and *give him drink*, are obviously not to be confined to their literal meaning, nor even to the discharge of the common offices of humanity; they are figurative expressions for all the duties of benevolence. (C. Hodge) Kindness is no less effectual; the most malignant enemy cannot always withstand it. (C. Hodge)

In Bible times an oriental needed to keep his hearth fire going all the time in order to insure fire for cooking and warmth. If it went out, he had to go to a neighbor for some live coals of fire. These he would carry on his head in a container, oriental fashion, back to his home. The person who would give him some live coals would be meeting his desperate need and showing him an outstanding kindness. In the case of an enemy, the one injured would be returning kindness for injury. (K. Wuest) It must refer to the burning pain of shame and remorse which the man feels whose hostility is repaid by love. (Denney)

Rom. 12:20 **Nevertheless** (transitional conj.), **if** (protasis, sarcastic 3rd class condition, "maybe he is, maybe he isn't") **your** (Gen. Rel.) **enemy** (Subj. Nom.; someone hostile to you) **hungers** (πεινάω, PAsubj.3S, Pictorial, Potential; longing for spiritual food), **then** (ellipsis, apodosis)

supplied) **feed** (ψωμίζω, PAImp.2S, Aoristic, Command; nourish) **him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.); **if** (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe he is, maybe he isn't") **he thirsts** (διψάω, PASubj.3S, Pictorial, Potential; thirst for the Word), **then** (ellipsis, apodosis supplied) **give him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **a drink** (ποτίζω, PAImp.2S, Static, Command), **for** (result conj.) **by doing** (ποιέω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Instrumental) **this** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you will heap** (σωρεύω, FAI2S, Gnostic; pile up, build, send a barrage of) **coals** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; burning embers, charcoal) **of fire** (Descr. Gen.) **upon his** (Poss. Gen.) **head** (Prep. Acc.; idiom: cause him to blush with shame and remorse, leaves his hostility in the hands of the Lord).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:20** ἀλλὰ ἐὰν πεινᾷ ὁ ἐχθρὸς σου ψώμιζε αὐτόν· ἐὰν διψᾷ πότιζε αὐτόν· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν ἄνθρακας πυρὸς σωρεύσεις ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 12:20** sed si esurierit inimicus tuus ciba illum si sitit potum da illi hoc enim faciens carbones ignis congeres super caput eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 12:21** Stop being conquered [overcome] by evil [Satan's cosmic system], but conquer [be victorious over] evil by means of good [application of Bible doctrine].

^{KW} **Rom. 12:21** Stop being overcome by the evil, but be overcoming the evil by means of the good.

^{KJV} **Romans 12:21** Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Stop being conquered (Imperative of Prohibition) by Satan's cosmic system. The Pictorial Present tense paints a picture of a believer falling into sin, rejecting Bible doctrine, and ending up enslaved by Satan's wiles. Instead, we are told to conquer (Imperative of Command) evil by means of good. What does "good" refer to? Being nice and polite will not save us from the cosmic system. Living by establishment principles, which are good in themselves, will not prevent us from falling into many of Satan's traps. Conquering by means of "good" means the positive believer transfers doctrine from the pages of the Bible to his thinking, which renovates his thoughts, and enables him to reside in the sphere of God's power, the love complex. Continued residence in the sphere of the love complex enables us to be victorious over evil.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is a great conflict and warfare upon earth carried on between evil and good. Truth contends with error, reason with superstition, conscience with passion, virtue with vice, law with crime, order with turbulence, religion with infidelity. There are wars and fightings in which it may be said that light contends with darkness. But for the most part the campaign is not so

simple, so intelligible; the combatants are not on the one side all good, nor on the other all evil; opposing principles are distributed irregularly through the armies. None can be neutral in this struggle. Whether or not we consciously and deliberately engage in the moral war, it is ever raging. Not only so; we are constrained to take a side. He who professedly withdraws from the moral conflict does in reality side with the enemy of God. For to deem the war one of no interest, one which has no claim upon us, is to fail to respond to the trumpet-call of duty, and to decline with the noblest of all careers – that of the soldier of the cross. “He that is not with Me,” says our Lord, “is against Me.” The forces of evil are powerful and often victorious. Christians do ill to despise the power of their spiritual foe; for such an estimate may lead them to over-confidence, and to the neglect of necessary means of defence. They may then be taken unawares, and being surprised may succumb to their foe; or in any case the foe may in all likelihood gain an advantage over them. (J. Barmby)

Not only is there a warfare between the evil and the good, a warfare which shall ultimately result in the triumph of what is good, but it is the duty of every Christian to take part in that warfare. This duty applies first to his own character and life. The best way to drive out evil thoughts, evil passions, is to fill your mind with what is good. Seek the filling of the Holy Spirit. Be filled with all the fullness of God. Let your thoughts be much occupied with the precepts and promises of God’s Word, and then sin will not easily gain dominion over you. Those who occupy their days with all the good they may do will not have time to think of what things they may not do. (C. Irwin)

Rom. 12:21 Stop (neg. adv.) being conquered (νικάω, PPImp.2S, Pictorial, Prohibition; beaten, persuaded, overcome) by evil (Abl. Means; the reversionist rejects Bible doctrine and ends up living in Satan’s cosmic system), but (contrast conj.) conquer (νικάω, PAImp.2S, Customary, Command; prevail, be victorious over) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by means of good (Instr. Means; the positive believer transfers doctrine from the page to his thinking, the renovation of thought, and resides in the divine dynasphere).

^{WHO} **Romans 12:21** μὴ νικῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ ἀλλὰ νίκα ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν

^{VUL} **Romans 12:21** noli vinci a malo sed vince in bono malum

CHAPTER 13

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:1** Let every soul [Christian in Rome] be under the authority of the governing authorities which are higher [ranking], for there is no authority that is not from God, and those which exist have been ordained [determined] by God.

^{KW} **Rom. 13:1** Let every soul put himself habitually in subjection to authorities who hold position over them, for there is not an authority except that ordained by God.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:1** Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now recommends (Imperative of Entreaty) that every human being under Roman control be in subjection to the governing authorities which are of higher rank (Attributive Participle) than they are. The Durative Present tense means we should be oriented to authority as a constant maxim of life. The word “subjection” brings all kinds of negative connotations with it, but according to divine protocol, being in subjection is not negative, but positive. Don’t forget that the Lord Himself paid the ultimate compliment to the Roman Centurion who understood and had no issues with authority orientation. The Descriptive Present tense also points to varying levels of authority, with those beneath and those above at virtually every level.

New Christians who were once followers of the pagan Rome religion did not think they had any responsibility to Rome as a governing authority because their belief in Christ transcending such authority. This belief would actually align them with Jews who placed their religion above that of pagan Rome. To make things even more complicated, some of the Jews in Rome became Christians. They switched their allegiance from Judaism to Christianity, with obedience to pagan Rome an anathema. Strange bedfellows were created at this time in history! Paul was addressing these groups of believers, an historical fact (isagogics) that is often overlooked when interpreting this passage. He was trying to prevent Christians in Rome from becoming anarchists during a period in which Nero was allowing them to worship freely.

Why are we encouraged to submit to governing authorities? What about Hitler and Stalin? Should we have submitted to their authority? These are tough questions, because Paul says there is (Gnomic Present tense) no authority on earth that does not have its source in God. And of course, if He is sovereign and omnipotent, then nothing is beyond His control, including the governing authorities. Paul elaborates that the governing authorities that exist (Circumstantial Participle) have been ordained (Periphrastic Perfect tense) by God. They have all been fixed, appointed, and determined by God in eternity past. Every president, dictator or prime minister has been placed there by God. I do not believe that “authorities” in this passage can be expanded to include angels, but I do believe that demonic powers have usurped the state’s authority (Congress) and are an enemy to the Constitution and the people.

So what governing authorities are we talking about? Some scholars believe there is a double-reference here, including both civil authorities and so-called angelic authorities that lay behind them. I don’t buy that inference; there is no hint of angelic authorities here, and besides, when was the last time you took orders from an angel? The principle Paul is referring to does not include submission to an authority who requires you to sin against the Lord. For instance, many believers were martyred because they refused to honor Caesar as God. Please, use some common

sense here. The principle of authority orientation includes showing honor and respect to law enforcement officers, firemen, military leaders, your boss, government officials, teachers, etc. Correct authority orientation does not include violating God's mandates by assisting tyrannical leaders in government.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a *synecdoche* of the Part, in which the soul represents the whole person. The second phrase is an *epitasis*, or amplification of the first phrase, which serves to explain, emphasize and further augment the force of the previous enunciation. (E.W. Bullinger) Imperfect as human government may often be, and in some instances oppressive and unjust, still they exist for a purpose of good, and form part of the Divine order for the government of the world. The meaning is that government is an ordinance of God, that God has ordained or appointed it, that there should be authority and rulers. Government is necessary. (J. Barmby) We must not withstand regularly constituted magistrates, but depend on God to overrule their acts, if they seem to conflict with our duty to God or our convictions of His Truth. Our conflict is with the sovereignties, and the authorities and the world might, the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials. (A.E. Knoch) Those who would riot and rebel must know that opposition to government is opposition to God. Resisting government unlawfully and unethically brings the judgment of God on believers (verse 2). Nevertheless, *the obedience Christians owe to the government is never absolute and must carefully be weighed in light of their subjection to God.* (W. Kroll)

The most fundamental principle in Calvinist political thought is that God is sovereign over the secular state. The God who rules in grace for the church also rules over the state ... for there is no authority except that which God has established. Basic in Puritan thought is the doctrine of divine sovereignty. It was the sovereign God who created the state and gave to it its powers and functions. The earthly magistrate held his position and exercised his power by a divine decree. He was a minister of God under common grace for the execution of the laws of God among the people at large, for the maintenance of law and order, and for so ruling the state that it would provide an atmosphere favorable for the preaching of the Gospel. He was to so rule that the people of God, the elect, could live individually and collectively a life that is truly Christian. In Puritan political theory the magistrate derived his power from God and not from the people. Human government was divinely ordained for the realization of the purposes of God in history. His powers did not come from the people, nor was he primarily responsible to them for the stewardship of his office ... The rulers and the people were thus subject to the revealed will of God, and the will of the people could never take precedence over the divinely ordained powers and functions of human government. (J. Boice)

It is true that Satan has remarkable freedom to rule this world. He is called the ruler of this world, and the god of this world, and the prince of the power of the air. He offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if He would bow down to him. Nevertheless, God is clearly pictured in the Bible as holding sway over the world, even though Satan is called the god of this world. For example, the authority of governing rulers in the world is from God, including Pilate as he condemned Jesus. It is God who removes kings and sets up kings. He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand or say

to Him, "What are you doing?" Behind Satan's limited freedom to act is the hand of a sovereign God guiding all things for the good of His people. (J. Piper) The worst government in any country is of God, and is calculated to effect His purposes and promote His glory. *Wicked rulers are necessary in God's plans to punish wicked nations.* (R. Haldane) God is as much the God of Nero as He was the power behind Cyrus. (F.F. Bruce) The government of the Roman Empire at that time was one of the best in history. The Pax Romana was at its height. The excellent government of Augustus and Tiberius began to degenerate under Caligula, Claudius and Nero. For the most part, persecution of the Christians came from the leaders of the Jewish temple. Persecution by Gentiles was occurring mainly in the provinces, and Rome was quiet. Paul was still free. (D. Barnhouse)

To the degree that this age is dominated by Satan and sin, Christians must resolutely refuse to adopt its values. But the world in which Christians continue to live out their bodily existence has not been wholly abandoned by God. As a manifestation of His common grace, God has established in this world certain institutions, such as marriage and government, that have a positive role to play even after the inauguration of the new age. From a human perspective, rulers come to power through force or heredity or popular choice. But the transformed mind recognizes behind every such process the hand of God. Paul brings home this general principle in the last clause of the verse. (D. Moo) In Romans 13:1 Paul states the believer's duty to government *when it functions properly within the framework of law.* No Christian is to be a law unto himself. No individual is exempt from the duties of citizenship ... When we speak of power (*kratos*) we recognize that there can be both legitimate and illegitimate power. And, of course, *Christians are under no obligation to obey a power that is illegitimate. It does not mean Christians are merely to be pliant, lying down in the face of evil and doing nothing to oppose it. The separation of church and state does not mean the separation of God and state.* (D. Barnhouse)

Some professed Christians vainly imagine, that they are wholly excused from all manner of duty and subjection to civil authority, refusing to honor their rulers, and to pay taxes; which opinion is not only unreasonable in itself, but also tends to fix a lasting reproach upon the Christian name and profession ... There were some professed Christians in the apostolic age, who disclaimed all magistracy and civil authority in general, despising government and speaking evil of dignities; some under a notion that Jews ought not to be under the jurisdiction of Gentile rulers; and others, that they were set free from the temporal powers, by Christ. Now it is with persons of this licentious opinion and character, that the apostle is concerned. And all that was directly to his point, was to show that they were bound to submit to magistracy in general. This is a circumstance very material to be taken notice of, in order to ascertain the sense of the apostle. For this being considered, it is sufficient to account for all that he says concerning the duty of subjection, and the sin of resistance, to the higher powers, without having recourse to the doctrine of unlimited submission and passive obedience, in all cases whatever. (J. Mayhew) He does not want Rome to think that the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ is in any sense antagonistic to a properly functioning Roman government. (W. Hendriksen)

My attempt at an interpretation of this controversial passage centers on an understanding of the recipients of Paul's letter, that is, the situation of the Christian communities in Rome. Based on

this contextual reading of the text, I hope to show that in Romans 13:1-7, Paul did not set out a rigid doctrine of the State, nor of Church-State relations, but rather gave advice to a particular community of faith in a particular historical context. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul's concern was primarily pastoral. He advised the Jewish Christians in Rome to submit to the governing authorities. Such action would keep them from withholding taxes or from becoming involved in any anti-Roman protests through sympathy with Palestinian Jewish nationalism ... J. I. H. McDonald is right in his contention that the logic of Romans 13:1-7 is not conditioned by a dogmatic or philosophical theory of State power, but is Paul's assessment of the positive function of the authorities from his vantage point within the first-century Roman Empire. Paul's linking of the governing authorities and God springs out of a particular set of historical circumstances. As we shall see below, this glowing account of the Imperium's function and nature is part of his pastoral or paranaetic concern for the Roman Church. (M. Neufeld) It would be straining this passage to deduce from it "the Divine right of kings to govern wrong," and it would be unjust to argue from it that it is always unlawful to resist and to dethrone a tyrant. (J. Barmby)

For many years, I accepted our text with stark literalness. I believed that God wanted each Christian to submit utterly to his government. If a man had the misfortune to live in Germany under Hitler, I thought that our text commanded him to be completely subject to the Nazi government. If he was a native of Russia, I thought that he must submit to the Czars until the time of the revolution, and then be subject to the Communist regime. In connection with American history, I thought that a colonist should have been subject to England until the Revolution took place, and then submit to the government of the United States. Now, in one sense this is true; but I have become convinced that there are limitations to this interpretation. Let us consider the literal sense of the text, and then its limitations ... The Bible sets forth certain conditions under which an individual Christian must disobey his government. (1) The Christian is to obey God and not human authority in all matters connected with the preaching of the Gospel ... God is Lord of the Christian conscience, and His commands to preach the gospel take precedence over any prohibition against preaching the gospel. (2) No government has the right to command a Christian to do an unchristian act ... This passage cannot be applied to a reactionary, race-hating Nazi dictatorship or to an atheistic, human rights destroying Communist dictatorship ... If governments order us to do evil, we will disobey. (D. Barnhouse)

The Christians, being regarded as a Jewish sect, and known for the acknowledgement of a Messiah and their refusal to comply with heathen usages, were not unnaturally confounded with such disturbers of the peace. It was, therefore, peculiarly needful that the Christian communities should be cautioned to disprove such accusations by showing themselves in all respects good law-abiding subjects. (J. Barmby) The duty of Christians as citizens is in our day not sufficiently recognized. Many Christians keep aloof from public life and the duties of citizenship because of the political corruption and party strife which are so common. Others, again, enter into public duties, but seem to leave their religion behind them. The result is a sad want of Christian statesmanship and of Christian legislation. (C. Irwin) This does not imply that we are calmly to accept of all a government chooses to inflict, but simply that, speaking generally, civil society and civil government are ordained of God to prevent us descending to beastly levels again ... Paul does not teach here that any degree of tyranny whatever is to be submitted to by a Christian.

(R. Edgar) Christians will voice their “No” to Caesar’s unauthorized demands the more effectively if they have shown themselves ready to say “Yes” to all his authorized demands. (F. Bruce)

A crisis seldom finds the church forearmed with an adequate interpretation of the prerogatives of the state. Under pressure Christians have either granted the ruler too much latitude, or else have refused to concede him what he is fully entitled to claim. As a result they have been unduly subservient in some periods, while in others they have allowed no satisfactory place in their thought for the necessary functions of the state ... Moreover, the expectation that their Lord would soon return must have fortified the slightly anarchistic element in the church, and doubtless made it difficult for some of the early Christians to settle down as loyal subjects of the state ... At the moment the state appeared to be a beneficent power – a bulwark of order and, on the whole, a minister of justice. In due time, however, the church was to find that Rome could persecute as well as protect. One possible reaction to this change is the strident opposition with which the writer of Revelation denounces the civil power ... Most of our evidence points to the conclusion that the early church decided that in those situations where the rights of conscience were invaded the state must be resisted, but in all other matters the Christian must accept and discharge the obligations of his citizenship. (J. Knox)

Human government is a permanent institution brought into being by God for the regulation of human affairs. The powers or authorities here are seen, not in their individual personalities, but as officers of the law, whose positions are ordained by God. That is, the various government and the laws connected with it are appointed by God as a means of promoting law and order on earth. The incumbents in those offices are not always ordained of God ... But even the parental power does not extend to things unlawful. If the civil power command us to violate the law of God, we must obey God before man. If it commands us to disobey the common laws of humanity, or the sacred institutions of our country, our obedience is due to the higher and more general law, rather than the lower and particular. These distinctions must be drawn by the wisdom granted Christians in the varying circumstances of human affairs: they are all only subordinate portions of the great duty of obedience to law. (K. Wuest) Paul is not arguing for the divine right of kings or for any special form of government, but for government and order. Nor does he oppose here revolution for a change of government, but he does oppose all lawlessness and disorder. (A. Robertson)

Paul’s natural instinct we to credit the state with good intentions, and also with a wise administration of justice. And the state had not hitherto displayed hostility to the Christians; still less had it indulged in any organized persecutions ... The cruel persecution under Nero marked the beginning of an alteration of the attitude of the state to the church ... In this changed situation the Christians were compelled to revise their judgment of the state. And Paul leaves room for such revision. His words are to be understood of the civil authorities as he knew them, and the functions of justice which he saw them to be discharging. His teaching here is *wrongly applied* when it is taken to mean that all existing authorities of any kind and character are divinely appointed. Paul himself suggests the test. When they are a terror not to the worker of good but to the evildoer, when they administer even-handed justice, they are ministers of God within civil life, and Christians are bound to provide them with all reasonable support. (C. Scott)

It should not be inferred from this passage that all *rulers* are chosen by God, but rather that all *rule* is divinely ordained ... It is not the party or person in power that is appointed under God, but the fact of government. (R. Earle)

One can well imagine Christians arguing: “The old age has passed away; we are a new creation in Christ and belong to the transcendent, spiritual realm. Surely we, who are even now reigning with Christ in His kingdom, need pay no attention to the secular authorities of this defunct age.” To the degree that this age is dominated by Satan and sin, Christians must resolutely refuse to adopt its values. But the world in which Christians continue to live out their bodily existence has not been wholly abandoned by God. As a manifestation of His common grace, God has established in this world certain institutions, such as marriage and government, that have a positive role to play even after the inauguration of the new age. (D. Moo) Grotius qualifies this obedience by saying, that it should not extend to what is contrary to the will of God. But is it remarkable, that often in Scripture things are stated broadly and without any qualifying terms, and yet they have limits, as it is clear from other portions. This peculiarity is worthy of notice. Power is from God, the abuse of power is from what is evil in men. The apostle throughout refers only to power justly exercised. He does not enter into the subject of tyranny and oppression. And this is probably the reason why he does not set limits to the obedience required: he contemplated no other than the proper and legitimate use of power. (J. Calvin)

Disobedience to the civil authorities may have arisen from mistaken views among the Christians themselves as to the nature of Christ’s kingdom and its relation to existing powers of this world ... We may observe that the apostle here pays no regard to the question of the duty of Christians in revolutionary movements. His precepts regard an established power, be it what it may. It, in all matters lawful, we are bound to obey. But even the parental power does not extend to things unlawful. If the civil power commands us to disobey the common laws of humanity, or the sacred institutions of our country, our obedience is due to the higher and more general law, rather than to the lower and particular. These distinctions must be drawn by the wisdom granted to Christians in the varying circumstances of human affairs; they are all only subordinate portions of the great duty of obedience to law. To obtain, by lawful means, the removal or alteration of an unjust or unreasonable law, is another part of this duty: for all authorities among men must be in accord with the highest authority, the moral sense. But even where law is hard and unreasonable, not disobedience, but legitimate protest, is the duty of the Christian. (H. Alford)

Paul may be intent on warning the Roman church, which contained some Christian Jews as well as Gentile believers who sympathized with them over the plight of their nation, not to identify with any revolutionary movement advocating rebellion against Rome ... If this is indeed the background, then Paul was not simply giving counsel of a general or universal nature (although applicable elsewhere), but was speaking to a definite historical situation that could have proved explosive from the Christian as well as the Jewish standpoint ... There is also a possibility that the Jews who returned to Rome after the death of Claudius (including some Christian Jews) were hostile toward the state because of the way Claudius had treated them. These needed to be mollified. (F. Gaebelien) How shall the justified man, whose obligations as a member of the spiritual body have been outlined, conduct himself in this secular world? This is the natural

advance of thought ... First of all the Christian finds himself to be one among many fellow Christians; he also finds himself as one who is still living in a secular world. (R. Lenski)

Chaos and anarchy enable the powerful, the rich, and the bullies to come out on top, and they invariably do. God desires that even in the present time, even in the world that has not yet confessed Jesus as Lord, there should be a measure of justice and order ... Knowledge that the authorities are there to look after such matters is a strong incentive to forswear freelance attempts at justice ... But did Paul not believe that the gospel and rule of Jesus the Messiah, the world's true Lord, subverted the gospel and rule of Caesar, whose cult was growing fast in precisely the cities where he spent most of his time? Yes, and this is perhaps part of the point ... It is all the more important to make it clear that this does not mean a holy anarchy in the present, an overrealized eschatology in which the rule of Christ has already abolished all earthly governments and magistrates. Precisely because Paul is holding out for the day when all creation will be renewed, when every knee shall bow at the name of Jesus, it is vital that the excitable little groups of Christians should not take the law into their own hands in advance ... The ultimate overthrow of pagan power comes by other means. (N. Wright)

Paul's teaching about the transitory nature of this world might be precisely why he includes 13:1-7. His purpose may be to stifle the kind of extremism that would pervert his emphasis on the coming of a new era and on the "new creation" into a rejection of every human and societal convention, including the government. (D. Moo) This will not mean an uncritical, blind obedience to the authority's every command; for the final arbiter of what constitutes *submission* in a particular situation is not the civil authority but God. Paul has in mind, of course, an authoritarian state, in which the Christian's *submission* to the authorities is limited to respecting them, obeying them so far as such obedience does not conflict with God's laws, and seriously and responsibly disobeying them when it does, paying them direct and indirect taxes willingly, since no government can function without resources – and praying persistently for them. (C. Cranfield) In what follows the state is not regarded as a persecutor; it is represented, on the contrary, as the guardian of justice. (F. Godet)

There can be no question here of an unconditional and uncritical subjection to any and every demand of the State ... For this reason they (Romans 13:1-7) have constantly been misapplied by oppressive regimes, as if Scripture gave rulers *carte blanche* to develop a tyranny and to demand unconditional obedience ... To trespass and organize a sit-in, or to obstruct the police in their duties, may also in some circumstances be justified, but it should be called "civil protest" rather than "civil disobedience," since in this case the laws which are being broken in order to publicize the protest are not themselves intrinsically evil ... In Revelation 13 the state is no longer seen as the servant of God, wielding His authority, but as the ally of the devil (pictured as a red dragon), who has given his authority to the persecuting state (pictured as a monster emerging out of the sea). Thus Revelation 13 is a satanic parody of Romans 13. Yet both are true. According as the State remains within its limits or transgresses them, the Christian will describe it as the Servant of God or as the instrument of the Devil. (J. Stott, Cullmann)

God's Word defends the rights of property just as the rights to life ... No wonder Marx and Lenin and the Communists hate the Bible. It convicts them of covetousness and thievery! You see, the

only way for Communism to exist, is to destroy all hold of the Bible on men. Communism is the devil's opium for a people willing to let go of the Word of God. (W. Newell)

Rom. 13:1 Let every (Nom. Spec.) soul (Subj. Nom.; Hebraism: human being) be under the authority of (ὑπερέχω, PPImp.3S, Durative, Entreaty/Permission; submission to) the governing authorities (Dat. Ind. Obj.; official, ruling) which are higher (ὑποτάσσω, PAPtc.DPF, Descriptive, Attributive; superior, governing, higher ranking, exalted), for (explanatory conj.) there is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) no (neg. adv.) authority (Pred. Nom.; power) that (particle) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) not (neg. adv.) from God (Abl. Source), and (connective conj.) those (Subj. Nom.; authorities, powers) which exist (εἰμί, PAPtc.NPF, Static, Circumstantial) have been (εἰμί, PAI3P, Gnostic) ordained (τάσσω, Perf.PPtc.NPF, Periphrastic, Predicative; delegated, established, fixed, appointed, determined, arranged) by God (Abl. Agency).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:1** Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ αἱ δὲ οὐδαὶ ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν·

^{VUL} **Romans 13:1** omnis anima potestatibus sublimioribus subdita sit non est enim potestas nisi a Deo quae autem sunt a Deo ordinatae sunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:2** Therefore, he [reversionist Christian] who resists [Roman] authority opposes the ordinance [divine edict] of God; in fact, those who resist [oppose legitimate Roman authority] shall receive discipline [Roman judicial punishment] upon themselves;

^{KW} **Rom. 13:2** Moreover, the existing authorities stand permanently ordained by God. So that the one who sets himself in array against the authority, against the ordinance of God has set himself, with the result that he is in a permanent position of antagonism against the ordinance. And those who resist shall receive for themselves judgment.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:2** Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is addressing this pericope in Romans to Gentile and Jewish Christians who were borderline anarchists. They resented the presence, let alone rule, of their nation by Rome. They were behaving like reversionists and needed to be corrected. Paul was not issuing an edict of passive resistance or absolute submission to every whim of any tyranny that happens to come along. Both extremes are violations of legitimate authority orientation. The apostate or reversionist who rejects establishment principles (legitimate authority)

opposes (Intensive Perfect tense) the divine institution and edict of God. This type of person draws a battle line against Almighty God by rejecting His delegated authority.

What kind of people sin against the divine direction of God as relates to legitimate, beneficial authority? Some organizational examples of people who reject legitimate authority are liberals, socialists, anarchists, revolutionaries and terrorists. These are just a few categories of individuals who reject divine authority and replace it with one satanic panacea or another. Rejection of authority occurs in many realms. Politicians who reject the Constitution they swore to defend sin against legitimate authority. Judges who reject the law of the land and overturn valid precedent sin against legitimate authority. What authority are the sinning against? They sin against our sovereign Lord.

Rejection of authority can be in the realm of politics (liberalism), economics (socialism), law enforcement (anarchists), government (revolutionaries), and religion (terrorists). This is not an all-inclusive list, but it is definitely an up-to-date sampling for the beginning of the 21st century. Paul warns us that anybody who resists (Intensive Perfect tense) divinely delegated authority will receive discipline (Predictive Future tense) upon himself. God is not amused by anti-authority arrogance, whether it is exhibited by believers or unbelievers. He will issue a decision and that person will be disciplined (Latin: damned). It will be administered either directly by the Lord or through one of His intermediaries.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the maintenance of law and order in any body politic, personal assault and willful wrong demand penal satisfaction, and this self-evident truth the Gospel does not ignore or set aside. It recognizes the civil magistrate as a minister of God ordained to punish the evildoer. Rulers are designed to be a terror to evildoers. (M. Terry) Does this mean that the apostle was urging unlimited compliance, a subjection so absolute that even when the command of the magistrate should be in direct conflict with God's revealed will, it must nevertheless be obeyed? *Of course not!* It is clear that in writing as he does here in Rom. 13:2, the apostle is thinking of the ruler who is performing his duty of preserving order, approving good behavior, and punishing evil. In *that* case he who opposes the authority is, indeed, resisting the divine ordinance. The apostle is not establishing a universal valid principle that opposing the authority and disobeying a command issued by a civil magistrate is always wrong. In reading Paul's letters, filled with instructions and exhortations, one must be sure to make allowance for restrictions or qualifications ... That the apostle was referring to normal, and not to outrageous or mistaken, governmental functioning is clear from the verse. (W. Hendriksen)

God is the fount of all authority, and those who exercise authority on earth do so by delegation from Him; therefore to disobey them is to disobey God. Human government is a divine ordinance, and the powers of coercion and commendation which it exercises have been entrusted to it by God, for the repression of crime and the encouragement of righteousness. Christians of all people, then, ought to obey the laws, pay their taxes and respect the authorities – not because it will be the worse for them if they do not, but because this is one way of serving God. (F.F. Bruce) Since God appointed human rulers, the person who opposes them is opposing, is in a

state of rebellion against, the ordinance of God. Those who take up this attitude will bring judgment on themselves. Bringing judgment could refer to the action of the secular ruler, with the implication that God's own judgment is present in the punishment meted out by the ruler. (D. Moo) *A participatory democracy is a radically different thing from the government of which Paul speaks of here. It is expected in a participatory democracy that bad laws are to be changed and bad officials are to be ousted.* (G. Fee)

It has often been asserted, that the scripture in general (and the passage under consideration in particular) makes all resistance to princes a crime, in any case whatever. If they turn tyrants and become the common oppressors of those, whose welfare they ought to regard with a paternal affection, we must not pretend to right ourselves, unless it be by prayers and tears and humble intreaties : And if these methods fail of procuring redress, we must not have recourse to any other, but all suffer ourselves to be robbed and butchered at the pleasure of the Lord's anointed; lest we should incur the sin of rebellion, and the punishment of damnation. For he has God's authority and commission to bear him out in the worst of crimes, so far that he may not be withstood or controlled. Now whether we are obliged to yield such an absolute submission to our prince, or whether disobedience and resistance may not be justifiable in some cases, notwithstanding any thing in the passage before us, is an inquiry in which we are all concerned; and this is the inquiry which is the main design of the present discourse. (J. Mayhew) There are limits [to this authority], of course, but the place to begin is not with the limits, but by trying to understand the nature of the authority that has been given to civil rulers. (J. Boice)

Culpepper agrees with Borg that Paul's specific concern in Romans 13:1-7 is that Jewish Christians refrain from joining a revolutionary, nationalistic movement which might undermine the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the Roman Church. (M. Neufeld) Since it is certain that there were persons who vainly imagined, that civil government, in general, was not to be regarded by them, it is most reasonable to suppose, that the apostle designed his discourse only against them. And agreeably to this supposition, we find that he argues the usefulness of civil magistracy in general; its agreeableness to the will and purpose of God, who is over all; and so deduces from hence, the obligation of submission to it. But it will not follow, that because civil government is, in general, a good institution, and necessary to the peace and happiness of human society, therefore there are no supposeable cases in which resistance to it can be innocent. So that the duty of unlimited obedience, whether active or passive, can be argued, neither from the manner of expression here used, nor from the general scope and design of the passage. (J. Mayhew)

What should be the attitude of the Christian when rulers are a terror to good conduct? Were our colonial forebears right in casting off the authority of England and establishing independence? The question to be solved is: At what point does human law run counter to divine law? Just where may a man defy constituted authority on the ground that such authority is opposed to divine principles? I became convinced that each Christian must answer this question in the context of his own life. I saw that two sincere believers might reach opposite conclusions and become stern antagonists in a civil struggle, and yet both be in the will of God ... The tea was thrown overboard to express the colonists' insistence on representative government. The harshness of the British inflamed and united the colonists. The Congress which met at Philadelphia in 1774 had no thought of independence. In fact, they passed an address to the King

that was remarkably pacific. A year later, the British had so forced the issue that the Boston Massacre, the ride of Paul Revere, the Battle of Concord Bridge and other terrible events had begun their course; and in 1776 the same men, who had expressed the hope that the King and his heirs would rule forever in undiminished authority, signed the Declaration of Independence. (D. Barnhouse)

Now we come back to the spiritual problem which faced our forefathers in America. A Christian in France or Russia could never have sympathized with the godless upheavals in those countries. What part could a believer in Christ have had in the riots of Paris, the enthronement of a nude harlot as goddess on the altar of the church, and the murders of 1793? Or what part could a believer have had in the purges of millions by the Communists in Russia, the Ukraine, and Hungary? In the American Colonies there were godly men who did not move without prayer and waiting on the Lord. As late as July, 1775, the Congress sent another address to the King which has been called "the Olive Branch." In this the leaders of the colonies expressed dismay at the disturbance of peaceful relations by the force of Parliament ... Undoubtedly, God so ordered events in England that the creation of a new nation was forced upon the colonists in America. The founders of our nation were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and followers of the Christian ethic. They reached decisions with deep agony of soul lest they should veer from moral righteousness. But we must have equal sympathy for those true believers who held that it was their Christian duty to remain faithful to the King ... Today's Christian must find his own answers with regard to war, segregation, the authority of the Supreme Court, conflict with States' Rights, and all other matters that go deep into the heart of the believer. (D. Barnhouse)

This world is ruled by principalities and powers under the leadership of Satan; yet we are free from those powers and know no dominion except that of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, Christian liberty is no excuse for anarchy. We are freed from all law in order to be subject to Christ, who in turn, sets us in the midst of the world, subject to earthly powers which sometimes act in a most devilish way ... There are some authorities that use their powers in harmony with God's will, and others that misuse their powers and trample the will of God under their feet. But Paul is not talking about such distinctions. He is speaking of that which all authorities have in common, namely, that they are instituted by God. That there are governments in the world is not an arbitrary invention of man; it is a fact ordained by God. Thus it is God who grants power to the governments. It does not follow that actions of the governments are ethically approved. God uses even unworthy and culpable men as means to the accomplishment of His purposes ... Here we come face to face with the conflict between the individual conscience and the provisions of his government. (D. Barnhouse)

There is corruption in government from the top to the bottom, and it is not confined to one party. These unsaved, godless men who are in positions of government actually do not understand the American system. You see, the men who made our laws had a Bible background ... However, in our day the government is corrupt. I go to the civic centers in our cities, and I see fine buildings, costing millions of dollars, which have been built by contractors who are friends of the politicians. Also I see poverty areas. Oh, corruption is there. What's wrong? Well, the thing wrong is the human heart ... My friend, nothing is wrong with our form of government; there is something wrong with the individuals who are in positions of power. A professor in the history

department of the University of Michigan summed it up well when he said: “America is in the hands of those who do not understand the spiritual heritage that we have.” The government is to maintain law and order. When it does not do that, it has failed. I feel that a Christian should be opposed to the breakdown of law and order. We are to respect our rulers who are enforcing the law. I have great respect for our army, although it is honeycombed with corruption. I have great respect for police officers, although I know they make mistakes. (J. McGee)

It is well to ponder the seriousness with which Paul regarded *irresponsible* opposition to the state. It is only fair to assume that this is not a complete statement of his attitude to constituted power; he himself was ready to affirm, and if need be to act on, the right of conscience to protest against the actions of the state. But that is very different from the perverse and irresponsible defiance of public authority ... The inference that can most legitimately be drawn from Paul’s words concerns the solemnity with which the law should be invested and its high claims to our respect. (J. Knox) The use made of the passage to prove the duty of “passive obedience” or “the right divine of kings to govern wrong” is beside the mark; the apostle was not thinking of such things at all. (W. Nicole) The punishment which God inflicts on men for their sins, we cannot properly call ordinations, but they are the means which He designedly appoints for the preservation of the legitimate order. (J. Calvin) The Christian will be slow to head a rebellion, but where circumstances absolutely compel, there does not seem anything in this passage to prohibit it. (W. Griffith Thomas)

If this is more than a stylistic variation, it may be intended to recognize that rebellion is not feasible at all unless it is instigated by collective action. Defiance of government is futile on an individual basis except as a demonstration of personal disagreement. (F. Gaebelien) The rebel or revolutionist may think that he is fighting only men; the Christian is to know better. (R. Lenski) “Authority,” even under its worst distortions, still so far keeps that aim that no human civic power, as a fact, punishes good as good, and rewards evil as evil; and thus for the common run of lives the worst settled authority is infinitely better than real anarchy. (H. Moule) What Paul condemns in these verses is rebellion in the name of Christian freedom. (Hunter) Anything in the directions given by authority that is manifestly not from God shows that the authority has exceeded its lawful function. (L. Morris) Caesar has no right to touch my conscience. If I yield to him there, I am a traitor to the truth. (W. Newell)

Rom. 13:2 **Therefore** (inferential conj.), **he** (Subj. Nom.; the reversionist, apostate) **who resists** (ἀντιτάσσω, PMPTc.NSM, Descriptive, Substantival, Articular, Deponent; rejects establishment principles, draws a line of battle) **authority** (Dat. Disadv.; of course, restricted to its’ sphere of operation) **opposes** (ἀνθίστημι, Perf.AI3S, Intensive) **the ordinance** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; divine institution, edict, direction) **of God** (Poss. Gen.); **in fact** (inferential conj.), **those** (Subj. Nom.; liberals, socialists, anarchists, revolutionaries) **who resist** (ἀνθίστημι, Perf.APTc.NPM, Intensive, Substantival) **shall receive** (λαμβάνω, FMI3P, Predictive) **discipline** (Acc. Dir. Obj., verbal noun;

punishment, judicial decision) upon themselves (Dat. Disadv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:2** ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται

^{VUL} **Romans 13:2** itaque qui resistit potestati Dei ordinationi resistit qui autem resistunt ipsi sibi damnationem adquirunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:3** Certainly, the governing authorities [legitimate Roman officials] should never [according to the true intent of their office] be a threat to good production [free enterprise capitalism], but to evil production [socialism & the welfare state]. Therefore, you should not feel threatened by governing authorities: keep on producing good [adhering to laws of the land] and you should receive recognition from it [if the government is functioning according to divine principles],

^{KW} **Rom. 13:3** For the rulers are not a terror to the good work but to the evil. Now, do you desire not to be afraid of the authority? Keep on doing the good, and you will have commendation from him,

^{KJV} **Romans 13:3** For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the term "governing authorities" includes legitimate rulers, local officials, and others in power. Governing authorities are sanctioned by God and should never be (Gnomic Present tense) a threat to intrinsically good production. The indicative mood is not declarative, because there have always been governing authorities that have functioned against good and in favor of evil. The indicative mood is a potential statement - according to divine standards, governing authorities are obligated to function in favor of good and in opposition to evil. In the context of government, good production includes freedom, privacy, and property as outlined by free enterprise capitalism. There is no reason to be afraid of legitimate rulers in a free enterprise economic system. But what about evil production? In the context of government, evil production is crime, bureaucracy, and the false sense of security promised by socialism and the welfare state.

In the United States, which operates (at least theoretically) in an open and free economic system called capitalism, there is no reason to feel threatened by the governing authorities. Individuals are free to work and invest in a free market economy, i.e. good production. In dictatorships and other forms of government which are not free and open, such as where socialism and the welfare state exist, individuals are not free to make their own decisions because the economy is restricted and manipulated by a handful of self-serving bureaucrats, i.e. evil production. The freedom of the individual will eventually be threatened in a socialist and welfare state where the governing powers take control of the

decision-making process. So what if the governing authorities of the country you are living in depart from biblical mandates and begin the gradual, socialistic process of enslaving the people? Now can you revolt? More on that in a minute.

The only individuals who should feel threatened by legitimate governing authorities are those who practice crime, engage in bureaucracy, or live by the false sense of security promised by socialism and the welfare state. So far, what I am discussing is an application to government in the United States. What about dictatorships, communist and socialist governments? If you find yourself living in such a framework, is it not sanctioned by God? Are you supposed to engage in the overthrow of these governments? The measuring stick is the Word of God. If the government does not require you to violate God's Word by your daily activity, then you should not feel threatened (Customary Present tense) by those who hold political office. Again, the indicative mood is not declarative, but is a potential expressing an obligation. It will not only be possible, but it will absolutely happen during the Tribulation, that the governing authorities will demand that all citizens of the world receive the mark of the beast? If you are alive during that time – having been left behind – will you submit to this life or death demand?

In general, governing authorities are a benevolent institution designed by God to benefit man. On occasion, however, God sets up governing authorities in order to discipline or punish a national populace. In a government where citizens vote for their officials, the application would be "be careful what you ask for." *If citizens of a nation elect a degenerate government official, the Lord will uphold this official as a means of punishing that city, county, state or nation.* So unless a government is requiring you to do something that violates the Word of God, you are to keep on producing (Imperative of Command) good under the laws of the land you live in. *It is possible to live under an evil system of government and still live the Christian way of life.* As long as this is possible, you are commanded to do so, and it is quite probable that you will receive (Predictive Future tense) security and benefit from that government. The potential indicative does not guarantee that this will always occur, but if the governing authorities are functioning according to divine standards, they have an obligation to reward good instead of evil.

What if the governing authorities of the United States violate the Constitution and Bill of Rights and begin a gradual, socialistic enslavement of the people? Should you rebel against such a revolution, in effect becoming a counter-revolution, or a Re-founding or Re-construction of the legitimate authority that is being usurped? Should you adopt the words of Thomas Jefferson: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God"? He and Benjamin Franklin proposed placing this motto on the Great Seal of the United States. Flags were made with this phrase on them and troops marched into battle against the British believing in this motto. Were they violating Scripture? What about this quote from Jefferson? "What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms. The remedy is to set them right as to facts, pardon and pacify them." --Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787. ME 6:373, Papers 12:356

Is resisting those who resist God's will, the same thing as resisting God? What about Mayhew's conclusions? - "The argument here used no more proves it to be a sin to resist such rulers [evil ones], than it does, to resist the devil, that he may flee from us." This is not a lightweight issue. It is one that is being discussed in coffee shops and taverns across the nation in 2009. Due to the increasing number of satanic policies being foisted on American citizens by a socialist/communist governing board of czars, bureaucrats and behind the scenes conspirators, we may all have to make some crucial decisions in the coming years – perhaps even life or death decisions like some of the believers that Paul was addressing in Rome. What is my opinion on this matter? My 4-point outline is comprised of 4 C's: the Constitution, good Citizenship, your Conscience, and Common Sense. The last item especially should be exercised when interpreting this passage. You cannot support anarchy with the Bible anymore than you can support unquestioning submission to tyranny. Divine *principles* should not be turned into legal *precepts* for Church Age believers.

Be sure to read a short sermon/paper by Chuck Baldwin under the Relevant Opinions section below. I also recommend the opening comments by a blogger named "Mike" and his friends. And if you are truly hungry for more, I have also added substantial quotes from one of Mayhew's papers on this topic - which can be accessed in its entirety for free by googling his name.

I cannot but enjoy a rather humorous blogger quote from Anonymous:

"Sometimes we just need to render unto Caesar a good, old fashioned, ass whoopin'."

As President Obama would say: "Now let me be clear on this." What I mean by "good, old fashioned, ass whoopin'" is the removal of a large number of miscreants from the Senate and House of Representatives by either (1) the ballot box, or (2) treason trials. The violation of their oaths of office to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States are blatant. They need to be replaced immediately before there is no United States of America to protect and defend. I would also extend these trials against some members of the Supreme Court as well. Being an appointed and confirmed member of the Supreme Court does not eliminate the possibility that one or more of this court is guilty of treason as well. And obviously, the unconstitutional creation of another branch of government called "czars" would fit under this umbrella.

You should also take note of something else that is commonly overlooked. "Paul follows with a reference to the law of love (following the teaching of Jesus) which encapsulates all the other commandments (Rom. 13:8-10)." (bibleintro.com) Virtue love must be added to the 4 C's previously mentioned, as an umbrella over them all or as a corollary to Christian conscience and common sense. "A conscience informed by the demands of the Word of God will not rebel against any authority unless obedience to a specific commandment of that authority means disobedience to God. Even then, rebellion or creating social tension is not the motivation for disobedience, but a clear conscience

before God.” (Charles Wingard) Constitution, good citizenship, conscience, common sense, and virtue love – that is my opinion on this subject.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The state, then, does not derive its mandate from military superiority, hereditary succession, or even the democratic voice of the people, but ultimately from the will and pleasure of God. God has given the state “authority,” meaning delegated power. This power is temporal, granted to the state in order to preserve peace, promote justice, punish crime, and protect its citizens. It should be noted that each of these functions is necessitated by human depravity. Here Calvinism introduces a healthy dose of realism. Because secular government cannot remove sin, its role is non-redemptive; nevertheless, its purpose is to restrain the corrupting influence of iniquity. As it fulfills this role, the state is an instrument of divine government in the world, bearing the sword as the servant of God. (J. Boice) It is only when ungodly government cannot be changed from within that we have the right to respond with nonsubmission. (W. Kroll)

To be sure, the magistrates punish, but under normal circumstances those who receive punishment have only themselves to blame. Rulers are not a terror to those who conduct themselves properly, but to those who conduct themselves badly. It is the latter who have reason to fear. (W. Hendriksen) Rebels against authority malign the Giver of authority. It is a dangerous thing to set oneself in opposition to a divinely ordered process. Those who rule pose no threat to those whose lives are marked with good deeds. It is the one who does evil who fears authority. (R. Mounce) Christians need never blindly fall under subjection to injustice or a government that has gone bad. *When a wicked government demands its citizens do what God demands they not do, Christians have both the right and responsibility to make their voices heard.* (W. Kroll)

Introduction to a sermon/article by Chuck Baldwin:

For many Christians throughout history, the above text of Romans 13 has been used to justify inaction against the tyrannies of their day. German Lutheran pastors hid behind it in the time of the Nazis, giving sermons to their congregations that justified submission in the face of Nazi tyranny as "obedience to the Higher Power." Hitler was happy to let them continue preaching.

Other Christians, however, have resisted this interpretation. In American history, Jonathan Mayhew, the man who was the first practitioner of what King George the Third would later dub "The Black Regiment," was one Christian who correctly interpreted Romans 13 not as an excuse for inaction but rather as part of a Christian call to arms.

On 30 January 1750, Mayhew delivered a sermon "Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers with Some Reflections on the Resistance Made to King Charles I." Its critique of the proper Christian response to tyranny would lay the philosophical groundwork for the American Revolution. As Peter Kershaw writes:

John Adams called Rev. Mayhew "the morning gun of the Revolution." Adams also dubbed him a "transcendent genius." Robert Treat Paine called Dr. Mayhew, "The Father of Civil and Religious Liberty in Massachusetts and America." No one today should underestimate the significant contribution that the Rev. Jonathan Mayhew made toward the cause of liberty and American independence. Mayhew preached several sermons on Romans 13. The sermon . . . was considered so important that it was printed and widely distributed throughout the American Colonies. Mayhew was also famous for his election sermons (in Mayhew's day it was common for preachers to preach a sermon to the governor and the legislators immediately following an election).

The message of Mayhew's sermon challenging passive obedience and non-resistance to all rulers was radical and unmistakable -- the king must repent of his tyrannies or face the consequences of his subjects forcibly throwing off the chains of tyranny. Mayhew's sermon was even sent to the king and the British parliament as a "remonstrance." Mayhew's habit of serving remonstrances on tyrants became a common practice with many other patriot preachers, as well. King George branded these "nonconformist" clergymen as the "Black Regiment" (mocking them for the black robes they wore). Mayhew's sermon resulted in the motto for the American Revolution: "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

Now, again in the 21st Century, we are faced with tyranny rising. And once again timid Christians are seeking cover behind Romans 13. In the essay below, Chuck Baldwin takes up Mayhew's standard.

Like Jonathan Mayhew and Chuck Baldwin, I too have discovered many Christians hiding behind Romans 13 in an effort to avoid their civic duty. It is almost as commonplace as "Christ-is-coming-again-tomorrow-morning-at-10:38-so-don't-bother-me-while-I-get-my soul-in-order" excuse. Almost.

My thanks to Armdcav, Jackie J. and others who brought this to my attention, so I can bring it to yours.

Mike

Romans Chapter 13 Revisited

by Chuck Baldwin

July 15, 2009

It seems that every time someone such as myself attempts to encourage our Christian brothers and sisters to resist an unconstitutional or otherwise reprehensible government policy, we hear the retort, "What about Romans Chapter 13? We Christians must submit to government. Any government. Read your Bible, and leave me alone." Or words to that effect.

No doubt, some who use this argument are sincere. They are only repeating what they have heard their pastor and other religious leaders say. On the other hand, let's be honest enough to admit that some who use this argument are just plain lazy, apathetic, and indifferent. And Romans 13 is their escape from responsibility. I suspect this is the much larger group, by the way.

Nevertheless, for the benefit of those who are sincere (but obviously misinformed), let's briefly examine Romans Chapter 13. I quote Romans Chapter 13, verses 1 through 7, from the Authorized King James text:

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

Do our Christian friends who use these verses to teach that we should not oppose America's political leaders really believe that civil magistrates have unlimited authority to do anything they want without opposition? I doubt whether they truly believe that.

For example, what if our President decided to resurrect the old monarchical custom of *Jus Primae Noctis* (Law of First Night)? That was the old medieval custom when the king claimed the right to sleep with a subject's bride on the first night of their marriage. Would our sincere Christian brethren sheepishly say, "Romans Chapter 13 says we must submit to the government"? I think not. And would any of us respect any man who would submit to such a law?

So, there are limits to authority. A father has authority in his home, but does this give him power to abuse his wife and children? Of course not. An employer has authority on the job, but does this give him power to control the private lives of his employees? No. A pastor has overseer authority in the church, but does this give him power to tell employers in his church how to run their businesses? Of course not. All human authority is limited in nature. No man has unlimited authority over the lives of other men. Lordship and Sovereignty is the exclusive domain of Jesus Christ.

By the same token, a civil magistrate has authority in civil matters, but his authority is limited and defined. Observe that Romans Chapter 13 clearly limits the authority of civil government by strictly defining its purpose: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil . . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good . . . for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Notice that civil government must not be a "terror to good works." It has no power or authority to terrorize good works or good people. God never gave it that authority. And any government that oversteps that divine boundary has no divine authority or protection. This is a basic principle of Natural Law (and all of America's legal documents--including the U.S. Constitution--are founded upon the God-ordained principles of Natural Law).

The apostle clearly states that civil government is a "minister of God to thee for good." It is not a minister of God for evil. Civil magistrates have a divine duty to "execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." They have no authority to execute wrath upon him that doeth good. None. Zilch. Zero. And anyone who says they do is lying. So, even in the midst of telling Christians to submit to civil authority, Romans Chapter 13 limits the power and reach of civil authority.

Did Moses violate God's principle of submission to authority when he killed the Egyptian taskmaster in defense of his fellow Hebrew? Did Elijah violate God's principle of submission to authority when he openly challenged Ahab and Jezebel? Did David violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to surrender to Saul's troops? Did Daniel violate God's principle of submission to authority when he disobeyed the king's command to not pray audibly to God? Did the three Hebrew children violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to bow to the image of the state? Did John the Baptist violate God's principle of submission to authority when he publicly scolded King Herod for his infidelity? Did Simon Peter and the other Apostles violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to stop preaching on the streets of Jerusalem? Did Paul violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to obey those authorities who demanded that he abandon his missionary work? In fact, Paul spent almost as much time in jail as he did out of jail.

Remember that every apostle of Christ (except John) was killed by hostile civil authorities opposed to their endeavors. Christians throughout church history were imprisoned, tortured, or killed by civil authorities of all stripes for refusing to submit to their various laws and prohibitions. Did all of these Christian martyrs violate God's principle of submission to authority?

So, even the great prophets, apostles, and writers of the Bible (including the writer of Romans Chapter 13) understood that human authority--even civil authority--is limited.

Plus, Paul makes it clear that our submission to civil authority must be predicated on more than fear of governmental retaliation. Notice, he said, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Meaning, our obedience to

civil authority is more than just "because they said so." It is also a matter of conscience. This means we must think and reason for ourselves regarding the justness and rightness of our government's laws. Obedience is not automatic or robotic. It is a result of both rational deliberation and moral approbation.

Therefore, there are times when civil authority may need to be resisted. Either governmental abuse of power or the violation of conscience (or both) could precipitate civil disobedience. Of course, how and when we decide to resist civil authority is an entirely separate issue. And I will reserve that discussion for another time.

Beyond that, we in the United States of America do not live under a monarchy. We have no king. There is no single governing official in this country. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with any man or any group of men. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with the President, the Congress, or even the Supreme Court. In America, the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme Law of the Land." Under our laws, every governing official publicly promises to submit to the Constitution of the United States. Do readers understand the significance of this distinction? I hope so.

This means that, in America, the "higher powers" are not the men who occupy elected office; they are the tenets and principles set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Under our laws and form of government, it is the duty of every citizen, including our elected officials, to obey the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, this is how Romans Chapter 13 reads to Americans:

"Let every soul be subject unto the [U.S. Constitution.] For there is no [Constitution] but of God: the [Constitution] that be [is] ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the [Constitution], resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For [the Constitution is] not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the [Constitution]? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For [the Constitution] is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for [the Constitution] beareth not the sword in vain: for [the Constitution] is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for [the Constitution is] God's minister, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

Dear Christian friend, the above is exactly the proper understanding of our responsibility to civil authority in these United States, according to the teaching of Romans Chapter 13.

Furthermore, Christians, above all people, should desire that their elected representatives submit to the Constitution, because it is constitutional government that has done more to

protect Christian liberty than any other governing document ever devised by man. As I have noted before in this column, Biblical principles and Natural Law form the foundation of all three of America's founding documents: the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

As a result, Christians in America (for the most part) have not had to face the painful decision to "obey God rather than men" and defy their civil authorities.

The problem in America today is that we have allowed our political leaders to violate their oaths of office and to ignore--and blatantly disobey--the "supreme Law of the Land," the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, if we truly believe Romans Chapter 13, we will insist and demand that our civil magistrates submit to the U.S. Constitution.

Now, how many of us Christians are going to truly obey Romans Chapter 13?

Chuck Baldwin

Selected quotes from:

A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-resistance to the Higher Powers, with Some Reflections on the Resistance Made to King Charles I

By Jonathan Mayhew, 1749

If rulers are a terror to good works, and not to the evil; if they are not ministers for good to society, but for evil and distress, by violence and oppression; if they execute wrath upon sober, peaceable persons, who do their duty as members of society; and suffer rich and honorable knaves to escape with impunity ; if instead of attending continually upon the good work of advancing the public welfare, they attend only upon the gratification of their own lust and pride, and ambition, to the destruction of the public welfare ; if this be the case, it is plain that the apostle's argument for submission does not reach them; they are not the same, but different persons from those whom he characterizes; and who must be obeyed according to his reasoning.

If those who bear the title of civil rulers, do not perform the duty of civil rulers, but act directly counter to the sole end and design of their office; if they injure and oppress their subjects, instead of defending their rights and doing them good; they have not the least pretence, to be honored, obeyed and rewarded, according to the apostle's argument. For this reasoning, in order to show the duty of subjection to the higher powers, is, as was before observed, built wholly upon the supposition that they do, in fact, perform the duty of rulers. It is blasphemy to call tyrants and oppressors, God's ministers. They are more properly the messengers of Satan to buffet us. No rulers are properly God's ministers, but such as are just, ruling in the fear of God.

When once magistrates act contrary to their office, and the end of their institution; when they rob and ruin the public, instead of being guardians of its peace and welfare; they immediately cease to be the ordinance and ministers of God; and no more deserve that glorious character, than common pirates and highwaymen. So that whenever that argument for submission fails, which is grounded upon the usefulness of magistracy to civil society, (as it always does when magistrates do hurt to society instead of good) the other argument, which is taken from their being the ordinance of God, must necessarily fail also; no person of a civil character being God's minister, in the sense of the apostle, any farther than he performs God's will, by exercising a just and reasonable authority; and ruling for the good of the subject ... The argument here used no more proves it to be a sin to resist such rulers [tyrants and oppressors], than it does, to resist the devil - that he may flee from us.

Thus, upon a careful review of the apostle's reasoning in this passage, it appears that his arguments to enforce submission, are of such a nature, as to conclude only in favor of submission to such rulers as he himself describes; i.e., such as rule for the good of society, which is the only end of their institution. Common tyrants, and public oppressors, are not entitled to obedience from their subjects, by virtue of any thing here laid down by the inspired apostle ... Not to discontinue our allegiance, in this case, would be to join with the sovereign in promoting the slavery and misery of that society, the welfare of which, we ourselves, as well as our sovereign, are indispensably obliged to secure and promote, as far as in us lies. It is true the apostle puts no case of such a tyrannical prince; but by his grounding his argument for submission wholly upon the good of civil society; it is plain he implicitly authorises, and even requires us to make resistance, whenever this shall be necessary to the public safety and happiness.

Suppose God requires a family of children, to obey their father and not to resist him; and enforces his command with this argument; that the superintendence and care and authority of a just and kind parent, will contribute to the happiness of the whole family so that they ought to obey him for their own sakes more than for his. Suppose this parent at length runs distracted, and attempts, in his mad fit, to cut all his children's throats. Now, in this case, is not the reason before assigned why these children should obey their parent while he continued of a sound mind, namely, their common good, a reason equally conclusive for disobeying and resisting him, since he is become delirious, and attempts their ruin? It makes no alteration in argument, whether this parent, properly speaking loses his reason, or does, while he retains his understanding, that which is fatal in its consequences, as any thing he could do, were he really deprived of it. This similitude needs no formal application.

It is not pretended that any person besides kings, have a *divine right* to do what they please, so that no one may resist them, without incurring the guilt of factiousness and rebellion. If any other supreme powers oppress the people, it is generally allowed, that the people may get redress, by resistance, if other methods prove ineffectual. And if any officers in a Kingly government, go beyond the limits of that power which they have derived from the crown, (the supposed original source of all power and authority in the

slate) and attempt, illegally, to take away the properties and lives of their fellow-subjects, they may be *forceably* resisted, at least till application can be made to the crown. But as to the sovereign himself, he may not be resisted in any case; nor any of his officers, while they confine themselves within the bounds which he has prescribed to them. This is, I think, a true sketch of the principles of those who defend the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. Now there is nothing in scripture which supports this scheme of political principles.

Thus it appears, that the common argument, grounded upon this passage, in favor of universal and passive obedience, really, overthrows itself, by proving too much, if it proves any thing at all; namely, that no civil officer is, in any case whatever, to be resisted, though acting in express contradiction to the design of his office; which no man, in his senses, ever did, or can assert ... If we calmly consider the nature of the thing itself, nothing can well be imagined more directly contrary to common sense, than to suppose that millions of people should be subjected to the arbitrary, precarious pleasure of one single man; (who has naturally no superiority over them in point of authority) so that their estates, and every thing that is valuable in life, and even their lives also, shall be absolutely at his disposal, if he happens to be wanton-and capricious enough to demand them.

What unprejudiced man can think, that God made ALL to be thus subservient to the lawless pleasure and phrenzy of ONE, so that it shall always be a sin to resist him! Nothing but the most plain and express revelation from heaven could make a sober, impartial man believe such a monstrous, unaccountable doctrine, and, indeed, the thing itself, appears so shocking—so out of all proportion, that it may be questioned, whether all the miracles that ever were wrought, could make it credible, that this doctrine really came from God. At present, there is not the least syllable in scripture which gives any countenance to it. The hereditary, indefensible, divine right of kings, and the doctrine of non-resistance, which is built upon the supposition of such a right, are altogether as fabulous and chimerical, as transubstantiation; or any of the most absurd reveries of ancient or modern visionaries. These notions are fetched neither from divine relation, nor human reason; and if they are derived from neither of those sources, it is not much matter from whence they come or whither they go.

A people really oppressed to a great degree by their sovereign, cannot well be insensible when they are so oppressed. And such a people (if I may allude to an ancient fable), have, like the hesperian fruit, a DRAGON for their protector and guardian. Nor would they have any reason to mourn, if some HERCULES should appear to dispatch him. For a nation thus abused to arise unanimously, and to resist their prince, even to the dethroning him, is not criminal; but a reasonable way of vindicating their liberties and just rights; it is making use of the means, and the only means, which God has put into their power, for mutual and self defense. And it would be highly criminal in them, not to make use of this means. It would be stupid tameness, and unaccountable folly, for whole nations to suffer one unreasonable, ambitious and cruel man, to wanton and riot in their misery. And in

such a case it would, of the two, be more rational to suppose, that they that did NOT resist, than that they who did, would receive to themselves damnation.

If we attend to the nature of the argument with which the apostle here enforces the duty of submission to the higher powers, we shall find it to be such an one, as concludes not in favour of submission to all who bear the title of rulers, in common; but only, to those who actually perform the duty of rulers, by exercising a reasonable and just authority, for the good of human society. This is a point which it will be proper to enlarge upon, because the question before us turns very much upon the truth or falsehood of this position. It is obvious, then, in general, that the civil rulers whom the apostle here speaks of, and obedience to whom he presses upon christians as a duty, are good rulers, such as are in the exercise of their office and power, benefactors to society. Such they are described to be, throughout this passage. It is manifest that this character and description of rulers, agrees only to such as are rulers in fact, as well as in name: to such as govern well, and act agreeably to their office. And the apostle's argument for submission to rulers, is wholly built and grounded upon a presumption that they do in fact answer this character; and is of no force at all upon the supposition of the contrary.

In America, the supreme civil authority - the law of the land - is not a person. It is our Constitution. And the Constitution of the United States of America is in perfect harmony with the laws of God - even if certain elected officials aren't. (A. Falconer) The U.S. Constitution is a higher power than the "governing authorities." Otherwise we have no rights. Our Bill of Rights is a higher authority over the federal government ... Romans 13 does not teach submission to violations of our Bill of Rights ... As Christians we are expected by God to obey our government rulers, but not when they become a terror unto us. So many of America's pastors are woefully ignorant of the truth, and would have stupidly led their congregations to board the trains to Auschwitz (i.e., to the holocaust death camps). It can get confusing at times with all the lying propaganda being circulated, but common sense tells us that what happened under Hitler, Stalin and Mao can happen here in America. (D. Stewart) So, as an honest Bible preacher, obeying the plain commands of God, I must speak out against corruption and immorality. Waste, corruption, the taking away of men's freedom and the seizing of men's property, these sins every honest preacher must condemn and every honest Christian must disavow. (J. Rice)

The gift of authority is a divine gift, so precious that the Bible indicates that God will judge men severely for any abuse of it ... The difficulties encountered in this chapter seem to rise from thoughts that are read into it, rather than from what it actually teaches. Nothing here indicates what a believer should do when the civil government departs from the role that God has given to it. A government should maintain law and order. A Christian is subject to a government that maintains law and order. This chapter contains no rules for the believer to follow in case the government persecutes the Christian faith. Another omission is counsel as to what should be the believer's attitude of his government commits moral wrong. The teaching concerning the believer's allegiance in case of civil war, revolution or rebellion must be found elsewhere. (D. Barnhouse) For

since a wicked prince is the Lord's scourge to punish the sins of the people, let us remember, that it happens through our fault that this excellent blessing of God is turned into a curse. (J. Calvin)

When a government has shown itself incapable of protecting the good and punishing the transgressors, and is notorious for its reversal of the true principles which should guide its action and for its forgetfulness of the intent of its functions, it has put itself outside the pale of respect and submission; it may lawfully be overthrown and another substituted. (S. Aldridge) Doubtless, this was written before Nero had stretched forth his hands against the Christians; for though, as Alford remarks, this would not have affected the general principles here taught, it could hardly have failed to modify the phraseology. (R. Jamieson) It is implied that those to whom he speaks will always be identified with the *good* work, and so have the authorities on their side: it is taken for granted also that the State will not act in violation of its own idea, and identify itself with the bad. This is most expressive when read as an interrogation, though some prefer to take it as an assertion. (W. Nicole)

One way to deal with the problem is to assume that Paul is presenting the norm, that is to say, the state as functioning in terms of fulfilling the ideal for government, which is certainly that of punishing evil and rewarding or encouraging good. If this is the correct interpretation, then we can understand why Paul warns against rebellion and makes no allowance for revolutionary activity. The way is then open to justify revolution in cases where rights are denied and liberties taken away, making life intolerable for freedom-loving men and women, since the state has ceased to fulfill its God-appointed function. However, Christians will not as a church lead in revolution, but only as citizens of the commonwealth. At the very least, under circumstances involving a collapse of justice, the Christian community is obliged to voice its criticism of the state's failure, pointing out the deviation from the divinely ordained pattern. Subjection to the state is not to be confused with unthinking, blind, docile conformity. (F. Gaebelein)

Reading Romans 13 against the backdrop of the extravagant claims made within the burgeoning imperial cult highlights one point in particular. According to Paul (and the Jewish tradition in which he stands) the rulers are not themselves divine; they are set up by the one God, and they owe this God allegiance. Romans 13 constitutes a severe demotion of arrogant and self-divinizing rulers. It is an undermining of totalitarianism, not a reinforcement of it. By implication, if the rulers themselves are given the task of judging wicked people within their sphere of authority, they themselves will be judged by the God who set them up ... This does not mean that one must be politically and socially quiescent until the great renewal of all things. (N. Wright) In those situations where Christians have been unable to withdraw from intolerable situations, this rule is in no wise broken. The Huguenots fled from France to England, and the Puritans from England to America, for freedom of conscience, much as the Lord said, "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Escape is sometimes possible, and is not rebellion. (W. Kelly)

Rom. 13:3 Certainly (inferential conj.; to be sure), the governing authorities (Subj. Nom.; legitimate rulers, local officials, those in power) should never (neg. adv.) be (εἶμι, PAI3P, Gnostic, Potential Ind. Expressing Obligation: ought) a threat (Pred. Nom.; cause of fear, terror) to good (Dat. Ref.; of intrinsic value, moral) production (Dat. Ind. Obj.; freedom, privacy, and property from free enterprise capitalism), but (contrast conj.) to evil (Dat. Disadv.; crime, bureaucracy, and the false sense of security promised by socialism and the welfare state) production (ellipsis, Ind. Obj. supplied). Therefore (continuative conj.), you should not (neg. adv.) feel (θέλω, PAI2S, Customary, Potential Ind. Expressing Obligation; will, desire) threatened (φοβέομαι, PMInf., Customary, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) by governing authorities (Acc. Gen. Ref.; they are a benevolent institution designed by God to benefit man): keep on producing (ποιέω, PAImp.2S, Iterative, Command) good (Compl. Acc.; adhering to the laws of the land) and (continuative conj.) you should receive (ἔχω, FAI2S, Predictive, Potential Ind. Expressing Obligation; have, hold) recognition (Compl. Acc.; praise, security, benefit) from it (Abl. Source; the authority of human government),

^{WHO} **Romans 13:3** οἱ γὰρ ἄρχοντες οὐκ εἰσὶν φόβος τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἔργῳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κακῷ θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν· τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖ καὶ ἕξεις ἔπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς·

^{VUL} **Romans 13:3** nam principes non sunt timori boni operis sed mali vis autem non timere potestatem bonum fac et habebis laudem ex illa

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:4** For he [the governing Roman official] is a civil servant from God to you for your benefit [protects your personal freedom]. But if you are continually producing evil, be afraid, for it [the judicial branch of Roman government] does not wield a two-edged sword [the death penalty] to no purpose, because he is a civil servant from God, an avenger of discipline [legitimate instrument for administering punishment] upon the one [criminal] who produces evil [violates the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens].

^{KW} **Rom. 13:4** For he is God's servant to you for good. But if you are habitually doing that which is evil, be fearing, for not in vain is he wearing the sword, for he is God's servant, an executor of wrath upon the one who practices the evil.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:4** For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The governing authority, whether he is a judge, police officer, or fireman, is (Descriptive Present tense) a civil servant from God to you for your benefit. Civil servants are elected to protect your freedom and privacy, enabling you to live the Christian way of life and hopefully advance to maturity. Commentators go in different directions on these verses. Those who emphasize Roman law in the time of Paul think he is encouraging Christians in Rome to live peaceably and amiably with that Roman government, even if they don't like those who operate as its civil servants. At that time, however, Rome was not hostile to Christians; in later years, they persecuted and murdered them in horrible ways. At that time, Roman law actively prevented the practice of Christianity and obeying its commands (such as worshipping Caesar as god) were not to be followed. Those who emphasize criminality concentrate less on national government, and more on the local apprehension and punishment of evil-doers.

If you are pursuing a life of criminality (Potential Subjunctive mood) or are actively trying to overthrow a beneficial governmental system, you should be afraid (Imperative of Warning). The judicial branch of government, regardless of the type of governmental system, does not carry (Customary Present tense) a two-edged sword for no purpose. Delegated officials carry God's discipline in their hands. They have the authority to inflict punishment, imprisonment, or death. The death penalty is wrapped-up in the use of the Greek word for "two-edged sword" in many verses of Scripture, as well as external sources. Civil servants, such as judges, magistrates and police officers, are from God. Divine authority has been delegated to them, so they should be obeyed as long as you do not have to compromise the Word of God.

Civil servants are avengers (Latin: gladiators) for God; they are legitimate instruments for administering discipline, including capital punishment, upon criminals. The definition of criminality obviously includes thieves, murderers, and rapists. But Paul expands the definition to include anyone who produces evil (Pictorial Present tense). Any activity that violates the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens is evil. By their very nature, the following modern organizations produce evil: communism, socialism, terrorism, the welfare state, environmentalism, gun control lobbies, internationalists (United Nations affiliations), anti-prayer and other anti-Christian groups, New Age religions, etc. If you are a Christian and you adhere to the philosophy of one of these organizations, you are in reversionism and are operating as an evangelist for Satan.

Why do I classify some of these organizations as satanic? After all, you may have friends and family who believe in some of them. The key phrase is "any activity that violates the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens." Terrorism violates the right of life itself. Communism and socialism violate your freedom to work and keep the wages you earned by that work. The welfare state forces those who work to subsidize those who refuse to work ... and in this day, it removes your freedom to choose your own doctor or health care plan. Environmentalism works to destroy the right of private property. Gun control destroys your right to defend yourself and your family. Internationalist organizations like the United Nations seek to destroy the government and economy of sovereign nations.

Atheistic groups and New Age religions seek to eliminate Christianity from public practice and erase its glorious history from textbooks.

It is also worth mentioning that nobody should resist the existing government without using common sense. Even a patriotic group of Christians trying to preserve their freedom against a tyrannical government can meet with disaster. Our military and intelligence services possess firepower and surveillance capability beyond your imagination. You do not want to join an organization that opposes this military-intelligence complex lightly, because it could very well end with death. You must pray and struggle within your own conscience as to whether you are fulfilling God's plan. Jesus Christ is Lord of the state, whether it recognizes it or not. Does He want you to join a band of freedom fighters to restore capitalism and free enterprise to the United States. A wrong thing (governmental tyranny by violating the Constitution and Bill of Rights) done in a wrong way (eliminating your freedom by fiat or force) is wrong. A wrong thing (rebellion to legitimate authority) done in a wrong way (anarchy) is wrong. A right thing (pursuing freedom) done in a right way (divinely sponsored resistance) is a right thing. A right thing (pursuing freedom) done in a wrong way (resistance not sponsored by God) is wrong.

Take note of Gamaliel's warning to patriotic Jews in Acts 5:34-38. "Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." It's not always apparent what the plan of God is at a given time. He often overthrows good government and replaces it by evil government in order to discipline a rebellious people who have turned their back on Him. If you pursue freedom in this scenario, you might end up like Theudas or Judas of Galilee.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The design of civil government is not to promote the advantage of rulers, but of the ruled. The Christian religion is to be adapted to all states of society and all forms of civil government. If there is anything in their institutions inconsistent with its spirit, it is changed by its silent operation on the heart and conscience [function of the invisible spiritual pivot], rather than by denunciation. (C. Hodge) This application of capital punishment is to be upheld as a principle with reference to cases in law where the actual satisfaction of the divine Nemesis absolutely demands it. (Meyer) In ancient times and in modern times, the sword has been carried before sovereigns. It betokens the power of capital punishment, and the reference to it here is among the

many testimonies borne by Scripture against the attempt to abolish the infliction of the penalty of death for crime in Christian states. (Alford) Before deciding to rebel against good government, one must consider the consequences to noncompliance with the rule of law ... Government is to be an “avenger” who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil. When it is not, good government ceases to be good, and the physical reason for compliance is removed. (W. Kroll)

New Testament doctrine never advocates a union of church and state, the interference of Christian organizations into the affairs of state, or the overthrow of pagan government. While the Roman Empire served as “a minister of God to you for good,” the invisible spiritual pivot of mature believers brought divine blessing to the Empire. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Human government is a divine institution, instituted by God when Noah came out of the ark, a basic law of which is capital punishment (Gen. 9:5-6) for the murderer duly convicted of his crime. The civil magistrate, saved or unsaved, is a servant of God in the sense that since God has instituted human government as a means of regulating the affairs of the human race, a magistrate who carries out the laws, acts as a servant of God. (K. Wuest) The weakling who wants to hide behind legalistic precepts will find no refuge here ... I am convinced that no individual should allow the church to think for him. When consciences are revealed at the Judgment Seat of Christ, the individual will account for his decisions, not for the barriers behind which he took refuge. (D. Barnhouse)

Killing, according to Scripture, is legitimate and is absolutely necessary in such cases as capital punishment for violent crimes (here) or the military defense that protect a nation. Those who oppose capital punishment and the military slide toward reversionism and undermine the laws of divine establishment that protect a nation. If a believer (for instance) commits murder, he has not only committed a sin against God, but he has violated the laws of establishment concerning the sanctity of human life. He should, therefore, suffer capital punishment because he made the criminal decision to commit murder... Despising all authority, the criminal chooses to become a criminal. His own arrogance, not his environment nor his upbringing, leads him to the criminal presumption that he is superior to the rights, privacy, and property of others. Instead of improving himself, he continually tries to prove himself, using and hurting others to demonstrate that he is in control. Other people exist only for his convenience. He prides himself in being above the law and regards himself as a good person. By his own volition, the criminal is unteachable. God ordains capital punishment for duly convicted criminals. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

God’s wrath, which belongs properly in the last day, is capable of being brought forward into the present; one means by which this future wrath is anticipated is the magistrate’s sword. This last expression recalls the technical term “*ius gladii*,” by which was meant the authority (possessed by all higher magistrates) of inflicting sentence of death (Histories, Tacitus). The action of the state was to be regarded as an aspect of God’s providence; in this His wrath finds a place, for it represents His resistance to evil. Accordingly the state takes its place as avenger, bringing the wrath of God Himself to bear upon evil-doers. It is thus, paradoxically, an instrument of God’s long-suffering, for through this partial manifestation of His wrath the power of evil is restrained and its final

judgment and defeat deferred. (C.K. Barrett) If ye refuse to do your duty as members of society; if ye refuse to bear your part in the support of government; if you are disorderly, and do things which merit civil chastisement, then, indeed, you have reason to be afraid. For it is not in vain that rulers are vested with the power of inflicting punishment. (J. Mayhew)

By means of the sword wrong-doing is punished. In fact, the vicious, dangerous criminal may even be put to death. The sword is often connected with the idea of putting to death, as is clear from such passages as Luke 21:24, Acts 12:2, Acts 16:27, Revelation 13:10, and Hebrews 11:34. The argument in favor of executing dangerous criminals, who have committed horrible crimes, is based not only on Genesis 9:6, but also here in Romans 13:4. (W. Hendriksen) Government sometimes oversteps its rightful domain. When this happens, the believer will find it impossible to obey the ruler. The believer's ultimate allegiance is to God. Wherever the demands of secular society clearly violate this higher allegiance, the Christian will act outside the law. This, of course, must not be done in a cavalier fashion. (R. Mounce) Paul was not attempting in Romans 13:1-7 to write out a manifesto for Church-State relations for the next two or three millennia; his concern was pastoral and local. Pastorally concerned, Paul was advising against anti-Roman and Palestinian nationalist sentiments among the Jewish Christians in Rome. They were to submit to the governing authority (the Roman Empire) because its authority was derived from God. (M. Neufeld) If we forsake God, we are at the mercy of our governors. (J. Boice)

This passage sanctions the use of the sword, or punishment by death, with respect to the transgressors of the fundamental laws of society. The sword is put for punishment by death of any kind. This refutes the opinion of those who think that it is sinful, nay, that it is murder, to put criminals to death. God here sanctions the practice. And if it is right in the civil magistrate to punish with death the violators of the fundamental laws of society, it is right in Christians to countenance and co-operate with the magistrate in effecting such punishments. God has put the sword into the magistrate's hand, and has armed him with legal authority. To suffer crime, therefore, to pass unpunished, is a dereliction of duty in the magistrate. Instead of being a duty, it is a sin to neglect avenging the laws when they are transgressed. The magistrate is here called a revenger, and is said to execute wrath. (R. Haldane) One possible response to Paul's counsel in Romans 13:1-7 in 1994 is to affirm that, although all governing authorities have been instituted by God, they have been tainted with human sin, and as such do not always conform to the rule of God. Clearly, Hitler's regime, which produced massive death and destruction, was not an authority in God's service (13:5). If a government or authority ceases to be a force for good and order, but instead becomes an instrument of evil and death, it is no longer a Christian's duty to submit and obey that authority (cf. Acts 5:29). (M. Neufeld)

The sword can be wielded to execute punishment that falls short of death. But to exclude the right of the death penalty when the nature of the crime calls for such is totally contrary to that which the sword signifies and executes. The sword is so frequently associated with death as the instrument of execution (Matt. 26:52 and others), that to exclude its use for this purpose in this instance would be so arbitrary as to bear upon its face prejudice contrary to the evidence. We can see today how divergent from biblical teaching is the sentimentality that substitutes the interests of the offender for the

satisfaction of justice as the basis of criminal retribution. (J. Murray) The apostle in this passage expressly vindicates the right of capital punishment as divinely entrusted to the magistrate. (W.R. Nicoll) Obedience to God, concern for the unity of the Church, and love for other people—the concerns that led Paul to direct the Christians in Rome to submit to imperial rulers—take precedence over being subject to governing authorities. (M. Neufeld)

Human good, which has no standing in God’s plan, must not be confused with morality. Human good is evil disguised as goodness produced by a believer under the control of the sin nature and residing in the cosmic system. It is human good to sympathize with criminals and release them into society, to shirk military service as a conscientious objector, to perpetrate Christian activism – adopting an “end justifies the means” philosophy and trying to solve spiritual problems with legislated solutions. Motivated by crusader arrogance, believers replace spiritual solutions with dubious human solutions. Such attempts to whitewash the devil’s world destroy freedom, are contrary to the will and plan of God, and are never part of the spiritual life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Let each protester take great care to have his conscience illumined, lest he erect his individual judgment into a law of God. (S. Aldridge) The state has no God-given right to massacre its citizens. It has no right to use its power to advance evil. (J. Boice)

Political power is in the hand of God and He establishes whomsoever He wishes. Not only the good kings among the descendents of David and Solomon, but also those who were evil, derived their power from God ... All power derives from God, even the vast power wielded by Satan. There is no power, there is no authority apart from God. Acts of an alien power are by God’s permission, for reasons impossible for us to understand or even imagine, but which will be made clear in the future. (D. Barnhouse) Governmental force, *properly used*, helps *prevent* tyranny and executes justice; it brings punishment on the wrongdoer. (J. Witmer) He is the minister of God for that which is *good*. And we may not tone down the import of the term “good” in this instance ... The good the magistrate promotes is that which subserves the interests of piety ... The parallelism is noteworthy – the same dignity and investiture belong to the ruler’s penal prerogative as to his function in promoting *good*. (J. Murray)

The sword betokens the power of capital punishment: and the reference to it here is among the many testimonies borne by Scripture against the attempt to abolish the infliction of the penalty of death for crime in Christian states. (H. Alford) While “God’s servant” is an honorable title, it contains a reminder that the state is *not* God and that its function is to administer justice for Him in areas where it is competent to do so. Even as God’s servant in the civil realm can err, so the state is not to be thought of as infallible in its decisions. (F. Gaebelin) Paul does not say that “the rulers” are God’s ministers, for they may abuse the authority, may wreck the state. He calls *the authority* “God’s minister,” for he refers to its exercise which accords with God’s own arrangement. (R. Lenski)

Rom. 13:4 For (inferential conj.) he (judge, police officer, fireman) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) a civil servant (Pred. Nom.; minister) from God (Abl. Source) to you (Dat. Adv.) for your benefit (Acc. Purpose; protects the personal freedom of the pivot, thereby encapsulating our advance to maturity). But (adversative conj.) if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe you are, maybe you aren't") you are continually producing (ποιέω, PASubj.2S, Iterative, Potential) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; activity of the criminal mind), be afraid (φοβέομαι, PMImp.2S, Customary, Warning, Deponent), for (explanatory conj.) it (the judicial branch of government) does not (neg. adv.) wield (φορέω, PAI3S, Customary; carry) a two-edged sword (Acc. Dir. Obj.; delegated authority carries God's discipline in hand; the death penalty is wrapped-up in God's delegated sword) to no purpose (Adv. Manner; in vain), because (causal conj.) he (referring to a judge or magistrate) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) a civil servant (Pred. Nom.; minister) from God (Abl. Source), an avenger (Pred. Nom.; a legitimate instrument for administering punishment) of discipline (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the principle of capital punishment) upon the one (Dat. Disadv.; the criminal reversionist) who produces (πράσσω, PAPtc.DSM, Pictorial, Substantival) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; violates the rights and freedoms of law abiding citizens).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:4** θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἔαν δὲ τὸ κακὸν ποιῆς φοβοῦ· οὐ γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ· θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν ἕκδικος εἰς ὀργὴν τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι

^{VUL} **Romans 13:4** Dei enim minister est tibi in bonum si autem male feceris time non enim sine causa gladium portat Dei enim minister est vindex in iram ei qui malum agit

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:5** Therefore, you should by necessity [to avoid distress and calamity] be subordinate to the governing authorities [in Rome], not only because of the punishment [fear of reprisal], but also because of the conscience [it's the common sense thing to do].

^{KW} **Rom. 13:5** On which account there is a necessity for putting one's self in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also because of conscience,

^{KJV} **Romans 13:5** Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Since the governing authorities are presumably in place to protect your freedom, privacy, and property, we are obliged by necessity to be subordinate ourselves (Customary Present tense) to them. We should do this (Purpose Inf. With two Intended Results) not only because we are afraid of punishment, but also because our conscience tells us it is the common sense thing to do. Our self-consciousness, mentality, and norms and standards should tell us that government officials are there for our benefit and we should obey them. Our memory center, vocabulary, frame of reference, and categorical thinking according to Bible doctrine should also reinforce the idea of voluntary submission to our local civil servants. Whether it is due to avoidance of pain or adherence to the common sense application of our conscience, it does not make sense to disobey those who (hopefully) protect our freedom and privacy.

The Greek word *anagke* (necessity) is quite interesting here because it has a number of possible interpretations. Under ideal circumstances, subordinating yourself to the governing authorities is easy to do. But the idea here is that Christians were in the minority and were not living under the best of circumstances. The Roman government was becoming increasingly antagonistic toward Christians who were living in its sphere of influence. Under these circumstances, Paul was giving good advice because by not subordinating yourself to the Roman authorities they were running the risk of facing *distress* or *calamity* – two optional and legitimate translations of *anagke*. When you are outnumbered 99-to-1 it is best to keep your mouth shut and try to live peaceably under the authority of the governing entities.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In our own days, individualism is carried to such an extent that authority is often disdained and defied, even by those who are by no means the dregs of society, who make pretensions to intelligence and virtue. It is well, therefore, that the inspired teaching should be pondered which attaches importance so great to order, patriotism, and loyalty. (J. Barmby) The powers or authorities here are seen, not in their individual personalities, but as officers of the law, whose positions are ordained by God. The structure of government and the laws connected with it are appointed by God as a means of promoting law and order on earth. (K. Wuest) The necessity for Christians to submit to government is therefore no mere practical expedient, a means of avoiding punishment; it arises ultimately from insight into God's providential ordering of human history. Such submission is part of that good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God discovered by the renewed mind. (D. Moo)

A Christian should have an enlightened moral conscience because he should know the Word of God, and because he possesses the Holy Spirit to help him understand it. Regardless of whether an action is convenient, personally advantageous, or popular, the Christian ought to pursue the right course of action. This means that a Christian will stand against the state when it does wrong, regardless of the consequences. The world may say, "You'll never get ahead if you do that." But the Christian will ask not whether the position is advantageous or popular, but whether the position is itself right and will

act accordingly. Governments have often been wrong. Our own government is frequently wrong. Christians will stand against those wrong actions and for the right because of conscience. (D. Barnhouse) If Christians fail to take action against injustice, the Christians themselves become involved in sin. (W. Kroll)

It would be a hard thing indeed if God did not rule the rulers. But the Christian has nothing to fear, when he considers that every plan and proceeding of government is overruled and directed by his God. If He puts His children into the hands of men, He retains these men in His own hand, and they can injure them in nothing without His permission. Have not Christians more security for their safety in the care of their Almighty Father, than in a permission given by Him to defend themselves against the oppression of the rulers? They have peace whatever party gets into power, because they know that in everything God fulfills His purposes by them. God rules on earth, even in the councils of His enemies, as completely as He rules in heaven. When God chooses to overturn the empire or tyrants, He is at no loss for instruments. He is not obliged to employ the heirs of glory in such scenes of blood; He uses the wicked to overturn the wicked. (R. Haldane) Haldane believes in unlimited submission to authority no matter what. I do not concur with that viewpoint. (LWB)

The other way Christians should be the very best of citizens is by opposing the state verbally and by acts of noncompliance whenever the government strays from its legitimate God-given function or transgresses the moral law of God. We do this chiefly by words ... nevertheless, we are also to resist and even disobey the state when necessary. (J. Boice) This reference to conscience suggests both the spirit and limit of obedience. As the State governs in God's name, it must not do anything contrary to God's law. Hence this teaching, as Godet points out, leaves the Christian free to witness against the State if it should prove necessary. (W. Griffith Thomas) This does not mean that Christians are merely to be pliant, lying down in the face of evil and doing nothing to oppose it ... Though we do not rule the state, nor should we, it is nevertheless our duty as Christians to speak out against the civil ruler's sins and remind the governing authorities that they are ultimately accountable to Him from whom their authority comes. So we are accountable too! We are accountable to speak up. (J. Boice)

We are to be in submission to those in authority over us, not only out of fear and respect, but also out of a good conscience before God. However, we dare not blindly bow to the state if our conscience is offended by the wickedness of the state. Since the state and its magistrate are not infallible, the believer may at times have to conscientiously object to what the state requires that is in direct contradiction to the law of God. (W. Kroll) If the Jewish Christians in Rome were to agitate for the cleansing of the Holy Land from Roman/Gentile rule, a true spirit of unity in the church at Rome would be impossible. Paul, aware of this possibility, argued that as an extension of the love they have for one another, the Jewish Christians in Rome must accept the rule of the empire and not rebel or provoke another expulsion from the capital city. (M. Neufeld) The inalienable right of all subjects to endeavor to alter or improve the form of government under which they live is left untouched here. (R. Jamieson)

If biblical principles are inculcated in our children from their earliest years, they will understand that they themselves must be worthy if they are to hold church office, and they will be slow to vote for those who are not worthy. (D. Barnhouse) A Christian will stand against the state when it does wrong, regardless of the consequences. The world may say, “You’ll never get ahead if you do that.” But the Christian will ask not whether the position is advantageous or popular, but whether the position itself is right and will act accordingly. Governments have often been wrong. Our own government is frequently wrong. Christians will stand against those wrong actions and for right “because of conscience.” (J. Boice) *The Bible does not teach the doctrine of passive obedience or non-resistance.* (J. Barmby) The Christian may be subordinate, but never servile. (D. Barnhouse)

Conscience is a powerful reinforcement of the outward directions to submit to the state. But once conscience is brought in, there is a limit: what is against conscience cannot be done. The believer may have to refuse obedience on the grounds of conscience. This is what the members of the early church did (Acts 5:29). Conscience at one and the same time obliges as to be obedient and sets a limit to that obedience. (L. Morris, C. Mauer) There can then, here or elsewhere, be no question of interpreting Christian obedience in action as slavish passive obedience. Christian obedience is never blind; and indeed, open-eyed obedience, directed by conscience, must even be critical. (E. Kasemann)

Rom. 13:5 Therefore (inferential conj.), you should by necessity (Ind. Nom.; freedom, privacy, and property depend on it, to avoid distress and calamity) be subordinate to the governing authorities (ὑποτάσσω, PPInf., Customary, Purpose, Intended Result), not (neg. adv.) only (Adv.; just) because of the punishment (Causal Acc.; fear of reprisal), but (adversative conj.) also (adjunctive) because of (representing) the conscience (Causal Acc.; self-consciousness, mentality, norms and standards: memory center, vocabulary, frame of reference, categorical thinking, common sense application).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:5** διὸ ἀνάγκη ὑποτάσσεσθαι οὐ μόνον διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν

^{VUL} **Romans 13:5** ideo necessitate subditi estote non solum propter iram sed et propter conscientiam

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:6** For this reason, you should also keep paying taxes, because they are God’s delegated representatives [civil servants] who continually attend [full-time career] upon this thing [public service].

^{KW} **Rom. 13:6** For because of this you pay taxes; for God’s public servants they are, continually giving their attention to this very thing.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:6** For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Since the governing authorities are God's delegated representatives, you should continue to pay (Customary Present tense) your share of taxes for their support. Civil servants are elected officials who have chosen a career of full-time public service. For the duration of their term of office, they are continually engaged (Iterative Present tense) in this public service. Our taxes pay their salaries, maintain the office buildings they work in, and support beneficial programs. Where do legitimate taxes end and an oppressive tax burden begin? "Tithes" in the OT were not charitable donations to maintain the church; tithes were the 10% national income tax that all citizens paid, part of which maintained church officials and buildings. If the United States operated on a "fair tax" basis as subscribed by the Bible, we would have a flat 10% income tax. We are grossly overtaxed because our nation has been heading down Satan's path of socialism and the welfare state (under the banner of "peace and prosperity" without God) for the past 100 years.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

No government can be maintained without expense. National defences, public institutions, all of which have for their object the protection and well-being of all the citizens, require to be kept up. Every citizen is responsible for bearing his share in meeting expenditure for the common good. He may not approve of every item of expenditure, but that is no valid reason for refusing to contribute his share of taxation, where the representatives of the nation have decreed that the expenditure is wise and necessary. (C. Irwin) Never did a sovereign prince pervert the ends of government as Nero did, and yet to him Paul appealed, and under him had the protection of the law and the inferior magistrates more than once. Better a bad government than none at all. (M. Henry)

What about the graded income tax? Is that just? No, of course it is not just. We speak of the rich paying their "fair" share. But fairness is one thing that cannot be said of taking more taxes from those who make more money. Fairness would require that we tax everyone equally. Taxing the rich more may be expedient. It may be the only place money can be found in recessionary times or in a failing economy. But it is not just, and in the long run it hurts the national economy since accumulated capital is the only source of funding for new business projects. When the government taxes the rich excessively it mortgages the future for short-term economic gain. (D. Barnhouse)

The cruel persecution under Nero made the beginning of an alteration in the attitude of the state to the church. The cult of the Roman emperor suddenly acquired great importance, and Christians who refused to worship a man as god were branded as enemies of the state. In this changed situation the Christians were compelled to revise their judgment of the state. And Paul

leaves room for such revision. His words are to be understood of the civil authorities as he knew them, and the functions of justice which he saw them to be discharging. (C. Scott)

Rom. 13:6 For (explanatory conj.) this (Acc. Gen. Ref.) reason (causal particle), you should also (adjunctive) keep paying (τελέω, PAI2P, Customary, Iterative, Potential) taxes (Acc. Dir. Obj.; tribute, 10% flat income tax), because (causal conj.) they are (εἶμι, PAI3P, Descriptive) God's (Gen. Rel.) delegated representatives (Pred. Nom.; civil servants with delegated authority) who continually attend (προσκατερῶ, PAPtc.NPM, Iterative, Substantial; engage themselves with as a career, full-time public service) upon this (Poss. Acc.) thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.; public service).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:6** διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ φόρους τελεῖτε· λειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἰσιν εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκατεροῦντες

^{VUL} **Romans 13:6** ideo enim et tributa praestatis ministri enim Dei sunt in hoc ipsum servientes

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:7** **Render to everyone their dues [pay your bills]: taxes to whom taxes are due; import duties to whom import duties are due; respect to whom respect is due; honor to whom honor is due.**

^{KW} **Rom. 13:7** Deliver to all the debts due them: to the one collecting the tax, the tax; to the one collecting the custom, the custom; to the one to whom the fear is due, the fear; to the one to whom the honor is due, the honor.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:7** Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul teaches the principle of fulfilling your civic obligations and paying your debts by commanding (Imperative mood) believers to render to everyone what is owed to them. In order for everyone's freedom and privacy to be protected, believers must pay their share of internal taxes and import duties. They must also give respect and honor to those civil servants who handle these financial transactions. There is nothing in this verse that says you can't buy a house or car on mortgage, although the length of that mortgage should be kept under seven years if possible. What it does say by application is that you should make your mortgage payments on time and don't borrow any money that you cannot repay in a short period of time according to the terms of the agreement.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Phoros” is the tribute paid to a subject nation, while “telos” is tax for support of civil government. (A.T. Robertson) “Dues” is that which is owed, a debt. The word has in it

the idea of a moral obligation. “Custom” is an indirect tax on goods. (K. Wuest) When the state appears to be the enemy of Christians, the fact is that demonic powers have usurped the state’s authority. These are the true enemy, and their victory over the state, shown by the rise of persecution, is interpreted as a sign that the end is at hand. (C.K. Barrett)

The moral responsibility for deciding whether to pay one’s taxes to a government that one believes is in opposition to accepted moral law (or some other equally principled objection) is lifted from the shoulders of believers. The reason one is relieved of this moral responsibility is because Romans 13:7 places taxes in the same category as payment for services rendered by people who work for us in the service professions. (W. Kaiser) This word was used regularly in the papyri for a promise to pay back borrowed money. The emphasis is on the payment of a debt. (A. Deissman)

The Calvinist theory of government demands a high degree of respect for political office. Calvin himself wrote: “The first duty of subjects toward magistrates is to think most honorably of their office,” and “We must be very careful not to despise or violate that authority of magistrates, full of venerable majesty, which God has established by the weightiest decrees, even though it may reside with the most unworthy men.” In other words, honor should be given to political office even when the one who holds it is personally disreputable. This perspective, which in recent debates has been noticeably absent from American political discourse, stems from the Reformed belief that God is sovereign over the state. (J. Boice)

Rom. 13:7 **Render** (ἀποδίδωμι, AAImp.2P, Constative, Command; give, reward) **to everyone** (Dat. Adv.) **their** (Poss. Gen.) **dues** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fulfill your civic obligations, pay your debts): **taxes** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; tribute) **to whom** (Dat. Adv.) **taxes are due** (Compl. Acc.); **import duties** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; tribute) **to whom** (Dat. Adv.) **import duties are due** (Compl. Acc.); **respect** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **to whom** (Dat. Adv.) **respect is due** (Compl. Acc.); **honor** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **to whom** (Dat. Adv.) **honor is due** (Compl. Acc.).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:7** ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς τῷ τὸν φόρον τὸν φόρον τῷ τὸ τέλος τὸ τέλος τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμὴν

^{VUL} **Romans 13:7** reddite omnibus debita cui tributum tributum cui vectigal vectigal cui timorem timorem cui honorem honorem

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:8** **Owe no man anything [don’t be in debt to anyone], if not [except] to love one another of the same kind [friends]; moreover, he who loves another of a different kind [strangers] has fulfilled the law.**

^{KW} **Rom. 13:8** Stop owing even one person even one thing, except to be loving one another; for the one who is loving another, has fulfilled the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:8** Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now teaches a common sense principle of staying out of debt. He commands us to owe (Imperative mood) nobody anything at all. If it is possible, you should avoid taking on debt. Does this mean you have to live with your parents until you have saved up enough money to buy your own house with cash? It is good to avoid debt as much as possible, but that isn't the principle taught here. The second half of this verse tells us that the only debt we really want to incur is to love (Customary Present tense) our friends. Can you think of anything that would interfere with a friendship more than owing somebody money that you can't pay back? Being in debt to another person and lacking the funds to pay that person back is a major barrier to friendship. It's not a good practice to borrow money from friends, especially if you want them to remain friends.

The only thing we are to owe our friends is category 3 friendship. Friends are those who have similar likes and dislikes that we do. Strangers are those who do not share similar likes and dislikes. If we are able to have a relaxed mental attitude towards those with different likes and dislikes, we are fulfilling (Gnomic Perfect tense) the intent of the law. Others of the "same kind" are friends, those who share our thoughts and opinions. Others of a "different kind" are strangers, those who do not share our thoughts and opinions. It's easy to be relaxed around our friends; it is more difficult to be relaxed around strangers. It's easy to be relaxed around believers; it's more difficult to be relaxed around unbelievers. Around friends, we can exercise personal love; around strangers, we must exercise impersonal love. The Lord places greater emphasis on exercising impersonal love than on personal love, because the former is more difficult than the latter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Do not continue owing a person. Pay your debts. The language of the AV prohibits the Christian from contracting legal debts such as mortgages and business loans. But that is not Paul's thought here. The only thing we are allowed to owe is divine love, that love produced in the heart of the yielded saint by the Holy Spirit, a love self-sacrificial in its essence, giving of itself for the benefit of the person loved. (K. Wuest) Pay all other debts; be indebted in the matter of love alone. (Alford) Do not leave your obligations to them unfulfilled. (C.K. Barrett)

Get rid of all debts, not by denying, ignoring, or evading them, but by paying them; there is only one debt of which one can never get rid – the debt of love. (J. Knox) This command does not forbid a Christian from ever incurring a debt (e.g., to buy a house or a car); it rather demands that Christians repay any debts they do incur promptly and in

accordance with the terms of the contract. Prompt payment of debts, however, is simply a transitional point in these verses. Paul's real interest emerges in the next clause: that Christians love one another. (D. Moo) The Bible does not forbid borrowing. The point of this verse is not that Christians should never borrow, but that they should never leave their debts unpaid. (D. Barnhouse)

In accord with the analogy of Scripture this cannot be taken to mean that we may never incur financial obligations, that we may not borrow from others in case of need (Exodus 22:25, Psalm 37:26, Matthew 5:42, Luke 6:35). But it does condemn the looseness with which we contract debts and particularly the indifference so often displayed in the discharging of them. Few things bring greater reproach upon the Christian profession than the accumulation of debts and refusal to pay them. (J. Murray) "The wicked borrows, and pays not again." (Psalm 37:21)

Rom. 13:8 Owe (ὀφείλω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; be obliged to, in debt to) no man (Dat. Ind. Obj.; nobody at all) anything (Partitive Acc.; nothing), if (1st class condition, "and you do") not (neg. adv.; idiom: "except") to love (ἀγαπάω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. as Subj. of Verb, Articular, Intended Result; category 3 friendship love) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; friends who have *similar* likes and dislikes as yours); moreover (continuative conj.), he (Subj. Nom.) who loves (ἀγαπάω, PAPtc.NSM, Tential, Substantival; impersonal, virtue love, tolerance) another of a different kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; relaxed mental attitude towards those who have *different* likes and dislikes from yours) has fulfilled (πληρώω, Perf.AI3S, Gnostic, Customary Truth) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Mosaic law).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:8** Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν· ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν

^{VUL} **Romans 13:8** nemini quicquam debeatis nisi ut invicem diligatis qui enim diligit proximum legem implevit

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:9** For example [short list of criminal acts against freedom]: You shall not commit adultery, You shall not commit murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet, and if there is another of a different kind of mandate [Church Age mandate as opposed to Mosaic commandment], it is summed up in this principle: You shall love [tolerance and relaxed mental attitude] your neighbor [fellow man] as yourself [according to high standards].

^{KW} **Rom. 13:9** For this, You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and if there is any commandment of a different nature, in this word it is summed up, in this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:9** For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now provides a short list of criminal acts against freedom, as given in some of the Ten Commandments. Adultery is a crime against your spouse, murder is a crime against your life, stealing is a crime against your property, and coveting is a mental attitude sin that often leads to the adultery, murder or theft just mentioned. Paul speaks against these in the Predictive Future tense, but with negative adverbs that make it a request (Cohortative Indicative mood). The warning is directed against these four representative samples as both sins and crimes. They are contained in the Ten Commandments because when they are avoided, they protect individual freedom.

Since the age of the Mosaic Law has ended, some believers might be confused as to why Paul is quoting some of the Ten Commandments. After all, the Church Age does not operate on the same basis as the Age of Israel. In order to avoid confusion, Paul adds one over-arching mandate that will enable Church Age believers to fulfill the intent of the Mosaic Law. This mandate is to love (Imperative Future tense) your neighbor as yourself. This mandate is a way to state positively the previously mentioned negative prohibitions. Mandates are a way of applying elements of the Mosaic Law in a different dispensation. All of the prohibitions from the Age of Israel can be summed up (Aoristic Present tense) in one positive principle during the Church Age.

What does it mean to love your neighbor as you do yourself? The word “neighbor” is a reference to your fellow man. It doesn’t mean your next-door neighbor in particular, although he is included in the greater “fellow man.” Obviously none of us has met every individual on earth, so how are we to “love” those whom we’ve never met? The Greek word “agapao” means to apply the principle of tolerance and maintain a relaxed mental attitude towards those we have never met. If Paul meant we were to love our fellow man in the same capacity as we love our close family and friends, he would have used the Greek word “phileo.” Loving our fellow man means we are to exercise virtue love towards others “according to the same standards” we apply to ourselves – hopefully divine standards. This is not a command to manufacture some form of emotional or fickle self-love and transfer it to strangers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the Church Age the operative divine law is not the Mosaic Law but “the law of Christ” (I Cor. 9:20-21; Gal. 6:2). This also is called “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2), which I designate the protocol plan of God or life in the divine dynasphere. Christ fulfilled the entire Mosaic Law in the power of the Holy Spirit in the prototype

divine dynasphere. The Church Age believer obeys the new “law of Christ” by following His precedent in Rom. 8:2-4: filled with the Spirit in the operational divine dynasphere. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) How can we have high standards if we must love everyone? How can a believer have personal integrity and at the same time try to show the same love to a totally despicable stranger that he has for an admirable friend? Another honor code distinction is imperative. Personal love emphasizes the object of love; impersonal love, the subject. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The phrase “as thyself” is often taken to mean “as you love yourself,” but there is no basis in the Greek text for that interpretation. In fact, such a command could never come from God. Our attitude toward ourselves is the epitomy of instability; the absolute righteousness of God would never set up so vascillating and inconsistent a standard for our conduct. One moment you might be arrogant and full of unrealistic, inflated self-love. Are you then to live in a dream world regarding other people, too? Or the next moment, you might regret some stupid thing you have done and hate yourself for being such a thoroughgoing dunce. Are you to despise your neighbor? Of course not. That is not the intent of the passage. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

“As yourself” points to the source of your love: your own soul, the real you, the place where your own norms and standards reside. This love emphasizes the subject, the one who does the loving, instead of the object, the one who is loved. Indeed, the one who loves does not need to even know the object in any personal sort of way. This is impersonal love. You are commanded by the honor code to love all others on the basis of who *you* are, from your standards, from your integrity, not as a reaction or response to what they are. “Love your neighbor as yourself” does not set up self-love as a standard; it requires that you love others from the high standards of doctrine you have in your soul. It is therefore stable and consistent. Impersonal love demands an attitude *in you*, the absence of mental attitude sins, the relaxed mental attitude provided under the filling of the Holy Spirit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There are times when disappointment, incompatibility, or hostility characterizes the most intimate of relationships. How much more impossible would it be to cultivate personal love for the unattractive or unlovable! How, then, can you obey the biblical command to love your neighbor as yourself? You can only love all people through a mental attitude of impersonal love. Impersonal love for the entire human race does not require attraction, friendship, or even acquaintance with the object of love. This unconditional love that flows out of the integrity of the subject rather than the appeal of the object is the same love God bestows on all unbelievers. Such love is not sentimental or emotional, but virtue-dependent. When you acquire spiritual self-esteem and develop personal love for God (I John 4:21), you gain the virtue necessary to express impersonal love toward everyone in your periphery. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 13:9 For (explanatory conj.) example (Ind. Nom.; a short itemized list of criminal acts against freedom): You shall not (neg. adv.) commit adultery (μοιχεύω, FAI2S,

Predictive, Cohortative; both a sin and a crime: theft of another person's most valuable property), **You shall not** (neg. adv.) **commit murder** (φονεύω, FAI2S, Predictive, Cohortative), **You shall not** (neg. adv.) **steal** (κλέπτω, FAI2S, Predictive, Cohortative), **You shall not** (neg. adv.) **covet** (ἐπιθυμέω, FAI2S, Predictive, Cohortative; lust), **and** (continuative conj.) **if** (1st class condition, "and there is") **there** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (ellipsis, verb supplied) **another of a different kind of** (Descr. Nom.; Church Age as opposed to the Age of Israel; the regime of the Mosaic Law has ended) **mandate** (Pred. Nom.; a *positive* way to state the previously mentioned *negative* prohibitions; divine mandates are applied differently in each dispensation), **it is summed up** (ἀνακεφαλαιόω, PPI3S, Aoristic; restated, recapitulated, completed, perfected) **in this** (Dat. Ref.) **principle** (Loc. Sph.): **You shall love** (ἀγαπάω, FAI2S, Imperative, Cohortative; the principles of tolerance and a relaxed mental attitude) **your** (Gen. Rel.) **neighbor** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow man) **as** (comparative adv.) **yourself** (Compl. Acc.; according to your own standards).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:9** τὸ γὰρ Οὐ μοιχεύσεις Οὐ φονεύσεις Οὐ κλέψεις Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις καὶ εἴ τις ἕτερα ἐντολή ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ ἀνακεφαλαιούται [ἐν τῷ] Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτὸν

^{VUL} **Romans 13:9** nam non adulterabis non occides non furaberis non concupisces et si quod est aliud mandatum in hoc verbo instauratur diliges proximum tuum tamquam te ipsum

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:10** Virtue love does not produce evil towards his fellow man, therefore, the fulfillment of the law is virtue love.

^{KW} **Rom. 13:10** The aforementioned love does not work evil to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:10** Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Virtue love does not produce (Customary Present tense) evil toward his fellow man. If you are functioning with virtue love, you will harbor no ill feelings nor desire to maltreat your fellow man. You will not lower yourself to their standards, but will maintain an attitude of tolerance and peace. Again, the word "neighbor" means fellow man, particularly those in your immediate geographical location. If you are able to function with impersonal (virtue) love towards your fellow man, you will be fulfilling the intent of the law. Evil activities such as murder, adultery and theft will not even occur to you.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When Paul says this, he is not instituting a new, though simplified, legalism. He does not say that man is justified by fulfilling the law through love; rather he is pointing out the ethical expression of the true meaning of the law, which, when rightly understood, itself points to the way of faith, which expresses itself in love. (C.K. Barrett) God encourages the Christian to think and apply the basic truths of divine establishment according to the legitimate processes of human government in his own nation. An astute political leader in the Church Age who wishes his nation to prosper can learn much from the Mosaic Law without blindly superimposing its exact provisions where they may not apply. Instead, he will adapt establishment principles to the circumstances, objectives, and heritage of his own country. The law of love, therefore, is an establishment principle initially announced by Christ and is executed by believers in the power of the Holy Spirit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 13:10 virtue love (Subj. Nom.) does not (neg. adv.) produce (ἐργάζομαι, PMI3S, Customary, Deponent; works, renders) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; ill feelings, maltreatment: lowering yourself to their standards) towards his (Dat. Rel.) fellow man (Dat. Disadv.; those in your periphery, neighbor), therefore (inferential conj.), the fulfillment (Subj. Nom.; completion) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) virtue love (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:10** ἡ ἀγάπη τῷ πλησίον κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται· πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη

^{VUL} **Romans 13:10** dilectio proximo malum non operatur plenitudo ergo legis est dilectio

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:11** Also, you must have a systematic understanding of this dispensation [the Church Age], that the hour has arrived for you to be roused [reversion recovery] out of thoughtless indolence [spiritual lethargy], for at this present time [during the Church Age], salvation [glorification salvation] is nearer for us than when we came to believe [justification salvation].

^{KW} **Rom. 13:11** And this, knowing the strategic season, that it is an hour now for you to awake out of sleep, for now our salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:11** And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says we must also have a systematic understanding (Intensive Perfect tense) of the dispensation of the Church Age in which we live. Why is it so important that we have a scientific and detailed understanding of dispensations? In this case, it is because the time has arrived for all believers to be recover (Constative Aorist tense) from reversionism.

Reversionism is a state of spiritual apathy and ignorance, where the believer daydreams his life away. This pathetic state of being has also been described as the sleep of carelessness, and a form of lethargy in which the believer is bored to tears with Bible doctrine. This tragic state of affairs is true of about 95% of believers in America today.

Why is this state of spiritual lethargy so pathetic? Besides the fact that God has a plan for born-again believers that involves the maximum intake, metabolism, and application of Bible doctrine, time is running out for the Church Age believer. We are nearing the end of this age, which means the opportunity to grow to spiritual maturity and receive future rewards is almost over. Glorification salvation is close at hand. Our eschatological salvation, which is sharing in the future millennial reign of Christ, is dependent upon our sanctification salvation in the present. If we don't redeem our time in the Word now, there will be no future reign for us; we will be sitting on the sidelines throughout eternity.

How close is the end of this age? Paul doesn't set times and dates, but he does say that it is closer than at the time when we first believed (Ingressive Aorist tense) in Jesus Christ. That point-in-time decision is often called justification salvation. Immediately after justification salvation, our number one priority in life is to grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. That process of growth in which we are supposed to live is called sanctification salvation. Our success or failure to live a sanctified life by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine determines what we will do in eternity. Since the time is short, Paul says we should wake-up from our spiritual sleep (Latin: somnia) and get cracking!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Those who are not concerned about their Christian life, nor watch with fear of the Lord, begin, but do not progress; they put their hand to the plow, yet look back. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. With their body they leave Egypt, but in their hearts they return to it. Secure and without the fear of God, they go their way, without feeling, without reverence, but hardened. (M. Luther) He who does not hurry to repent without ceasing, declares in reality that he does not need repentance. (Bernard) To sleep in this sense means to disregard and despise the blessings that are eternal. Over against these, such sleepers are very indifferent, because they are held captive by the temporal gifts which, wide awake, they see with great greed. What is night for the former (the believer) is day for the latter (the unbeliever). What the former regards as an awakening, the latter looks upon as sleep, and vice versa. (M. Luther)

There are not three different salvations, but three distinct phases or stages of salvation: salvation as an accomplished fact, as a present process, and as a future prospect. This one is placed in the future. (A.W. Pink), but is dependent on our spiritual growth in the current age. Salvation could be translated "our deliverance," referring to the rapture which is imminent and our falling short of maturity. The unknown time remaining on earth should be motivation for our studying Scripture with greater intensity. (LWB) Salvation, here intended, is the consummation of the work of Christ in their deliverance from this present evil world. (C. Hodge) Christians are addressed as those who know the seasons, who discern the signs of the times, who regard the

present as a period of probation, of discipline, of education, and whose gaze is ever forwards, whose hope is in their Lord's return to judge and to save. (J. Barmby)

I read the newspapers to see how God is governing the world. It is well for us to know what are the current beliefs and motives of our fellow-men. (C. Spurgeon) "Sleep" here refers to a lethargic, non-aggressive, lazy Christian life. Salvation is in three tenses: past, justification, the removal of the guilt and penalty of sin from the believing sinner and the bestowal of righteousness, Christ Jesus Himself, this occurring at the moment of believing; present, sanctification, the continuous process by which the Holy Spirit puts sin out of our lives, produces His own fruit, gradually conforming us to the image of our Lord; and future, glorification, the transformation of our bodies at the rapture into perfect bodies of a new nature. It is of the last that Paul is speaking. (K. Wuest) The salvation here spoken of lies in the future; it is yet to be inherited, that is to say, it is that eschatological salvation which in Paul's words is "nearer to us than when we first believed." The salvation to which he refers is the future reign of David's greater Son, the Messiah, and of our participation with Him in the final destiny of man, to rule over the works of God's hands. (J. Dillow)

The conviction that our civilization is moving toward the goal of God's purpose helps to set our life in the light of eternal values. Our experience is more than a series of casual episodes unrelated to any significant end. Eschatology declares, among other things, that God will finally bring all of history to that conclusion which He has designed; as a consequence, we find our lives lifted out of the region of the accidental and the contingent. Eschatology means that ultimate justice becomes our absolute standard. We may not know how to apply it in daily experience, but it proves to be a bracing and invigorating force ... A drugged and heavy-headed unawareness of developments around us can have no part in the Christian's attitude to life. An inert, listless indifference to what is happening and what will soon take place is inappropriate at any time, but especially so in days when critical events are on the threshold. (J. Knox)

Rom. 13:11 Also (adjunctive), you must have a systematic understanding of (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NPM, Intensive, Imperativ; scientific and detailed) this (Acc. Spec.; period of time) dispensation (Acc. Time; season, the Church Age), that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) the hour (Subj. Nom.; time) has arrived (Temp. Adv. with verbal ellipsis; "is now", current, present) for you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be roused (ἐγείρω, APInf., Constative, Intended Result; awakened, reversion recovery) out of thoughtless indolence (Abl. Separation; the sleep of carelessness, daydreaming your life away, apathy, ignorance, apostasy, reversionism, spiritual lethargy: bored and yawns at Bible doctrine), for (inferential conj.) at this present time (Temp. Adv.; now, during the dispensation of the Church Age), salvation (Subj. Nom.; eschatological salvation: sharing in the future millennial reign of Christ, which is dependent upon our sanctification salvation in the present) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) nearer (Adv. Time; close at hand) for us (Gen.

Adv.) **than** (comparative particle) **when** (Temp. Adv.) **we came to believe** (πιστεύω, AAI1P, Ingressive; point in time, not a process: justification salvation).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:11** Καὶ τοῦτο εἰδότες τὸν καιρὸν ὅτι ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθῆναι νῦν γὰρ ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἢ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν

^{VUL} **Romans 13:11** et hoc scientes tempus quia hora est iam nos de somno surgere nunc enim propior est nostra salus quam cum credidimus

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:12** **The night [spiritual darkness; life on earth] has advanced, furthermore, the day [spiritual light; death or the rapture] is approaching. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness [production from the cosmic system], then clothe ourselves with the armor [Bible doctrine] of light [production from the filling of the Spirit].**

^{KW} **Rom. 13:12** The night has long been on its way, and the day has arrived. Therefore, let us at once and once for all put off the works of the darkness, and let us at once and once for all clothe ourselves with the weapons of the light.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:12** The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The night has advanced (Constative Aorist tense). Night is a metaphor for spiritual darkness, the emblem of sin, sorrow, and unhappiness. It is also used here to represent the end of the Church Age, or life on earth as we know it. Furthermore, the day is approaching (Dramatic Perfect tense). Day is a metaphor for spiritual light, the emblem of knowledge, purity, and happiness. It is used here to represent death or the rapture. Knowing these things, we are to cast off (Ingressive Aorist tense) the works of darkness. The works of darkness are production from the cosmic system, panaceas that are presented as “solutions” to the problems of the world. Some of these satanic panaceas are liberal do-goodism, environmentalism, utopian socialism, and welfare statism.

Once we cast off these cosmic panaceas from our thinking, what are we to replace them with? We are to clothe ourselves (Ingressive Aorist tense) with the armor of light. Armor is a metaphor for problem-solving devices as worn by the mature believer who is saturated with Bible doctrine. The armor of light is production from the sphere of divine power, and the time for the intake, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine is growing short. The use of the Hortatory Subjunctive mood points to a request from Paul to grow according to divine protocol, a request in our best interests. Clothing ourselves with the armor of light is accomplished by the filling of the Spirit and the utilization of Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The conception is introduced of Christians being as soldiers on the watch during the watches of the night, awaiting daybreak, equipped with arms of heavenly proof, careful not to sleep on their post, or to allow themselves in revelry or any deeds of shame, such as are done in the night under the cover of darkness. (J. Barmby) When human life lacks a goal it becomes inconsequential, and all its serious issues are subject to postponement. The sense of a divinely appointed end introduces an element of urgency which delivers us from aimless drifting. In a much simpler setting Jesus emphasized the need of settling important matters while time permitted and the opportunity was still present (Matt. 5:25). If we procrastinated the opportunity might pass, and it would be too late to set things right. (J. Knox)

Paul builds on the imminence of Christ's return, using the imagery of changing clothes: "putting off" one set in order to "put on" another. NT writers adopt it as a vivid way of picturing the change of values that accompanies conversion to Christ. Christians are to put off their night clothes and put on their day clothes. (D. Moo) The mind of Christ, or Bible doctrine in the soul, is the material the Spirit uses to manufacture the virtues of Christ in our lives. Doctrine is the nutrient that the Holy Spirit uses to produce the fruit of the Spirit. This is what is meant by "clothing ourselves with the armor of light." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Ignorance of God is what he calls "night," for all those who are thus ignorant go astray and sleep as people do in the night. By light he means the revelation of divine truth, by which Christ the sun or righteousness arises on us. He mentions awake, by which he intimates that we are to be equipped and prepared to undertake the services which the Lord requires from us. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 13:12 The night (Subj. Nom.; evening, 'rest from work', spiritual darkness: the emblem of sin, sorrow, unhappiness; end of the Church Age, life on this earth) has advanced (προκόπτω, AAI3S, Constative; progressed, prospered), furthermore (transitional conj.), the day (Subj. Nom.; morning, spiritual light: the emblem of knowledge, purity, happiness; death or the rapture) is approaching (ἐγγίζω, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic). Therefore (Inferential conj.), let us cast off (ἀποτίθημι, AMSubj.1P, Ingressive, Hortatory; rid oneself of) the works (Acc. Dir. Obj.; inconsequential things) of darkness (Descr. Gen.; production from the cosmic system, cosmic panaceas to 'solve' the problems of the world: liberal do-goodism, environmentalism, utopian socialism, welfare statism, etc.), then (continuative conj.) clothe ourselves with (ἐνδύω, AMSubj.1P, Ingressive, Hortatory; put on, wear) the armor (Acc. Dir. Obj.; problem-solving devices, worn by the mature believer who is saturated with Bible doctrine) of light (Descr. Gen.; production from the divine dynasphere, the time to take in Bible doctrine is growing short).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:12** ἡ νύξ προέκοψεν ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἤγγικεν ἀποθώμεθα οὖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκότους ἐνδυσώμεθα [δὲ] τὰ ὄπλα τοῦ φωτός

^{VUL} **Romans 13:12** nox praecessit dies autem adpropiauit abiciamus ergo opera tenebrarum et induamur arma lucis

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:13** Let us walk honorably [according to the royal family honor code] in the light of eternity, not in wild behavior [emotional revolt] or unrestrained revelry [drinking bouts], nor in illicit sexual activity or licentiousness [unacceptable flirtation], nor in quarreling or envy,

^{KW} **Rom. 13:13** In the same manner as in the day let us order our behavior in a seemly fashion, not in carousals and drunkenness, not in sexual intercourse and a dissolute abandon, not in strife and jealousy.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:13** Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In light of these things, Paul concludes (Culminative Aorist tense) that we should conduct our Christian life on earth according to the royal family honor code. Our Christian walk should be lived in the light of eternity, not in wild behavior. The Greek word for wild behavior points to emotional instability, inconstancy, and stormy confusion. Many believers who fall into this emotional trap waste or pine away day-after-day, living in a perpetual pity party, an emotional orgy. Neither should our Christian life center around excessive drinking and dissipation (Latin: inebriation).

Nor should our Christian walk be lived in illicit sexual activity or unacceptable sensuous conduct, such as flirtation and other forms of debauchery. So far, Paul has listed four types of degenerate behavior. He adds quarreling and envy to the list, so those with an ascetic trend won't be left out. Strife, discord, contention, jealousy, rivalry, and inordinate ambition are also sins that destroy the Christian life. Paul contrasts six prohibitions with one entreaty; living the Christian way of life is much simpler than living in Satan's cosmic system.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Rioting” is a revel, a carousal, a nocturnal and riotous procession of half-drunken and frolicsome fellows, who after supper, parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before the houses of their male and female friends; hence used generally of feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry. “Chambering” is sexual intercourse. “Wantonness” is unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, shamelessness, and insolence. (K. Wuest)

The conduct of darkness is described as orgies, drunken bouts, sexual immorality and debauchery. Along with the more socially repugnant acts of drunkenness and debauchery, we find, rather unexpectedly, quarreling and jealousy. These too are acts of darkness. Unfortunately, the church is considerably more tolerant toward such sins. Paul placed them together as deeds of darkness. (R. Mounce)

Rom. 13:13 Let us walk (περιπατέω, AASubj.1P, Culminative, Hortatory; order our lives, conduct ourselves) honorably (Compl. Adv.; decently, honestly, properly, becomingly, according to RFHC principles) as (comparative adv.) in the light of eternity (Loc. Time; daytime), not (neg. adv.) in wild behavior (Loc. Sph.; inconstancy, stormy confusion, wasting or pining away, pity party, emotional orgy) or (connective conj.) unrestrained revelry (Loc. Sph.; drunkenness, dissipation, drinking bouts), nor (neg. adv.) in illicit sexual activity (Loc. Sph.; fornication) or (connective conj.) licentiousness (Loc. Sph.; debauchery, unacceptable sensuous conduct, flirtation), nor (neg. adv.) in quarreling (Loc. Sph.; strife, discord, contention) or (connective conj.) envy (Loc. Sph.; jealousy, rivalry, inappropriate competitiveness),

^{WHO} **Romans 13:13** ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ εὐσχημόνως περιπατήσωμεν μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 13:13** sicut in die honeste ambulemus non in comesationibus et ebrietatibus non in cubilibus et in pudicitias non in contentione et aemulatione

^{LWB} **Rom. 13:14** **But instead, clothe [empower] yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop making provision for the flesh [old sin nature] because of lust.**

^{KW} **Rom. 13:14** But clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and stop making provision for the sinful nature with a view to a passionate craving.

^{KJV} **Romans 13:14** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Instead of engaging in the sins Paul itemized, he commands us (Imperative mood) to clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. We can begin doing this as soon as we stop making provision (Imperative of Prohibition) for the flesh. Making provision for the flesh is allowing the old sin nature to take control of your life. There are many ways for the old sin nature to take control, but in this example, lust of the flesh initiates the takeover. The believer who allows lust to take control of his life eventually sinks into idleness,

deteriorates into laziness, and becomes an apathetic casualty in the Christian life. He ceases to live according to the royal family honor code and becomes an evangelist for Satan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In any case he is trying to describe the amazing paradox that by losing ourselves in Christ we completely discover our own personal life. (J. Knox) Now to “put on Christ,” means here to be on every side fortified by the power of His Spirit, and be thereby prepared to discharge all the duties of holiness; for thus is the image of God renewed in us, which is the only true ornament of the soul. (J. Calvin)

The Holy Spirit reproduces in us the virtues of Christ when we advance in the divine dynasphere, God’s divine power system. We are commanded to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” to have “Christ formed in us,” and to have “Christ at home in our hearts.” The plan of God for the Church Age believer is a supernatural plan that demands a supernatural means of execution. The finite power of God, therefore, goes silently into effect in our lives when we follow the mandates of His protocol plan. This system of divine power, available only to the Church, can handle any difficulty in our lives and will glorify Christ as in no other dispensation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 13:14 But instead (adversative conj.), clothe yourself (ἐνδύω, AMImp.2P, Culminative, Command; empower yourself) with the Lord (Compl. Acc.) Jesus Christ (Adv. Acc.), and (continuative conj.) stop (neg. adv.) making (ποιέω, PMImp.2P, Pictorial, Prohibition; produce, manufacture) provision (Acc. Dir. Obj.; forethought) for the flesh (Obj. Gen.; function of the old sin nature) because of lust (Causal Acc.; sink into idleness, deteriorate into laziness, to become apathetic, to be a casualty).

^{WHO} **Romans 13:14** ἀλλὰ ἐνδύσασθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιήσθε εἰς ἐπιθυμίας

^{VUL} **Romans 13:14** sed induite Dominum Iesum Christum et carnis curam ne feceritis in desideriiis

CHAPTER 14

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:1** Moreover, accept [in one’s circle of acquaintances] the person [ignorant reversionist] who is weak in doctrine [deficient due to arrogance and lack of motivation] without the intent of quarreling about opinions [avoid theological debates].

κω **Rom. 14:1** Now, to the one who is weak with respect to his faith, be giving a cordial welcome, not with a view to a critical analysis of his inward reasonings.

κJV **Romans 14:1** Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now commands us (Imperative mood) to accept the reversionistic believer into our circle of acquaintances (Customary Present tense). This arrogant, unmotivated believer is weak in Bible doctrine (Descriptive Present tense) due to an inconsistent Christian life. Doctrine is not his number one priority in life, so he is sorely lacking in spiritual knowledge. However, it does the reversionist good to cross paths with a mature believer once in awhile, to remind him of his failure to live the protocol plan of God. The mature believer is not commanded to become personal friends with the reversionist, but he is told to accept him with a relaxed mental attitude. The mature believer is also told to avoid quarreling with the reversionist.

It is the natural tendency of a mature believer to want to “straighten out” the ignorant, misinformed believer. It is also the tendency of the reversionist to argue about any and every doctrine. Reversionists are not truly interested in learning the Word of God; they are only interested in arguing for their pet theories, one at a time, in rapid succession. Most of these so-called “theological discussions,” whichever side starts them, are disputes or debates that are usually unrelated to Bible doctrine. The tendency of the reversionist is to discuss some form of legalism, because the reversionist likes to pick a few things they think they are doing right (Latin: cogitations) to justify their sinful attitude towards the Word and the true Christian life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Two cases of malfunction: (a) the mature believer is being arrogant about the non-essentials, therefore is without flexibility, (b) the weak believer is rejecting his equal opportunity to learn doctrine and to be corrected by it, rather than being bullied by a fellow believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The strong brother is not called upon to settle all the scruples of the weak brother. But each takes it on himself to do it. (A.T. Robertson) The weak judge the strong for what they believe to be illicit uses of freedom; the strong despise the weak for their lack of freedom. Each side judges the other from its own conscience in an attempt to compel the other to its opinion. Thus a great pitfall imperils the unity of Christ’s body. Paul exhorts his readers not to judge fellow Christians on points, which from God’s perspective, are not of ultimate importance. (J. Edwards)

Disputation seldom begets unanimity. If a statement of the will of Christ from the Scriptures has not the effect of producing conviction, lengthened discussions are more likely to increase prejudice than to resolve doubts. While, therefore, it is greatly important that believers, who have inadequate views of any part of Divine truth, should be taught more fully the way of the Lord, it is also true that the most likely way to effect this is to avoid disputations with them on the points in which they are weak. This observation is founded on experience, and it is warranted by the command of God. To push them forward faster than they are taught by the Word and Spirit of

God, will stumble and injure instead of making them strong. Christians seldom argue one another into their views, and more frequently each is more confirmed in his own opinion. (R. Haldane)

A Christian's "faith" in many respects might be weak, immature and uninstructed; but he must be welcomed warmly as a Christian and not challenged forthwith to a debate about those areas of life in which he is still unemancipated. Some (again like Paul) made no distinction between more or less sacred days, regarding every day as "holy to the Lord." Others felt that some days were holier than others. What is to be done when Christians of such different convictions find themselves in the same fellowship? Must they start to thrash the matter out, one side determined to convert the other? No, says Paul; let each one be satisfied in his own mind and conscience. (F.F. Bruce) Christians are always dumping on one another. Instead of getting on with living their own lives as best they can to the glory of God or, which is also necessary, living so as to win nonbelievers to Christ, they are wasting their time trying to find fault with one another. They do not trust what God is doing in the other Christian. (J. Boice)

The weak brethren were persons who thought it was their duty to abstain from animal food, and perhaps also from wine, and there is allusion also to observance of certain days. The natural inference is that he would not have mentioned wine had there not been some who made it a point of conscience to abstain from it. If the weak brethren were ascetics, it is most probable that they were Jewish Christians who had imbibed the principles of the Essenes. (J. Barmby). Fellowship among God's saints should not be based on knowledge or ignorance. God receives us even when we are feeble in faith. We should not cut from our fellowship one who does not follow all our deductions from the Scriptures. Neither should we make light of his scruples. (A.E. Knoch) Contentious questions dissipate energies better conserved for more constructive purposes. They distract the mind from matters which really require attention. (J. Knox)

Weak in faith does not mean lack of faith, but rather, as the following examples show, a lack of knowledge (1 Cor. 8:10). The weak, who have not yet thought through the full implications of the faith, attempt to impose their doubts on the strong to prevent them from a full exercise of the Christian liberty that their faith allows them. The strong are enjoined to welcome the weak not for purposes of settling accounts with them or of trying to show them the folly of their beliefs. They are charged to accept them genuinely for what they are, as fellow Christians. (J. Edwards) There are always brethren in every church who entertain imperfect conceptions of Christian truth combined usually with a certain doggedness for their defective creed. These are not to be browbeaten. On the other hand such troublesome brethren must not criticize the rest, advance their views as standards and demand uniformity. Evidently the apostle was familiar with this type of mind, as such men were found in other churches under his inspection. (R.P. Martin)

Natural instinct prompts the weak to supplement what God offers with what he himself can do, and particularly to make certain, by the scrupulous fulfillment of specific regulations, that he will find grace and favor with God. It therefore becomes apparent the the man of weak faith is moving toward – or has scarcely escaped from – that position which Paul has so vigorously attacked in the earlier part of Romans. He is only restoring merit as a condition of salvation and opening the door to all uncharitableness toward his neighbor. Though Paul clearly considers that

those who set great store by special rules have made limited progress in the Christian life, he is convinced that they have a real place in the Christian community. (J. Knox) The weakness referred to is weakness of any kind, and will apply to anything in which it is discovered. (R. Haldane) The strong who had internalized Bible doctrine were to receive the weak, those who did not fully rest in the grace of God. But they were not to argue with them over secondary points of difference. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 14:1 Moreover (transitional conj.), accept (προσλαμβάνω, PMImp.2P, Customary, Command, Deponent; accept in one's society or circle of acquaintances) the person (Acc. Dir. Obj.; ignorant reversionist, not a new believer in this case) who is weak (ἀσθενέω, PAPtc.ASM, Descriptive, Substantival; inconsistency in their Christian life due to lack of knowledge, deficient in Bible doctrine due to arrogance) in doctrine (Loc. Sph.) without (adversative conj.) the intent of quarreling (Acc. Purpose; discussing different views simultaneously) about opinions (Adv. Gen. Ref.; discussing different views one at a time; theological disputes, arguments, debates, legalistic taboos unrelated to Bible doctrine).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:1** Τὸν δὲ ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει προσλαμβάνεσθε μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:1** infirmum autem in fide adsumite non in disceptationibus cogitationum

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:2** On the one hand, the person [mature believer] who has doctrine [is strong in the faith] may as a result eat all things [absence of legalism], but on the other hand, the person [immature believer] because of weakness [lacks doctrine in the soul] makes it a practice to eat vegetables [presence of legalism].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:2** One, on the one hand, has confidence that he may eat all things; but the one, on the other hand, who is weak, constantly eats vegetables.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:2** For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the classic Greek “men ... de” to contrast a mature believer with an immature believer. The mature believer has a maximum quantity of Bible doctrine in the soul (Descriptive Present tense), while the immature believer has a serious lack of doctrine in the soul. The mature believer lives by divine viewpoint because of ample doctrine, the immature believer lives by human viewpoint due to lack of doctrine in the soul. The mature believer is strong in the faith, the immature believer is weak in the faith. “Eating” has a double meaning in this verse; it refers primarily to the daily intake and metabolism

of Bible doctrine (Iterative Present tense) and secondarily to the daily intake and metabolism of food, such as meat and vegetables.

The difference between the strong and the weak, the mature and the immature, is the reservoir of doctrine in the soul available for application. The immature believer often has strong opinions on a variety of topics, but those opinions lack the underlying foundation of advanced knowledge and are spiritually powerless. Without doctrine in the soul and an understanding of how to apply it to life, a believer is weak (Descriptive Present tense) in the faith. Those believers who have an abundance of doctrine in the soul understand that it isn't food that makes a person mature or immature; that was the position of certain legalists in Paul's day. The issue is Bible doctrine, not food. "Meat" points to the absence of legalism; "vegetables" points to the presence of legalism.

This is not primarily a verse on meat-eating versus vegetarianism; a mature believer can eat anything he wants. Paul contrasts the two because at that time, there were individuals who claimed vegetarians were more spiritual than meat-eaters. Paul says exactly the opposite: those with Bible doctrine in the soul are meat-eaters and are spiritually mature; those without Bible doctrine in the soul are vegetarians and are spiritually immature. There is an element of degree present, in that advanced Bible doctrine is called "meat" in other Scriptures. The issue is not what kind of food you eat, but the presence of Bible doctrine and the absence of legalism.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The mature believer should be inflexible when it comes to doctrine (essential, black and white) and flexible when it comes to application (non-essential, grey areas). The weak believer is flexible when it comes to doctrine (malfunction, treats it as a grey area) and inflexible when it comes to application (malfunction, black and white). (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul has in mind a party of vegetarians in Rome. (Denney) It must be kept in mind that the vegetarians refusal to eat meat and his limiting himself to a vegetarian diet was for religious, not dietary reasons, and that these, in the estimation of Paul were scruples, the product of an inadequate understanding of God's Word and an over-sensitized conscience which was of course relatively unenlightened. (K. Wuest)

The apostle decides that neither flesh-eater nor herb-eater must despise the other. If each is animated by a regard to God's glory and to Christ's kingdom, each deserves respect and esteem. Also, the observance of sacred days has usually been an outward mark of the religious. Of the primitive Christians some regarded and others disregarded such days. The apostle blamed neither party; if they did what they did conscientiously, and unto the Lord, this was enough. It is not in such observances that true religion exists, but in the spirit that governs actions, and the intention with which they are undertaken. (J. Barmby) When a Christian thinks another at fault in a practice not covered clearly by the moral traditions passed on to the church by the apostles, he must stifle his impulse to interfere and be tolerant. (R.P. Martin)

Paul does not debate the prior issue whether or not the weak man is right. He assumes that he is wrong because his restrictive practices reflect an imperfect grasp of what the gospel is and does. The weak believer is preoccupied with matters which are actually indifferent, but magnifies them till they assume the proportions of really important religious issues. Christian tolerance, though it must be patient, does not need to be blind. We might note with profit that as a rule we are dangerously oblivious to the need of cultivating a sense of where to draw the line between what is important and what is not. (J. Knox) Many, especially in Jerusalem and vicinity, but also in Rome and probably elsewhere, held fast to their traditions. Now as long as no saving significance or merit of any kind was ascribed to the perpetuation of such rules and regulations, and no offense was given, such persistence in clinging to the old could be tolerated. The adherents must be treated with love and patience. (W. Hendriksen)

Every individual carries within him a set of convictions born of past experience and the influence of other personalities upon his own. He is apt to consider his opinions sacrosanct and rationalize principles out of them. A desire for self-justification may prompt him to regard with scorn those who do not conform to his views, and write them off as unreasonable and intolerable. Even a group of individuals with similar backgrounds and interests is liable to be broken up by this kind of reaction. (R.P.Martin) In mixed communities problems immediately presented themselves. Customs, Gentile versus Jewish, were bound to clash. The fact that the law of ordinances had been nailed to the cross, and along with it all man-made regulations, had also become logically extinct, had not become clear to every believer in Christ. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 14:2 On the one hand (concessive clause, correlative affirmative particle), the person (Subj. Nom.; mature believer) who has doctrine (πιστεύω, PAI3S, Descriptive; believes on good evidence, lives by divine viewpoint: *who is strong in the faith*) may as a result eat (ἐσθίω, AAInf., Iterative, Result) all things (Compl. Acc.; Mark 7:19, all categories of meat are clean), but on the other hand (adversative particle), the person (Subj. Nom.; immature believer with strong opinions, full of self-importance, empty of doctrine) because of weakness (ἀσθενέω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Causal; lives by human viewpoint: lacks advanced knowledge and is spiritually powerless) makes it a practice to eat (ἐσθίω, PAI3S, Iterative) vegetables (Noncompl. Acc.; edible garden herbs).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:2** ὃς μὲν πιστεύει φαγεῖν πάντα ὁ δὲ ἀσθενῶν λάχανα ἐσθίει

^{VUL} **Romans 14:2** alius enim credit manducare omnia qui autem infirmus est holus manducat

LWB Rom. 14:3 **The person [mature believer] who eats everything must not treat with contempt the person [immature believer] who does not eat [vegetarian]; furthermore, the person who does not eat [vegetarian] must not judge the person [mature believer] who eats everything, for God accepts him [receives the meat-eater in fellowship].**

^{KW} **Rom. 14:3** The one who eats, let him not be treating with contempt the one who does not eat; and the one who does not eat, let him not be criticizing the one who eats, for God received him.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:3** Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues the contrast between the mature believer who eats everything (Customary Present tense) with the immature believer who does not eat everything, i.e., the vegetarian. Both are prohibited (Imperative mood) from treating the other with disdain out of arrogance. It is a tendency for the mature believer to look down on the immature believer, treating him with contempt out of pride and arrogance. For instance, the mature believer points to the immature believer and says, “He doesn’t understand anything about the Word of God.” The same thing occurred in Paul’s day when the mature believer who ate meat considered the immature vegetarian to be weak; this position, however, pointed to an inflexibility in the mature believer.

On the other hand, it is a tendency for the immature believer to criticize the mature believer out of pseudo-spiritual arrogance. For instance, the immature believer points to the mature believer and says, “All he cares about is Bible doctrine.” The immature believer is also operating out of arrogance and is inflexible due to an ignorance of Bible doctrine and what it does to the soul. The immature believer substitutes some form or system of legalism for legitimate spiritual growth through Bible doctrine. The mature believer has the truth (Bible doctrine in the soul), but misapplies it toward the immature believer in arrogance. The immature believer has no truth (ignorance of Bible doctrine), and mis-applies his human viewpoint in pseudo-spiritual arrogance.

Again, Bible doctrine in the soul and its correct application is the central theme of this verse. The form of legalism that hinges on whether one can eat meat or only vegetables is secondary. In this case, both categories of believers are wrong, but the immature believer is “more wrong” because he has no Bible doctrine in the soul and doesn’t understand he lacks divine viewpoint and is exhibiting locked-in legalism. The mature believer, in spite of his mis-application of doctrine, is nevertheless accepted (Constative Aorist tense) by God in fellowship. The believer with doctrine in the soul is God’s companion and helper, and is welcomed into His close circle of friends.

The immature believer, operating with human viewpoint, is not in His close circle of friends, but is probably under divine discipline. The weak believer, if a reversionist, is actually the “enemy of God,” and in this instance, is actually judging the strong believer, who because of the Bible doctrine in his soul, is the “friend of God” (Phil. 3:18, James 4:4). Jesus is not your friend unless you have cracked the maturity barrier. If you do not have maximum Bible doctrine in the soul, you do not have the “mind of Christ.” If you do not have the “mind of Christ,” you are not His close friend. He still loves you, but you

remain outside His close circle of friends who are regularly blessed; instead, you are in the unhappy sphere of continual spanking (divine discipline) because of His love.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some Christians claim that they abstain from eating and drinking certain foods and beverages in order to please the Lord, when actually they are seeking to enhance themselves in the eyes of men and to obtain a reputation for superior piety. (D. Barnhouse). The strong are obliged to tolerate the non-essential, inconsequential, and occasionally obnoxious opinions and actions of the weak. An arrogant person might assume you are weak and might ridicule you for bending to the demands of immature believers, but there is no weakness in such flexibility. The strong believer is confident and says, "I may bend, but I will not break." He maintains a relaxed sense of humor about himself, about life, and about others. Impersonal love implements the strong believer's duty to the weak believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Censoriousness is the peculiar error of the ascetic, contemptuousness of the liberal. A distinguished minister once remarked, "The weak brother is the biggest bully in the universe." Both extremes are allied to spiritual pride. (K. Wuest) Men are justified and reconciled to God not by vegetarianism, sabbatarianism, or teetotalism, but by faith alone, or better, by God's own free electing grace, faith being man's recognition that all is dependent not upon himself but God. (C.K. Barrett) The apostle condemns both attitudes, that of contempt and that of condemnation. Though he desires that the rights of the weak shall be fully respected and that the vegetarian shall be treated with sympathetic regard and genuine deference, he is no less insistent on demanding that the weak refrain from condemning the strong. (W. Hendriksen)

The weak, arrogant believer without doctrine (being both presumptuous and blasphemous) is trying to harness the strong, mature believer who has doctrine, under a yoke of legalistic bondage. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The sharpness of this rebuke shows that Paul, with all his love and consideration for the weak, was alive to the possibility of a tyranny of the weak, and repressed it in its beginnings. (Denney) One side, the meat-eaters, despises the vegetarians, while the vegetarians criticize the meat-eaters. God took both sides into His fellowship without requiring that they be vegetarians or meat-eaters. (A.T. Robertson) It is often only after indulging in controversy that we are wise enough to recognize the damage that it does. (J. Knox)

Rom. 14:3 The person (Subj. Nom.; mature believer) who eats (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; all categories of meat) everything (Acc. Dir. Obj.) must not (neg. adv.) treat with contempt (ἐξουθενέω, PAImp.3S, Customary, Prohibition; out of spiritual arrogance, inflexible application from pride) the person (Acc. Dir. Obj.; immature believer) who does not (neg. adv.) eat (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.ASM, Descriptive, Substantival; the vegetarian); furthermore (continuative conj.), the person (Subj. Nom.; immature believer) who does not (neg. adv.) eat (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; the vegetarian) must not (neg. adv.) judge (κρίνω, PAImp.3S, Customary, Prohibition; out of a pseudo-

spiritual arrogance, inflexible application from ignorance) **the person** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; mature believer) **who eats** (ἐσθίω, PAptc.ASM, Descriptive, Substantival; all categories of meat) **everything** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **for** (explanatory conj.) **God** (Subj. Nom.) **accepts** (προσλαμβάνω, AMI3S, Constatative, Deponent; receives the meateater into His fellowship, accepts him as a companion or helper, has a place for him in His close circle of friends) **him** (Compl. Acc.).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:3** ὁ ἐσθίων τὸν μὴ ἐσθίοντα μὴ ἐξουθενείτω ὁ δὲ μὴ ἐσθίων τὸν ἐσθίοντα μὴ κρινέτω ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτὸν προσελάβετο

^{VUL} **Romans 14:3** is qui manducat non manducantem non spernat et qui non manducat manducantem non iudicet Deus enim illum adsumpsit

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:4** Who are you [weak believer] who keeps on judging another member of the same household [fellow believer]? He stands firm [advances in the spiritual life] or falls down [becomes a spiritual casualty] by means of his own Lord [Jesus Christ]. Yes, he shall be supported, for the Lord has the power to cause him to stand [He doesn't need help from a legalist].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:4** As for you, who are you who are judging another's household slave? To his own personal master he stands or falls. Indeed, he shall be made to stand, for the Lord has power to make him stand.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:4** Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks a pointed question to the weak believer who is bound up in legalism and is trying to force his legalistic lifestyle on a strong believer. He asks, "Who do you think you are (Static Present tense)?" The weak believer he is addressing is involved in continually judging (Iterative Present tense) a stronger believer by a false standard of self-righteous legalism. "Another member of the same household" means a fellow believer, in this case a strong believer who has doctrine in the soul. God has not delegated the judgment of strong believers to weak believers.

Your fellow believer either stands firm (Pictorial Present tense) or falls down (Pictorial Present tense) in the spiritual life by means of his own Lord, Jesus Christ. Your fellow believer either moves forward or backwards on his own, and he does this under the direction of Jesus Christ, not you. Your fellow believer either advances in the spiritual life under the authority of Jesus Christ, or he become a casualty in the angelic conflict by submitting to the authority of Satan. In either case, his spiritual life is his own

responsibility. The phrase “stands firm” does not mean remaining in neutral; “standing firm” implies forward momentum.

Yes, whichever way the believer goes, forwards or backwards, he shall ultimately be supported (Predictive Future tense) by the Lord. The Lord has the power to cause him to stand (Constative Aorist tense). The Lord does not need any assistance from a self-righteous, legalistic believer. This is a round-about way of saying, “Mind your own business.” In this case, the warning is addressed to a weak believer who doesn’t realize he is weak; and in spite of his spiritual weakness, he lays a superficial code of legalism on the strong believer.

The weak believer doesn’t realize that his spiritual code is based on legalism and is grossly deficient; he sees the strong believer living in a sphere of spiritual freedom and thinks he needs some rules and regulations to live by. Nothing could be worse than to replace Bible doctrine in the soul with a set of legalistic rules and regulations. Nothing could be worse than a weak believer shackling a strong believer under a legalistic code that destroys his forward momentum. There is no forward momentum of any kind under legalism; forward momentum only occurs through the intake, metabolism and application of Bible doctrine in the filling of the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The non-abstainer’s freedom does not endanger his position; for God is powerful to sustain him, and to God alone he is accountable. Zealous religionists tend to push their own views, and zealous controversialists are given to attacking the doctrines and practices of others. Men substitute human dogmas, human fancies, and human remedies for moral and social ills, for the great principle of Christianity. But we shall do well to be guided by liberty for one’s self, by consideration for one’s neighbors, and by charity with reference to the conduct of our fellow-Christians. (J. Barmby) God takes out of our hands the responsibility of chastising believers who are out of line. When we judge others, we arrogate to ourselves equality with the justice of God. Judging is God’s business, and we come into line for discipline when we try to preempt the supreme court of heaven. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Those who were strong, and knew their Christian liberty, and made use of it, despised the weak, who did not. Whereas they should have pitied them, and helped them, and afforded them meek and friendly instruction, they trampled upon them as silly, and humoursome, and superstitious, for scrupling those things which they knew to be lawful. Those who were weak, and durst not use their Christian liberty, judged and censured the strong, who did, as if they were loose Christians, carnal professors, that cared not what they did, but walked at all adventures, and stuck at nothing. They judged them as breakers of the law, contemners of God’s ordinance, and the like. (M. Henry)

When you are the victim of character assassination – slander, gossip, maligning, judging – social disaster can attain monumental proportions. Sins of the tongue are devastating,

but the Lord will protect you from malicious defamation. He will strengthen and vindicate you against the most vicious of verbal assaults. The Lord judges with intense discipline those who judge and defame. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) “Judge” explicitly denotes a self-appointed critic who intrudes on another believer’s privacy. In context, the motivation of the judge was legalism, self-righteousness, asceticism – one who sought to build personal righteousness on strict obedience to the Mosaic Law. The “son of the bondwoman” always persecutes the “son of the free woman.” In other words, the believer enslaved to legalism invariably judges the believer living under the freedom of grace. (ibid)

It was not difficult when the fellowship was met together for worship to realize the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to feel the throb of mutual affection between the brethren. But when the worship came to an end, when the brethren separated to meet again in ordinary social intercourse, personal idiosyncrasies made their appearance on one side or both, which tended to destroy the fellowship, producing discussion, discomfort, and even disunion. (C. Scott) Though forbearance is a great Christian duty, indifference to the distinction between truth and error is not thereby encouraged. (R. Jamieson)

Whatever rigid sticklers for the necessity of orthodoxy on every truth of the Bible and every point of the Christian Faith may say, nothing can be clearer from this chapter than that some points in Christianity are unessential to Christian fellowship. Those who, affecting more than ordinary zeal for the honor and truth of God, deny the validity of this distinction between essential and non-essential truths must settle the question, not with us, but with the apostle. Acceptance with God is the only proper criterion of right to Christian fellowship. Whom God receives, men cannot lawfully reject. (R. Jamieson) Here, the one involved in judging was guilty of the worst type of hypocritical legalism: meddling in the affairs of other believers, trying to control their lives, or attempting to squeeze them into his own mold of pseudo-spirituality. When a believer sets himself up as the criterion for spirituality, he is in effect playing God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 14:4 Who (Subj. Nom.) are (εἰμί, PAI2S, Static) you (Pred. Nom.; the weak believer) who keeps on judging (κρίνω, PAptc.NSM, Iterative, Substantival, Articular) another (Compl. Acc.; of the same kind: fellow Christian) member of the same household (Acc. Dir. Obj.; house slave, domestic servant, royal family of God; God has not delegated the judgment of strong believers to weak believers)? He (your fellow Christian moves either forwards or backwards, never in neutral) stands firm (στήκω, PAI3S, Pictorial; advances in the spiritual life under authority) or (contrast conj.) falls down (πίπτω, PAI3S, Pictorial; becomes a casualty in the angelic conflict) by means of his own (Instr. Assoc.) Lord (Instr. Means; Christ Jesus is his master, not you; in the case of a household slave, his lord is the master who owns him). Yes (sarcastic affirmative particle), he shall be

supported (ἵστημι, FPI3S, Predictive; established, confirmed), for (explanatory conj.) the Lord (Subj. Nom.; He doesn't need a legalist's help) has the power (δυνατέω, PAI3S, Durative) to cause to stand (ἵστημι, AAInf., Constatative, Causal; support, establish, confirm) him (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:4** σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει· σταθήσεται δέ δυνατεῖ γὰρ ὁ κύριος σῆσαι αὐτόν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:4** tu quis es qui iudices alienum servum suo domino stat aut cadit stabit autem potens est enim Deus statuere illum

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:5** On the one hand, a person [weak believer] may distinguish a day [designates Sunday as the “Lord’s Day”] over a day [every other day of the week]. On the other hand, a person [strong believer] may prefer all days [every day is a day for doctrine, not just Sunday]. Let each person be fully assured in his own thinking [flexibility according to one’s level of spiritual growth].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:5** For, on the one hand, there is he who judges a day above another day. On the other hand, there is he who subjects every day to a scrutiny. Let each one I his own mind be fully assured.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:5** One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts two types of believers with two types of worship by using a concessive clause. On the one hand, a weak believer may distinguish (Customary Present tense) a particular day over all the other days of the week for worship. In Christian circles, this day is usually Sunday, which they call “the Lord’s Day.” On the other hand, a strong believer prefers (Customary Present tense) all days as the same - each day being a day for Bible doctrine, not just Sunday. Is it acceptable to worship only on Sunday? Yes, it is. Is it acceptable to worship every day, and not treat Sunday as something special? Yes, it is.

Paul says each person, regardless of persuasion, should be fully convinced (Perfective Present tense) in his own mind regarding the day or frequency of worship. The Imperative of Permission means this decision comes from spiritual freedom, not a legalistic requirement. The phrase “his own” points to varying standards according to one’s level of spiritual growth. Whichever decision is made, it is to be made from a position of freedom, privacy and flexibility. Every believer is to be content with their own chosen modus operandi when it comes to days of worship; every believer is also to be respectful of the decisions of others. Nobody has the right to dictate the frequency of attendance on another believer.

There is no absolute right and wrong when it comes to days of worship, because no two believers have exactly the same level of spiritual growth. You should be comfortable with the decision you have made and you should have a relaxed mental attitude towards those who have chosen differently. If this is the case, then why have I referred to the first example as a weak believer and the second example as a strong believer? First, because Paul teaches the difference in other passages of Scripture, such as in Colossians (see relevant opinions for others). Let's use a little common sense here. The more you attend Bible study, the greater the possibility of reaching supergrace status.

If you go to church for the purpose of learning the Word of God once a week on Sunday, how long will it take for you to go completely through the Bible under a qualified pastor or teacher? If you go to church 52 times a year, and you cover less than an entire chapter each week, you may NEVER cover the entire Bible in your lifetime. If you go to church twice on Sunday and perhaps on Wednesday evening, how long will it take for you to go completely through the Bible? You may perhaps cover every chapter of the Bible, although superficially, in your lifetime. One of the churches I grew up in assembles for Bible study six nights a week and twice on Sunday. Get the picture? How hungry are you for the Word of God and how serious are you in wanting to learn every bit of it?

Personal reference: As a new believer, Bible study once a week on Sunday seemed like enough. The more I grew, however, the more I wanted to know. Where is a person to get more Bible study? Do you have to attend seminary in order to learn the Bible cover to cover? Is there a special class of believer who needs to know the entire Bible, or are all believers supposed to know the Word of God front to back? If you have a communication gift, you need to attend seminary to get the language and theology training necessary to fulfill the function of that gift. But all believers are commanded to learn Bible doctrine and to apply what they know to life. The more you grow, the more you want to know; knowledge builds upon knowledge.

So while we are all free to choose how often and on which days we meet for worship, the greater the frequency, the greater your potential for spiritual progress. A believer who only attends church one day a week will probably remain a spiritual child his entire life. A believer who attends Bible study many days a week may grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ to the maximum. It is a matter of each individual's privacy of the priesthood, but there is a distinct advantage in attending Bible study more often. Bible study is the highest form of worship; there is nothing greater than putting on the mind of Christ. Also notice Paul's emphasis on your own thinking; this decision is one that should come from your mind, not your emotions. Be comfortable with your own decision and be relaxed with the decisions of others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The whole Mosaic system, including its Sabbath day, has given way to the reign of grace. In spite of all that is set forth in the Bible, much of which we have presented in these studies, two

groups of professing Christians nullify the Bible teaching by their legalism. One group insists on observing the seventh day, even though God says that it has been abolished. The other group observes a “Christian Sabbath”; they model it after the Sabbath of the Old Testament, and derive their authority from the law of Moses in spite of the New Testament teachings. (D. Barnhouse) To select a particular day over another, calling it ‘holy’, and enforcing it over other days, is nothing but rank legalism. There is only one kind or type of days, NOT a standard for “holy” days and a different standard for other days. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The so-called Puritan teaching here has been rightly called ‘an adulterous theology’ because it sought to marry believers to both husbands, to the Law and to Christ. (C.I. Scofield)

Undertand that God so ordered the sabbaths that the series was continually broken. In the ordinary course of events, the people of Israel observed a series of seventh days; then there would be a cluster of sacred days, followed by another series of seventh days. Only the principle of an approximate seventh day was observed. The present system of observing every seventh day regardless of the months or years has existed only since the time of Pope Gregory XIII who devised the Gregorian calendar in 1582. Israel never observed a seventh day in an unbroken series. If we understand that several days were observed as a festival and that a new series of seven began on a Thursday or a Tuesday and continued, perhaps for seven weeks, sometimes longer, the whole matter becomes simple. God was not at all interested in the seventh day as an inflexibly recurring seven, and the sacred character of the Sabbath did not belong to the seventh day of a permanent series but rather to its relative place in many shifting series of sevens whose counting began from constantly changing starting points. (D. Barnhouse)

The strong believer regards every day alike. Each day alike is an opportunity for him to be filled with the Spirit, and in everything by word or deed giving thanks unto God the Father through Him. No day, thus, is holy *in itself*, above another! Privilege there is, but no bondage. (W. R. Newell) Sabbatical obligation to keep any day, whether seventh or first, was not recognized in apostolic times. (Alford) Nothing in the Christian religion is legal or statutory, not even the religious observance of the first day of the week. (K. Wuest) Paul classifies the observance of days along with such *trivial matters* as whether a believer is to eat or not to eat certain foods. Concerning which food or which day, Paul is utterly indifferent. (D. Barnhouse) Three things that build this assurance are: (a) resolving your own spiritual controversies with Bible doctrine, (b) becoming spiritually self-sustaining with Bible doctrine, and (c) learning to do your own thinking with Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The difference of practice with regard to days was allowed without dispute. To Paul himself the observance or non-observance of the days referred to was a matter in itself of no importance. He was content that each person should act up to his own conscientious convictions on the subject. (J. Barnby) The man possessed by an idea is the man who influences his fellows, not he who is sure of nothing, who has only conundrums to propound instead of a way of salvation to proclaim and suggestions for usefulness to enforce. The ring of conviction in the voice begets assent and confidence in the hearers. (S. Aldridge) Nothing in the Christian religion is legal or statutory, not even the religious observance of the first day of the week (Sunday); that observance originated in faith, and is not what it should be except as it is maintained by faith. (K. Wuest) The Christian who has grasped the freedom of the Gospel recognizes the indifference in themselves of all such

ordinances; but he voluntarily submits to the rules of his church out of respect for its authority. (Sanday & Headlam)

The observance of days is a matter of individual preference. It is abundantly evident that no day is above another, so far as the Scriptures are concerned. The seventh day, the Sabbath, was never given to the nations. To observe it is to put ourselves under the curse of the law. The first day of the week, called Sunday, is never referred to in the Scriptures, properly translated. It is a desperate attempt to find some scriptural excuse for the prevalent observance of Sunday. There is nothing wrong in the setting aside of a day to the Lord. Custom has made Sunday the most convenient for this purpose. But let us not mar the Word of God in order to uphold the practice. Neither should we ride roughshod over the religious scruples of those who look upon Sunday as a day sanctioned by God for divine worship. They have no basis for their belief, nevertheless their conscience demands consideration. (A.E. Knoch)

A second concrete example is now given of the differences between those who have laid hold of the truths of God's Word and those who tenaciously cling to some legalistic practice. The subject is the honoring of certain days over others. Those who are weak choose a certain day and proclaim it holy – holier than other days. Those who, like Paul, understand the liberty we have in Christ Jesus, do not observe days but rather serve and worship the Lord consistently seven days a week. Paul clearly aligns himself with those who are seven-day-a-week Christians. (W. Kroll)

Rom. 14:5 On the one hand (concessive clause, contrast), a person (Subj. Nom.; weak believer) may distinguish (κρίνω, PAI3S, Customary, Potential; select, prefer) a day (Compl. Acc.; calling Sunday 'the Lords Day') over (prep.; greater than) a day (Noncompl. Acc.; every other day of the week); on the other hand (adversative), a person (Subj. Nom.; strong believer) may prefer (κρίνω, PAI3S, Customary, Potential; consider, think, judge) all (Acc. Spec.) days (compl. Acc.; everyday is a day for doctrine, not just Sunday). Let each person (Subj. Nom.; regardless of persuasion) be fully assured (πληροφορέω, PPImp.3S, Perfective, Permission; certain, convinced, persuaded) in his own (Dat. Poss.; varying standards are permitted according to one's level of spiritual growth - that is flexible application) thinking (Loc. Sph.; mind, thought, privacy of the priesthood; be content with one's own *modus operandi* and have a relaxed mental attitude towards the other).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:5** ὃς μὲν [γὰρ] κρίνει ἡμέραν παρ ἡμέραν ὃς δὲ κρίνει πᾶσαν ἡμέραν· ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοῖ πληροφορεῖσθω

^{VUL} **Romans 14:5** nam alius iudicat diem plus inter diem alius iudicat omnem diem unusquisque in suo sensu abundet

LWB Rom. 14:6 The person [strong believer] who observes the day [any day] regards it unto the Lord. Moreover, the person [strong believer] who eats [all categories of meat], eats unto the Lord, for he gives thanks to God. Moreover, the person [weak believer] who does not eat [vegetarian], does not eat [all categories of meat] unto the Lord, but gives thanks unto God [for his vegetables].

KW Rom. 14:6 The one who has formed a judgment regarding the day, with reference to the Lord he judges it. And the one who eats, with reference to the Lord he eats, for he gives thanks to God. And the one who does not eat, with reference to the Lord does not eat, and he gives thanks to God.

KJV Romans 14:6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The strong believer who observes the day (Customary Present tense) regards it unto the Lord. The Lord gives us one day at a time; the strong believer regards each day unto the Lord, one day at a time. The weak believer singles out one day a week for worship, while the strong believer studies doctrine every day. The weak believer regards a particular day as more holy or important than another. The strong believer regards every day as a day to be lived for the Lord. The strong believer dedicates every day to the Lord, including the days when he engages in work throughout the week. The weak believer dedicates Sunday to the Lord only.

Setting a particular day of the week aside (Sunday) to engage in religious activities is on the *precept* level, such as giving a certain percentage of your income to the church; the *principle* is for every day to belong to the Lord. If a person is too young in the Christian walk, a *precept* is a useful tool to get the neophyte used to regular Bible study. Once the believer matures, Bible study and prayer become part of everyday life, not just a particular day. The *precept* is no longer useful when the *principle* has been metabolized.

The mature believer eats all categories of meat unto the Lord (Customary Present tense), giving thanks to God (Customary Present tense) for his food and for Bible doctrine. The weak believer who eats vegetables only (Customary Present tense), does not eat all categories of meat unto the Lord (Customary Present tense), but still gives thanks to God (Customary Present tense) for his vegetables. The Christian way of life has absolutely nothing to do with your diet, so don't make an issue out of eating or not eating meat, fish, fowl, vegetables, herbs, etc.. Give thanks to the Lord for your food and enjoy it!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A Christian's viewpoint regarding and estimation of any certain thing is controlled or conditioned by the measure in which he knows the Lord Jesus. Both parties in this dispute, by the line of action they choose, have the same end in view – namely, the interest of the Lord.

Thanksgiving to God consecrates every meal whether it be the ascetic one of him who abstains from wine and flesh (he who does not eat), or the more generous one of him who uses both (the one who eats). The man's judgment of a certain day is with reference to the Lord. That is, his measure of what that day stands for and his appropriate conduct in it is conditioned by his estimation of the Lord Jesus and what is fitting with reference to Him. Thus, a Christian's viewpoint regarding and estimation of any certain thing is controlled or conditioned by the measure in which he knows the Lord Jesus. (K. Wuest)

The Christian's observance or non-observance of days is here based on a larger truth of which it is a part. His whole life belongs, not to himself, but to his Lord. (Denney) In Acts 10, three times God told Peter that *all* foods were now cleansed and that he was not to call any food unclean. Food will not commend us to God. (D. Barnhouse) Paul's principle of freedom in non-essentials is most important. (A.T. Robertson) A weak brother, if roasted and ridiculed by the stronger, may be made a burden to himself, and his personal peace be sacrificed on the altar of his neighbor's criticism. (R. Edgar) It is sometimes thought that the regular observance of one day in seven is altogether incompatible with Christian spirituality and liberty as here inculcated by the Apostle. (W.G. Thomas) Paul allows complete flexibility when it comes to days. (LWB)

In the scrupulous man, background and psychological make-up have combined to produce a reaction of emotional abhorrence to behavior that other Christians find objectionable. Such a man is certainly weak and has not grasped the full implications of his faith. But any quick forceful attempt to "educate" him would end in disaster, Paul wisely realized. Accordingly, he does not take the logical step of ordering conformity. Instead, he counsels: let the other man be. Christian fellowship does not imply a right to run other people's lives for them: only Christ can – and will – discharge such a right. The temptation to criticize some one else must be resisted. (F.F. Bruce) The dietary laws of the OT were set aside after the Church Age began and are no longer an issue. The special feast days are now defunct and the Christian is to consider each day alike as a grace gift from God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The person who esteems every day alike, that is, does not regard particular days as having peculiar religious significance, is recognized by the apostle as rightfully entertaining this position. Hence it is the person esteeming one day above another who is weak in faith: he has not yet understood the implications of the transition from the old economy to the new. (J. Murray) If we read into the present dispensation that which pertained only to the former, there can be nothing but confusion in our own minds, and conflict and arguments with our fellow-Christians. And, besides this conflict with them, we shall be seeking to put not only the Church of God, but all the Gentiles also under the laws which were given by Moses to Israel alone. (E.W. Bullinger)

Rom. 14:6 **The person** (Subj. Nom.; strong believer) **who observes** (φρονέω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantial; regards a particular day as more holy or important than another) **the day** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Lord gives us one day at a time – the weak believer singles out one day a week while the strong believer studies doctrine every day), **regards** (φρονέω, PAI3S, Customary; recognizes, dedicates) **it** (anarthrous,

ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied) unto the Lord (Dat. Adv.; the entire day is dedicated to the Lord, including the work you are engaged in throughout the week); moreover (continuative conj.), the person (Subj. Nom.; mature believer) who eats (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; all categories of meat), eats (ἐσθίω, PAI3S, Customary) unto the Lord (Dat. Adv.), for (explanatory conj.) he gives thanks (εὐχαριστέω, PAI3S, Customary) to God (Dat. Adv.); moreover (continuative conj.), the person (Subj. Nom.; weak believer) who does not (neg. adv.) eat (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; the vegetarian), does not (neg. adv.) eat (ἐσθίω, PAI3S, Customary; all categories of meat) unto the Lord (Dat. Adv.), but (adversative conj.) gives thanks (εὐχαριστέω, PAI3S, Customary) unto God (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:6** ὁ φρονῶν τὴν ἡμέραν κυρίῳ φρονεῖ· καὶ ὁ ἐσθίων κυρίῳ ἐσθίει εὐχαριστεῖ γὰρ τῷ θεῷ· καὶ ὁ μὴ ἐσθίων κυρίῳ οὐκ ἐσθίει καὶ εὐχαριστεῖ τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 14:6** qui sapit diem Domino sapit et qui manducat Domino manducat gratias enim agit Deo et qui non manducat Domino non manducat et gratias agit Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:7** For none of us [believers] should live for himself [blessing by association is our goal]; moreover, none [believers] should die for himself [dying grace is our goal].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:7** For no one lives with reference to himself, and no one with reference to himself dies.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:7** For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

No believer in the Lord Jesus Christ should live (Pictorial Present tense) for himself. We are to live for Christ rather than our own personal interests, and by doing so, others should receive blessing by association from us. As a matter of fact, no believer should die (Pictorial Present tense) for himself either. Even our death should provide blessings through dying grace to others present. The Potential Indicative mood points to both our living and dying as providing blessings to others; in the case of most Christians today, this is unfortunately not the case.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Whether we are conscious of it or not, the life of each of us, whether we are rich or poor, learned or unlearned, young or old, is exercising some influence upon others. It is not necessary that we should know another in order to exercise an influence upon him. Thousands of men are influenced by persons whom they never saw. The Reformation began at Cambridge University very early in the sixteenth century by Bilney, a solitary

student, reading a Greek New Testament with Latin translation and notes ... A young American student, more than seventy years ago, happened to read a printed sermon which had fallen into his hands. That sermon, by a man whom he had never seen, fell into the young student's soul like a spark into tinder, and in six months Adoniram Judson resolved to become a missionary to the heathen. (C. Irwin)

Through grace and doctrinal orientation you discern your personal potential in the plan of God. Adversity fades in proximity to the spiritual self-esteem generated from a limitless relationship with the Lord. This authenticated personal destiny weathers all circumstances of adversity or prosperity. When you have a personal recognition of the destiny you share in Christ and the enormity of your spiritual endowment, awe and gratitude toward God animate your attitude. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 14:7 For (explanatory conj.) none (Subj. Nom.) of us (Adv. Gen. Ref.; restricted to believers) should live (ζάω, PAI3S, Pictorial, Potential; blessing by association is expected) for himself (Dat. Disadv.; live for Christ rather than his own personal interests); moreover (continuative conj.), none (Subj. Nom.; believers) should die (ἀποθνήσκω, PAI3S, Pictorial, Potential; dying grace) for himself (Dat. Disadv.),

^{WHO} **Romans 14:7** οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἑμῶν ἑαυτῷ ζῆ καὶ οὐδεὶς ἑαυτῷ ἀποθνήσκει·

^{VUL} **Romans 14:7** nemo enim nostrum sibi vivit et nemo sibi moritur

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:8** **For when we are living [the spiritual life] we should be living [providing blessings by association to others] unto the Lord, and when we are dying [approaching physical death], we should be dying [providing dying grace benefits to others] unto the Lord. Therefore, whether we are living or whether we are dying, we should be the Lord's.**

^{KW} **Rom. 14:8** For, whether we are living, with reference to the Lord we are living. Whether we are dying, with reference to the Lord we are dying.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:8** For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When we are living our spiritual life (Customary Present tense) we should be living unto the Lord. Blessings by association should flow to those in our periphery. When we are approaching physical death (Pictorial Present tense), we should be dying unto the Lord. Dying grace benefits should flow to those in our periphery. The time of our birth and the time of our death are both in God's hands. We are allotted a specific number of inhaled and exhaled in this life. Knowing this,

we should maximize our spiritual impact to those around us. The Potential Subjunctive mood once again sets this up as our goal in the spiritual life.

The 3rd class conditional clause means maybe we will fulfill these goals and maybe we won't. Birth and death are under God's control, but how we live between those two points in time is up to our own volition. Therefore, whether we are living the spiritual life or are approaching physical death, we should be dedicating our life to the Lord and providing blessing to others whenever possible. The Concessive Participles point to the goal of distributing blessings to others no matter what our status may be at the time. The Iterative Present tense points to our living the spiritual life on a non-stop basis; the Aoristic Present tense points to our living the spiritual life up to the last breath we take on earth.

The contrasts and comparisons can be seen in the following manner:

<u>Living</u>	Dative Advantage - for the Lord Dative Disadvantage - for himself	blessing by association to others cursing by association to others
<u>Dying</u>	Dative Advantage - for the Lord Dative Disadvantage - for himself	blessing by association to others cursing by association to others

Obviously the goal of the Christian life is to live and die to the advantage of others – being a blessing by association rather than a cursing by association.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is an example of an *epadiplosis*, or double encircling: “living ... living, dying ... dying” (E.W. Bullinger) In Romans 14:8 we have “ean” (if) four times in succession with “te” (changes the translation of “if” to “when” and “whether”). There are here two pairs of conditions. The parts of each pair are balanced carefully ... an inner bond between the two, idiomatic in nature (A.T. Robertson) The victorious life is a possibility only because we do not trust in our own resources, but look to receive from God the succor that He is able to give us. Unless we are constantly aware that disaster attends any attempt to claim complete independence for ourselves, we are living in a world of fantastic illusion. The only true framework within which our experience makes sense is the acceptance of God's creative purpose as the decisive factor in our lives. (J. Knox)

The Christian way of life is a life of freedom, exceeding even the freedom of divine establishment. Privacy is essential to freedom. The principle of the honor code, then, is “live and let live.” This means abstaining from gossip, maligning, judging, character assassination, and evil speculation from rumours and hearsay evidence (Rom. 14:10-13). Respect for the privacy of the priesthood also demands toleration for the erroneous opinions of immature believers on non-essential matters. Ultimately Bible doctrine is the essential; everything else, to a greater or lesser degree, is non-essential. (Rom. 14:19) As a believer grows in the Word, doctrine corrects his opinions, with no need for unsolicited interference from other Christians. Toleration permits all believers to assemble in the local congregation and approach the Word of God with objectivity.

As royal priests, representing themselves before the Lord, the immature have the privacy and freedom to grow, while the mature have continued opportunities to develop the strength through flexibility. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 14:8 For (explanatory conj.) when (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe we are, maybe we aren't", particle changes the *if* to *when*) we are living (ζάω, PASubj.1P, Customary, Modal; our spiritual life), we should be living (ζάω, PAI1P, Customary, Potential, apodosis; blessings by association should be flowing from our daily spiritual life) unto the Lord (Dat. Adv.), and (enclitic particle) when (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe we will, maybe we won't", particle changes the *if* to *when*) we are dying (ἀποθνήσκω, PASubj.1P, Pictorial, Modal; approaching physical death), we should be dying (ἀποθνήσκω, PAI1P, Customary, Potential, apodosis; dying grace benefits should be flowing from our spiritual life to others) unto the Lord (Dat. Adv.). Therefore (enclitic particle), whether (protasis, 3rd class condition) we are living (ζάω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Concessive; blessing by association) or (enclitic particle) whether (protasis, 3rd class condition) we are dying (ἀποθνήσκω, PASubj.1P, Aoristic, Concessive; dying grace benefits), we should be (εἰμί, PAI1P, Customary, Potential) the Lord's (Poss. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:8** εἰάν τε γὰρ ζῶμεν τῷ κυρίῳ ζῶμεν εἰάν τε ἀποθνήσκωμεν τῷ κυρίῳ ἀποθνήσκομεν εἰάν τε οὖν ζῶμεν εἰάν τε ἀποθνήσκωμεν τοῦ κυρίου ἐσμέν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:8** sive enim vivimus Domino vivimus sive morimur Domino morimur sive ergo vivimus sive morimur Domini sumus

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:9** For Christ died [spiritual death on the cross] and lived [resurrection life] towards this purpose, so that He might become Lord [the ruling power] over both the dying ones [those in dying grace status] and the ones who are living [imparting blessings by association due to momentum in their spiritual life].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:9** Therefore, whether we are living or whether we are dying, we belong to the Lord; for to this end Christ both died and lived, in order that He might exercise lordship over both dead ones and living ones..

^{KJV} **Romans 14:9** For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Christ died spiritually on the cross (Constative Aorist tense) and received resurrection life (Ingressive Aorist tense) for the express purpose of not only imparting blessings to us, but that we might live for Him and impart blessings by association to others. His session at the right hand of the Father is not without activity. He has taken up residence at the right hand of the Father and indwells every believer for the purpose of becoming the ruling power (Ingressive Aorist tense) over our lives. We are to walk with Him, live in His sphere of power, and impart blessings by association to others, whether we are in dying grace status or living a life (Pictorial Present tense) of momentum in the divine protocol plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The historical facts of Christ's death and resurrection necessarily give rise to doctrine, and they cannot be separated from our belief without tending to overthrow the whole edifice of Christian living based on Christ as its foundation. It matters comparatively little whether a man eats meat or abstains from it, observes certain days or disregards their special sanctity, provided that the scruple alleged or the freedom enjoyed is conscientious, springing out of his conception of the nature of the religion Jesus Christ has revealed. It is not for others to despise the punctilious or to blame the informal. (S. Aldridge)

Rom. 14:9 For (explanatory conj.) Christ (Subj. Nom.) died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Constative; spiritual death at the Cross) and (continuative conj.) lived (ζάω, AAI3S, Ingressive; received resurrection life and now sits in session at the right hand of the Father) towards this purpose (Acc. Purpose), so that (purpose conj.) He might become Lord (κυριεύω, AASubj.3S, Ingressive, Purpose Clause; the ruling power over their lives) over both (connective conj.) the dying ones (Gen. of Ruling Over; those who are in dying grace status) and (connective conj.) the ones who are living (ζάω, PAPTc.GPM, Pictorial, Gen. or Ruling Over, Substantival; those who are imparting blessings by association due to their spiritual life with momentum).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:9** εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἔζησεν ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ

^{VUL} **Romans 14:9** in hoc enim Christus et mortuus est et revixit ut et mortuorum et vivorum dominetur

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:10** **But you [the self-righeous, immature believer], why do you judge your brother [the strong believer]? Or you [the strong, mature believer], again, why do you treat your brother [the weak believer] with contempt? For we shall all [both weak and strong, immature and mature] stand before the judgment seat of God [for rewards].**

κω Rom. 14:10 But as for you, why are you judging your brother? Or, as for you also, why are you treating your brother with contempt? For we all shall stand before the judgment seat of God.

KJV Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to chew-out both the weak and strong believer. He asks (Interrogative Indicative mood) the weak believer, who is wound up in legalistic self-righteousness, why he judges his brother, the strong believer. Then he asks the mature believer, who should know better because of the doctrine in his soul, why he treats his brother, the weak believer, with contempt (Latin: spurn). The Retroactive, Progressive Present tense means both parties have been behaving poorly towards each other in the past and such behavior is continuing at this very moment.

Paul doesn't allow excuses for this bad behavior, whether they are immature or mature believers. Both parties should know better. After all, all believers, both weak and strong, immature and mature, will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Predictive Future tense) immediately after the rapture of the Church. We will all receive rewards at the Judgment Seat (Latin: tribunal, Greek: bema) for those things we did while filled with the Spirit; we will also receive shame for those things we did when we were not filled with the Spirit. In this example, we will not obtain any reward for judging or treating a fellow believer with contempt.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The weak believer thinks his legalism is strength and is deceived. The weak believer bullies the strong believer - taking his inflexible, nonessential opinions and transforming them into a rigid, legalistic orthodoxy - and attempts to make them part of the Christian way of life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The final consequence of protracted carnality is forfeiture of reward and stinging rebuke when the King returns to establish His rule. No tragedy could be greater than for the Christian, saved by grace and given unlimited possibilities, to forfeit all of this and fail to participate in the future reign of the servant kings. Even describing the negative judgment as "loss of reward" is only a circumlocution for penalty. A loss of reward is one kind of penalty. (J. Dillow)

In face of our common responsibility to Him, how dare we judge each other? When we all stand at that bar – and it should be part of our spiritual environment always – no one will look at his brother with either censoriousness or contempt. (K. Wuest) I have known people who were fearful at the thought of coming before the Judgment Seat of Christ to have their lives tested in this way. But why should we be afraid? Should we not rather rejoice at the thought that all the garbage of our daily living will be utterly consumed, leaving us only with what the Lord Himself has been able to realize of His own nature and Person in our individual lives? That will indeed be a day of great salvation! (A. Custance) God's flaming arrows are far more effective than anyone's vicious tongue. Avoid judging others – leave them to God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Both as to faith and Christian practice Christians may endeavour to enlighten one another; but when they fail, they have no authority to force others to change their views. Each Christian, however, is bound to follow the Lord fully so far as his own knowledge extends, and not to be stopped by the ignorance of his brother. He is not to do what he knows to be wrong, in order to walk with his weak brother; nor is he to avoid doing anything that he judges to be the will of his Master, in order to retain fellowship with other Christians. (R. Haldane) It is not the place of the church to fix any days and condemn those who do not observe them. Only the observance of days as a matter of law keeping is condemned. (A.E. Knoch)

Rom. 14:10 But (adversative conj.) you (Ind. Nom.; self-righteous, weak-immature believer), why (interrogative) do you judge (κρίνω, PAI2S, Retroactive Progressive, Interrogative; occupational hazard of the weak believer) your (Gen. Rel.) brother (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the strong believer)? Or (interrogative particle), you (Ind. Nom.; mature-strong believer) again (emphatic conj.), why (interrogative) do you treat your (Gen. Rel.) brother (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the weak believer) with contempt (ἐξουθενέω, PAI2S, Retroactive Progressive; despise him, occupational hazard of the strong believer)? For (explanatory conj.) we shall all (Nom. Spec.; weak and strong, mature and immature) stand before (παρίστημι, FMI1P, Predictive; immediately following the rapture) the judgment seat (Dat. Ind. Obj.; for rewards) of God (Poss. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:10** σὺ δὲ τί κρίνεις τὸν ἀδελφόν σου ἢ καὶ σὺ τί ἐξουθενεῖς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου πάντες γὰρ παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 14:10** tu autem quid iudicas fratrem tuum aut tu quare spernis fratrem tuum omnes enim stabimus ante tribunal Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:11** For it stands written [in Isaiah 45:23]: “As I live,” says the Lord, “every knee shall bow to Me [worship Jesus Christ], also every tongue shall confess [their sins] to God [the Father].”

^{KW} **Rom. 14:11** For it stands written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:11** For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It stands written (Intensive Perfect tense) in Isaiah 45:23 that every knee shall bow to Jesus Christ (Predictive Future tense) during the time between the rapture of the Church

and the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is a metonym for compulsory submission, but it will be willing submission in this case. It is often called the Great Genuflex (Latin: flectet genu). It also says (Historical Present tense) that every tongue will confess (Predictive Future tense) their sins to and acknowledge their devotion to Christ to God the Father. Nothing will be hidden from view in that day. The Lord promises this will happen (Gnomic Present tense) by making an oath: “As I live.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is an example of a *catachresis*, where one word is exchanged for another only remotely connected with it. In this case, *confess* means to *praise* or *celebrate*. (E.W. Bullinger) Immediately after the rapture, there will be a period of fantastic happiness and celebration, a reunion of the entire royal family, assembled for the first time in spontaneous recognition of Christ. I call this the big genuflexion. This time of worship and of breaking into song will culminate as Christ leads the entire royal procession back to heaven. In this future sequence of events, an almost shocking contrast comes when the initial celebration and maximum spirit de corps of the big genuflexion suddenly gives way to grave solemnity. The Lord Jesus Christ will convene court. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

That there are negative consequences at the Judgment Seat of Christ is usually glossed over, and then a somewhat nebulous reference to crowns is alluded to in popular presentations. But there are negative consequences, too! It is certainly better to deal with our sin now (in private), rather than then (in public). For those who wait, they will confess their sin, and like the prodigal son will be restored to eternal fellowship with their King. (J. Dillow) At the Judgment Seat of Christ you will be on your own facing the Lord of Glory. Christ will handle each case separately. Christianity is personal, and you must answer for yourself. In life, you may have evaded the responsibility for your own decisions and you may have found others to blame or to lean on; you may have developed a prodigious ability to make excuses. But in front of the omniscient King of kings, you will not be able to evade, to compensate, to laugh it off, to find any excuse. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 14:11 **For** (explanatory conj.) **it stands written** (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Isaiah 45:23): **“As I** (Subj. Nom.; emphatic) **live** (ζάω, PAI1S, Durative, Gnomic; form of an oath)”, **says** (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical) **the Lord** (Subj. Nom.), **“every** (Nom. Spec.) **knee** (Subj. Nom.) **shall bow** (κάμπτω, FAI3S, Predictive; the Big Genuflex occurs between the Rapture of the Church and the Judgment Seat of Christ, metonym for *compulsory submission*) **to Me** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; Jesus Christ), **also** (adjunctive), **every** (Nom. Spec.) **tongue** (Subj. Nom.; language, speech, using our voices) **shall confess** (ἐξομολογέω, FMI3S, Predictive; acknowledge their sins) **to God** (Dat. Adv.; the Father).”

^{WHO} **Romans 14:11** γέγραπται γάρ Ζῶ ἐγὼ λέγει κύριος ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται τῷ θεῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 14:11** scriptum est enim vivo ego dicit Dominus quoniam mihi flectet omne genu et omnis lingua confitebitur Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:12** **Consequently, therefore, each one of us shall give an account concerning himself [for the purpose of receiving rewards] to God [the Father].**

^{KW} **Rom. 14:12** Therefore, then, each one of us shall give an account concerning himself to God.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:12** So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every believer, without exception, will give a verbal testimony (Predictive Future tense) concerning his activities on earth to God the Father for the purpose of determining rewards. Only those things done while in fellowship will receive a reward: gold, silver, precious stones. Those things done outside of fellowship will be burned: wood, hay and stubble. Being “in fellowship” means being filled with the Spirit, walking in the sphere of divine power.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Many references in the NT present the truth that the church will be judged by Christ Himself. Inasmuch as the translation of the church, according to the pretribulational point of view, has already separated the righteous from the unrighteous, only saved people will be involved in the judgment of Christ in connection with the church. The judgment will have as its supreme question the matter of reward. (J. Walvoord) This responsibility naturally drives us to constantly take inventory of our religious scruples and convictions to make sure they are based in the infallible Word and not in the traditions or whims of humans. (W. Kroll)

The doctrine of man’s accountability and responsibility to God is set forth so plainly, so fully and so constantly throughout the Scriptures that he who runs may read it, and only those who deliberately close their eyes to it can fail to perceive its verity and force. The entire volume of God’s Word testifies to the fact that He requires from man right affections and right actions, and that He judges and treats him according to these. So every one of us will give account of himself to God that the rights of God may be enforced upon moral agents. (AW. Pink)

Rom. 14:12 **Consequently** (inferential particle), **therefore** (result particle), **each one** (Subj. Nom.) **of us** (Adv. Gen. Ref.) **shall give** (δίδωμι, FAI3S, Predictive) **an account** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; testimony, word) **concerning himself** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; for the purpose of determining rewards) **to God** (Dat. Adv.; the Father).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:12** ἄρα [οὖν] ἕκαστος ἡμῶν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λόγον δώσει [τῷ θεῷ]

^{VUL} **Romans 14:12** itaque unusquisque nostrum pro se rationem reddet Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:13** **Therefore, let us not judge one another of the same kind [fellow believers], but instead let us consider this: Let no one put an obstacle or a distraction in front of a brother [a weak believer].**

^{KW} **Rom. 14:13** Therefore, no longer let us be judging one another. But be judging this rather, not to place a stumbling block before your brother, or a snare in which he may be entrapped.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:13** Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul advises us not to judge (Imperative of Prohibition) fellow believers. He would not have given this prohibition had it not been going on with frequency in Rome. Instead, he asks us to consider (Imperative of Command) another option. Let no one (Imperative of Prohibition) put an obstacle or a distraction (Customary Present tense) in front of a weaker believer. A weak believer has little doctrinal resources at his disposal and has limited flexibility for application. Any stumblingblock (Latin: scandal) or occasion to fall (Latin: offence) harms both our fellow believer and ourself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul neither condemns or approves any form of diet, nor condemns or approves the observance or non-observance of days. He does not take sides with non-essentials, therefore avoiding strife. What he does is to take the side of doctrine, which is the aristocratic right of every believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Verbal sins such as gossiping, judging, and maligning warrant harsh divine discipline because they destroy the privacy of their victims. Privacy is an essential component of freedom. Living his own life before the Lord would become difficult for a believer if he were vilified and his personal business were constantly criticized. Sins of the tongue violate the sanctity of human freedom, and if a believer actually were living in the cosmic system, maligning him would only interfere with his recovery. (ibid)

Rom. 14:13 Therefore (inferential particle), let us not (neg. adv.; no longer, from now on: meaning we have been guilty) judge (κρίνω, PASubj.1P, Pictorial, Prohibition) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers), but (contrast conj.) instead (comparative adv.), let us consider (κρίνω, AAImp.2P, Constative, Command) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.): "Let no (neg. adv.) one (Subj. Nom.) put (τίθημι, PAInf., Customary, Imperative of Prohibition, Articular, Appositional) an obstacle (Acc. Dir. Obj.; stumblingblock)

or (connective conj.) a distraction (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trap, occasion to fall) in front of a brother (Loc. Place, Sphere; a weak believer with limited flexibility).”

^{WHO} **Romans 14:13** Μηκέτι οὖν ἀλλήλους κρίνωμεν· ἀλλὰ τοῦτο κρίνατε μᾶλλον τὸ μὴ τιθέναι πρόσκομμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἢ σκάνδαλον

^{VUL} **Romans 14:13** non ergo amplius invicem iudicemus sed hoc iudicate magis ne ponatis offendiculum fratri vel scandalum

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:14** I know for certain and have received confidence in the Lord Jesus that nothing [category of food] is unclean by itself, except to him [the weak believer] who presumes something to be unclean – to him it is unclean.

^{kw} **Rom. 14:14** For I know with an absolute knowledge and stand persuaded in the Lord Jesus that not even one thing is unhallowed in itself except it be to the one who reasons it out to be unhallowed. To that one it is unhallowed.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:14** I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows beyond any shadow of a doubt (Intensive Perfect tense) and has been persuaded (Intensive Perfect tense) in the Lord Jesus, that there is no category of food that is impure or defiled in and of itself. However, to the weak believer who thinks (Customary Present tense) a particular kind of food is impure, it is impure to him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Nothing is unclean of itself. It is the weak conscience (or inflexibility with regard to non-essentials) that makes it unclean. Inflexibility drives out the thought processes, i.e. divorcement from reality, loss of common sense. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In *principle*, the apostle sides with the strong. He has no scruples about meats or drinks or days. (Denney) Paul wants the strong in faith to recognize that people cannot always existentially grasp such truth, particularly when it runs so counter to a long and strongly held tradition basic to their own identity as God’s people. (D. Moo)

Rom. 14:14 I know for certain (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Intensive) and (connective conj.) have received confidence (πείθω, Perf.PI1S, Intensive; persuaded, convinced) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.) Jesus (Dat. Ref.) that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) nothing (Subj. Nom.; no category of food) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) unclean (Pred. Nom.; impure, defiled) by itself (Gen. Content, Origin), except (conditional particle with a negative) to him (Dat. Disadv.; the weak believer) who

presumes (λογίζομαι, PMPTc.DSM, Customary, Substantival, Deponent, Articular; considers, reckons, figures, believers) something (enclitic, indefinite pronoun) to be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. as Modifier) unclean (Pred. Nom.; impure, defiled) - to him (Dat. Disadv.) it is (ellipsis, verb supplied) unclean (Pred. Nom.; impure, defiled).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:14** οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ ὅτι οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ εἰ μὴ τῷ λογιζομένῳ τι κοινὸν εἶναι ἐκείνῳ κοινόν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:14** scio et confido in Domino Iesu quia nihil commune per ipsum nisi ei qui existimat quid commune esse illi commune est

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:15** For if your brother is distracted because of food [dietary taboos], then you are no longer walking [conducting your Christian way of life] according to the standard of virtue love. Do not contribute to the ruin [destroyed spiritual life] of a person [weak believer] on behalf of whom Christ died.

^{KW} **Rom. 14:15** For, if because of your food your brother is made to grieve, no longer are you conducting yourself according to love. Stop ruining by your food that one on behalf of whom Christ died.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:15** But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If a fellow believer is distressed (Customary Present tense) because of some dietary taboos, such as not eating meat, then you should not eat meat in his presence. Otherwise, you are no longer conducting your Christian way of life (Iterative Present tense) according to the standard of virtue love. A growing, maturing believer is supposed to exercise impersonal love towards his fellow believer; the mature believer should show consideration for the weakness of his fellow believer on this topic and should not eat meat when in his periphery.

Paul commands us (Imperative of Prohibition) not to sidetrack the spiritual life of a fellow, weak believer. After all, Jesus Christ died a substitutionary death on the cross (Constative Aorist tense) for the weak believer as well as the strong believer. Eating meat in the presence of a weak believer with this legalistic taboo is not only inconsiderate, but it may shatter the forward momentum of this believer in the early stages of his experiential sanctification. Just like we would not want someone to sabotage our spiritual walk, we do not wish to sabotage another believer's spiritual walk.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is a verbal *metonym*, or a change of one verb for another verb, i.e. “do not be a cause of destruction or ruin.” (E.W. Bullinger) The weaker brother is shaken by observing the fellow Christian do the “unthinkable” that for a while, at least, he is of no use to Christ. It could even mean that he becomes so demoralized that in the end he forfeits any possibility of reward for himself. It does not mean that he loses his salvation. (J. Dillow) Here it may mean temporal ruin; a Christian forced to act contrary to his scruples, even though more strict than necessary, may find himself ruined by his wounded conscience. (J. Witmer)

While some of the actions of the saints may not have been unduly injurious to themselves, it did not happen that younger Christians patterning their lives along similar lines were going much farther in departing from godliness, and endangered themselves fatally as a consequence. Behavior which to a more mature Christian is inoffensive may appear in a different light to a weaker brother who is thereby led astray. Such a brother may turn into license what for the stronger Christian is only an expression of liberty in the Lord, and he may so fatally corrupt his own spiritual life that the Lord will find it necessary to take him home. Thus, what we allow ourselves as being harmless in our own spiritual life may become the cause of a weaker brother’s destruction. (A. Custance)

Rom. 14:15 For (explanatory conj.) if (protasis, 1st class condition, “and he is”) your (Gen. Rel.) brother (Subj. Nom.; friend, neighbor) is distracted (λυπέω, PPI3S, Customary; distressed, grieved, vexed, sorrowful) because of food (Prep. Acc.; sees you disregarding his pet dietary taboos), then (ellipsis, apodosis supplied) you are no longer (Temporal Adv.) walking (περιπατέω, PAI2S, Iterative; conducting yourself, ordering your behavior) according to the standard of virtue love (Acc. Gen. Ref.; impersonal love regards this brother’s weakness and does not eat meat in his presence). Do not (neg. adv.) contribute to the ruin (ἀπόλλυμι, PAImp.2S, Pictorial, Prohibition; shattered, disillusioned, deeply hurt, crushed; destruction of his spiritual life) of a person (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in this case, an elect, but weak, believer) on behalf of whom (Gen. Adv.; substitutionary death on the Cross) Christ (Subj. Nom.) died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Constative).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:15** εἰ γὰρ διὰ βρῶμα ὁ ἀδελφός σου λυπεῖται οὐκέτι κατὰ ἀγάπην περιπατεῖς· μὴ τῷ βρώματί σου ἐκείνον ἀπόλλυε ὑπὲρ οὗ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:15** si enim propter cibum frater tuus contristatur iam non secundum caritatem ambulas noli cibo tuo illum perdere pro quo Christus mortuus est

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:16** Therefore, do not allow your privilege [of grace-oriented eating & drinking] to be maligned,

^{KW} **Rom. 14:16** Therefore, stop allowing your good to be spoken of in a reproachful and evil manner.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:16** Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While we have perfect gracious freedom to eat and drink without legalistic issues, Paul prohibits (Imperative mood) the strong believer from flaunting his legitimate freedom in the presence of a weak believer. When we do so, the weak believer may speak poorly of our grace-oriented lifestyle to others and taint our witness to Christ, as well as distract him from greater priorities in his spiritual life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The good thing you do” is the liberty or Christian freedom which you claim. (A.T. Robertson) The “good” here refers to Christian liberty, the freedom of conscience which has been won by Christ, but which will inevitably get a bad name if it is exercised in an inconsiderate, loveless fashion. The kingdom of God is that heavenly sphere of life in which God’s Word and Spirit govern. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 14:16 Therefore (inferential conj.), do not (neg. adv.) allow your (Poss. Gen.) privilege (Subj. Nom.; grace-oriented eating and drinking habits) to be maligned (βλασφημέω, PPImp.3S, Descriptive, Prohibition; spoken poorly about, derided),

^{WHO} **Romans 14:16** μὴ βλασφημείσθω οὖν ὑμῶν τὸ ἀγαθόν

^{VUL} **Romans 14:16** non ergo blasphemetur bonum nostrum

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:17** For the royal power [essence of the Cristian way of life] of God does not consist of eating and drinking [external rituals], but righteousness [imputed at salvation] and prosperity [imputed at maturity] and inner happiness [imputed upon the attainment of supergrace status] by means of the Holy Spirit,

^{KW} **Rom. 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the sphere of the Holy Spirit;

^{KJV} **Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The royal power of God, delegated divine omnipotence provided to the believer in fellowship, is the basis for the Christian way of life. This filling of the Spirit is a sign of royal family aristocracy during the dispensation of the Church Age. This delegated, royal power does not consist of (Gnomic Present tense) external rituals, such as what kind of food we eat or whether we drink adult beverages or not. It is the internal filling of the Spirit which enables us to live a supernatural spiritual life. The spiritual life is progressive and internal, not static and external. It is lived according to the principles of grace, not legalistic precepts regarding rituals or ceremonies.

Paul points to the progressive nature of the spiritual life by using three words in distinct order: righteousness, prosperity and inner happiness. We receive imputed righteousness at the point of salvation. We receive spiritual prosperity on the road to maturity. We obtain inner happiness when we attain supergrace status. We receive these blessings as we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ by the continual filling of the Spirit and the daily intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. This is the essence of the Christian way of life. It is available to all believers; all that is required is adherence to divine protocol.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The kingdom of God, or royal power of the aristocratic believer of the Church Age, is not concerned with what sustains the body (food and drink), but with what sustains the soul (Bible doctrine). What you eat and drink is a non-essential. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Here is an example of a *synecdoche* of the Species, where the Species is put for the Genus, or when particulars are put for universals: *peace* is used for *plenty* and *happiness*, all manner of *heavenly and spiritual blessing*. (E.W. Bullinger) The kingdom of God “comes not with outward show” (Luke 17:20), but is chiefly that which is inward and spiritual. (C. Feinberg) Preoccupation with a benefit of relatively negligible importance obscures the real purpose of the spiritual life. The kingdom of God has nothing to do with trivial matters like eating and drinking. (J. Knox) Men are peculiarly prone to cling to externals in religious worship. (R. Haldane)

There are non-essentials in the Christian life. The code of life lays down no hard specific rules of abstinence or conformity. Eating and drinking are no necessary part of Christian living. It is the spirit in which certain actions are performed or certain privations submitted to rather than the things themselves which make men Christians. External observances do not constitute religion. They are a visible embodiment of it, but not its vital principle. Let us not set too high an estimate on rites and ceremonies and forms of worship, or we may glorify the husk to the neglect of the kernel, and the shapely bark may conceal a rotten tree. Also, unprofitable arguing is abandoned for mutual comfort and service. Engaged upon the higher business of the kingdom, petty details sink into their rightful insignificance, and minor matters settle themselves. (S. Aldridge)

Rom. 14:17 **For** (explanatory conj.) **the royal power** (Subj. Nom.; kingdom, royal family aristocracy in this dispensation, the essence of the Christian way of life) **of God** (Poss. Gen.) **does not** (neg. adv.) **consist of** (εἰμί, ΠΑΙ3S, Gnomic; is not concerned with external rituals, but

with internal spiritual life) eating (Pred. Nom.; solid food, meat) and (connective conj.) drinking (Pred. Nom.; alcoholic beverages), but (contrast conj.) righteousness (Pred. Nom.; imputed at salvation) and (connective conj.) prosperity (Pred. Nom.; imputed at maturity) and (connective conj.) inner happiness (Pred. Nom.; imputed upon the attainment of SG status) by means of the Holy Spirit (Dat. Ref.) (Instr. Means),

^{WHO} **Romans 14:17** οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ βρῶσις καὶ πόσις ἀλλὰ δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ χαρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ·

^{VUL} **Romans 14:17** non est regnum Dei esca et potus sed iustitia et pax et gaudium in Spiritu Sancto

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:18** Because the person who serves Christ in this manner [spiritual rather than material] is well thought of by God [as a result of a successful priesthood] and respected by men [as a result of a successful ambassadorship].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:18** For the one who in this serves the Christ is well pleasing to God, and because having met the specifications is approved by men.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:18** For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The believer who serves Christ (Customary Present tense) by concentrating on divine, spiritual protocol rather than by legalistic, material means, has a two-fold benefit. He is well thought of by God because he is fulfilling the modus vivendi of the believer's priesthood, and he is well thought of because he is fulfilling the modus vivendi of the believer's ambassadorship. These benefits are only attainable by adhering to precisely correct protocol during the Church Age. They are not attainable by any human substitutes, such as philosophy, psychology, New Age worship, or other 21st century "isms."

Being accepted by God is far more important than the respect of men, would you not agree? It is possible to translate the conjunction "kai" in the ascensive, so that respect from men follows (translated "even" instead of "and") being well-pleasing to God. This optional translation places greater emphasis on your priestly activities before embarking on your ambassadorial responsibilities. However, since I have no issue with the connective use of "kai" in this passage, I leave the passage with the understanding that both internal and external functions are important in the Christian's life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Instead of occupying themselves about outward actions, ceremonial observances, and ritual distinctions, Christians are in this passage recommended to aspire to those virtues which are of highest importance in the sight of God, and which bear the most powerfully upon the welfare of society. Christianity creates a spiritual kingdom. It is not, like many human religions, a system of regulations as to conduct or observances. It is a kingdom conceived in the Divine mind, and worthy of its Divine Author; a kingdom established upon the mediation of a Divine Saviour; a kingdom consisting in the rule of spiritual powers and principles. It is a kingdom whose subjects are governed in their whole life by the power it introduces and applies to their inner nature. (J. Barmby)

Christianity is internal, not external, and its main principles are righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. (W.G. Thomas) The apostle has contrasted that preoccupation with ceremonial regulation, which is apt to be the mark of religious people, with the awareness of spiritual realities, which is the gift of true faith. He has pointed out that we can serve Christ either by observing or by disregarding the rules which govern marginal issues; but we cannot be indifferent to the essential qualities of the triumphant life. We do not have the option of ignoring righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The inwardness of true discipleship stands in opposition to any formal pattern of behavior. The spiritual quality of a life is determined largely by its controlling motives. (J. Knox)

Rom. 14:18 Because (causal conj.) the person (Subj. Nom.) who serves (δουλεύω, PAPtc.NSM, Customary, Substantival) Christ (Dat. Adv.) in this manner (Instr. Manner; by concentrating on the spiritual rather than the material) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) well thought of (Pred. Nom.; pleasing, acceptable; *modus vivendi* of the believer's priesthood) by God (Instr. Agency) and (continuative conj.) respected (Pred. Nom.; esteemed, approved, tried and true) by men (Instr. Agency; *modus vivendi* of the believer's ambassadorship).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:18** ὁ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ δουλεύων τῷ Χριστῷ εὐάρεστος τῷ θεῷ καὶ δόκιμος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις

^{VUL} **Romans 14:18** qui enim in hoc servit Christo placet Deo et probatus est hominibus

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:19** **Consequently, then, let us continue to pursue prosperous things [those that provide spiritual momentum], especially those related to the edification complex [doctrinal structure in the soul] from which comes blessing to each other of the same kind [encourage fellow believers to pursue spiritual protocol].**

^{KW} **Rom. 14:19** Accordingly, therefore, the things of peace let us be eagerly and earnestly seeking after, and the things which edify, which edification is with a view to the edification of one another.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:19** Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because we want God to think well of us and fellow believers to respect and approve us, let us continue to pursue (Iterative Present tense) profitable things that move us progressively from one stage of spiritual growth to another. Paul encourages us (Hortatory Subjunctive mood) to move from the first stage of spiritual self-esteem (through testing) into the second stage of spiritual maturity. This is what R.B. Thieme, Jr. has often called “moving from supergrace A to supergrace B by successfully applying doctrine when tested in no-man’s land.”

The intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine in the filling of the Holy Spirit builds a spiritual complex (Latin: edification) or structure (building) in our soul. As we build upon our doctrinal foundation, and successfully apply what we are learning from God’s Word, we not only grow spiritually, but we also bless others in our periphery by association. And while we are living the precisely correct spiritual protocol bequeathed to us during the Church Age, we are to encourage our fellow believers to make the same journey with us.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Edification, or building up, is that of His grace in the weak Christian’s soul, growing, it may be, to full assurance of faith (1 Cor. 3:9). Upset not the rising structure, which is God’s own, as you may do by putting a stumbling-block in the weak brother’s way. (J. Barmby) Edify is to build a house, erect a building, to build up, to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, and blessedness. Literally, “things of edification,” that, namely, which is with reference to one another. The definite article thus points Paul’s reference to individuals rather than to the Church as a whole. (K. Wuest)

These are safe tests to apply to all our intercourse with our fellow saints. Will it provoke strife? If so, let us avoid it. Will it edify? If not, let us forego it. (A.E. Knoch) Although happiness is the ultimate objective of God’s game plan, happiness is strictly a by-product. God’s plan calls us to pursue truth in the sphere of divine power. There is no shortcut. The shortcut to happiness is the long road to misery. “Edification” refers to erecting a structure in the soul, the believer’s inner strength which is completed upon reaching the penthouse. All believers share the common objective of spiritual maturity and under the royal family honor code are bound to avoid what would distract another believer from reaching the goal. Happiness comes to those who keep faithfully learning and applying Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 14:19 Consequently (inferential illative particle), then (transitional conj.), let us continue to pursue (διώκω,

PASubj.1P, Iterative, Hortatory; follow after, chase, strive for) **prosperous** (Gen. Rel.; profitable, peaceful) **things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; those which move us from SGA through No-Man's Land into SGB), **especially** (explicative) **those** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **related to the edification complex** (Gen. Rel.; building in the soul) **from which** (Abl. Source) **comes blessing** (ellipsis, phrase supplied) **to each other of the same kind** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; encourage fellow believers).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:19** ἄρα οὖν τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης διώκωμεν καὶ τὰ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς τῆς εἰς ἀλλήλους

^{VUL} **Romans 14:19** itaque quae pacis sunt sectemur et quae aedificationis sunt in invicem

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:20** Stop interfering with the plan of God [replacing the principles of grace mechanics with legalism] for the sake of food [unimportant external precepts]. On the one hand, all things [categories of food] are clean [sanctified by God through prayer], but on the other hand, evil for the man [strong believer] who eats with offense [flaunting his spiritual freedom in front of a weak believer].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:20** Stop on account of food ruining the work of God. All things indeed are pure. But it is evil to the man who eats so as to be a stumbling block.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:20** For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now prohibits us (Imperative mood) from interfering with the plan of God (Iterative Present tense) for weak believers. Evidently some strong Roman believers were carelessly invalidating any forward momentum (Latin: destroying) that weak believers in their neighborhood were making. The plan of God for all believers is to build a complex or structure of doctrine in the soul so that each believer has “the mind of Christ.” There is precisely correct protocol for doing this. Some Roman believers were inadvertently tearing down the doctrinal foundation in the soul of weak believers by flaunting their freedom to eat meat in front of legalistic vegetarians.

Paul has already given permission to believers to eat anything, as long as they have prayed over it for the purpose of sanctifying their minds and bodies. He contrasts this freedom to eat anything without guilt with the evil practice of deliberately causing the weak believer to stumble in confusion and chaos. The strong believer who arrogantly flaunts his freedom in front of a weak believer is interfering with God's plan of sanctification for the weak believer. Some Roman believers were eating meat (Pictorial Present tense) in a manner which upset fellow believers (Latin: offending) that did not yet understand the grace principles around such secondary activities.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This phrase eliminates any form of eating and drinking as a legalistic taboo, except over-indulgence or either, i.e. gluttony, drunkenness. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Also, the strong believer should not allow his superiority in Bible doctrine to hinder the growth of the weak believer. Instead, he should be tolerant in impersonal love. (ibid)

Right + Right = Right

[Flexibility in eating] + [correct mental attitude] = Right

Right + Wrong = Wrong

[Flexibility in eating] + [guilt complex] = Wrong

Rom. 14:20 Stop (neg. adv.) interfering with (καταλύω, PAImp.2S, Iterative, Prohibition; demolish, destroy, invalidate, annul, abolish) the plan (Acc. Dir. Obj.; work, inadvertantly tearing down the ECS which God is helping you build in the soul) of God (Gen. Rel.) for the sake of (improper prep.; on account of, for this reason) food (Gen. Disadv.; eating meat). On the one hand (correlative conj., comparative), all things (Subj. Nom.; categories of food) are (ellipsis, verb supplied) clean (Pred. Nom.; ceremonially pure, guiltless, free from impurities after being sanctified by God through prayer), but on the other hand (adversative conj., antithesis), evil (Pred. Nom.) for the man (Dat. Disadv.; the strong believer) who eats (ἐσθίω, PAPtc.DSM, Pictorial, Substantival) with offense (Abl. Means, Gen. Attend. Circum.; giving the weaker believer an opportunity to stumble in confusion and chaos).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:20** μὴ ἕνεκεν βρώματος κατάλυε τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα μὲν καθαρὰ ἀλλὰ κακὸν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ διὰ προσκόμματος ἐσθίουσι

^{VUL} **Romans 14:20** noli propter escam destruere opus Dei omnia quidem munda sunt sed malum est homini qui per offendiculum manducat

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:21** It is good protocol [beneficial to the weak believer] to abstain from eating meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything else [within context] by means of which your brother [weak believer] might stumble.

^{KW} **Rom. 14:21** It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor even anything by which your brother stumbles.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:21** It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It is an honorable practice to abstain from eating (Constative Aorist tense) meat or drinking (Constative Aorist tense) adult beverages in front of weak believers. Weak believers are those who do not understand grace principles and are living under legalistic precepts from either the OT or traditions. Just because they are weak does not mean we are to treat them with contempt; we are to give them considerable latitude whenever possible. When Paul says “anything else” by which a weaker brother might stumble (Aoristic Present tense), he is outlining a principle of compassion and consideration for our weaker brethren.

Some Roman believers were still engulfed in legalism of some form or another. Apparently they had taboos around eating meat and drinking wine. Paul has no problem with either of these activities, as long as the person who is “indulging” is not offending a weak believer, and of course, as long as he is not committing the sin of drunkenness. When we are alone or are not in the presence of weak believers, we are free to pray over our food and drink and enjoy them without a guilty conscience. The phrase “anything else” is not a license to sin; it is permission to live a spiritual life of freedom from legalism, rituals, ceremonies and human viewpoint taboos.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The bracketed portion in the Latin Vulgate is not in the original Greek text. (LWB) The man of far-reaching spiritual views can accommodate himself to his less intellectual brother more readily than the latter can lay aside his prejudices and rejoice in the removal of all restrictions. Those who delight in climbing to the peaks of spiritual knowledge can learn to moderate their ardour, and sit with their fellows in happy concord in the plain, because otherwise there can be no general assembly, many being devoid of the strength and agility needful for an ascent to the summit. (S. Aldridge)

Rom. 14:21 It is (ellipsis, Subj. Nom. and verb supplied) good protocol (Pred. Nom.; honorable, considerate, beneficial to the weak believer) to abstain (neg. adv., verbal noun) from eating (ἐσθίω, AAIInf., Constative, Substantival, Articular) meat (Acc. Dir. Obj.), nor (neg. adv.) to drink (πίνω, AAIInf., Constative, Substantival) wine (Acc. Dir. Obj.), nor (neg. adv.) to do anything else (ellipsis, understood by context) by means of which (Instr. Means) your (Gen. Rel.) brother (Subj. Nom.) might stumble (προσκόπτω, PAI3S, Aoristic, Potential; take offense at).

^{WHO} **Romans 14:21** καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον μηδὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἀδελφός σου προσκόπτει

^{VUL} **Romans 14:21** bonum est non manducare carnem et non bibere vinum neque in quo frater tuus offendit [aut scandalizatur aut infirmatur]

LWB Rom. 14:22 With reference to the doctrine which you [the mature believer] possess: **Keep holding it within yourself before God. The person [mature believer] who does not place a guilt complex on himself by the things he previously approved [accepts after testing] is happy [free from religious scruples],**

KW Rom. 14:22 As for you, the faith which you have, be having to yourself in the sight of God. Spiritually prosperous is the one who does not judge himself in that which he has tested with a view to approving it should it meet specifications and, having found that it does, has placed his approval upon it.

KJV Romans 14:22 Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now advises the mature believer to keep on maintaining (Iterative Present tense) the doctrine which he possesses (Descriptive Present tense) in his soul. This means you should always have a reservoir of truth on the spiritual battle line (FLOT) for immediate application to life's problems. All believers start the Christian way of life at Ground Zero, and we all undoubtedly have thoughts and actions that we once held high that we now realize are shameful by divine standards. The believer with maximum doctrinal resources at his disposal does not need to judge himself (Tendential Present tense) for these past actions, in the harsh introspective manner attributed to Martin Luther. This legalistic flagellation accomplishes nothing in the spiritual life.

Once the principles of grace mechanics are understood, we are to live by them moving forward and not look back. The things we once held dear (Retroactive Present tense) that are now an embarrassment should be forgotten. They were forgiven on the cross and there is no value in digging them back up again. If God has eliminated them from our "ledger," why debit our account with them again? This is the beginning of happiness in God's protocol plan for the Church Age. The mature believer should have no religious (legalistic) scruples, but rather an untroubled conscience. Grace and forgiveness rules!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Bible doctrine in the soul is the standard for spiritual growth and maturity, not a believer's personality or other attributes. A pleasing personality is not a measure of greatness - Bible doctrine in the soul is. A pleasing personality often obfuscates the real person. Personality does not necessarily represent the true person. Personality is a non-essential; Bible doctrine in the soul is an essential. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Before God administers suffering for blessing, the believer must have the inner strength necessary to endure and profit from the test. In other words, the believer must have spiritual self-esteem. God will not send suffering for blessing until first the believer is confident in his relationship with God and in his own ability to use the assets that God has given him. His soul must be inculcated with Bible doctrine so that he loves God and lives by his own doctrinal thinking. (ibid)

The word translated “blessed” in this phrase means “happy” or “fortunate.” Paul himself uses it in other places to refer to the happiness of the person whose sins are forgiven (Rom. 4:7), or the person whose conscience is clear. (J. Piper) In pronouncing the strong believer “blessed” there is, however, no retraction of the leading plea of the passage. It is, rather, the blessedness of this state of mind and conscience that underscores the necessity of exercising the restraint which the weakness of others constrains. (J. Murray) Happy means spiritually prosperous. It is a rare felicity to have a conscience untroubled by scruples. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 14:22 With reference to the doctrine (Acc. Gen. Ref.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) you (Subj. Nom.; the mature believer) possess (ἔχω, PAI2S, Descriptive): Keep holding (ἔχω, PAImp.2S, Iterative, Command; maintaining) it (ellipsis, Dir. Obj. supplied) within yourself (Acc. Poss.) before God (Gen. Adv.). The person (Subj. Nom.; mature believer) who does not (neg. adv.) place a guilt complex on (κρίνω, PAPtc.NSM, Tendential, Substantival; find fault with, criticize, judge) himself (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by the things (Instr. Means) he previously approved (δοκιμάζω, PAI3S, Retroactive; examines, accepts after testing, finds worthy) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) happy (Pred. Nom.; free from religious scruples, untroubled conscience),

^{WHO} **Romans 14:22** σὺ πίστιν ἦν ἔχεις κατὰ σεαυτὸν ἔχε ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ μακάριος ὁ μὴ κρίνων ἑαυτὸν ἐν ᾧ δοκιμάζει·

^{VUL} **Romans 14:22** tu fidem habes penes temet ipsum habe coram Deo beatus qui non iudicat semet ipsum in eo quo probat

^{LWB} **Rom. 14:23** But the person [weak believer] who puts a guilt complex upon himself [over some taboo] is condemned [guilty by his own conscience] if he eats [meat], because it [eating meat] is not out from doctrine as the source [of his norms & standards] and everything [categories of food & drink] which is not eaten out from doctrine as the source [of his norms & standards] is sin [guilt as a mental attitude sin].

^{KW} **Rom. 14:23** But the one who doubts, if he eats, stands condemned because not by faith did he eat. Moreover, everything which is not of faith is sin.

^{KJV} **Romans 14:23** And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The weak believer who has an obvious tragic flaw in his spiritual life often puts a guilt complex upon himself (Customary Present tense) when he eats meat or drinks wine and does not understand the grace principles behind doing so. When he partakes in something that is a taboo according to his “fledgling” norms and standards, he is pronounced guilty

(Intensive Perfect tense) by his own conscience. This believer's soul is at odds with itself, not knowing whether he can eat meat and not be guilty of sin. If he eats or drinks something questionable while in this state of mind, he creates his own prison, so to speak.

Anything that is eaten with firm doctrinal norms and standards is acceptable to God. However, anything questionable eaten by a believer who does not have firm doctrinal standards creates (Descriptive Present tense) a mental attitude sin of guilt. The law of liberty is based on doctrinal norms and standards, so if there is no foundation or structure of doctrine in the soul, a believer sins by the simple action of eating and drinking something that is a taboo to his tender conscience. Legalism (taboos) and the law of liberty are mutually exclusive. As long as the weak believer remains immature in the faith, anything he does that is questionable to the taboos in his conscience is sin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Four tragic flaws: (1) the “non-essential image” you have created in your soul from a person in your past whom you held in high regard and now try to emulate; (2) the “arrogant presumption pattern” in which people who are brilliant in one field think they will be successful in another field though they are ignorant (particularly attributable to athletes and entertainers); (3) the “non-essential personality” in which the internal contents of the soul are overshadowed by the external fabric of a pleasing personality, or in other words: “it’s the man, not the message”; (4) the “arrogant subjectivity of overemphasizing your personal problems” when listening to the essentials of Bible doctrine which determine the reality of your life - your personal problems are non-essentials, so restrain yourself when the Bible is being taught. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

An enlightened conscience is a great blessing; it secures the liberty of the soul from bondage to the opinions of men, and from the self-inflicted pains of a scrupulous and morbid state of moral feeling; it promotes the right exercise of all the virtuous affections, and the right discharge of all relative duties. (C. Hodge) Men really sin even when they do virtuous things without the Holy Spirit, for they do them with a wicked heart. (A. Custance) Whatever is not of faith is sin. Upon the authority of God's Word, anything that is not in harmony with Scripture, no matter what it appears to be doing, is not a good work. This includes parachurch organizations, schools, dramas, concerts, gymnasiums, movies, Christmas festivities, etc. The church's only mission is to teach and spread the Word of God by the means God has appointed. Only in this manner are works good and profitable to men. (W.E. Best)

A full discussion of the problems of the termination of the Epistle to the Romans involves questions concerning the authenticity and integrity of the last chapter (or of the last two chapters), including the possibility that Paul may have made two copies of the Epistle, one with and one without Chapter 16 (Chapters 1-15 being sent to Rome and Chapters 1-16 to Ephesus). The doxology “Now to Him Who is able to strengthen you ... be glory for evermore through Jesus Christ” varies in location; traditionally, it has been printed at the end of Chapter 16, but in some witnesses it occurs at the close of Chapter 14, and in another witness at the close of Chapter 15. The Committee decided to include the doxology at its traditional place at the close of Chapter 16, but enclosed within square brackets to indicate a degree of uncertainty that it

belongs there. (B. Metzger) Some of the confusion is around the Vulgate (Latin) transmission. (LWB)

Rom. 14:23 But (contrast conj.) the person (Subj. Nom.; weak believer with an obvious tragic flaw) who puts a guilt complex upon himself (διακρίνω, PMPTc.NSM, Customary, Substantival; doubts, hesitates, deliberates, wavers, is at odds with himself over a particular food or drink) is condemned (κατακρίνω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; pronounced guilty by his own conscience; lack of doctrine creates a guilt complex in the weak believer) if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe he will, maybe he won't) he eats (έσθίω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Potential; context points to eating meat, but also includes drinking adult beverages), because (explanatory & causal conj.) it (his eating of meat or drinking of adult beverages) is (aposiopesis, verb supplied) not (neg. adv.) out from doctrine as the source (Abl. Source & Means; which should be shaping his norms and standards) and (continuative conj.) everything (Subj. Nom.; all categories of food and drink) which (Nom. Appos.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) not (neg. adv.) eaten (ellipsis, supplied from context) out from doctrine as the source (Abl. Source & Means; having divine norms and standards that define our law of liberty) is (είμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) sin (Pred. Nom.; guilt reaction as a mental attitude sin).

WHO **Romans 14:23** ὁ δὲ διακρινόμενος ἐὰν φάγη κατακέκριται ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως· πᾶν δὲ ὃ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἁμαρτία ἐστίν

VUL **Romans 14:23** qui autem discernit si manducaverit damnatus est quia non ex fide omne autem quod non ex fide peccatum est

CHAPTER 15

LWB **Rom. 15:1** Now, we [believers with doctrinal norms & standards], the strong ones [mature believers], are obligated [spiritual responsibility] to keep on bearing the weaknesses [immaturity] of the spiritually impotent ones [weak believers], not making it a practice to accommodate ourselves [we should forgo some elements of our spiritual freedom when around weak believers].

KW **Rom. 15:1** As for us, then, the strong ones, we have a moral obligation to be bearing the infirmities of those who are not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:1** We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Believers who have a well-developed edification complex of doctrine in the soul are mature believers, called “the strong ones.” Strong believers are obliged (Customary Present tense) to show consideration for weaker believers (Latin: imbeciles). There is a high level of spiritual responsibility required by God from strong believers. Responsibility goes hand-in-hand with spiritual growth. Members of the royal family must have these high standards internally and must exercise them whenever required. This is part of the ambassador function of the Church Age believer.

Strong believers are obligated to endure (Durative Present tense) the immaturity (Latin: infirmity) of weak believers, because immaturity is tough to put up with. Weak believers are weak because they are either neophytes (new believers) or they have been living in carnality and have not progressed in the spiritual life. Their understanding of the Word of God is quite limited, even if they think they have a firm grasp of its contents. Weak believers are usually legalistic and inflexible in their assessments of what is true and false. In many cases, inconsequential things are elevated to paramount importance; things which are right are made wrong.

Strong believers are encouraged (Infinitive of Purpose) to forgo some legitimate freedoms when in the presence of weak believers. We should continue this practice (Iterative Present tense) with common sense. If a weak believer is deliberately trying to put a yoke of legalism on others, we must ignore those efforts and hold true to our doctrinal understanding. Paul always used spiritual common sense when discerning when to uphold the freedom and liberty of the believer and when to forgo certain legitimate activities so as not to cause dissent with weak believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The mature believer can be flexible because he knows that in due time the continued intake of doctrine will bring the immature believer into line with the truth. All the mature believer must do when faced with an overzealous, undertaught, new believer is recall how many people tolerated his own half-formed ideas while he was growing spiritually! Bible doctrine is the answer, but no one learns everything at once. Flexibility in the nonessentials means toleration; toleration means live and let live. Toleration under the honor code means live and let live as unto the Lord. A three point outline of this chapter:

- A. Maturity function of the Royal Family Honor Code (verses 1-12)
- B. Three principles for momentum to spiritual maturity (verses 13-15)
- C. Apostolic function of the Royal Family Honor Code (verses 16-33)

Minimum Bible doctrine + Maximum arrogance = Inconsequential opinions on the non-essential things in life. Bible doctrine is always the issue, not ourselves. You cannot have comfort and encouragement from doctrine you do not have in your soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Many are weak mentally; their ability is small, their education has been neglected. And some are weak spiritually – babes in Christ, though perhaps men in years. Such are not to be despised or derided by such as are strong. Deal patiently, tenderly, forbearingly with such as these. This does not mean that we are to gratify all his foolish whims and caprices – to try, as some do, to please everybody at all costs; to flatter the vain, and cajole the ignorant, and humor the petulant. (J. Barmby) Christ is the most brilliant example in this as in all else. What marvelous condescension He displayed in His dealings with His disciples, whose weakness and lack of faith was a constant source of distress to Him! If He could bridge the great gulf between Him and His disciples, surely we can bear with those whose infirmities we all share. (A.E. Knoch)

The strong here are believers whose understanding of the Word frees them from religious scruples. The weaker are believers whose understanding of the Word is so limited, that they consider some things which are right in themselves, to be wrong. When an informed believer forgoes an action which he knows is right, but which a weaker Christian thinks to be wrong, and does it for the sake of not offending the weaker Christian, he curtails his own freedom of action, denies himself something that is legitimately his, and this is a burden to him. (K. Wuest) We are all royalty, yet no two believers are equal. Even among royalty some are stronger and more advanced than others by virtue of their more consistent perception and application of Bible doctrine. Maturity imposes the obligation of honorable, generous, and responsible behavior that is the concomitant of high rank or noble birth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Because someone insists on retaining burdens which we are able to discard, we are not entitled to disregard his plight. Consequently, though we may be free ourselves, we are willing to treat with patient forbearance the failings of the weak. At times this may be galling for us, but we must remember that it is scarcely pleasant for them. This will demand of us patience in the face of his exasperating limitations, as well as freedom from resentment on account of the restrictions which he proposes to lay on us as well as on himself. (J. Knox) Paul continues to address the strong believers, and for the first time, he names them, implicitly including himself among them. Conversely, then, those whom Paul here designates as the weak are believers who are incapable of realizing that their faith in Christ has freed them from certain ritual observances. (D. Moo)

Rom. 15:1 **Now** (transitional conj.), **we** (Subj. Nom.; members of the spiritual pivot, believers whose understanding of the Word frees them from religious scruples), **the strong ones** (Nom. Appos.; mature believers, who consist of a mere 0.5% of all believers), **are obligated** (ὀφείλω, PAIIP, Customary; responsibility goes hand-in-hand with spiritual growth, aristocracy must have high standards) **to keep on bearing** (ἀσθένεια, PAInf., Durative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; enduring, put up with their immaturity) **the weaknesses** (βαστάζω, APInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb;

ineptitude) of the spiritually impotent ones (Obj. Gen.; powerless; because their understanding of the Word is so limited, they are inflexible in their scruples, considering some things which are right in themselves to be wrong), i.e. (emphatic conj.), not (neg. adv.) making it a practice to accomodate (ἀρέσκω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose, Intended Result) ourselves (Dat. Disadv.; we should forgo legitimate acts when weak believers are present).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:1** Ὁφείλομεν δὲ ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοὶ τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν καὶ μὴ ἑαυτοῖς ἀρέσκειν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:1** debemus autem nos firmiores inbecillitates infirmorum sustinere et non nobis placere

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:2** Let each one of us [mature believers] accommodate his fellow man [courtesy & good manners toward those in your periphery] for the purpose of the good [divine protocol plan] towards an edification complex [helping them build a spiritual structure in their souls],

^{KW} **Rom. 15:2** Each one of us, let him be pleasing his neighbor with a view to his good, resulting in his edification.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:2** Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an Imperative of Entreaty, asking every mature believer to extend common courtesy and good manners (Customary Present tense) to those in our periphery. This is a call to use impersonal love towards immature believers who do not yet have a doctrinal foundation in their soul. “Neighbors” is a reference to other believers in close proximity, those you come into contact with on a regular basis. The over-arching plan is to adhere to divine protocol for the Christian way of life, often called experiential sanctification.

Mature believers are called upon to help immature believers build a spiritual structure in their soul, which structure is made from Bible doctrine. The intake, metabolism, and application of Bible doctrine is our #1 priority in life after salvation. R.B. Thieme, Jr. expresses this progressive concept with the algebraic formula: X+Y+Z=PPG. Joseph Dillow expands on this formula: Justification salvation + sanctification salvation + glorification salvation = God’s plan for the Church Age believer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When a difference arises between two parties, who are accustomed to think and act together, there is danger of each party becoming bitter and overbearing, and resolving to thrust its own convictions and preferences upon the other. Paul teaches us that the true remedy for this evil is

unselfishness, and that the true motive to unselfishness is to be found in the cross of Christ. How often do we find Christians trying to thrust their own views, their own tastes, their own practices, upon their neighbors, whether these are willing or unwilling. (J. Barmby)

This must not be interpreted to mean that we are always to defer to the whims and wishes of others, not even those of fellow believers, and thus always follow the course of action that pleases them. To please men is not a principle of the believer's life (Gal. 1:10). Paul provides us with an example of the pleasing he has in mind (I Cor. 10:33) and in the present passage is to be restricted to that situation dealt with. (J. Murray) God has destined those to whom he has granted superior knowledge to convey instruction to the ignorant, so to those whom he makes strong he commits the duty of supporting the weak by their strength. (J. Calvin)

The pleasing one's neighbor in this context refers to the act of the believer forgoing a legitimate act because that weaker Christian thinks it is wrong. It pleases him because it removes a source of temptation to him to do that thing, and makes his attempt to live a life pleasing to God easier. But the stronger Christian is to do this only in the instance where the weaker Christian would be edified or built up in the Christian life. (K. Wuest) The virtue of forbearance should not be confused with niceness. We may, for example, be nice when we should be just, or be agreeable when we should be truthful, or be flattering when honesty and integrity are demanded. The good, as any physician will tell you, is not always what the patient wants to hear, and a Christian, as well as a physician, is worthy of the name only where the good of the other prevails over any other interest. (J. Edwards)

Rom. 15:2 Let each one (Subj. Nom.) of us (Gen. Spec.; mature believers) accommodate (ἀρέσκω, PAImp.3S, Customary, Permission, Entreaty; common courtesy, good manners, impersonal love) his (Instr. Assoc.) fellow man (Dir. Obj.; those in proximity to you, neighbor) for the purpose of the good (Acc. Purpose; X+Y+Z = Protocol Plan of God) towards an edification complex (Acc. Result; helping them build a spiritual structure in their souls),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:2** ἕκαστος ἡμῶν τῷ πλησίον ἀρεσκέτω εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς οἰκοδομίην·

^{VUL} **Romans 15:2** unusquisque vestrum proximo suo placeat in bonum ad aedificationem

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:3** For even Christ did not accommodate Himself, but as it stands written [in Psalm 69:9]: The insults of those [unbelievers] who reviled You [God the Father] came to fall upon Me [Jesus Christ].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:3** For even the Christ did not please Himself, but even as it stands written, The reproaches of those who reproached you fell upon me.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:3** For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even Christ did not accommodate (Constative Aorist tense) Himself, as it stands written (Intensive Perfect tense) in Psalm 69:9. The disgraceful insults (Latin: improprieties) from unbelievers who reviled (Pictorial Present tense) God the Father in the end came to fall (Culminative Aorist tense) upon the Lord Jesus Christ. The oneness between the Father and the Son is an example of how we should be at peace with and in close agreement with our fellow believers whenever possible.

Rom. 15:3 For (explanatory conj.) even (ascensive) Christ (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. adv.) accommodate (ἀρέσκω, AAI3S, Constative) Himself (Dat. Disadv.), but (adversative conj.), as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Psalms 69:9): "The insults (Subj. Nom.; reproach, disgrace) of those (Adv. Gen. Ref.; unbelievers) who reviled (ὀνειδίζω, PAPtc.GPM, Pictorial, Substantival, Articular; insulted, reproached) You (Acc. Dir. Obj.; God the Father) came to fall (ἐπιπίπτω, AAI3P, Culminative) upon Me (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ)."

^{WHO} **Romans 15:3** καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρεσεν· ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται Οἱ ὀνειδισμοὶ τῶν ὀνειδίζόντων σε ἐπέπεσαν ἐπ' ἐμέ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:3** etenim Christus non sibi placuit sed sicut scriptum est inproperia inproperantium tibi ceciderunt super me

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:4** Moreover, everything [in the Old Testament] written in earlier times [during the Age of Israel] was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and through encouragement from the Scriptures, we might repeatedly obtain confidence.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:4** For whatever things were written, in order that through the patience and through the encouragement arising from the scriptures we might be having hope.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:4** For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Everything in the Old Testament which was written in times past (Constative Aorist tense) was not only written for Israel, but was also written (Culminative Aorist tense) for the benefit of teaching Church Age believers. If there were no lessons to be learned from the O.T. we would only have the N.T. as our Bible. But there is considerable value in learning the O.T. so that we might repeatedly obtain confidence (Potential Subjunctive mood) from its teachings through perseverance and encouragement. If we steadfastly

study the O.T. we have the opportunity to receive patient endurance, comfort, consolation and confidence through its illustrative, historical accounts and words of wisdom.

Do we automatically receive this confidence by merely paying lip-service to the Old Testament? No, the Ablative of Means and the Potential Subjunctive mood both point to this confidence being obtained by continual acts (Iterative Present tense) of volition. It is by means of studying the Old Testament (steadfast, patient endurance) and encouraging ourselves through daily study that we become confident in who and what we are according to divine viewpoint. This is a continuous process known as experiential sanctification; it is not a one-shot, instantaneous “deal.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Progressive: perseverance leads to comfort which leads to confidence. You cannot skip perseverance, search the Scriptures for comfort, and expect to ever possess true confidence. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Do not forget that it is impossible to find God apart from His Word. The Holy Spirit does not come to any soul independently of the Bible. He dwells in the minds of those who trust in Christ. He leads us on from day to day, but He will never lead us without the Word, and He will always lead us into the deeper patience and comfort of the Scriptures. (D.G. Barnhouse) Anyone who diligently studies Scripture, asking God to apply its teachings to his heart and life, will be hurt by it again and again, for he will become more and more conscious of the fact that the distance between his own conduct and the ideal held before him in Holy Writ is great indeed. Nevertheless, he must pray for strength to persist in this study, learning more and more how to apply it to his life. Those who by God’s grace and power persist in such a practical study will discover that these sacred writings, written in former times, not only hurt but also heal. In fact, they are filled with encouraging promises, which, when accepted by God-given faith, result in the birth and growth, within men’s hearts, of firmly rooted Christian hope. (W. Hendriksen)

Herein is another secret of power in the Christian life. Whatever grace is needed is found in Holy Scripture. It was intended for this very purpose, and it always accomplishes its end when properly used. It contains truth because it is a Divine revelation. It assures us of God’s pardon as our consolation, God’s presence as our cheer, God’s power as our confidence. It reveals His will as our rule, His grace as our provision, and in its record of the life of God’s people it shows that what has been done can be done again. It is ever pointing onward to that blessed hope, and this provides an anchor which keeps us from drifting, and an helmet which shields us from danger. The more thoroughly, therefore, we become intellectually and spiritually acquainted with the Bible as the Word of God, the more deeply it will affect our character and transform our life. There is nothing in Christianity so potent for Christian living as a daily, definite, first-hand meditation of the Word of God. It is as impossible to exaggerate its power, as it is impossible to over-estimate the loss that accrues when our Christian life is not supported, sustained, and guided every day by this close contact with Holy Scripture. (Griffith Thomas)

Rom. 15:4 Moreover (transitional conj.), everything (Subj. Nom.; in the O.T. Scriptures) written in earlier times (προγράφων, API3S, Constative; during the Age of Israel) was

written (γράφω, API3S, Culminative) for our (Acc. Poss.) instruction (Acc. Purpose), so that (result conj.) through perseverance (Abl. Means; fortitude, steadfastness, patient endurance) and (consecutive conj.) through encouragement (Abl. Means; exhortation, comfort, consolation) from the Scriptures (Abl. Source), we might repeatedly obtain (ἔχω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Potential) confidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:4** ὅσα γὰρ προεγράφη [πάντα] εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἐγράφη ἵνα διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχωμεν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:4** quaecumque enim scripta sunt ad nostram doctrinam scripta sunt ut per patientiam et consolationem scripturarum spem habeamus

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:5** Now, may the God of perseverance and encouragement reward you [members of the royal family] with the same thinking [establishment principles & doctrinal rationales] one with another [function of impersonal love] according to the standards of Christ Jesus [divine viewpoint],

^{KW} **Rom. 15:5** Now, the God of the patience and the encouragement give to you to be thinking the same things among one another according to Christ Jesus,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:5** Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses two anthropopathisms to describe personality traits of God: perseverance and encouragement. Why are these anthropopathisms and not attributes of deity per se? God does not need to exercise perseverance nor does He need to encourage (Latin: solace) Himself; these are terms of accommodation, in which He ascribes human characteristics to Himself in order to communicate the concept of compassion towards us. And the two characteristics He mentions are the exact characteristics mentioned in the prior verse as being rewards given (Constative Aorist tense) to those who study the Bible on a daily basis – particularly the O.T. in this example.

Every member of the royal family of God is encouraged to study the Word of God. This is not a privilege for a certain few, but for every believer-priest before God. By learning the establishment principles and doctrinal rationales in Scripture, our thinking gradually becomes closer and closer to each other, i.e. true fellowship. The divine standards of Christ Jesus are infused in our souls and we come to have the same thinking as our fellow believers on a host of topics. The personal love between the Father and the Son comes from complete agreement within the Godhead on all things. While we begin by utilizing

impersonal love towards our fellow believers, as we grow in grace and knowledge, that impersonal love may eventually become personal love.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The error of the evangelical church is to strive for an identical pattern of looks and behavior among its members. Some groups train their members in such a way that they end up looking and even speaking alike. Others establish codes of behavior to determine what may and may not be done. Anyone who deviates from these patterns is immediately suspect and may even be judged to be backsliding. This is not what either Jesus or Paul intended. (J. Boice)

The virtues, then, of the Christian character are as much the fruit of the Spirit of God as faith is His gift. Everything good in the man of God is of God: all his sins are his own. When, therefore, we are in straits, difficulties, or troubles, we ought to look to God for patience to bear what He may see good to lay upon us, and for consolation under the burden. (R. Haldane) The method of our prayer must be first for truth, and then for peace; for such is the method of the wisdom that is from above. It is first pure, then peaceable. This is to be likeminded according to Christ Jesus. (M. Henry)

Rom. 15:5 Now (continuative; using two *anthropopathisms*), may the God (Subj. Nom.) of perseverance (Descr. Gen.; patience, endurance, fortitude) and (connective conj.) encouragement (Descr. Gen.; comfort, exhortation) reward (δίδωμι, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative; give back, yield) you (Dat. Adv.; every member of the royal family of God) with the same (Acc. Spec.) thinking (φρονέω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Intended Result; establishment principles and doctrinal rationales) one with another (Dat. Adv.; reciprocal function of impersonal love) according to the standards of Christ Jesus (Prep. Acc.; divine viewpoint),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:5** ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως δώη ὑμῖν τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν ἀλλήλοις κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:5** Deus autem patientiae et solacii det vobis id ipsum sapere in alterutrum secundum Iesum Christum

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:6** So that with one motivation [unanimous accord] by one message [Bible doctrine from one's pastor-teacher] you might honor God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:6** In order that with one mind and one mouth you may keep on glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:6** That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When believers are saturated with Bible doctrine, they end up sharing divine viewpoint on all facets of life. The more we study the Word and correctly apply its teachings to life, the more we come together in Christ. We gradually develop a unison between each other according to divine viewpoint. Our thoughts become His thoughts, and as a result His thoughts bind us together in unanimous accord. More than anything else in life, we honor (Potential Subjunctive mood) God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ when we study the Word. We honor God as our inculcation of doctrine transforms our thinking to divine viewpoint. This is the highest form of worship revealed to man.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul describes himself in 2 Timothy 1:11 as the apostle of the nations. He made an agreement with Peter and John in Galatians 2:9 that they should go to the circumcision while he went to the nations. He was severed from the rest in order to fulfill this ministry. As a result all the truth for the nations at the present time comes only through the apostle Paul. Those who wish to be established in present truth should master his epistles, especially Ephesians. After they have learned the mysteries or secrets in his writings and scaled the heights to which he alone can guide them, they never will be tempted to descend to the level which is found in our Lord's earthly ministry, and in its continuation by the twelve, as recorded in the book of Acts and in the epistles from their pens. (A.E. Knoch)

The close relationship of God to the Scriptures is clearly indicated. Patience and comfort are derived from the Scriptures and they are also derived from God. There is no disjunction. The Scriptures are the abiding Word of God and therefore the living Word. It is through their means that God imparts to us the patience and comfort that are His. Paul's thought cannot be adjusted to any other view than that the Scriptures sustain to God that abiding relation that they themselves are His Word. (J. Murray) It is not necessary that Christians think exactly alike on every subject. But it is necessary that in the lives of all God's children the love of Christ Jesus be reflected and His will be done. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 15:6 So that (purpose conj.) with one motivation (Adv., unanimous accord, together, in unison) by one (Dat. Measure) message (Instr. Means; Bible doctrine from one's pastor-teacher, voice) you might honor (δοξάζω, PASubj., Customary, Potential; glorify) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.), even (ascensive conj.) the Father (Acc. Rel.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. Rel.).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:6** ἵνα ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι δοξάζητε τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:6** ut unanimes uno ore honorificetis Deum et Patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:7** **Therefore, keep on receiving one another of the same kind [fellow believers], just as Christ also received us: for the glory of God [the Father].**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:7** Wherefore, be receiving one another even as also the Christ received us, with a view to the glory of God.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:7** Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands us (Imperative mood) to keep on accepting (Iterative Present tense) our fellow believers, both weak and strong. All of us should be learning, metabolizing and applying Bible doctrine on a daily basis. All of us should be exhibiting impersonal (virtue) love toward our fellow believers as we progress in experiential sanctification. We should recognize that no two people are at the same stage of spiritual growth, therefore everyone should receive common courtesy as they advance in God's plan. Jesus Christ accepted us (Constative Aorist tense) for the glory of God the Father when we did not know Him. We should likewise accept each other, since Christ has accepted us all.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some Christians think they will succeed in bringing others to their view of the truth by exposing the errors of those who differ from them. Consequently, we have bitter controversies between the various denominations, because Christians will persist in emphasizing the points on which they differ, rather than the points – often far more numerous and more important – on which they agree. To draw nearer to Christ, and to draw one another nearer to Christ, this is the true peace. (C. Irwin)

The “us” covers both parties in the Church, however they are distinguished; if Christ received both, they are bound to receive each other. (K. Wuest) God keeps each believer alive to advance to maturity in the divine dynasphere. Under the honor code, therefore, you must persevere in the perception and application of Bible doctrine. You must submit to the authority of your pastor-teacher, but this also means that you must demonstrate courtesy, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity toward those in the congregation who may be at a different stage of spiritual growth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:7 **Therefore** (inferential particle), **keep on receiving** (προσλαμβάνω, PMImp. 2P, Iterative, Command, Reciprocal, Deponent; accept) **one another of the same kind**

(Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers: weak and strong), **just as** (comparative particle) **Christ** (Subj. Nom.) **also** (adjunctive) **received** (προσλαμβάνω, AMI3S, Constativ, Deponent; accepted) **us** (Acc. Dir. Obj.): **for the glory** (Acc. Purpose; honor) **of God** (Poss. Gen.; the Father).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:7** Διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς προσελάβετο ἡμᾶς εἰς δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:7** propter quod suscipite invicem sicut et Christus suscepit vos in honorem Dei

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:8** For I report: Christ was made a minister to the circumcision [Israel] on behalf of the Truth [doctrine] of God, so that He might confirm [guarantee] the promises [the unfulfilled, unconditional covenants] unto the fathers [the O.T. writers],

^{KW} **Rom. 15:8** For I am saying, Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of God's truth, resulting in the confirmation of the promises to the fathers,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:8** Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This acceptance of our fellow believers, weak or strong in doctrine, is supported by way of an illustration of the unconditional covenants. Christ was made (Consummative Perfect tense) a minister to the uncircumcision, the nation of Israel, on behalf of the doctrine and integrity of God. He was made a minister to Israel so that He might establish the future status of the nation (Constativ Aorist tense) and ensure the divine promises are fulfilled. The O.T. writers described at great length the unfulfilled, unconditional covenants: Abrahamic, Davidic, Palestinian and New. Christ came to ensure their ultimate fulfillment.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The theocratic message was limited to Israel; it was announced only to Israel and was authenticated by signs and miracles ... yet the establishment of the theocratic kingdom depended upon the repentance of the nation, the recognition of John the Baptist as the promised fore-runner, and the reception of Jesus Christ as the theocratic king. (ibid) Paul has a double object. He writes to remind the Gentiles that it is through the Jews that they are called, the Jews that the aim and purpose of their existence is the calling of the Gentiles. The Gentiles must remember that Christ became a Jew to save them; the Jew that Christ came among them in order that all the families of the earth might be blessed: both must realize that the aim of the whole world is to proclaim God's glory. (Sanday & Headlam)

Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. (S. Johnson) God presented Himself first to the children of Israel. He gave them very special promises which have never been revoked, since the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29). For instance, the Lord told Moses to kill one lamb for the nation of Israel on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, foreshadowing that time when God would restore Israel to the land and rule the world through that nation. (D.G. Barnhouse) There could be no universal blessings of the Abrahamic covenant applied to the Gentiles until Israel had experienced the realization of the theocratic kingdom, in which kingdom and in whose King the nations would be blessed. (J.D. Pentecost)

Rom. 15:8 For (explanatory conj.) I report (λέγω, PA1IS, Static; by way of illustration): Christ (Subj. Acc.) was made (γίνομαι, Perf.PInf., Consummative, Absolute, Deponent; created, established) a minister (Acc. Dir. Obj.; servant with authority) to the circumcision (Obj. Gen.; Israel) on behalf of the Truth (Acc. Gen. Ref.; doctrine, integrity) of God (Poss. Gen.), so that He might confirm (βεβαιώω, AAInf., Constative, Purpose, Articular; establish the future status of, prove reliable, guaranteed security) the promises (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the unfulfilled, unconditional covenants: Abrahamic, Davidic, Palestinian, New) unto the fathers (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the O.T. writers),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:8** λέγω γὰρ Χριστὸν διάκονον γεγενῆσθαι περιτομῆς ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων

^{VUL} **Romans 15:8** dico enim Christum Iesum ministrum fuisse circumcisionis propter veritatem Dei ad confirmandas promissiones patrum

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:9** **And so that on behalf of mercy, the Gentiles might praise the reputation of God [Jesus Christ], just as it stands written [in Psalm 18:49]: Because of this [deliverance from enemies], I [David] will praise You [the Father] among the Gentiles, and I will sing hymns to Your Name [the Lord Jesus Christ].**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:9** And [resulting] in the Gentiles, on behalf of His mercy, glorifying God; even as it stands written, Because of this I will openly confess to you among the Gentiles and in your Name sing.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:9** And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because of the mercy shown to the nation Israel with reference to the unconditional covenants, Gentiles are now able to praise the reputation of God for His faithfulness. He did not change His mind about Israel and cast her away forever. He had mercy on her like

He has mercy on all of us who believe in Jesus Christ. We know our security is eternal because Israel's security is eternal. God does not change His mind and cast us off, so we are able to highly esteem His character and plan. Paul quotes a passage which is written (Intensive Perfect tense) in the Psalms.

David promises to praise the Father (Predictive Future tense) in front of the Gentiles. He also promises to sing hymns (Predictive Future tense) to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ among the Gentiles. David promised to do these things because, as a type of Christ, he was fulfilling his mission to evangelize Gentiles as well as Jews. And David was no bad singer; as we know from the Psalms, he not only played a variety of musical instruments, but he also was an accomplished songwriter. He used these God-given talents to publicly praise God and to evangelize both Jews and Gentiles.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This quotation from Psalm 18:49, with those that follow, are for scriptural confirmation of God's purpose, which has just been spoken of, to include the Gentiles in His covenanted mercies to Israel, so that they too might glorify Him. (J. Barmby) The oath-certified promises are God's promises and to their fulfillment His truth is promised. God's faithfulness cannot fail and so Christ came to vindicate and bring to effect God's faithfulness. (J. Murray)

Rom. 15:9 And (continuative conj.) so that (purpose clause) on behalf of mercy (Obj. Gen.), the Gentiles (Subj. Acc.) might praise the reputation (δοξάζω, AAInf., Constativē, Intended Result; confer honor upon, highly esteem) of God (Acc. Poss.; the Son Jesus Christ), just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Psalm 18:49): Because (causal conj.) of this (Causal Acc.; deliverance from enemies, divine blessings, and continued success as a soldier), I (David) will praise (ἐξομολογέω, FMI1S, Predictive; confess, celebrate, admit) You (Dat. Adv.; the Father) among the Gentiles (Instr. Assoc.), and (continuative conj.) I will sing hymns (ψάλλω, FAI1S, Predictive; David was a musical genius) to Your (Poss. Gen.) Name (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:9** τὰ δὲ ἔθνη ὑπὲρ ἐλέους δοξάσαι τὸν θεὸν καθὼς γέγραπται Διὰ τοῦτο ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι ἐν ἔθνεσιν καὶ τῷ ὀνοματί σου ψαλῶ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:9** gentes autem super misericordiam honorare Deum sicut scriptum est propter hoc confitebor tibi in gentibus et nomini tuo cantabo

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:10** And again [in Deut. 32:43] he [Moses] said: Be of good cheer, Gentiles, with His people [the Jews of Israel].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:10** And again he says, Rejoice, Gentiles, with His people.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:10** And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses another example from the O.T. Scriptures, this time a death song written by Moses (Historical Present tense) in Deuteronomy 32:43. Moses commands (Imperative mood) the Gentiles to take delight in (Dramatic Aorist tense) God's people, the Jews of Israel. He commands us to understand their place in God's plan for the ages, to be happy with their place in His plan, and to respond to that knowledge with good cheer. Moses did not write this as a politician operating in the flesh; he was writing under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is a verse that defends Israel against anti-Semitism.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Underlying much of the friction in the early churches must have been the presence of both Jews and Gentiles together. The Jewish Christian would have to fight hard against the temptation of religious snobbery. The Gentile Christians would tend to regard the Jew and his traditions as a hangover from the obsolete past. Over against these natural reactions Paul again makes Christ's example the Christian criterion. (F.F. Bruce)

Rom. 15:10 And (connective conj.) again (adv.; once more; Moses' death song in Deut. 32:43) he (Moses writing under the ministry of the Holy Spirit) said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical): Be of good cheer (εὐφραίνω, APImp.2P, Dramatic, Command; be happy, rejoice, take delight in, the emotions responding to intellectual content), Gentiles (Voc. Address), with His (Poss. Gen.) people (Gen. Assoc.; reference to the Jews of Israel).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:10** καὶ πάλιν λέγει Εὐφράνθητε ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:10** et iterum dicit laetamini gentes cum plebe eius

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:11** And again [in Psalm 117:1]: **Keep on praising the Lord, all you Gentiles; in fact, let all the people applaud [with maximum doctrine in the soul] Him [Jesus Christ].**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:11** And again, Be extolling, all you Gentiles, the Lord. And let all the people extol Him.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:11** And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul quotes another Psalm which commands (Imperative mood) Gentiles to keep on praising (Iterative Present tense) the Lord. This command is followed by an entreaty (Imperative mood) for both Jews and Gentiles to praise (Constative Aorist tense) the Lord Jesus Christ. This type of praise (Latin: magnify) assumes maximum doctrine in the soul as a prerequisite.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Any spiritual blessings that come to the Gentiles spring solely from the mercy of God. Nevertheless God eternally purposed to bless the Gentiles spiritually through the Lord Jesus as their Messiah and through His covenants with Israel. (J. Witmer)

Rom. 15:11 And (continuative conj.) again (Adv.; in Psalm 117:1): Keep on praising (αἰνέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command) the Lord (Acc. Dir. Obj.), all (Voc. Spec.) you (Voc. Address) Gentiles (Voc. Descr.); in fact (adjunctive; also), let (may) all (Nom. Spec.; both Jews and Gentiles) the people (Subj. Nom.) applaud (ἐπαινέω, AAImp.3P, Constative, Permission; laud, praise, requires maximum doctrine in the soul) Him (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:11** καὶ πάλιν Αἰνεῖτε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τὸν κύριον καὶ ἐπαινεσάτωσαν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ λαοί

^{VUL} **Romans 15:11** et iterum laudate omnes gentes Dominum et magnificate eum omnes populi

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:12** And again [in Isaiah 11:10], Isaiah said: There shall be a Rootspout [Jesus Christ in hypostatic union] of Jesse [emphasizes His humanity], even He [Jesus Christ] Who will arise [bodily resurrection] to rule over the Gentiles [from the 2nd advent through the millennium]; upon Him the Gentiles [mature ones] will have confidence.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:12** And again Isaiah says, There shall be a sprout out of the root of Jesse, even the One who arises to be a ruler of the Gentiles. Upon Him will the Gentiles place their hope.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:12** And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now Paul quotes Isaiah 11:10 which predicts (Future tense) that a Rootspout of Jesse will appear on the scene (Futuristic Present tense) who will rule over the Gentiles. The Rootspout represents Jesus Christ in hypostatic union. Jesse was David's father, emphasizing the importance of the virgin birth, Jesus Christ in His humanity. Jesus did fulfill this prophesy when He appeared in bodily resurrection. He will rule over the Gentiles beginning at the 2nd advent and continuing throughout the millennium. Mature

believers will indeed have confidence (Predictive Future tense) in Him; immature believers have no real confidence in Jesus Christ or anything else for that matter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“There shall be a root of Jesse.” This limits the origin of the human nature of the Messiah to the family of Jesse. “And He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles.” This determines the Messiah to be the King of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. “In Him shall the Gentiles trust.” This strictly asserts that the Gentiles would trust in the Messiah descended from Jesse. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 15:12 And (continuative conj.) again (Adv.; in Isaiah 11:10), Isaiah (Subj. Nom.) said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical): There shall be (εἶμι, FMI3S, Predictive) a Rootsprout (Pred. Nom.; Jesus Christ in hypostatic union) of Jesse (Adv. Gen. Ref.; David’s father; emphasizes the importance of the virgin birth, Jesus Christ in His humanity), even (ascensive conj.) He (Pred. Nom.; Jesus Christ) Who will arise (ἀνίστημι, PMPTc.NSM, Futuristic, Substantival; appear on the scene historically in bodily resurrection) to rule over (ἄρχω, PAInf., Futuristic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) the Gentiles (Obj. Gen.; beginning at the 2nd advent and continuing throughout the Millennium); upon Him (Dat. Adv.) the Gentiles (Subj. Nom.; mature ones) will have confidence (ἐλπίζω, FAI3P, Predictive).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:12** καὶ πάλιν Ἡσαΐας λέγει Ἔσται ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ Ἰεσσαί καὶ ὁ ἀνιστάμενος ἄρχειν ἐθνῶν ἐπ αὐτῷ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:12** et rursus Esaias ait erit radix Iesse et qui exsurget regere gentes in eo gentes sperabunt

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:13** Now, may the God [Jesus Christ] of absolute confidence [justification salvation] fill you [transfer doctrine from the left to the right lobe of the soul] to the point of overflowing [sanctification salvation] with every category of inner happiness and prosperity [as a result of spiritual advance] by means of what [Bible doctrine] we believe, so that it [every category of inner happiness & prosperity] may continue to abound to you in absolute confidence [supergrace status] by means of the power of the Holy Spirit.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:13** Now the God of the hope fill you with every joy and hope in the sphere of believing, resulting in your super-abounding in the sphere of the hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:13** Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begins his closing remarks by asking Jesus Christ to bless with abundance those who are aggressively pursuing His divine plan. He calls Jesus the God of absolute confidence, which is a reference to Phase 1 of the divine plan, justification. We have confidence because of our position in Christ. Paul hopes the Lord will fill each of us (Constative Aorist tense) with an abundance of inner happiness and prosperity. His wish is not that an instantaneous outpouring of happiness and prosperity will drop on the heads of all believers. The Voluntative Optative mood points to human volition being the deciding factor. Being “filled to the point of overflowing” is a reference to cycling doctrinal rationales from storage in our soul to application in daily life.

First, we must locate a qualified teacher and place ourselves under his ministry. We must inhale as much Bible teaching into our soul as possible, completely saturating our minds with divine viewpoint in the filling of the Holy Spirit. This intake, metabolism and application of doctrine is known as experiential sanctification. Only by fulfilling this precisely correct, divinely instituted protocol are we eventually qualified to receive inner happiness and prosperity. The inner happiness referred to here is a result of having maximum Bible doctrine in the soul. There is no shortcut. The prosperity mentioned here is a result of spiritual advance. Again, there is no shortcut.

The Ablative of Means points to Bible doctrine in the soul as the means of obtaining every category of inner happiness and prosperity. “What we believe” is called Bible doctrine. Only a verse-by-verse and categorical study of the Bible can produce (Perfective Present tense) this structure of belief in our soul. Maximum doctrine in the soul is the only way of ensuring that every category of inner happiness and prosperity may continue to abound (Iterative Present tense) in us. The purpose clause points to inner happiness and prosperity as the very reason for the existence of Bible doctrine. Some translators prefer the Locative of Sphere in this phrase, which means inner happiness and prosperity are only provided when we are living in the sphere of Bible doctrine.

Whether we speak of “means” or “sphere,” the continued intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine by the power of the Holy Spirit is the only plan that produces absolute confidence. There is no substitute; there is no shortcut. Absolute confidence is attained by continuing to follow the precisely correct protocol outlined for growth in experiential sanctification. Following His protocol plan for spiritual growth always produces results. Any attempts to find a shortcut or a substitute for some facet of His plan that we do not like results in failure. Any form of confidence we think we have derived while deviating from His plan is false.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The *source* of this life is the God of absolute hope. The *measure* of this life is that we shall be filled “with all joy and peace.” The *quality* of this life is joy and peace which He desires for us. The *condition* of this life is faith (doctrine). The *purpose* of this life is that we might abound. The

enabling of this life is divine power. The *director* of this life is the Holy Spirit. (D.G. Barnhouse) “In believing” means in the sphere of the act of habitually believing. The word “perissos” means superabundance. (K. Wuest) “Fill you” implies that there are degrees of joy and peace in the minds of Christians. Some may have a measure of these graces which do not abound in them. It is a great blessing to be filled with them; and for this blessing the Apostle prays with respect to the Christians at Rome. If there be different degrees of joy and peace, how important is it to look earnestly to God for the fullest communication of these blessings! (R. Haldane)

Paul is not saying to “keep a stiff upper lip” or “look for the silver lining” or “never, never, never give up” when he speaks of the Christian’s hope. To be hopeful is a human characteristic possessed in large measure by great men and women, and we admire it. But if that is all we are talking about in terms of our spiritual state, it would be utter deception and delusion. This is because without God, our condition is literally, thoroughly, unmistakably, and unalterably, hopeless. (J. Boice) Paul is not advocating that any Christian give up his or her liberty; he is advocating only that we be willing, for the sake of others, to give up our exercise of Christian liberty. Paul’s bottom line is the unity of the church. As we have indicated, this unity is not to be pursued at any price. (D. Moo) This hope does not indicate a weak aspiration, but a firmly rooted expectation. (W. Hendriksen)

It is often observed that, in a cultivated and reflective state of society, there is a tendency to a mournful and even desponding disposition. When people have much leisure to think, and large knowledge of human life and history, they often cherish gloomy and hopeless forebodings. Unable to resolve their own difficulties, disappointed with efforts made to improve society, they are prone to abandon themselves to skepticism, and to ask whether all things do not exist in vain. The Holy Spirit was given to banish such a state of mind, and to inspire us with cheerfulness and with hope. He is the Spirit of life, quickening the spiritually dead; the Spirit of truth, revealing the realities of the Divine character and government; the Spirit of holiness, fostering in the soul of man all pure thoughts and purposes. And our text before us the welcome truth that the Spirit of God has power to fill us with joy and peace in believing, and to cause us to abound in hope. There is no broader and more obvious distinction between Christians and unbelievers than that which is suggested by our text. The Christian, speaking generally, is the man who hopes; the infidel is the man who is hopeless. (J. Barnby)

In order to depend on God, you must be intimately aware of His attributes through understanding Bible doctrine. Your point of contact with God is His integrity. Hence, the entire Christian life can be summarized as integrity first. This total dependence on God’s justice and righteousness is called hope, the confident expectation of blessing. Such confidence motivates and sustains your spiritual momentum: you are carried to maturity by thinking, thinking under an honor code principle. Right thinking creates right motivation, and right motivation leads to right action. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:13 **Now** (transitional conj.), **may the God** (Subj. Nom.; the Lord Jesus Christ) **of absolute confidence** (Gen. Appos.; Hope 1: justification-salvation) **fill you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; function of GAP: transferring doctrine from the left

to the right lobe of the soul) to the point of overflowing (πληρώω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative; superadded, Hope2: sanctification-salvation) with every category (Gen. Spec.; total, entirety) of inner happiness (Obj. Gen.; +H, the perspective attained from having Bible doctrine in your soul) and (connective conj.) prosperity (Obj. Gen.; as a result of spiritual advance) by means of what (Instr. Means; Bible doctrine) we believe (πιστεύω, PAInf., Perfective, Result, Articular), so that it (every category of inner happiness and prosperity) may continue to abound (περισσεύω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose) to you (Acc. Purpose) in absolute confidence (Loc. Sph.; Hope2: continuation of sanctification-salvation to maturity) by means of the power (Instr. Means) of the Holy Spirit (Gen. Poss.).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:13** ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος πληρῶσαι ὑμᾶς πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ εἰρήνης ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν εἰς τὸ περισσεύειν ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος ἁγίου

^{VUL} **Romans 15:13** Deus autem spei repleat vos omni gaudio et pace in credendo ut abundetis in spe in virtute Spiritus Sancti

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:14** In fact, even I myself am convinced concerning you [mature believers in Rome], my brethren, that you [positive believers] are full of goodness [fruits of the Spirit], having been filled to the point of overflowing [abundantly instructed in doctrine] with all categories of knowledge [systematic theology], also having the ability to have a corrective influence over one another of the same kind [assisting fellow believers without invading their privacy].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:14** But I have reached a settled conviction, my brethren, even I myself, concerning you, that you yourselves are also full of goodness, having been completely full of every knowledge with the result that you are in an abiding state of fullness, able also to be admonishing one another.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:14** And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is convinced (Intensive Perfect tense) that many of the believers in Rome that he is writing to are mature believers. He calls these positive, growing believers his brethren, and tells them he knows they are (Customary Present tense) full of the fruits of the Spirit. He doesn't have to know them personally to compliment them on these things. Without exception, anyone who is following the divine protocol for the Church Age is growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and is full of goodness, i.e., the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22. This goodness, virtue, and excellence of character

may not be seen by everybody, but it is always present (Circumstantial Participle) in those who have been filled to the point of overflowing (Dramatic Perfect tense) with Bible doctrine.

Why did I restrict the first part of this verse to mature believers only? Because Paul qualifies the group of believers he is addressing with a participle that describes them as being filled with all categories of doctrine. These believers have a complete (Latin: replete) systematic theology in their soul. They have maximum doctrine on the launching pad of their mind, ready for use when any situation arises. The phrase “all categories of knowledge” eliminates those believers who only possess merely the basics or rudimentary principles of the Word of God. There is no such thing as equality in the spiritual life. Paul is not complimenting all believers in Rome; he is complimenting the mature believers in Rome. Only mature believers have the ability (Circumstantial Participle) to assist their fellow believers (Customary Present tense) without violating their privacy. Only mature believers have a reservoir of doctrine by which they may instruct others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They have advanced in God’s protocol plan of thought and integrity, producing the royal family honor functions (not deeds). (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The believer who is filled with knowledge of God experiences a change of outlook. Having shifted from the egocentric to the Christocentric, he must have a new circumference. Thinking is transformed. Your feet are both on solid ground. You do not lose touch with the simple and practical, but your mind is centered at the throne of God. (D.G. Barnhouse) They were filled with all knowledge. This no doubt refers to spiritual perception rather than mere intellectual attainment. It is only the “good” who “know.” Goodness invariably produces Christian insight, spiritual perception and a consciousness of Divine truths which cannot be obtained in any other way. (W.G. Thomas)

Knowledge is the understanding of the Christian faith and is particularly related to the capacity for instruction reflected on in the next clause. (J. Murray) “Pases gnosis” is our Christian knowledge in its entirety. “Gnosis” is used for the true knowledge which consists in a deep and comprehensive grasp of the real principles of Christianity. (Sanday & Headlam) Paul had demonstrated in this letter and elsewhere his ability to be straightforward, even almost blunt, and forceful. Yet he also had a deep concern for the feelings of others and an ability to use effective principles of interpersonal relations. (J. Witmer) The Roman Christian’s “goodness” flows from their comprehensive understanding of the Christian faith (“all knowledge”). Indeed, so complete is their understanding that they are able to admonish one another. (D. Moo)

A strong faith is not built on a weak understanding; those who will not struggle with the mysteries of their life are scarcely likely to discover the power which unravels their bewildering tangles. In a day when any easy panacea serves as a substitute for honest thought, it is sobering to remember that Paul did not expect to build strong churches out of people who were too lazy to think. (J. Knox) The ability to instruct one another presupposes that the members of the church will have a sufficient knowledge of the faith to communicate it to others, and the disposition

gladly to undertake the task. Anyone devoid of the necessary knowledge cannot teach; anyone destitute of the goodness which Paul has mentioned will not even try. (ibid) It is Paul's courteous as well as kindly way to compliment those to whom he writes on what he believes to be good in them, and to cling to a good opinion of them, even where he has some misgivings, or has had reason to find fault. (J. Barmby)

"Filled" is perfect in tense, "having been filled completely full with the present result that they are in an abiding state of fullness." The words "all knowledge" are to be taken in the sense of "Christian knowledge in its entirety." (K. Wuest) If we do not know the Word of God and do not walk closely with Him, we have no right to teach another. On the contrary, if we do know the Scriptures and are close to God, it should be true of us as Paul said it was of the Christians at Rome: I myself am satisfied about you, my brethren. (J. Boice) There are comparative degrees in the knowledge of the Lord's people, and it is fitting and proper on occasion, to confer approbation and praise on those who excel in knowledge. It is mere worldly wisdom, not countenanced by Scripture doctrine and example, to withhold commendation when due, lest it should serve to puff up. (R. Haldane)

Hope is always connected with the coming of the Master, and in this spirit they were to face the future, and all the problems that might arise. This is the true Christian spirit of optimism and even buoyancy, because it is concentrated on the great event which is certain to happen. Pessimism is altogether alien from the true Christian spirit. A pessimist has been aptly described as a man who with two evils choose both, but the Christian will always be an optimist, not in a superficial, sentimental sense, but because of the great stronghold of hope which is his in Christ. (W.G. Thomas) Knowledge is likewise a characteristic virtue of the mature members of a strong church. The term sounds alarmingly comprehensive; but probably Paul has in mind that the Christian will have a firm grasp of what his faith really means. He will understand its content as an intelligible interpretation of life, and will not make the mistake of regarding emotional fervor as an adequate substitute for the light God gives our minds. (J. Knox)

While religion is highly popular in America, it is to a large extent superficial; it does not change peoples' lives to the degree one would expect from their level of professed faith. The problem is found in the second gap the pollster Gallup mentions, a gap between faith and knowledge. Related to this is a "knowledge gap" between Americans' stated faith and the lack of the most basic knowledge about that faith. Half of those who say they are Christians do not know who delivered the Sermon on the Mount. (J. Boice) As he did in the letter opening, Paul again displays sensitivity about presuming to write to a church that he had neither founded nor pastored. Hence the commendation and almost apologetic tone. But Paul quickly tempers this hesitancy with an assertion of his right to address the Roman church: as a mainly Gentile congregation, it lies within the sphere of apostolic responsibility that God has allotted him. (D. Moo)

Rom. 15:14 In fact (emphatic conj.), even (ascensive) I (Subj. Nom.) myself (Nom. Appos.) am convinced (πίθω, Perf.PI1S, Intensive; persuaded, certain) concerning you (Obj. Gen.; the mature believers in Rome), my (Gen. Rel.)

brethren (Voc. Address), that (conj. as Dir. Obj.) you (Subj. Nom.; positive believers) also (adjunctive) are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Customary) full (Pred. Nom.) of goodness (Adv. Gen. Ref.; virtue, excellence, potential divine good, one of the fruits of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22), having been filled to the point of overflowing (πληρώω, Perf.PPtc.NPM, Dramatic, Circumstantial; abundantly instructed on doctrinal subjects) with all categories (Gen. Spec.; systematic theology) of knowledge (Obj. Gen.; left lobe information stored on the launching pad of the soul), also (adjunctive; as mature believers) having the ability (δύναμαι, PMPTc.NPM, Descriptive, Circumstantial; power) to have a corrective influence over (νουθετέω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; instruct, remind, impart understanding, admonish) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj., reciprocal pronoun; assisting fellow believers without violating their privacy).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:14** Πέπεισμαι δέ ἀδελφοί μου καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ περὶ ὑμῶν ὅτι καὶ αὐτοὶ μεστοὶ ἐστε ἀγαθωσύνης πεπληρωμένοι πάσης τῆς γνώσεως δυνάμενοι καὶ ἀλλήλους νουθετεῖν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:14** certus sum autem fratres mei et ego ipse de vobis quoniam et ipsi pleni estis dilectione repleti omni scientia ita ut possitis alterutrum monere

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:15** **Consequently [because of your mature spiritual status], I write to you rather boldly on certain points, as one who is continually stirring up your minds to remembrance [repetition] because of that grace [communication gift] which was given to me by God,**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:15** The more boldly indeed I write to you in some measure as recalling to your mind again because of the grace which was given to me from God,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:15** Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to address the mature believers in Rome, telling them that he has written rather boldly (Epistolary Aorist tense) to them on some theological topics because they are mature enough to handle them. This is yet another compliment to those believers who have maximum doctrine in their souls. His mention of so many doctrinal points in this letter is to refresh their memory (Iterative Present tense) on lessons they have learned in the past. Repetition is the price of knowledge, and Paul is not afraid to repeat a teaching even to mature believers if he thinks it serves a greater purpose.

To some extent, he apologizes to the mature believers in Rome for repeating some things so frequently, but not because such repetition is not necessary. He repeats them often because he has been given the spiritual gift (Constative Aorist tense) of communication. In Paul's case, this grace gift was the office of Apostle; today, we have the communication gifts of pastor, teacher and evangelist. His communication gift insists that he repeat valuable doctrinal points again and again. He is unable to refuse the promptings of the gift (Attributive Participle) God has bestowed upon him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Giving advice to others on what they should do in specific situations is a serious responsibility, if not a heady presumption. Paul would not have offered his advice were it not a consequence of God's grace to him. (J. Edwards) Paul first tactfully apologizes for his letter and then justifies it. He regrets if he has appeared to be taking liberties on some points. He is fully aware of the mature balance – the firm grasp of doctrinal truth and its warm-hearted outworking – to be found in the Roman churches. But he has written to refresh their memory. And he claims the right to instruct them by virtue of his apostleship. He is nothing less than Christ's agent to the Gentile world. (F.F. Bruce)

Do we really believe that God has given to us what we need in the Bible, or do we think we have to supplement it with other man-made things? Do we need sociological techniques to do evangelism; psychology, psychiatry, and counseling for Christian growth; extrabiblical signs or miracles for guidance; and political tools for achieving social progress and reform? To judge from their programs, this is exactly what many evangelicals and evangelical churches believe and are practicing. But it is precisely why they are so weak and why "evangelical" religion is failing. The Word of God is sufficient in all areas; it is able to do all we need it to do and are commissioned to do as Christians. The only way the Holy Spirit regenerates lost men and women is through the Bible. (J. Boice)

Rom. 15:15 Consequently (transitional conj.; because of your mature spiritual status), I write (γράφω, AAIIS, Epistolary) to you (Dat. Adv.) rather boldly (Comparative Acc.; audacious, daring, alert) on certain points (Adv. Gen. Measure; in part), as one who (comparative particle where Ptc. gives reason for the action) is continually stirring up your (Acc. Poss.) minds to remembrance (ἐπαναμιμνήσκω, PAPtc.NSM, Iterative, Substantival; refreshing your memory, repetition is the price of knowledge) because of (causal conj.; through) that grace (Causal Acc.; the spiritual gift of communication; in Paul's case, the office of Apostle) which was given (δίδωμι, APpTc.ASF, Constative, Attributive) to me (Dat. Adv.) by God (Abl. Source, Agency),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:15** τολμηρότερος δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἀπὸ μέρους ὡς ἐπαναμιμνήσκων ὑμᾶς διὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθείσάν μοι ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:15** audacius autem scripsi vobis fratres ex parte tamquam in memoriam vos reducens propter gratiam quae data est mihi a Deo

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:16** So that I might be a minister [spiritual communicator] of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles [primary emphasis], ministering the good news [preaching the gospel & teaching doctrine] about God, so that as a result, the offering, the Gentiles, might become acceptable, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:16** Resulting in my being a servant of Christ Jesus in holy things to the Gentiles, exercising a sacred ministry in the good news of God in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be well pleasing, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:16** That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul recognizes that his communion gift was provided to him primarily so that he might be (Purpose Infinitive) a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. Peter was given his communication gift so that he might execute the office of preaching and teaching to the Jews (Pictorial Present tense). Paul was given his communication gift so that he might execute the office of preaching and teaching (Circumstantial Participle) to the Gentiles. Both men had their sphere of influence; both men ministered the good news about God. Paul uses the figurative expression of an offering, playing the part of the OT priest offering purified sacrifices.

In this case, he is offering sacrifices on behalf of the Gentiles. But in no way is he making himself a mediator between God and man. As an apostle, Paul is functioning as an evangelist and teacher, sanctifying Gentile believers (Dramatic Perfect tense) by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the gospel and the subsequent teaching of doctrine. He fulfills the function of an evangelist by preaching the gospel and setting new believers apart positionally unto God. He fulfills the function of a pastor by teaching Bible doctrine so that believers may grow in grace and knowledge and be continually sanctified before the Lord experientially.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is not in the office of minister to make atonement for sin, or to offer a propitiatory sacrifice to God, but to preach the Gospel. They are also never officially called priests. Even here, the term is only applied figuratively. They are not mediators between God and man. (C. Hodge) Although Paul had never visited or ministered to the Christian congregation in Rome, he was confident that they were a healthy church. Morally, they were full of goodness, intellectually they were complete in knowledge, and functionally they were competent to instruct one another. The believers in Rome were expected to help one another toward spiritual maturity. (R. Mounce)

Rom. 15:16 so that (purpose conj.) I might be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Purpose, Articular) a minister (Pred. Nom.; servant, government official, communicator of spiritual food) of Christ Jesus (Gen. Rel.) to the Gentiles (Acc. Dir. Obj.; primary emphasis), ministering (λειτουργός, PAPtc.ASM, Pictorial, Circumstantial; communicating, executing the office of preaching & teaching) the good news (Acc. Dir. Obj.) about God (Obj. Gen.; or "of God", emphasizing its' origin), so that as a result (result conj.), the offering (Subj. Nom.; Paul plays the part of the OT priest offering purified sacrifices), the Gentiles (Gen. Appos.), might become (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Constative, Potential, Deponent) acceptable (Pred. Nom.), having been sanctified (ἀγιάζω, Perf.PPtc.NSF, Dramatic, Modal) by the Holy Spirit (Instr. Means).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:16** εἰς τὸ εἶναί με λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἱεουργοῦντα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν εὐπρόσδεκτος ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:16** ut sim minister Christi Iesu in gentibus sanctificans evangelium Dei ut fiat oblatio gentium accepta sanctificata in Spiritu Sancto

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:17** Therefore, I continually hold my esprit de corps [reason for boasting] in Christ Jesus upon the things [doctrines] pertaining to God.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:17** I have therefore my glorifying I Christ Jesus with reference to the things which pertain to God.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:17** I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because of his communication gifts, Paul continually holds (Iterative Present tense) his esprit de corps, his reason for boasting, in Christ Jesus. He did not pursue the office of apostle out of the flesh; it was a grace gift from God. And his love for the Word of God, the accumulation of doctrine in his soul, also came from God. Because he received everything through the grace of God, he has nothing personal to boast about.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It may be also that he intended to obviate the unfavorable reports which he knew were everywhere scattered by the malevolent, he therefore mentioned beforehand that he would not speak but of things well known. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 15:17 Therefore (inferential conj.), I continually hold (ἔχω, PAIS, Iterative) my (Poss. Acc.) esprit de corps (Adv. Acc.; reason for boasting) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.) upon the things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrines in the soul) pertaining to God (Acc. Rel.),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:17** ἔχω οὖν [τῆν] καύχησιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν·

^{VUL} **Romans 15:17** habeo igitur gloriam in Christo Iesu ad Deum

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:18** **For I will not presume to speak about anything [my various missionary activities] which Christ has not accomplished through me, with a view to promoting obedience [authority orientation from Bible doctrine] to the Gentiles, by word [doctrinal communication] and occupation [professionalism in the ministry],**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:18** For I will not dare to be speaking concerning anything of the things which Christ did not bring about through my agency resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:18** For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul promises not to arrogantly presume (Predictive Future tense) that he has accomplished (Constative Aorist tense) anything in his ministry by himself. He refuses to even speak (Futuristic Present tense) about anything he has done in the mission field as if he did it without Christ. The only thing he can point to is his obedience to Bible doctrine, so that his doctrinal communication and professionalism in the ministry meets the needs of the Gentiles to whom he was commissioned to preach and teach. He hopes his authority orientation to the Word of God will promote the same kind of obedience in his hearers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God does not intend any of us to labor in vain, or spend our strength for nought, and, though results may vary, we are justified in expecting them if only we are faithful to the Gospel and to the true methods of proclaiming it. Of course it is essential to distinguish between “having” results and “seeing” them, and it is the former rather than the latter that should be kept in mind. God may often grant results which are invisible to the worker. (W.G. Thomas) Now this obedience of the Gentiles to the Gospel was Christ’s work. Christ wrought it. Faith is the gift of God. It is not to be ascribed to him that preaches or to him that hears, but to Christ, who by His Spirit opens the heart to believe the truth. But the preacher is employed as an agent. Christ wrought this through the Apostle. No man is made a Christian by any power less than God’s, and

by no other means than God's Word. Christ wrought the obedience of the Gentiles through Paul, but the instrumentality belongs to God's Word, as well as the agency to Himself. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 15:18 For (explanatory conj.) I will not (neg. adv.) presume (τολμάω, FAILS, Predictive; dare, arrogant presumption) to speak (λαλέω, PAInf., Futuristic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) about anything (Obj. Gen.; reference to Paul's missionary activity) which (ellipsis, understood) Christ (Subj. Nom.) has not (neg. adv.) accomplished (κατεργάζομαι, AMI3S, Constative, Deponent; produced) through me (Prep. Gen., Agency), with a view to promoting obedience (Adv. Acc.; authority orientation in life from Bible doctrine) to the Gentiles (Obj. Gen.; Peter's emphasis was the Jews, Paul's was the Gentiles), by word (Instr. Means; doctrinal communication) and (connective conj.) occupation (Instr. Means; professionalism in the ministry),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:18** οὐ γὰρ τολμήσω τι λαλεῖν ὧν οὐ κατεργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἔθνῶν λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:18** non enim audeo aliquid loqui eorum quae per me non effecit Christus in oboedientiam gentium verbo et factis

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:19** By the power of signs [remarkable events directed towards the Jews] and wonders [terrifying portents caused by God to impress the Gentiles] in the power of the Spirit, so that I *have traveled* from Jerusalem on a circuitous route, even as far as Illyricum [east of Italy], in order to bring to completion [proclaim to the remotest areas of the Roman Empire] the gospel of Christ.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:19** By the power of the Holy Spirit: so that from Jerusalem and the environs of Illyricum I have fulfilled my commission of preaching the good news of Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:19** Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's ministry was occasionally followed by signs and wonders in the power of the Holy Spirit. Signs were remarkable events directed towards evangelizing the Jews, while wonders were terrifying portents caused by God to impress the Gentiles. These signs and wonders came from the power of God, not from Paul. Signs followed his ministry in Jerusalem and wonders followed his ministry as far as Illyricum on the eastern border of Italy. God directed them upon Jew and Gentile as He saw fit. Paul recognized, in turn, that his preaching and teaching ministry was making a full circle, bringing the gospel (Intensive Perfect tense) to the most remote areas of the Roman Empire.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The primary purpose of a miracle in the 1st century was to prove that the person performing the miracle spoke or wrote by the power of the Holy Spirit, and that therefore, his words were from God, and authenticated by God. (K. Wuest) Paul's ministry to the Gentiles had been characterized by the power of the Holy Spirit, which sometimes manifested itself in signs and wonders; that is, miraculous interventions of divine power. One is reminded of the apostle's recovery after being stoned at Lystra and of the earthquake at Philippi. (R. Earle)

Paul once healed the sick at will (Acts 19:11-12). This supernatural calling card established his authority in a new locale as being a communicator of the Word of God. But as early as A.D. 62, he could not heal even his dear friend Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-27). By that time, Paul's reputation was well established, and the gift of healing had been removed. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:19 By the power (Instr. Means) of signs (Descr. Gen.; unusual, remarkable events directed towards the Jews) and (connective conj.; miracles) wonders (Adv. Gen. Ref.; terrifying portents caused by God to impress the Gentiles), in the power (Loc. Sph.) of the Spirit (Adv. Gen. Ref.), so that (result conj.) I (Subj. Acc.; Paul) have traveled (ellipsis, verb supplied) from Jerusalem (Prep. Abl.; starting place, beginning) on a circuitous route (Dat. Place, adverbial), even (ascensive conj.) as far as (Gen. Space) Illyricum (Gen. Place; a province just east of Italy, possibly *Dalmatia*), in order to bring to completion (πληρώ, Perf.AInf., Intensive, Purpose; bring full circle, proclaiming it in the most remote areas of the Roman Empire) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of Christ (Poss. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:19** ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος [ἁγίου] ὥστε με ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:19** in virtute signorum et prodigiorum in virtute Spiritus Sancti ita ut ab Hierusalem per circuitum usque in Illyricum repleverim evangelium Christi

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:20** In fact, in this way [operating as an itinerant preacher], I consider it an honor to proclaim the gospel, not where Christ has already been mentioned [evangelical function], so that I might not build upon the foundation belonging to another man of the same kind [policy of non-interference with other missionaries].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:20** Indeed, in this manner I have been actuated by considerations of honor to be ambitious to announce the glad tidings not where Christ was named, in order that I would not be building upon a foundation belonging to another;

^{KJV} **Romans 15:20** Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul considered his life as an itinerant preacher an honor (Customary Present tense), since his heart's desire was to proclaim the gospel (Retroactive Present tense) in locations where Christ had never been mentioned (Constative Aorist tense) to anyone. In order to fulfill this type of ministry, his wandering lifestyle was necessary. He did not want to stay put in one place, because he did not want to build (Pictorial Present tense) upon the foundation begun by another minister. He did not want to interfere with the sphere of influence of other missionaries. There were enough unbelievers to go around!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The gift of evangelism functions outside the local church toward unbelievers. Believers with the gifts of helps and government serve as deacons and accomplish the various administrative tasks delegated to them by the pastor-teacher for the efficient operation of the church. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:20 In fact (transitional conj.), in this way (Adv. Manner; Paul's standard operating procedures as an itinerant preacher), I consider it an honor (φιλοτιμέομαι, PMPTc.ASM, Customary, Circumstantial, Deponent) to proclaim the gospel (φιλοτιμέομαι, PMInf., Retroactive, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; evangelical function), not (neg. adv.) where (Adv. Place) Christ (Subj. Nom.) has already been mentioned (ὀνομάζω, API3S, Constative), so that (result conj.) I might not (neg. Adv.) build (οἰκοδομέω, PASubj.1S, Pictorial, Purpose clause) upon the foundation (Acc. Place) belonging to another man of the same kind (Poss. Gen.; Paul maintains a policy of pioneer, non-interference with other missionaries).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:20** οὕτως δὲ φιλοτιμούμενοι εὐαγγελίζεσθαι οὐχ ὅπου ὠνομάσθη Χριστός ἵνα μὴ ἐπ' ἀλλότριον θεμέλιον οἰκοδομῶ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:20** sic autem hoc praedicavi evangelium non ubi nominatus est Christus ne super alienum fundamentum aedificarem

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:21** Moreover, just as it stands written [in Isaiah 52:15]: They [people in remote geographical locations] shall see Him [Jesus Christ], with reference to Whom an announcement had never been made [no prior gospel preaching], and whoever has not heard [those in remote locations], will understand [comprehend the gospel and believe in Christ].

κ^w **Rom. 15:21** But as it stands written, They shall see, those to whom there was not made an announcement concerning Him, and those who have not heard, they shall understand.

K^{JV} **Romans 15:21** But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul defends his standard operating procedure as an apostle and missionary by quoting from Isaiah 52:15. Those people who lived in remote areas of the world who had not heard the gospel, shall see (Predictive Future tense) Jesus Christ and would believe in Him. Those people who lived in remote areas of the world who had become believers in Christ, but who had no teacher to instruct them in the doctrines of the Bible, would hear (Dramatic Perfect tense) and understand (Predictive Future tense) the Truth. By following this verse, Paul would bring the gospel to those who had never heard it (Constative Aorist tense), and advanced doctrines to those who had no available teacher to assist them in growing in grace and knowledge. And he was able to do this without interfering with another man's ministry or stealing another man's congregation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Whenever the Lord has work to do, He raises up men with a heart to perform it. (R. Haldane) It is absurd for any one to attempt to apply what is here to the pastoral office, for we know that in churches rightly formed, where the truth of the gospel has been already received, Christ's name must be constantly preached. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 15:21 Moreover (transitional particle), just as (comparative adv.) it stands written (γέγραπται, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Isaiah 52:15): They (people living in remote areas of the world who have not heard the gospel, nor any subsequent further Bible teaching) shall see (ὄραω, FMI3P, Predictive) Him (Dat. Adv.; Jesus Christ), with reference to (concerning) Whom (Adv. Gen. Ref.) an announcement had never (neg. adv.) been made (ἀναγγέλλω, API3S, Constative; no didactic teaching, no report), and (continuative conj.) whoever (Subj. Nom.; those living at the far reaches of the earth) has not (neg. adv.) heard (ἀκούω, Perf.AI3P, Dramatic), will understand (συνίημι, FAI3P, Predictive; comprehend the gospel, believe in Christ, and continue to grow in grace and knowledge).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:21** ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται ὄψονται Οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν συνήσουσιν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:21** sed sicut scriptum est quibus non est adnuntiatum de eo videbunt et qui non audierunt intellegent

LWB **Rom. 15:22** Also, as a matter of fact, I was detained [sidetracked] many times from coming to you.

KW **Rom. 15:22** Wherefore, I also have been continually hindered by the many things in coming to you.

KJV **Romans 15:22** For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because he desired to spread the gospel to remote locations, Paul was detained (Progressive Imperfect tense) on many occasions from going to Rome (Constative Aorist tense) to see them personally. God had another person who was designated to preach the gospel to parts of Rome. And we also know that when God was ready to send Paul to Rome to teach advanced doctrines to the Roman believers, he was preoccupied in his own mind to go to Jerusalem instead. At one time, Paul was kept from going to Rome by God, because the timing was not right. At another time, when God wanted Paul in Rome, he hindered himself by dreaming about his Jewish brethren in Israel. In the end, Paul ended up exactly where God wanted him, but not without some painful lessons in the process.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The providence of God wisely overrules the purposes and desires of men. God's dearest servants are not always gratified in every thing that they have a mind to. Yet all that delight in God have the desire of their heart fulfilled, though all the desires in their heart be not humoured. (M. Henry)

Rom. 15:22 Also (adjunctive; wherefore), as a matter of fact (inferential conj., for this reason), I was detained (ἐγκόπτω, Imperf.PIIS, Progressive; hindered, thwarted, impeded; God has another person working this missionary field) many (Acc. Measure) times (Acc. Time; idiom, relative pronoun used as Temporal adv.; self-imposed hindrances: God wanted him in Rome, but he kept dreaming about Jerusalem) from coming (ἐρχομαι, AAIInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent, Articular) to you (Acc. Dir. Obj.),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:22** Διὸ καὶ ἐνεκοπτόμην τὰ πολλὰ τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς·

^{VUL} **Romans 15:22** propter quod et inpediebar plurimum venire ad vos

LWB **Rom. 15:23** But now [his ministry having reached the eastern edge of the Empire], having no more place [converts] in these regions, and having a desire to come to you [for some rest & relaxation] for many years,

κω **Rom. 15:23** But now no longer having opportunity in these parts, and having a passionate desire to come to you these many years,

KJV **Romans 15:23** But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

At the time of his writing, Paul's ministry had reached the eastern edge of the Roman Empire and he had (Static Present tense) no more converts in that region. Those converts to Christ that Paul founded were now growing on their own and were sending out their own missionaries. It was time for Paul to move on, but first he expresses a desire (Descriptive Present tense) to go to Rome for a bit of rest and relaxation. He has had this desire to go to Rome for many years (Dramatic Aorist tense), but his ministry had previously kept him too busy elsewhere for the journey.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It took four years, including two years in prison writing the Prison Epistles, for Paul to fulfill this desire. While he was in the Eastern edge of the Empire, Nero had burned Rome to the ground and blamed it on Paul and his Christians. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) By our contemporary standards Paul should perhaps be "letting up" and planning for retirement. But here he is planning to go to Rome and Spain! In fact, the reason for writing to the Romans was largely to enlist their support for the great new frontier mission. Paul is not about to retire. Vast areas of the empire are unreached, not to mention the regions beyond. One thing is certain: He was cut down in combat, not in retirement. He was moving on to the frontier instead of settling down to bask in his amazing accomplishments. (J. Piper)

Some Christians act as if believers should sail through life on automatic pilot, expecting God to direct their lives in a supernatural way apart from any direct involvement from them. They think planning is wrong. But, of course, Paul did not think like that. He was open to God's special guidance, as we learn from the accounts of his missionary journeys in Acts. He obeyed God's leading. But he also made plans, and one of those plans, which was quite important in his thinking, was to carry the gospel to the far corners of the known Roman world – to Spain. Paul had planned to go to Spain for some time, and he was still pursuing this goal at the time of his writing to the Romans. (J. Boice) There is no demand for Paul where he is. (A.T. Robertson)

Rom. 15:23 **But** (adversative conj.) **now** (Adv. Time; his ministry having been completed in the Eastern edge of the Empire, it was time to move on), **having** (ἔχω, PAPtc.NSM, Static, Circumstantial) **no more** (neg. adv.; no demand for him where he is) **place** (Acc. Place; purpose, opportunity, possibility for new converts) **in these** (Dat. Spec.) **regions** (Loc. Sph.; districts, provinces; they were growing on their own and sending out their own missionaries), **and**

(continuative conj.) **having** (ἔχω, PAPtc.NSM, Descriptive, Circumstantial) **a desire** (Adv. Acc.) **to come** (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Dramatic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent, Articular; time to relax in Rome for a bit of R&R) **to you** (Acc. Rel.) **for many** (Gen. Spec.) **years** (Adv. Gen. Time),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:23** νυνὶ δὲ μηκέτι τόπον ἔχων ἐν τοῖς κλίμασιν τούτοις ἐπιποθίαν δὲ ἔχων τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ ἱκανῶν ἐτῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:23** nunc vero ulterius locum non habens in his regionibus cupiditatem autem habens veniendi ad vos ex multis iam annis

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:24** As soon as I depart for Spain, for I expect to see you when I pass through [only a short visit in Rome] and to be escorted to that place by you [accompanied and partially supported financially], if first [prior to his departure to Spain] I become sufficiently satisfied with you [happy with their spiritual progress],

^{KW} **Rom. 15:24** Whenever I journey into Spain I am hoping to see you as I journey through, and by you to be furnished with the necessities of travel to that place, if first in part I may be fully satisfied with your fellowship.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:24** Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As soon as Paul is ready to depart (Tendential Present tense) for Spain, he plans to pass through Rome. The Potential Subjunctive mood means he is planning on this trip, but he realizes God may have other plans for him that would supercede his own. In any case, he expects to see the Roman believers (Tendential Present tense) if and when that time arrives. He is not planning on a lengthy stay in Rome, however, because a strong church already existed there and as he said earlier, he does not want to build on another man's foundation. He intends to pass through only (Futuristic Present tense), getting a little rest and relaxation before his departure to Spain.

He also hopes to be escorted by some of the Romans on his journey to Spain. This could refer to either personal accompaniment or obtaining missionary support such as money, clothing and food. Before he departs for Spain, he says he must first become satisfied with (Constative Aorist tense) their spiritual growth. The use of the Potential Subjunctive mood means he realizes there is a possibility that he might have to stay in Rome long enough to teach them advanced doctrine. Until he is content with the amount of doctrine in their souls, he will not depart for Spain. The exercise of his communication gift will be in full swing until they can sustain each other in his absence.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Sometimes apostles were immediately directed, and either enjoined to go to a certain place, or restrained from going. The intention of Jesus in allowing them in general to direct their own course, while He overruled it in every instance, was no doubt for an example to us, that in directing our labours we are to judge according to our own views and desires, and that we are not to expect miraculous or immediate directions. Missionaries sometimes err on this point, and seem to look for miraculous interposition to direct them in going or not going to certain places. This is what the apostles themselves had not at all times, and which is by no means necessary. The providence of Jesus, whose is the command to preach the Gospel, and who directs the course of all things, will either open the door or shut it according as it suits His sovereign pleasure. (R. Haldane)

Paul planned only a brief stay in Rome since a strong church already existed there. (A.T. Robertson) Before being supplied with the requisites for his journey and sent on his way by the Roman Church, Paul would want to be satisfied, satiated, at least in part, with their company or fellowship. (K. Wuest) Although Paul made plans he was also flexible in the sense that he did not have a timetable. He went according to the way God opened the doors. He planned to go in a certain direction. He kept that clearly in his mind, but he did not tell God how or when it had to be. No matter how long it took, he kept plodding toward the goal. (J. Boice)

Rom. 15:24 As soon as (two temporal conditional conjs. with Subj.) I depart (πορεύομαι, PMSbj.1S, Tendentia, Potential, Deponent) for Spain (Acc. Place), [for (explanatory conj.) I expect (ἐλπίζω, PA1S, Tendentia; desire, am confident of) to see (διαπορεύομαι, AMInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) when I pass through (θεάομαι, PMPTc.NSM, Futuristic, Temporal, Deponent; Paul planned only a brief stay in Rome since a strong church already existed there) and (connective conj.) to be escorted (προπέμπω, APInf., Constative, Inf. Purpose; accompanied, assisted, helped on one's journey, may have included missionary support such as money, clothing, food) to that place (Adv. Place; Spain) by you (Gen. Accompaniment), if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe I will be, maybe I won't) first (Acc. Measure; prior to leaving for Spain) I become sufficiently (Gen. Content; partially, he's never going to be completely satisfied with their spiritual growth) satisfied (ἐμπλήρωμι, APSbj.1S, Constative, Potential; full enjoyment, content) with you (Gen. Rel.; your spiritual progress),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:24** ὡς ἂν πορεύομαι εἰς τὴν Σπανίαν· ἐλπίζω γὰρ διαπορευόμενος θεάσασθαι ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ' ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ ἐὰν ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπὸ μέρους ἐμπλησθῶ

^{VUL} **Romans 15:24** cum in Hispaniam proficisci coepero spero quod praeteriens videam vos et a vobis deducar illuc si vobis primum ex parte fruitus fuero

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:25** But now [in emotional reversionism], I am going to travel to Jerusalem for the purpose of ministering to the saints [Jewish believers].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:25** But now I am going on my journey to Jerusalem, ministering to the saints.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:25** But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As we know from the biblical record, Paul was in emotional revolt of the soul when he planned this part of his itinerary. He planned to go to Jerusalem first, then turn back toward Spain with Rome in the middle. God did not tell him to go to Jerusalem; he wanted to go there of his own accord. In fact, he was impinging on Peter's missionary sphere when he finally made it to Jerusalem. He tells the Romans he was going to travel (Pictorial Present tense) to Jerusalem for the purpose of ministering (Futuristic Present tense) to the Jewish believers there. God's plan called for him to go west to Rome, but Paul decided he would go against two warnings from the Holy Spirit and head for Jerusalem instead: Acts 21:4-9, 21:10-13. He may have been homesick, and possibly desirous of some R&R, but this was not God's geographical will for his life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The honor code demands a generous attitude in return for benefits received, and this mental attitude is molded only from within by the gradual buildup of Bible doctrine in the soul. No one can force any believer to be properly motivated to give. The church may make needs known, but must never beg or dun the believer for money. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:25 But (contrast conj.) now (temporal adv.; *Paul's emotional reversionism*), I am going to travel (πορεύομαι, PMIIS, Pictorial, Deponent) to Jerusalem (Acc. Place; Paul is impinging on Peter's missionary sphere) for the purpose of ministering (διακονέω, PAPtc.NSM, Futuristic, Purpose, Telic) to the saints (Dat. Adv.; Jewish believers).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:25** νυνὶ δὲ πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις

^{VUL} **Romans 15:25** nunc igitur proficiscar in Hierusalem ministrare sanctis

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:26** For [according to Paul's rationalization] the Macedonians and Achaians were pleased to make a considerable contribution [charity] for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

κω **Rom. 15:26** For it was the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make up a certain benefaction jointly contributed for the poor of the saints which are in Jerusalem;

KJV **Romans 15:26** For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his rationalization for why he needs to go to Jerusalem. The Macedonians and Achaians were kind enough (Dramatic Aorist tense) to make a considerable, charitable gift for the poor (Latin: paupers) in Jerusalem. They could have chosen a delegate to deliver the contribution to Jerusalem, but Paul was making it his business to deliver the funds. He was rationalizing that the amount was so substantial that he needed to deliver it in person. Who would have the presumption to counter Paul's offer to take the money to Jerusalem? Nobody would have volunteered once they heard Paul had offered to deliver it.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As an economic theory Marxism is determined by the compulsory ideal of common ownership of capital, whereas the early Christians were motivated by agape, of which the voluntary sharing of property was one expression. (J. Edwards) It was no assessment to raise a prescribed amount, but "some contribution," more or less according to will and circumstances. (W.R. Nicoll)

Rom. 15:26 **For** (explanatory conj.; *Paul's rationalization*) **the Macedonians** (Subj. Nom.) **and** (connective conj.) **Achaians** (Subj. Nom.) **were pleased** (εὐδοκέω, AAI3P, Dramatic; delighted) **to make** (ποιέω, AMInf., Dramatic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) **a considerable** (Acc. Indefinite Quantity) **contribution** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; gift, charity) **for the poor** (Acc. Assoc.; beggarly, paupers) **among the saints** (Partitive Gen.) **in Jerusalem** (Loc. Sph.).

WHO **Romans 15:26** εὐδόκησαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαΐα κοινωνίαν τινὰ ποιήσασθαι εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ

VUL **Romans 15:26** probaverunt enim Macedonia et Achaia conlationem aliquam facere in pauperes sanctorum qui sunt in Hierusalem

LWB **Rom. 15:27** Indeed [Paul's administrative distraction], they were very pleased, in so far as they [the Macedonians and Achaians] are debtors [obligated] to them [the Jews], for since the Gentiles are partakers of their spiritual blessings [from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church], they are obligated [by the royal family honor code] also to minister to them [the Jews] with material blessings.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:27** For it was their good pleasure, and their debtors they are. For in view of the fact that the Gentiles were fellow-partakers of their spiritual things, they are under moral obligation to minister to them in the sphere of things needed for the sustenance of the body, considering this material ministry as a sacred service.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:27** It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As if he hasn't rationalized his reasons for going to Jerusalem enough, Paul now gets involved in an administrative distraction. The Macedonians and Achaians were very pleased (Dramatic Aorist tense) to be able to help the poor in Jerusalem, because in a spiritual way, they are obligated (Historical Present tense) to do so by the royal family honor code. Gentiles are partakers (Constative Aorist tense) of Jewish spiritual blessings from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church. Therefore Gentiles are obligated (Progressive Present tense) to return the favor by ministering to the Jews by supporting them with financial blessings. Paul's spiritual principle is that the Gentiles benefit from the Jewish religion which gave birth to Jesus Christ our Lord. So it is incumbent on Gentiles to return the favor by helping the poor in Jerusalem.

Spiritual growth leads to the desire to share your material blessings. However, this true principle has nothing to do with Paul's decision that he wants to go to Jerusalem. In other words, he adds a bit of his personal feelings to the legitimate lesson he is teaching them. Unfortunately, the delivery of the contribution is nothing but a distraction from what God wants Paul to do next, which is to go to Rome. Why am I so hard on Paul, calling this a rationalization and a distraction? We know that he went to Jerusalem in spite of several warnings, and we also know the nature of the catastrophes (divine discipline) he encountered. We know that God intervened (overruled) and led him back to Rome.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The spiritual things of which the Gentiles partake are the spiritual blessings of salvation, and they are debtors to the Jews for them because as our Lord said in John 4:22: "Salvation is of the Jews." The carnal things which the Gentiles minister to the Jews are the necessities of life, food, clothing, and shelter, in short, money. Here it speaks of the Gentile saints participating jointly or having fellowship in the sending of the money to the Jewish saints in Jerusalem and of having fellowship with them. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 15:27 Indeed (affirmative particle; *Paul's administrative distraction*), they were very pleased (εὐδοκέω, AA13P, Dramatic), in so far as (inferential conj.) they (the Macedonians and Achaians) are (εἰμί, PA13P, Historical) debtors (Pred. Nom.; obligated) to them (Gen. Rel.; the Jews), for (explanatory conj.) since (protasis, 1st class

conditional particle) the Gentiles (Subj. Nom.) are partakers (κοινωνέω, AAI3P, Constative) of their (Poss. Gen.; Jewish) spiritual blessings (Dat. Adv., Instr. Assoc.; from Pentecost to the Rapture), they (the Gentiles) are obligated (ὀφείλω, PAI3P, Progressive; function of the Royal Family Honor Code) also (adjunctive) to minister (λειτουργέω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; perform a public service) to them (Dat. Adv.; the Jews) with material blessings (Instr. Manner; carnal, physical; spiritual growth leads to the desire to share your material blessings).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:27** εὐδόκησαν γὰρ καὶ ὀφείλεται εἶσιν αὐτῶν· εἰ γὰρ τοῖς πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινωνήσαν τὰ ἔθνη ὀφείλουσιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς σαρκικοῖς λειτουργῆσαι αὐτοῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 15:27** placuit enim eis et debitores sunt eorum nam si spiritalium eorum participes facti sunt gentiles debent et in carnalibus ministrare eis

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:28** Therefore, after I have accomplished this [charitable business transaction], and have placed in their hands [safely delivered] this sum of money [charitable fruit], I will come to [depart for] Spain for your benefit.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:28** Then, having brought this to a successful termination and having secured to them this fruit, I will come through you into Spain.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:28** When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to lay out his proposed travel itinerary by using two temporal participles. After he has completed (Culminative Aorist tense) his charitable business transaction, and has placed the sum of money into their hands (Culminative Aorist tense), he plans to leave Jerusalem and head for Spain (Predictive Future tense) through Rome. Paul tells them he wants to make sure the contents of the charitable fruit (Latin: fructose) or gift are safely delivered to the poor Jews in Jerusalem, but in reality his emotions have taken control of his soul. God wants him to go to Rome, and then to Spain. But Paul says he's going to Jerusalem.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Anyone in Greece could have delivered the charitable gift, but Paul thought if he delivered it personally, it might erase his guilt before Israel. He is using this gift as a bribe to get another hearing before the Jews. Lesson: Inflexibility destroys virtue. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul was anxious to complete this project of the collection of money for the Jerusalem poor. (K. Wuest) The apostle now describes the contribution or collection as “fruit,” a product of the Gentiles’

genuine faith and of their sincere gratitude for the willingness of the Jewish believers to share with them their faith in Christ. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 15:28 Therefore (inferential conj.), after (when) I have accomplished (ἐπιτελέω, AAPtc.NSM, Culminative, Temporal) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.; transaction, business, 'completed my charity mission to Jerusalem'), and (continuative conj.) have placed in their (Poss. Dat.; Jewish) hands (σφραγίζω, AMPtc.NSM, Culminative, Temporal; terminology of a conscientious merchant: sealed, safely delivered into their possession, confirmation, to guarantee the correctness of the contents) this (Acc. Spec.) sum of money (Acc. Dir. Obj.; charitable fruit), I will come (ἄπέρχομαι, FMI1S, Predictive, Deponent; depart, follow) to Spain (Acc. Place; doctrine said: Go to Rome, then Go to Spain. Paul's emotions said: I'm going to Jerusalem) for your benefit (Acc. Rel., Cause),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:28** τοῦτο οὖν ἐπιτελέσας καὶ σφραγισάμενος αὐτοῖς τὸν καρπὸν τοῦτον ἀπελεύσομαι δι' ὑμῶν εἰς Σπανίαν·

^{VUL} **Romans 15:28** hoc igitur cum consummavero et adsignavero eis fructum hunc proficiscar per vos in Hispaniam

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:29** **Then [after going to Jerusalem] I know that when I come to you, I will be coming with a full measure of the blessing of Christ.**

^{KW} **Rom. 15:29** And I know positively that when coming to you, in the fullness of the blessing of Christ I will come.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:29** And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul completes the rationalization of his reasons for going to Jerusalem. He tells the Roman believers that after he has completed his trip to Jerusalem (Futuristic Present tense) he will be able to come to Rome (Predictive Future tense) with a full measure of Christ's blessing. By the use of the phrase "full measure," he is alluding that if he skips his proposed trip to Jerusalem, he would be disobeying God and would not be able to bring as great a blessing to the Roman believers. Ironically, Paul did bring a measure (Latin: abundance) of blessing to the Romans from Christ, but that "full measure of blessing" ended up being the Prison Epistles. Paul had his plans, but God also had His.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Blessing means to be set apart to God, to speak well of some person, and an exceptional state of happiness. (J. Boice) The first century believers in Macedonia decided with pleasure to give a large sum of money to the Jews who lived in distant Jerusalem, who spoke a different language, and who had a totally different culture – people they would never meet. The Macedonian believers were fulfilling the royal family honor code. Right thinking results in right motivation, and right motivation results in right action. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 15:29 Then (transitional conj.; after going to Jerusalem) I know (οἶδα, Perf.A11S, Intensive) that (conj. used as Dir. Obj.) when I come (ἔρχομαι, PMPTc.NSM, Futuristic, Temporal, Deponent) to you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), I will be coming (ἔρχομαι, FMI1S, Predictive, Deponent) with a full measure (Dat. Measure, Accompanying Circumstance; abundance, Paul's *full measure* ended up being the Prison Epistles) of the blessing (Obj. Gen.) of Christ (Poss. Gen.).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:29** οἶδα δὲ ὅτι ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν πληρώματι εὐλογίας Χριστοῦ ἐλεύσομαι

^{VUL} **Romans 15:29** scio autem quoniam veniens ad vos in abundantia benedictionis Christi veniam

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:30** Now I implore you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the virtue love from the Spirit: Strive together [fight alongside] with me in your prayers to God [the Father] on my behalf.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:30** But I beg of you, please, brethren, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love which is of the Spirit, contend vigorously with me in your prayers on my behalf to God,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:30** Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul implores (Pictorial Present tense) his Roman brethren, by the Person of Jesus Christ and the virtue love which comes from the source of the Holy Spirit, to urgently pray (Constative Aorist tense) with him to God the Father. Paul is invoking two Members of the Trinity, along with his fellow believers, to pray to the Father on his behalf. Why is he so adamant in his request? Why does he use the Greek word “sunagonizomai” from which we get our English word “agonize?” This word means to fight alongside of, to contend with someone or something.

I agree with the conclusions of R.B. Thieme, Jr. in that Paul knows he is fighting God in this matter of going to Jerusalem. Paul knows God does not want him in Jerusalem,

infringing upon Peter's sphere of ministry. Paul knows God wants him in Rome. But Paul wants to go to Jerusalem anyway, so he is begging the Roman congregation to help him in his prayer vigil against God's will. He is hoping to ally himself with the Son, the Spirit, and the Roman believers so he might force the Father to allow him to go to Jerusalem. This prayer, done out of fellowship, did not receive his anticipated results. Nothing happened as Paul envisioned it would.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul prayed three things: (1) that he might be delivered from unbelievers in Judea, (2) that those in Jerusalem might receive the gift he had for them, and (3) that he might come to Rome and be refreshed. The first prayer was definitely not answered according to Paul's desire. Of the second, we can only infer that his reception at Jerusalem was not what he wished, and the third was answered in a manner completely unforeseen or even imagined by Paul. (D. Barnhouse) If Paul needed the prayers of his brethren, who were so far behind him, can they be unimportant to Christ's people in general? (R. Haldane)

Rom. 15:30 Now (temporal conj.) I implore (παρακαλέω, PA11S, Pictorial; encourage) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), brethren (Voc. Address), by our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Instr. Means) and (connective conj.) by the virtue love (Instr. Means) from the Spirit (Abl. Source): Strive together (συναγωνίζομαι, AMInf., Constativ, Imperativ, Deponent; fight alongside of, contend with; Paul knows he is fighting God in this matter, and he is begging his Roman congregation to help him in his prayer vigil against God's will) with me (Dat. Assoc.) in your (Poss. Gen.) prayers (Loc. Sph.; inaccurate prayers go no higher than the ceiling) to God (Acc. Dir. Obj.) on my behalf (Obj. Gen.),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:30** Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς [ἀδελφοί] διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος συναγωνίσασθαι μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:30** obsecro igitur vos fratres per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum et per caritatem Spiritus ut adiuvetis me in orationibus pro me ad Deum

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:31** So that I may be delivered [rescued] from those [who remember his previous persecution of their friends and family when he was Saul the Pharisee] who are disobedient in Judea [hypocrisy: Paul himself is being disobedient], and that my contribution for Jerusalem may be welcome to the saints [Jewish believers].

^{KW} **Rom. 15:31** In order that I may be delivered from those who are non-persuasive in Judea, and that my service which is for Jerusalem may become well pleasing to the saints,

^{KJV} **Romans 15:31** That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks the Roman believers to pray with him for three things. First, he prays that he might be delivered (Culminative Aorist tense) from those people in Jerusalem who would remember his persecution of their family and friends when he was Saul the Pharisee. We know from other passages what a disaster this scenario proved to be. And in the process of this prayer request, he actually calls these people (Descriptive Present tense) in Jerusalem disobedient. What hypocrisy! Paul himself was being disobedient by his attempts to go to Jerusalem against God's wishes.

Second, he prays that the generous contribution he is delivering to them from the Macedonians and Achaians will be accepted (Culminative Aorist tense) by the Jewish believers in Jerusalem. The biblical record does not confirm whether the grace gift was received well or not. There is also controversy over what his "contribution" was. Is Paul's contribution a reference to the monetary gift he is bringing from the Greeks, or is it a reference to his teaching ministry? If it refers to the money, he has in a manner transformed a gift from other people into a personal contribution. If it refers to his teaching ministry, it was definitely not accepted by those in Jerusalem - it was a complete failure.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What was the thing for which the apostle requested the prayers of his fellow Christians? It was to be delivered from death and danger in the discharge of his work. Those who reject the Gospel will always be its enemies, and from such, therefore, the Apostle prays to be delivered. It is remarkable that, while the most debasing superstitions are looked upon with indifference by the wise men of the world, the coolest and most philosophic of their number kindle into wrath against the Gospel. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 15:31 So that (result conj.) I may be delivered (ῥύομαι, ASubj.1S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent; rescued, preserved) from those (Adv. Gen. Ref.; people who remember his persecution of their family and friends as Saul the Pharisee) who are disobedient (ἀπειθέω, PAPtc.GPM, Descriptive, Substantival; the hypocrisy in this statement is profound, since Paul himself is being disobedient in his attempt to go to Jerusalem) in Judea (Loc. Place; possibly Judaizers), and (continuative conj.) that (relative pronoun used as Dir. Obj.) my (Poss. Gen.) contribution (Subj. Nom.) for Jerusalem (Acc. Rel., Benefit) may be (γίνομαι, ASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) welcome (Pred. Nom.; acceptable, pleasing) to the saints (Dat. Adv.; Jewish believers),

^{WHO} **Romans 15:31** ἵνα ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται

^{VUL} **Romans 15:31** ut liberer ab infidelibus qui sunt in Iudaea et obsequii mei oblatio accepta fiat in Hierosolyma sanctis

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:32** So that by coming to you with inner happiness [presumably due to his getting his way] through the will of God [arrogant presumption], I might find rest [relaxation] together with you.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:32** In order that in joy, having come to you through God's will, I may rest and refresh myself with you.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:32** That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The third thing Paul prays for is that he might find rest and relaxation in Rome (Culminative Aorist tense) with the Roman believers. He prefaces this prayer by his coming to Rome (Constative Aorist tense) with inner happiness, presumably because he gets his way due to his prayer vigil. And since he arrogantly presumes to have God's blessing, he also hopes to receive the rest and relaxation (Latin: refrigeration) he so deserves. Rest and relaxation requires right thoughts, right functions, and right geographical location. At this time, Paul has none of these; instead, he receives divine discipline. The Potential Subjunctive mood might be an admission that he knows he might not get what he is praying for.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

I have argued that Paul unequivocally affirmed the sovereignty of God in human affairs. I have also argued that he viewed prayer, particularly for the success of the evangelistic enterprise, as crucial. An excellent example of this is found in Romans 15:30-32. Such a statement may seem incongruous to some, appearing as it does in an epistle known principally for its emphasis on divine sovereignty. Paul, however, felt no discomfort in arguing that God had suspended the success of his journeys and mission on the prayers of his people. (Schreiner & Ware) Paul did go to Rome, but under circumstances and after delays which he could not have forecast. God answered the prayers, but not in the ways that Paul had hoped for or anticipated. (J. Murray)

“By the will of God” shows us that all events depend on God's will. Nothing happens without His appointment. All the efforts of his enemies, as well as the exertions of His servants, only fulfill His irresistible purposes. Without His will, nothing takes place on earth more than in heaven. God not only permits everything that takes place on earth, as some are inclined in this way to soften down His sovereignty, but He wills and appoints

it. (R. Haldane) The sentence, “by the will of God,” instructs us in the necessity of devoting ourselves to prayer, since God alone directs all our paths and all our steps by His gracious and unerring providence. (J. Calvin)

Rom. 15:32 So that (result conj.) by coming (έρχομαι, AApTc.NSM, Constative, Modal/Instr., Deponent) to you (Acc. Rel., Benefit) with inner happiness (Instr. Manner, Attend. Circum.; presumably due to his getting his way) through the will (Abl. Means) of God (Abl. Agency; arrogant presumption), I might find rest together (συναναπαύομαι, AMSubj.1S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent; R&R requires right thought, right function, right place) with you (Dat. Assoc.; Paul ends up receiving discipline - rest comes *much* later).

^{WHO} **Romans 15:32** ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:32** ut veniam ad vos in gaudio per voluntatem Dei et refrigerer vobiscum

^{LWB} **Rom. 15:33** Now, may the God of prosperity be with you all. Acknowledge it.

^{KW} **Rom. 15:33** Now, the God of the peace be with you all. Amen.

^{KJV} **Romans 15:33** Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul closes this part of his letter with a blessing upon the Roman believers. He prays that the God of prosperity will be with them all. Since there is another chapter remaining in Romans, this salutation seems out of place. But this is Paul’s way of saying “Goodbye” to the Roman believers. The last chapter is Paul’s introduction and greetings from other believers, a roll-call of hard-working, honorable souls that were ministering with him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Alas, how differently things turned out. Ordered to stay away from Jerusalem as a sphere of his ministry and sent to the Gentiles by the Lord Jesus (Acts 22:17-21), forbidden to set foot in Jerusalem by the Holy Spirit (Acts 21:4), allowing his emotions to get the better of his reason, Paul entered Jerusalem against the will of God, was mobbed by the Jews, rescued by the Romans, arrested by the latter when charges were preferred against him, and sent to Rome in chains for his hearing before Caesar. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 15:33 Now (temporal conj.), may the God (Subj. Nom.) of prosperity (Abl. Source; ironic, in that Paul has just said he will have no R&R until he gets his way) be (ellipsis,

verb supplied) with you (Gen. Rel.) all (Gen. Spec.).
Acknowledge it (liturgical formula; "let it be so").

^{WHO} **Romans 15:33** ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Romans 15:33** Deus autem pacis sit cum omnibus vobis amen

CHAPTER 16

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:1** Now, I introduce to you [vouch for] Phoebe, our sister, who is an agent [courier: she carried this epistle from Corinth to Rome] of the assembly at Kengchrea [eastern harbor of Corinth]:

^{KW} **Rom. 16:1** Now, I recommend to you, Phoebe, our sister, who is a deaconess of the assembly which is at Cenchrea,

^{KJV} **Romans 16:1** I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now vouches for (Static Present tense) Phoebe, who carried the Roman epistle from Corinth to Rome at Paul's request. The name Phoebe means radiant and charming, which she may have been. Paul introduces her as his courier for the church at Kengchrea, an eastern harbor town near Corinth. A lot of unnecessary wrangling has been done by transliterating the Greek word "diaconos" instead of translating it. The word has many meanings, such as table waiter, servant, helper, administrative assistant, secretary, courier, cook, janitor, accountant, and so on. In other words, context is quite important. It is the word unfortunately transliterated as "deacon" in other verses, with the idea that it refers to an officer of the church.

It is possible, as Wuest comments below, that Phoebe was a "deaconess," meaning she was a secretary, accountant, janitor, cook, or servant for the church. In this case, she is serving as a courier for this very epistle that Paul is about to complete. He is entrusting the delivery of this epistle to Phoebe to Rome so he may proceed east towards Jerusalem. She no doubt had the financial means and experience to travel from Greece to Italy without being harmed in any way. Paul calls her "our sister" as part of his introduction (Latin: sorority). Whatever the status accrued to the word "diakonos," she was given Paul's blessing for the delivery of this epistle to the Roman church.

If you insist on transliterating this word to mean “deaconess,” I recommend you study Timothy’s epistles closely so you may correctly ascertain the requirements for the office called “deacon.” Personally, I have no problem with a woman in the church with the proper spiritual gifts (helps, administration, encouragement) serving as a courier, table waiter, cook, accountant, janitor, secretary or administrative assistant. If you want to call her a “deaconess,” fine. Please keep in mind, however, that there is no element of authority over other people inherent in the etymology of this word. The basic meaning is “servant,” one who helps others with a legitimate need.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Servant” is “diakonos,” a technical word that can be used in either the masculine or feminine genders. The word means “a servant as seen in his activity.” The duties of the *deaconess* were “to take care of the sick and poor, to minister to martyrs and confessors in prison, to instruct catechumens ... and to exercise a general supervision over female church-members.” (K. Wuest) It is by no means clear exactly what sense should be attached to this word ... It could mean valued church worker. It was more important to Paul that the various kinds of Christian service should be performed than that certain official positions should be filled. Every Christian was a minister of some sort; not a few women member-ministers stood out sufficiently to be named. (C.K. Barrett)

This Phoebe was probably the bearer of the Epistle. She appears to have had business, perhaps of a legal kind, that took her to Rome; and Paul took advantage of her going to send the letter by her, desiring also to enlist the aid of her fellow Christians at Rome in furtherance of her business, whatever it might be. Her having been a succourer of many suggests the idea of her being a lady of means. Her function, and that of others, might be to minister to the sick and poor, and to fulfil such charitable offices as women could best discharge. (J. Barmby) The letter, when completed, was evidently taken to its destination by Phoebe, a Christian lady of substance who was making the journey on her own account. Paul takes the opportunity to commend her to the hospitality of the Christians to whom he writes. (W.H.G. Thomas)

Letters of commendation were common in the ancient world. People who were traveling in an age with few public facilities often depended on the assistance of people they had never met; and this assistance was easier to be had if the traveler could produce a letter of introduction from someone known to the potential host/assistant. So Paul writes to commend Phoebe to the Roman Christians. The word Paul uses here, diakonos, is one that is applicable to any Christian, for every Christian is a servant or minister of the risen Christ and of other Christians. Paul may, then, simply be highlighting the fact that Phoebe has effectively “served” the church to which she belongs ... The NT furnishes little basis on which to pinpoint the ministries carried out by deacons. It is likely that deacons were charged with visitation of the sick, poor relief, and perhaps financial oversight. (D. Moo)

Without any real justification, the New English Bible has the words “who holds office in the congregation at Cenchrea.” (J. Boice) If Phoebe ministered to the saints, as is evident from verse 2, then she would be a servant of the church and there is neither need nor warrant to suppose that

she occupied or exercised what amounted to an ecclesiastical office comparable to that of the deaconate. (J. Murray) In my judgment, based on I Timothy 2:12, there are two limitations placed on the function of women in the church: (1) an authoritative teaching position, and (2) an authoritative disciplining position. Those seem to me to be restricted to male leaders. (J. Boice) “Diakonos” is a life of habitual charity and hospitality, quite apart from any official position. (W.R. Nicoll)

The etymology of “diakonos” we have had repeatedly. The only question here is whether it is used in a general sense or in a technical sense. In some sense Phoebe was a servant or minister of the church in Cenchreae. (A.T. Robertson) That the word “diakonos” as used here, refers to an ecclesiastical office of deaconess, cannot be proved. Two extremes should be avoided here: (1) that of ordaining women to an ecclesiastical office when there is no warrant for doing so in Scripture; and (2) that of ignoring the very important and valuable services devout and alert women are able to render to the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (W. Hendriksen)

Rom. 16:1 **Now** (transitional conj.), **I introduce** (συνίστημι, PA11S, Static; recommend, present, vouch for) **to you** (Dat. Adv.) **Phoebe** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; means: radiant, charming), **our** (Gen. Rel.) **sister** (Acc. Appos.; Paul entrusted her with the care of the Roman Epistle, which she carried from Corinth to Rome), **who is** (εἰμι, PAPtc.ASF, Descriptive, Substantival) **an agent** (Pred. Acc.; courier, servant, helper) **of the assembly** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; church) **at Kengchrea** (Loc. Place; eastern harbor of Corinth):

^{WHO} **Romans 16:1** Συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν οὖσαν [καὶ] διακονοῦν τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχραεῖς

^{VUL} **Romans 16:1** commendo autem vobis Phoebem sororem nostram quae est in ministerio ecclesiae quae est Cenchrus

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:2** **Welcome her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints [according to the royal family honor code], and please assist her in whatever matter [business transaction] she might need of you, for she has also been an administrative assistant [matron] for many, even on behalf of myself.**

^{KW} **Rom. 16:2** To the end that you take her to yourselves in the Lord in a manner which is fitting to the saints, and that you stand by her in whatever business she may have need of you, for verily, she herself became a benefactress of many, and of me myself.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:2** That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands (Imperative mood) the Roman believers to welcome (Constative Aorist tense) Phoebe in a manner worthy of the royal family honor code. He also asks the Roman believers (Imperative of Entreaty) to assist her in resolving her business transaction or lawsuit. He doesn't know what her personal business is in Rome, but he asks for help on her behalf. He didn't violate her privacy by telling the entire world what her business was about, nor does it sound like he tried to pry the nature of her business from her. It was none of his business and he didn't concern himself about it. He merely asks that they help her out in whatever she might need (Customary Present tense) on a personal basis.

Paul also gives a couple of reasons why he is asking them to be unusually kind to Phoebe. First, she has served as administrative assistant for many in the church (Constative Aorist tense), acting as a patron for the poor, sick, and especially those who are traveling. In other words, she is well known in the Corinth area for taking care of traveling Christians, so it's the courteous thing to do to reciprocate the generosity. She must have been a smart and reasonably wealthy lady to be able to help so many people. As a matter of fact, she has even served Paul as his matron assistant, perhaps providing him food, shelter, opportunities to preach, and other traveling needs.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

She was probably a matron of means and social consideration. She had, and used, the opportunity to show kindness to her kindred in the faith, and to others in necessity. She may have shown hospitality to Christian ministers, have visited and relieved the sick and poor, and had rescued the fallen and neglected. The Roman Christians are desired to assist Phoebe in her business. Whether this was domestic, commercial, or legal, we do not know. In any case, she might well be grateful for an introduction which would secure for her the countenance, counsel, sympathy, and aid of men of wisdom and experience, of character and position. Let all Christian people honor those godly women who devote themselves to the succouring of the needy, the neglected, and the sinful. (J. Barmby)

Phoebe was a servant of the church. That is to say, she was a helper of God's people. She was a helper in Christian work ... Whatever position she occupied, she bears the name of servant. Now, there is nothing to be ashamed of in the name of servant. Every one who is worth anything is a servant in some sense. (C. Irwin) Phoebe is one of the women memorialized in the NT by their devoted service to the gospel whose honor is not to be tarnished by elevation to positions and functions inconsistent with the station they occupy in the economy of human relationships. (J. Murray)

The best alternative, then, is to give to "prostates" the meaning that it often has in secular Greek: patron, benefactor. A patron was one who came to the aid of others, especially foreigners, by providing housing and financial aid and by representing their interests before local authorities. Cenchræ's status as a busy seaport would make it imperative that a Christian in its church take up this ministry on behalf of visiting Christians. Phoebe, then, was probably a woman of high social standing and some wealth, who put

her status, resources, and time at the services of traveling Christians, like Paul, who needed help and support. Paul now urges the Romans to reciprocate. (D. Moo)

Rom. 16:2 Welcome (προσδέχομαι, AMSubj.2P, Constative, Imperative, Deponent) her (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.) in a manner worthy of (Descr. Gen.; reference to the RFHC) the saints (Gen. Assoc.), and (continuative conj.) please assist (παρίστημι, AASubj.2P, Constative, Imperative) her (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in whatever (Circum. particle; Paul is uncertain about what her business was in Rome and didn't push the matter because it was none of his concern: respect of privacy) matter (Dat. Ind. Obj.; thing, lawsuit, business transaction) she might need (χρήζω, PAsubj.3S, Customary, Potential) of you (Abl. Agency), for (explanatory conj.) she (Subj. Nom.) has also (adjunctive) been (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Constative, Deponent) an administrative assistant (Pred. Nom.; helper, matron) for many (Obj. Gen.; obviously a sharp lady who understands authority and knows how to get things done), even (ascensive) on behalf of (including) myself (Gen. Assoc.; doubling adds an emphasis to her service).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:2** ἵνα προσδέξησθε αὐτὴν ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων καὶ παραστήτε αὐτῇ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ὑμῶν χρήζη πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:2** ut eam suscipiatis in Domino digne sanctis et adistatis ei in quocumque negotio vestri indiguerit etenim ipsa quoque adstitit multis et mihi ipsi

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:3** Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers [traveling husband & wife tent-makers] in Christ Jesus,

^{KW} **Rom. 16:3** Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,

^{KJV} **Romans 16:3** Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks the Roman believers (Imperative of Entreaty) to greet a husband and wife tent-making team that have been his companions in Corinth and Ephesus. Prisca, or Priscilla, is a magnificent Gentile wife who worked so hard for the Lord that Paul mentions her before her husband. Aquila was a former Jewish slave of Pontus and held down the financial part of their team so his wife could devote more time to Christian service.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Do you love the profound theologian who sits in the corner of his library and toils away for forty years in order to establish a better Greek text of the New Testament so that multitudes can come

closer to the divine revelation as God gave it? (D. Barnhouse) Paul never forgets the believers who have helped him, like Prisca and Aquila. We should never forget those who help us grow in grace and knowledge, whether they are in the public eye or not. (LWB) Paul abode with them in Corinth, working with Aquila at tent-making, which was the craft of both. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 16:3 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Prisca (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Priscilla, a magnificent Gentile wife, mentioned before her husband because she was the more prominent Christian worker) and (connective conj.) Aquila (Acc. Dir. Obj.; means: the Eagle; her husband was a former Jewish slave of Pontus and a tent-maker by trade) my (Gen. Rel.) fellow-workers (Acc. Appos.; travelling tent-makers and Christians who helped Paul in Corinth and Ephesus) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.),

^{WHO} **Romans 16:3** Ἀσπάσασθε Πρίσκαν καὶ Ἀκύλαν τοὺς συνεργούς μου ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:3** salutate Priscam et Aquilam adiutores meos in Christo Iesu

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:4** Who on behalf of my life, risked their own necks, concerning whom not only I give thanks, but also all manner of Gentile assemblies.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:4** Who are such that on behalf of my life they laid down their necks, to whom I not only give thanks, but also all the assemblies of the Gentiles.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:4** Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Prisca and Aquila are of such a category of people that they even risked their own necks (Dramatic Aorist tense) for Paul. This word for “risking one’s neck” means to place one’s throat under the axe of an executioner. This may or may not have happened literally, but the idiom means at the very least that this husband and wife team exposed themselves to imminent peril. Not only is Paul giving thanks (Customary Present tense) for the risks they took on his behalf, but they evidently took similar risks by assisting other Gentile assemblies. Most towns did not have a church building to meet in, so homes were used for worship services. Many of these home-churches owed a debt of gratitude to Prisca and Aquila for one reason or another.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The wife’s name is given first, because she was the more prominent Christian worker. These two risked their lives to save Paul at one time. (K. Wuest)

Rom. 16:4 Who (Subj. Nom.; are of such a category of people) on behalf of my (Poss. Gen.) life (Gen. Substitution; *synecdoche* of the part for the whole: soul), risked (ὑποτίθημι, AAI3P, Dramatic) their own (Poss. Gen.) necks (Acc. Dir. Obj.; placing ones' throat under the axe of an executioner; idiom for *exposed themselves to imminent peril*), concerning whom (Dat. Ref.) not (neg. adv.) only (Ind. Nom.) I (Subj. Nom.) give thanks (εὐχαριστέω, PAI1S, Customary; genuine appreciation), but (adversative conj.) also (adjunctive) all manner of (Nom. Spec.) Gentile (Gen. Descr.) assemblies (Subj. Nom.; most localities did not have buildings to meet in, but met in homes).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:4** οἵτινες ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸν ἑαυτῶν τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν οἷς οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος εὐχαριστῶ ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν ἔθνῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 16:4** qui pro anima mea suas cervices subposuerunt quibus non solus ego gratias ago sed et cunctae ecclesiae gentium

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:5** Also salute their local assembly [home church]. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the first-fruit [Paul's first convert in that region] from Asia [western Turkey] for Christ.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:5** Also, greet the assembly which meets in their house.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:5** Likewise *greet* the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute the members of Prisca's and Aquila's home church. Then he asks them to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Epaenetus, a good friend, who was (Descriptive Present tense) Paul's first convert in the region of western Turkey. This is the same geographical area mentioned in detail as containing the seven churches in Revelation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The early Christians had no church buildings. The Roman Christians probably had several such homes where they would meet. (A.T. Robertson) There are in all 26 individuals to whom greetings are sent, together with two households of slaves, and probably three congregations. (J. Barmby) We should not overinterpret "beloved" since Paul clearly tries to say something complimentary about every person he greets. The characterization, while undoubtedly sincere, is also semiformalized. In calling him the firstfruits of Asia, Paul indicates that he was the first convert in the Roman province of Asia, whose cultural center was Ephesus. (D. Moo)

Rom. 16:5 **Also** (adjunctive), **salute** (ellipsis, verb brought over from verse 3) **their** (Gen. Rel.) **local** (Acc. Place; home) **assembly** (Acc. Dir. Obj.). **Salute** (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) **Epaenetus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **my** (Gen. Rel.) **beloved** (Acc. Appos.; category 3 friend), **who** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **the first-fruit** (Pred. Nom.; Paul's first convert in that region) **from Asia** (Abl. Source; western Turkey, i.e. the seven churches in Revelation) **for Christ** (Acc. Poss.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:5** καὶ τὴν κατ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν ἀσπάσασθε Ἐπαίνετον τὸν ἀγαπητόν μου ὃς ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀσίας εἰς Χριστόν

^{VUL} **Romans 16:5** et domesticam eorum ecclesiam salutate Ephraeneta dilectum mihi qui est primitivus Asiae in Christo

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:6** Salute Mary, who has labored greatly [to the point of exhaustion] for you.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:6** Greet Marian who is such as to have labored with wearisome effort to the point of exhaustion on your behalf with reference to many things.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:6** Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Mary, who has labored for them (Constative Aorist tense) to the point of exhaustion.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Of Mary we know nothing but what is recorded to her honor and remembrance in this passage, that she bestowed much labor upon the Christians of the imperial city. If she is taken as a representative of pious and benevolent and laborious Christian women, the record concerning her may suggest reflections regarding the vocation of such persons in the Church of Christ. (J. Barmby)

Rom. 16:6 **Salute** (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) **Mary** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **who** (Nom. Appos.) **has labored** (κοπιᾶω, AAI3S, Constative) **greatly** (Acc. Spec.; to the point of exhaustion, wearisome effort) **for you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:6** ἀσπάσασθε Μαριάν ἣτις πολλὰ ἐκοπίασεν εἰς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **Romans 16:6** salutate Mariam quae multum laboravit in vobis

LWB **Rom. 16:7** Salute Andronicus and Junia, my cousins, even my fellow-prisoners, who are honored among the missionaries and who became Christians [were converted] before me.

KW **Rom. 16:7** Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow countrymen and my fellow prisoners who are of excellent reputation among the apostles, who also came in Christ before I did.

KJV **Romans 16:7** Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Andronicus and Junia, his cousins, who were imprisoned with him (Latin: captives). Both Andronicus and Junia were Jews with Greek names they received in the imperial household. Both were related to Paul by blood, being from the tribe of Benjamin. Some think they were married, but not enough is known. In any case, they were honored (Descriptive Present tense) among the missionaries in that area for their service for Christ. They both became Christians (Intensive Perfect tense) before Paul himself was converted, which means they were part of the “old guard.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When our kindred have a spiritual as well as a natural affinity with us, they should be doubly dear, and should be treated with special distinction and affection. (J. Barmby) Age is doubly venerable when like a mellow sunset it crowns a Christian day. We may well ask whether we have advanced in knowledge, spirituality, and usefulness, as others have who commenced with us the Christian race. Are we lagging behind, whilst they have marched to the front? (S. Aldridge)

Whether they were in prison with Paul at the same time or simply shared with him this kind of experience in the service of the Lord is impossible to say. In two relative clauses Paul draws the attention of the Roman Christians to the stature of this husband and wife ministry team ... Paul often uses the title “apostle” in a looser sense: sometimes simply to denote a messenger or emissary and sometimes to denote a commissioned missionary. So “apostle” here probably means traveling missionary. (D. Moo)

Rom. 16:7 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Andronicus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; a Jew with a Greek name that he received in the imperial household) and (connective) Junia (Acc. Dir. Obj.; his Gentile wife), my (Gen. Rel.) cousins (Compl. Acc.; kinsmen, related by blood, of the tribe of Benjamin), even (ascensive) my (Gen. Rel.) fellow-prisoners (Compl. Acc.), who (Subj. Nom.) are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive) honored (Pred. Nom.; noteworthy, marked out, illustrious) among the missionaries (Dat. Assoc.; broader sense of the traditional noun ‘apostle’), and

(continuative) who (Nom. Appos.) became (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3P, Intensive, Deponent) Christians (Dat. Adv., Loc. Sph.; were saved "in Christ" before Paul was converted) before me (Gen. Time).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:7** ἀσπάσασθε Ἀνδρόνικον καὶ Ἰουλιᾶν τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναιχμαλώτους μου οἵτινές εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις οἱ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:7** salutate Andronicum et Iuniam cognatos et concaptivos meos qui sunt nobiles in apostolis qui et ante me fuerunt in Christo

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:8** Salute Ampliatus, my beloved [one of Paul's converts] in the Lord.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:8** Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:8** Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Ampliatus, one of his converts in the Lord.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These people were close to Paul. He calls them beloved and praises them for their faithful service to him and one another and for their labor in the Lord. Do you love other Christians like that, especially people who are not quite like you? Some believers are bookish, working away in libraries in order to understand the Bible better and be more able to explain it to others. Other Christians are more visible, popular figures. Some are quiet and self-effacing. Some are loud, enthusiastic, or even awkward in the way they express their Christianity. (J. Boice)

There is considerable evidence for connecting this name more closely with the Christian community in Rome. In the cemetery of Domitilla, now undoubtedly recognized as one of the earliest of Christian catacombs, is a chamber now known by the name of "Ampliatus" owing to an inscription which it contains. (Sanday & Headlam)

Rom. 16:8 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Ampliatus (Acc. Dir. Obj.), my (Gen. Rel.) beloved (Compl. Acc.; a convert of Paul's) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:8** ἀσπάσασθε Ἀμπλιᾶτον τὸν ἀγαπητὸν μου ἐν κυρίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:8** salutate Ampliatum dilectissimum mihi in Domino

LWB **Rom. 16:9** Salute Urbanus [city-bred, freed slave], our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachus, my beloved.

KW **Rom. 16:9** Greet Urbane, our fellow helper in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

KJV **Romans 16:9** Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Urbanus, a freed slave whose name means “city bred.” Paul did not know him personally, but calls him a fellow-worker in Christ. He does know Stachus, a good friend of his, whose name means “ear of corn.” Why do I say Paul knows one but does not know the other? Urbanus is called “our” fellow-worker, while Stachus is called “my” beloved.

Rom. 16:9 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Urbanus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; means: city-bred, freed slave), our (Gen. Rel.; not “my” because Paul did not know this man personally) fellow-worker (Compl. Acc.) in Christ (Loc. Sph.), and (connective) Stachus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; means: an ear of corn), my (Gen. Rel.) beloved (Compl. Acc.).

WHO **Romans 16:9** ἀσπάσασθε Οὐρβανὸν τὸν συνεργὸν ἡμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ καὶ Στάχυν τὸν ἀγαπητὸν μου

VUL **Romans 16:9** salutate Urbanum adiutorem nostrum in Christo et Stachyn dilectum meum

LWB **Rom. 16:10** Salute Apelles [a Jew named after the famous tragic actor], approved in Christ. Salute those [slaves] belonging to Aristobulus [grandson of Herod].

KW **Rom. 16:10** Greet Apelles, the one who, having been put to the test and having been found to meet the test, is approved in Christ. Greet those belonging to Aristobulus.

KJV **Romans 16:10** Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asked the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Apelles, a Jewish believer who was named after the famous tragic actor. He was tested by undeserved suffering and he passed the test, so Paul calls him “approved” in Christ. Paul also asked the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) the slaves that belonged to Aristobulus, the grandson of Herod.

Rom. 16:10 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Apelles (Acc. Dir. Obj.; a Jew named after the famous tragic actor), approved (Compl. Acc.; respected, tried & true; he was put to the test of undeserved suffering and passed it) in Christ (Loc. Sph.). Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.; his slaves) belonging to Aristobulus (Abl. Source; grandson of Herod the Great).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:10** ἀσπάσασθε Ἀπελλῆν τὸν δόκιμον ἐν Χριστῷ ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοβούλου

^{VUL} **Romans 16:10** salutate Apellen probum in Christo

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:11** Salute Herodion [Jewish believer named after his master Herod], my fellow countryman. Salute those [slaves] belonging to Narcissus [who was put to death by Agrippa].

^{KW} **Rom. 16:11** Greet Herodian, my fellow countryman. Greet those belonging to Narcissus, those who are in the Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:11** Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Herodion, a Jew who was named after his former master, Herod. Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) the Christian slaves who belonged to Narcissus, a famous freedman who was put to death by Agrippa.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Narcissus is the powerful freedman by that name put to death shortly after the accession of Nero and therefore some years before Paul wrote this epistle. (J. Murray)

Rom. 16:11 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Herodion (Acc. Dir. Obj.; named after his former master Herod), my (Gen. Rel.) fellow-countryman (Acc. Appos.; kinsman, a fellow Jew). Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.; his slaves) belonging to Narcissus (Abl. Source; a famous freedman who was put to death by Agrippa), the ones (Acc. Spec.; believers only) who are (εἰμί, PAPtc.APM, Descriptive, Substantial) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:11** ἀσπάσασθε Ἑρῳδίωνα τὸν συγγενῆ μου ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ναρκίσσου τοὺς ὄντας ἐν κυρίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:11** salutate eos qui sunt ex Aristoboli salutate Herodionem cognatum meum salutate eos qui sunt ex Narcissi qui sunt in Domino

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:12** Salute [twin sisters] Tryphena [dainty] and Tryphosa [delicate], who labor continuously to the point of exhaustion in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who has labored to the point of exhaustion with reference to many things [multi-talented] in the Lord.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:12** Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those who labored to the point of exhaustion in the Lord. Greet Persis, the beloved who was such that she labored to the point of exhaustion with reference to many things in the Lord.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:12** Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) two twin sisters, Tryphena and Tryphosa. The meaning of the first sister's name is dainty; the meaning of the second sister's name is delicate. Paul says they have labored continuously to the point of exhaustion (Iterative Present tense), which means they may be approaching or have already reached supergrace status. This inference to their relative spiritual status is due to the next commendation by Paul, to a third woman named Persis. Paul asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Persis, who has labored to the point of exhaustion (Constative Aorist tense) in many things. This could mean that Persis is multi-talented, or that she was approaching ultra-supergrace. Paul also calls her "beloved," yet another subtle distinction in spiritual status as compared to the twin sisters.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Three mature ladies who handled the pressure of being exhausted in their work magnificently. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 16:12 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Tryphena (Acc. Dir. Obj.; dainty) and (connective) Tryphosa (Acc. Dir. Obj.; delicate; two twin sisters in SG, whose slave names mean: to live luxuriously), who labor continuously to the point of exhaustion (κοπιᾶω, PAPtc.APF, Iterative, Substantival, Articular) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.). Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Persis (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in USG) the beloved (Compl. Acc.), who (Subj. Nom.) has labored to the point of exhaustion

(κοπιῶ, AAI3S, Constative) with reference to many things (Acc. Spec.; has great talents) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:12** ἀσπάσασθε Τρύφαιναν καὶ Τρυφῶσαν τὰς κοπιώσας ἐν κυρίῳ ἀσπάσασθε Περσίδα τὴν ἀγαπητὴν ἣτις πολλὰ ἐκοπίασεν ἐν κυρίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:12** salutate Tryfenam et Tryfosam quae laborant in Domino salutate Persidam carissimam quae multum laboravit in Domino

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:13** Salute Rufus [son of Simon, the man who carried the Lord's cross], chosen by the Lord, also his mother and mine [praising her maternal care].

^{KW} **Rom. 16:13** Greet Rufus, the one selected out in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:13** Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) Rufus, the son of Simon who carried the Lord's cross on the way to Calvary (Mark 15:21). The phrase "chosen by the Lord" might be a reference to the excitement Rufus displayed when he understood that he was one of God's elect. It might also be a reference to his election itself, or that the Lord had selected him for a special ministry. In any case, Paul also compliments the mother of Rufus for her maternal care for both her son and for Paul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Eklekton" cannot refer simply to the fact of his election to be a Christian, since in whatever sense that is true, it is true of all Christians alike. Whereas here it evidently expresses some distinction of Rufus. He was a noble specimen of a Christian. (W.R. Nicoll)

Rom. 16:13 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Rufus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; from Mark 15:21, whose father was Simon, the man who carried the Lord's cross; means: red), chosen (Compl. Acc.; selected) by the Lord (Instr. Agency), also (adjunctive) his (Gen. Rel.) mother (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective) mine (Gen. Rel.; delicately praising her maternal care for him).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:13** ἀσπάσασθε Ῥοῦφον τὸν ἐκλεκτὸν ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐμοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:13** salutate Rufum electum in Domino et matrem eius et meam

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:14** Salute Asyncritus [freedman of Augustus], Philegon [burning with energy], Hermes, Patrobas [former slave of Nero], Hermas, and the brethren with them.

κ^w **Rom. 16:14** Greet Asyncritus, Philegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren with them.

κ^{JV} **Romans 16:14** Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) a roll-call of Christians: Asyncritus, Philegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and many others in their geographical location. At least two of them, Asyncritus and Patrobas, were slaves in the home of two Caesars, Augustus and Nero. These men were prominent members, perhaps pastors of their own home churches. They were not “elders” in a single local church as some commentators have theorized.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There were many assemblies of believers in Rome, each with its own pastor. When the elder (pastor) from each church met with elders from the other churches in a “pastor’s conference,” that was the only instance of a true “plurality of elders.” A plurality of elders in a single assembly is nothing but layman arrogance, inordinate competition and destruction of the authority of the pastor-teacher. (R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 16:14 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Asyncritus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; freedman of Augustus), Philegon (Acc. Dir. Obj.; means: burning with energy), Hermes (Acc. Dir. Obj.), Patrobas (Acc. Dir. Obj.; former slave of Nero), Hermas (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Hermogenes), and (connective) the brethren (Acc. Dir. Obj.; another local church) with them (Dat. Assoc.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:14** ἀσπάσασθε Ἀσύγκριτον Φλέγοντα Ἑρμῆν Πατροβᾶν Ἑρμᾶν καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀδελφούς

^{VUL} **Romans 16:14** salutate Asyncritum Flegonta Hermen Patrobam Hermam et qui cum eis sunt fratres

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:15** Salute Philologus [former slave to the aunt of Julius Caesar] and Julia [his wife], Nereus [their teenage daughter] and his [Philologus’] sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them.

κ^w **Rom. 16:15** Greet Philologus, and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:15** Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) a former slave to the aunt of Julius Caesar, Philologus, and his wife Julia. The Roman believers are likewise to salute their teenage daughter, Nereus, who was later martyred for Jesus Christ. They are also to salute the sister of Philologus, a woman named Olympas, and other believers in their geographical location.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Arguments based upon names are worth little in view of the fact that men of all races met in Rome. (C.K. Barrett) So be careful how much emphasis is placed on the meaning of names in this chapter. (LWB)

Rom. 16:15 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) Philologus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; former slave to the aunt of Gaius Julius Caesar) and (connective) Julia (Acc. Dir. Obj.; his wife), Nereus (Acc. Dir. Obj.; their teenage daughter who was later martyred) and (connective) his (Gen. Rel.) sister (Acc. Dir. Obj.), and (connective) Olympas (Acc. Dir. Obj.), and (connective) all (Acc. Spec.) the saints (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with them (Dat. Assoc.; another assembly in Rome).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:15** ἀσπάσασθε Φιλόλογον καὶ Ἰουλίαν Νηρέα καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ Ὀλυμπᾶν καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς πάντας ἁγίους

^{VUL} **Romans 16:15** salutate Filologum et Iuliam Nereum et sororem eius et Olympiadem et omnes qui cum eis sunt sanctos

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:16** Salute one another of the same kind [believers] with a holy kiss [handshake and the exercise of impersonal love]. All the assemblies of Christ salute you.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:16** Greet one another with a holy kiss. There greet you all the churches of Christ.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:16** Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asks the Roman believers to salute (Imperative of Entreaty) their unnamed fellow believers throughout the Roman Empire. Greeting them with a “holy kiss” is fulfilled today by a handshake and by exercising impersonal (virtue) love. All the assemblies in Paul’s immediate vicinity reciprocate by saluting the Roman believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Combining a greeting (salute) and a kiss was an oriental custom, especially Jewish. Today's comparable greeting is the handshake. (K. Wuest) *Ecclesia* is also used of the total of professing Christians without reference to locality and is practically parallel in this sense to Christendom. (J. Walvoord) We don't learn much about Christian theology or the Christian life from a list of names! But Paul depended on a significant number of others who were working along with him. And if Paul needed such help, how much more do we. Also, Paul's mention of nine women in this list reminds us that women played an important role in the early church. (D. Moo)

Rom. 16:16 Salute (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty, Deponent) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; believers) with a holy (Instr. Manner) kiss (Instr. Means; this concept is fulfilled by *impersonal love*). All (Nom. Spec.) the assemblies (Subj. Nom.; churches) of Christ (Gen. Rel.) salute (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI3P, Retroactive, Deponent) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:16** Ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πᾶσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:16** salutate invicem in osculo sancto salutant vos omnes ecclesiae Christi

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:17** Now, I urge you, brethren [mature believers], to mark [keep your eyes on] those who cause dissensions [encourage divisions] and arouse opposition [create theological problems] contrary to the doctrine which you have learned for the purpose of practicing. In fact, keep on separating from them [keep them at a distance],

^{KW} **Rom. 16:17** Now, I beg of you, please, brethren, be keeping a watchful eye ever open for those who are causing the divisions and the scandals which are contrary to the teaching that you learned, and be turning away from them.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:17** Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now urges (Aoristic Present tense) the mature believers in Rome to keep an eye on (Aoristic Present tense) those who encourage divisions (Latin: dissention) in the local assembly and who create unnecessary theological problems due to their authority arrogance. These individuals set verbal and logical traps for the purpose of ensnaring new believers and those who have not shown consistent spiritual growth. Paul wants the mature Roman believers to stand guard over the immature believers, making sure they learn true doctrine and are not caught in a trap by false teachers. Paul also adds a Telic

Participle translated “for the purpose of practicing,” because doctrine is not only to be learned, but it is to be applied (Iterative Present tense) to daily life.

If the Roman believers are seduced by false doctrine, they will be applying false principles in their spiritual life. As an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul cannot let this happen, so he warns them once again at the end of this letter. In fact, he commands them (Imperative mood) to keep on separating (Iterative Present tense) from these antagonistic individuals. These individuals could be unbelievers, but most likely they were reversionistic believers with ulterior motives. Depending on their level of maturity, or their respective strengths and weaknesses, they should separate from (Latin: declinate, go in the opposite direction from) these unwholesome individuals either mentally (if possible) or physically.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If quarrelsome persons are left to themselves, they will soon have nobody to quarrel with. It is an old saying that it takes two to make a quarrel. It might be added that it takes three to keep it up. A third party often fans the flame. (C. Irwin) These false teachers are divisive, self-centered, persuasive, teach what is contrary to the gospel, and must therefore be avoided at all costs. It seems likely that the false teachers had not yet come to Rome; his purpose is not to get the Roman Christians to exercise church discipline against heretical church members, but to put them on their guard against such teachers who might make their way to Rome. (D. Moo) Believers are commanded to separate from anyone in the local church who is repeatedly guilty of sins of the tongue. Such an individual is a troublemaker. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The emphasis on knowledge of the truth in this section is particularly weighty. The errors were contrary to doctrine. The danger was due to the deception of smooth and fair speaking, and for this reason the Apostle wishes them to have the true spiritual wisdom. It is one of the most impressive thoughts connected with the NT that spiritual perception is one of the marks of a ripe, mature Christianity. The young Christian is unable to distinguish things that differ, but the growing saint is able to understand, and in the light of spiritual experience is able to discern good and evil, and to distinguish between the beautiful and the base. All this calls for a constant application of mind, heart, conscience, and will to the truth of God as revealed in His Word. The Christian who makes Bible study and meditation his daily portion and duty will never lack that spiritual enlightenment which will enable him to shrink from the first appearance of error and follow that which is good. (W.H.G. Thomas)

Heavy is the responsibility those incur who initiate strife among Christians. Let them be certain first that what they bring forward as a test is truth, important fundamental truth. If it opposes the ethical rules or the elementary teachings on which the gospel is established, it carries its own condemnation. A speculative theory is not a sufficient reason for throwing a firebrand amongst the articles of faith. The apostle’s warning applies, not to genuine seekers after truth, but to those who delight in making breaches in

the Christian fortress. Discriminate between schismatics and dissenters. (S. Aldridge)
Christians should not watch false teachers on television. We should not buy their books or attend their meetings. We should ignore them as figures standing entirely outside the fold of genuine Christianity. In other words, we are to know that they are there but keep away from them. (J. Boice)

In the present dispensation the filling of the Spirit does not stimulate emotion. Emotion is not a barometer of spirituality. Instead, emotion responds normally to the mentality of the soul, where truth resides as a result of learning Bible doctrine. God set aside the spectacular rituals and miracles of previous dispensations so that during the postcanon Church Age His manifold wisdom and power are displayed in doctrine – the object of faith – which emphasizes the believer’s thoughts and decisions rather than his emotions. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 16:17 **Now** (temporal conj.), **I urge** (παρακαλέω, PA1S, Aoristic; appeal to, exhort) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **brethren** (Voc. Add.; mature believers only), **to mark** (σκοπέω, PAInf., Aoristic, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; keep your eyes on, look out for, notice, closely observe) **those** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **who** (Acc. Appos.) **cause dissensions** (Adv. Acc.; encourage divisions) **and** (continuative) **arouse opposition** (Adv. Acc.; create theological problems; bait stick, animal trap) **contrary to the doctrine** (Acc. Rel.) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you have learned** (μανθάνω, AAI2P, Culminative) **for the purpose of practicing** (ποιέω, PAPtc.APM, Iterative, Telic, Articular; carrying out, keeping). **In fact** (emphatic conj.), **keep on separating** (έκκλίνω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; turn away, avoid, keep at a distance) **from them** (Abl. Separation),

^{WHO} **Romans 16:17** Παρακαλώ δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε ποιοῦντας καὶ ἐκκλίνετε ἀπ’ αὐτῶν·

^{VUL} **Romans 16:17** rogo autem vos fratres ut observetis eos qui dissensiones et offencicula praeter doctrinam quam vos didicistis faciunt et declinate ab illis

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:18** For they [reversionistic false teachers] are of such a category of individuals who do not serve our Lord Christ, but rather their own emotions [base interests]; furthermore, by a smooth sales job [plausible speech] and flattery [false eloquence], they repeatedly deceive the minds of the unsuspecting [those without doctrine: the clueless].

^{KW} **Rom. 16:18** For they are such as are not rendering service as bondslaves to our Lord Christ, but to their own stomachs; and with smooth and plausible address, which simulates goodness, and with polished eulogies, are leading astray the hearts of the innocent;

^{KJV} **Romans 16:18** For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his warning about the reversionistic false teachers. These self-appointed, self-annointed teachers do not serve (Customary Present tense) the Lord Christ, but instead they serve their own emotions. The word “emotions” is a synecdoche of a part of the body for the whole self or inner being. It refers to their own base, sinful interests, spurred forward by emotional revolt of the soul. Furthermore, they continue to follow Paul’s ministry, just one step behind him, with the hopes of twisting his doctrinal instruction into a jumble of false teachings by deceiving (Iterative Present tense) the unlearned. Those without maximum Bible doctrine in the soul are liable to deception; those without maximum Bible doctrine in the soul are clueless and unsuspecting.

False teachers know a variety of ways to deceive (Latin: seduce) such individuals by their smooth, plausible sales talk. The combination of flattery, false doctrine, deceitful eloquence, base emotional appeal, and a slick public relations presentation always works on those without doctrinal mooring. The iterative present tense points to this sad, but true state of affairs happening over-and-over again. Satan uses many gates of the cosmic system to capture these individuals. Some of his lies and panaceas are represented quite well in the media today, for instance: socialism, environmentalism, the welfare state, psychological living as opposed to the Christian way of life, philosophical speculation, multiculturalism, liberalism, etc.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The NT never commends the simple-mindedness of those who are merely gullible. It expects that Christians will be alert to what is happening, shrewd to assess the forces actually at work, and quick to support the good and resist the evil. The seemingly fair outward forms of wickedness will not then mislead the Christian. It is, of course, a discovery renewed age by age that vice does not meet us clothed in its appropriate garments ... Virtue must be vigilant if it is to avoid deception. Those who are so simple-minded that they suspect no evil will certainly be deceived, for the agents of destruction insinuate their poison with such specious suavity that the guileless are often overthrown before they are even aware of the menace that confronts them. (J. Knox) The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age is not related to feelings or emotion. We may feel wonderful or wretched and still be filled with the Spirit, just as we may have felt wonderful or wretched when we first believed in Christ yet were still saved. Emotion is never the criterion of spiritual status. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The early stages of reversionism are characterized by a frantic attempt to compensate for some reactor factor – frustration or loneliness, for example. Since emotion, like an appetite, has no content of its own – no character, no stability, no common sense, no knowledge, no doctrine – it is incompetent to handle the authority it seizes from the right lobe. The believer who is controlled by his emotions likewise has no character, stability, common sense, or application of

doctrine. Emotion cannot think; and thought, not feelings, must dominate the soul. Total separation from those who are enslaved to their emotions is commanded. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Satanic doctrines influence people to vie for spiritual status by claiming to speak in tongues, hear voices, see visions, perform miracles, heal the sick – all in a welter of emotionalism. The Church Age ministry of God the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such practices. The pursuit of such ecstatic experiences in the name of spirituality obscures the truth and blasphemes against God. Christianity is a system of thinking – thinking the truth – and the Holy Spirit provides the power that, first, aids our concentration in learning doctrine and, second, enhances our ability to apply in all the gates the doctrines we know. (ibid)

The fundamental idea is that of freedom from alien or disturbing elements. What Paul wishes for the Romans - moral intelligence, not impaired in the least by any dealings with evil. (Denney) Paul well knows that these false teachers are clever at dressing up their heresies in smooth talk and fine words. Those who are not on the watch for these people and who do not listen closely enough to what they are teaching might be led astray and into ultimate spiritual ruin. (D. Moo) One of the invaluable safeguards against deception is a keen awareness of the forces which are actually at work around us. One who has the discernment to recognize what is happening will be neither indifferent nor naïve. The somnolence which does not bother, the uncritical carelessness which does not see – these are the qualities which give evil men their opportunity. The watchful Christian will therefore take note – but with practical results: he will avoid those who might encompass his overthrow. The wisdom which Paul commends is a practical quality, shrewd to discriminate between what is really good and what is so in appearance only. (J. Knox)

Believers are equipped to use the power and dynamics of the spiritual life from the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine. But in emotional revolt they become users of God, equating their own aims with the will of God, seeking to feel good, searching for miraculous deliverance, or pursuing pseudo-blessing from hyperemotional or mystical experiences. They become vulnerable to the tumultuous pseudo-worship of charismatics who promote intense emotional stimulation in church services. Believers with such chaos of soul become obnoxious troublemakers or confused seekers. Hence, we as believers are commanded to separate from them. Apart from doctrine permeating the soul, there can be no capacity for loving God, no capacity for life, no capacity for happiness, or no capacity for love in any area. When you turn your back on doctrine, you precipitate an avalanche of self-induced misery and divine punishment. Emotional revolt of the soul, or spiritual anarchy, paves the way into the 5th stage of reversionism. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rom. 16:18 For (explanatory conj.) they (Subj. Nom.; reversionistic false teachers) are of such a category of individuals who (Descr. Nom.) do not (neg. adv.) serve (δουλεύω, ΠΑΙΣP, Customary) our (Gen. Rel.) Lord (Dat. Adv.) Christ (Dat. Ref.), but rather (contrast conj.) their own (Poss. Gen.) emotions (Dat. Disadv.; *synecdoche* of a part of the body for the whole self or inner being, base interests of their own); furthermore (continuative), by a smooth sales job (Instr. Means; plausible speech) and (connective)

flattery (Instr. Means; false eloquence, well-chosen but untrue words), **they repeatedly deceive** (ἐξαπατάω, PAI3P, Iterative; beguile, seduce, lead astray, cheat) **the minds** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; right lobes) **of the unsuspecting** (Poss. Gen.; liable to deception, those without doctrine, the clueless).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:18** οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ οὐ δουλεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ καὶ διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας ἐξαπατῶσιν τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀκάκων

^{VUL} **Romans 16:18** huiusmodi enim Christo Domino nostro non serviunt sed suo ventri et per dulces sermones et benedictiones seducunt corda innocentium

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:19** Of course, your authority orientation [obedience] has been reported to everyone [wide distribution], therefore, I am very happy [inspired] with you; however [obedience is not enough], I want you to become wise [you must have maximum Bible doctrine in the soul] with respect to good [divine protocol], and unravaged [untouched] with respect to evil [Satan's cosmic system].

^{KW} **Rom. 16:19** For your obedience has come to the ears of all. Because of you, therefore, I am rejoicing. But I desire you to be wise ones with reference to that which is good, and pure ones with reference to that which is evil.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:19** For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul complements the Roman believers on their obedience, their authority orientation to their pastors and teachers. They have grown spiritually because they sat down, shut up, and learned doctrine from those who had the gift and the training to teach them. This very practice was so pronounced that word of it had reached (Culminative Aorist tense) the ends of the Empire. He had heard reports (Latin: divulged) of their genuine humility nearly everywhere he traveled. Paul was immensely pleased with their (Customary Present tense) great attitude towards their teachers and the Word in general. He was always pleased to see a congregation growing in grace and knowledge, wherever he found one.

However, authority orientation all by itself is not enough for spiritual growth. There must be correct Bible doctrine available for every level of believer. Somebody must be able to teach the basics to new believers. Somebody must be able to teach categorical truth to spiritual adolescents. And somebody must be able to teach advanced doctrines and verse-by-verse exposition to those who are desiring to crack the maturity barrier. Paul wants them (Progressive Present tense) to become wise (Customary Present tense) believers, who follow the protocol plan of God in its entirety. He wants them to grow by adhering

to precisely correct protocol, not emphasizing one aspect of God's plan and ignoring the others that don't appeal to them.

Many believers start God's precisely correct protocol for the spiritual life because after becoming believers in Jesus Christ, they realize there is an entire volume that contains God's mind that they know little about. Perhaps they read it through by themselves; perhaps they supplement their reading with a one-volume commentary on the Bible, such as that by Matthew Henry. Perhaps they join a church and they learn a few basics. But many, upon reaching the first step in their spiritual walk, lock horns with a pastor or teacher whose personality they don't like, and they crash and burn. One of the biggest distractions in the Christian life is concentrating on the man instead of the message.

In many Christian circles there is an arrogant demand that all believers fit into a cookie-cutter mold. This is extremely prevalent in seminaries and program churches. I have witnessed a gross involvement in personality cults in the past few of decades of my Christian life. I have seen believers start on the road to reversion recovery and then abandon it for one single facet of God's precise system of protocol because the next stage of their spiritual walk required them to learn doctrine from a man whose personality offended them in some way. Perhaps they sat under a particular pastor for years, were comfortable with his personality and methodology, and were then forced to move to a new geographical location where the new pastor was quite the opposite.

I personally have a problem learning from what I call "casper milktoast" individuals. One seminary professor comes to mind, who undoubtedly has the gift of pastor and/or teacher, but in my personal estimation, I think he is better suited to teach elementary school. I am able to occasionally learn something from his writing, but I have great difficulty learning from him face-to-face. I consider his methods to be childish, frivolous and insulting to my intelligence. In turn, this particular professor has a great problem with one of my favorite Bible teachers, a former WW2 military officer. I quote Colonel Thieme quite liberally throughout my exegesis, because on many occasions, I cannot find any way to improve on what he has done on some passages of Scripture. I have encountered other believers, however, who are offended by the personality of "military types."

The pendulum seems to swing in two directions. A person can become comfortable with one teacher and reject another equally competent teacher because of personality conflicts. Or a person can become comfortable with anyone who teaches and not know when they are learning truth or heresy. In this passage, Paul seems to be concerned that the Romans might push their admirable quality of obedience to the point of listening to any false teacher that might come along. Whichever way your pendulum might swing, it is possible to miss an valuable opportunity to learn and grow. It is also possible to react to a teacher and enter Satan's cosmic system by one arrogant trap or another.

Paul wants the Roman believers to be untouched by Satan's devices. He wants us to live far away from his labyrinth of evil. He wants us to avoid both extreme ends of the pendulum's swing. On the one hand, he wants us to have maximum doctrine in our soul,

which often requires more than one pastor or teacher in our life. Rejecting the next teacher because he does not have a pleasing personality or is not tough enough might prevent you from reaching the next stage of spiritual growth. On the other hand, he does not want us to listen to every teacher who comes along without being discriminating on what is being taught. Many heresies have been taught over the years and have been swallowed by the unsuspecting.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Augustine wrote: *Dilige et quod vis fac*. “Only love, and then do as you please” (in Epp. Johann., Tr. vii, sec. 8). Let not the hasty reader conclude that he is counseling a method whereby the believer can enter into complete lawlessness and the anarchy that comes from self-will. He is saying that if true love is in the heart then love is the law of the heart. I can do as I please, because I do not please to do anything that would displease the Lord. (D. Barnhouse)

Paul warns that the false teachers are adept at deceiving the innocent. And he issues this warning just because the Roman Christians have such a universal reputation for being obedient, that is, innocent. Paul rejoices in this, for it is, of course, a good quality. But at the same time, he wants them to combine this innocence with wisdom about what is good and to confine their innocence to what is evil. They should not be so simple-minded as to swallow whatever is offered. Understood in this way, Paul probably alludes to Jesus saying about being wise as serpents and innocent as doves, for the meaning is much the same. (D. Moo)

Obedience here applies to their readiness in receiving everything taught by the authority of God. It is the greatest praise to any church or individual to obey cheerfully, with a childlike disposition, whatever the Word of God teaches. Many Christians are not teachable, and while they have obeyed the Gospel to salvation, yet use their own wisdom in many other things respecting the institutions of God. They employ subtle and plausible reasonings, by which they impose on themselves and deceive others. This in the end will procure them neither honor nor profit. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 16:19 Of course (affirmative particle; certainly, by all means), your (Poss. Gen.) authority orientation (Subj. Nom.; obedience) has been reported (ἀφικνέομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; has reached) to everyone (Acc. Dir. Obj.; wide distribution), therefore (inferential particle; consequently), I am very pleased (χαίρω, PAI1S, Customary; have inner happiness, rejoice) with you (Dat. Adv.; Paul is inspired by another pastor's congregation); however (adversative conj.; authority orientation is not enough of itself, correct Bible doctrine must be present, i.e. Romanism), I want (θέλω, PAI1S, Progressive; desire, prefer, wish) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Roman believers) to become (εἶμι, PAInf., Customary) wise (Compl. Acc.) with respect to good (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the protocol plan of God), and (continuative) unravaged (Acc. Com.; untouched, simple,

pure, unmixed, harmless, unsophisticated, maintain your integrity) with respect to evil (Acc. Gen. Ref.; unadulterated; Satan's cosmic system).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:19** ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπακοὴ εἰς πάντα ἀφίκετο· ἐφ' ὑμῖν οὖν χαίρω θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς σοφοὺς [μέν] εἶναι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν

^{VUL} **Romans 16:19** vestra enim oboedientia in omnem locum divulgata est gaudeo igitur in vobis sed volo vos sapientes esse in bono et simplices in malo

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:20** In fact, the God of prosperity will crush Satan under your feet shortly [at the 2nd advent]. May the [victorious] grace from our Lord Jesus be with you.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:20** And the God of the peace will trample Satan under your feet soon. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:20** And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Although Paul is a bit concerned that some false teachers might come into Rome and corrupt the spiritual progress of the believers there, he also knows for a fact that the God of prosperity will ultimately crush (Predictive Future tense) Satan under their feet at the 2nd advent. Satan is “alive and well on planet earth,” but he is also a conquered enemy bound with a lengthy chain. Satan will eventually be smashed, but for the time being he has free reign to hassle believers. Paul prays the victorious grace from our Lord Jesus will be with them when they cross swords with the often hidden enemy.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul appeals to an unmitigated trust in divine sovereignty in such matters. “Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath” (12:19). (J. Edwards) The defeat and downfall of Satan is decisively accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus and will come to pass without fail. Therefore in the present age we are called to resist Satan by our faith in the triumph over him that has been accomplished and assured by Jesus. (J. Piper)

Even in the churches there would be no peace, were it not for God’s presence. Such is the cunning of Satan, and the remaining ignorance and corruption of the Lord’s people, that Satan would keep them in continual broils, if God did not powerfully counteract him. Satan works personally in disturbing the churches, though his work is carried on through the instrumentality of men. He excites his emissaries and suggests his devices to them, and they are successful through his artifices. (R. Haldane)

Rom. 16:20 In fact (inferential conj.; used as an apodosis: As a result), the God (Subj. Nom.) of prosperity (Adv. Gen. Ref.) will crush (συντρίβω, FAI3S, Predictive; smash, shatter) Satan (Acc. Dir. Obj.; a conquered enemy with a lengthened chain) under your (Poss. Gen.) feet (Acc. Place) shortly (Loc. Time; the 2nd advent is a short time away compared to eternity). May the grace (Subj. Nom.; there is victory for anyone who appropriates grace) from our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Abl. Source) be (ellipsis, verb supplied) with you (Gen. Poss.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:20** ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης συντρίψει τὸν Σατανᾶν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν ἐν τάχει ἢ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν

^{VUL} **Romans 16:20** Deus autem pacis conteret Satanam sub pedibus vestris velociter gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi vobiscum

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:21** Timothy, my fellow-worker, salutes you, as well as Lucius [the Cyrene from Acts 31:1], Jason [a successful businessman], and Sosipater [who accompanied Paul on his ill-designed trip to Jerusalem], my fellow countrymen [Jewish relative].

^{KW} **Rom. 16:21** There greet you Timothy, my co-worker, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:21** Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sends a crisp salute to the Roman believers (Aoristic Present tense) from Timothy and three Jewish relatives that are with him. The first relative is Lucius, the Cyrene from Acts 13:1 who assisted in Paul's so-called ordination ceremony. The second relative is Jason, a successful businessman mentioned in Acts 17:5-9. The third relative is Sosipater, a businessman in Acts 20:4, the son of Pyrrhus of Berea, who accompanied Paul on his ill-conceived, reversionistic trip to Jerusalem.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These are close friends of Paul that were not pastors, evangelists or missionaries. They were businessmen whom he could be relaxed around, talk to when the need arose, and also companions he could have a good time with. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Tertius was the secretary to whom Paul dictated the letter to the Romans. The great apostle, afflicted with an Oriental eye disease called ophthalmia which he contracted in the lowlands of Pamphylia while on his first missionary journey (Gal. 4:13-15), was in the habit of dictating his letters to a secretary. (K. Wuest) Timothy's importance can be gauged from the fact that Paul introduces him as co-author of six of his letters. (D. Moo)

Rom. 16:21 Timothy (Subj. Nom.), my (Gen. Rel.) fellow-worker (Nom. Appos.), salutes (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI3S, Aoristic, Deponent) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), as well as (adjunctive) Lucius (Subj. Nom.; the Cyrene from Acts 13:1 who assisted in Paul's ordination ceremony), Jason (Subj. Nom.; a successful businessman in Acts 17:5-9), and (connective) Sosipater (Subj. Nom.; a businessman in Acts 20:4, the son of Pyrrhus of Berea, who accompanied Paul on his reversionistic trip to Jerusalem), my (Gen. Rel.) fellow countrymen (Nom. Appos.; kinsmen, relatives, Jews in this case).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:21** Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος ὁ συνεργός [μου] καὶ Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου

^{VUL} **Romans 16:21** salutat vos Timotheus adiutor meus et Lucius et Iason et Sosipater cognati mei

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:22** **I, Tertius, who have written this epistle [as Paul's amanuensis], salute you in the Lord.**

^{KW} **Rom. 16:22** As for myself, I, Tertius, greet you in the Lord, the one who is putting this letter in writing.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:22** I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Tertius, acting as Paul's amanuensis, wrote (Culminative Aorist tense) the epistle to the Romans. Paul dictated, while he acted as secretary or scribe. Tertius also salutes (Customary Present tense) the Roman believers. Tertius was most likely an educated Christian slave.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A system of numbering slaves in the slave world of the ancient Roman Empire gave such names as Primus, Secundus, Tertius, Quartus and Quintus. (D. Barnhouse)

Rom. 16:22 **I** (Subj. Nom.), **Tertius** (Nom. Appos.), **who have written** (γράφω, AAPtc.NSM, Culminative, Substantival, Articular) **this** (Acc. Spec.) **epistle** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; amanuensis), **salute** (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI1S, Customary) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **in the Lord** (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:22** ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Τέρτιος ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐν κυρίῳ

^{VUL} **Romans 16:22** saluto vos ego Tertius qui scripsi epistulam in Domino

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:23** Gaius, my host and of the entire assembly [his house was their church], salutes you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, salutes you, as well as Quartus his brother.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:23** There greets you Gaius, my host and host of the whole assembly. There greet you Erastus, the manager of the city, and Quartus, the brother.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:23** Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Gaius, Paul's host and the host of the entire assembly, salutes (Customary Present tense) the Roman believers. Before the ritual of water baptism was replaced by the reality of Spirit baptism, Paul baptized Gaius in Acts 19:29 and 20:4. You heard me correctly; there is no place in the Church Age dispensation for the ritual of water baptism. Erastus, the city treasurer or administrator of all city property, salutes (Customary Present tense) the Roman believers, along with his brother, Quartus.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Gaius Titius Justus would then be his full designation (praenomen, nomen gentile, and cognomen) as a Roman citizen (a citizen of the Roman colony of Corinth). Erastus, the city treasurer, has been identified with the civic official of that name mentioned in a Latin inscription on a marble paving-block discovered at Corinth in 1929 by members of the American School at Athens. The aedile (commissioner for public works) was a responsible magistrate in a Roman city. It might be inferred that Erastus acquitted himself so satisfactorily in the inferior office that he was promoted to the higher magistracy, and showed his appreciation of the honor thus done him by presenting the city with a marble pavement. (F.F. Bruce)

Rom. 16:23 Gaius (Subj. Nom.; was baptized in water by Paul before this ritual was replaced by the reality of Spirit baptism, Acts 19:29, 20:4), my (Gen. Rel.) host (Nom. Appos.) and (connective) of the entire (Gen. Content) assembly (Gen. Rel.; the assembly meets in Gaius' home), salutes (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI1S, Customary) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.). Erastus (Subj. Nom.), the treasurer (Nom. Appos.; house-manager, administrator of the city's property) of the city (Gen. Rel.), salutes (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI1S, Customary) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), as well as (adjunctive) Quartus (Subj. Nom.) his (Gen. Rel.) brother (Gen. Rel.).

^{WHO} **Romans 16:23** ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Γάϊος ὁ ξένος μου καὶ ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἐραστός ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως καὶ Κούαρτος ὁ ἀδελφός

^{VUL} **Romans 16:23** salutatus vos Gaius hospes meus et universae ecclesiae salutatus vos Erastus arcarius civitatis et Quartus frater

Rom. 16:24 This is not a genuine verse. It is not included in the best manuscripts (eg. Aleph A B C Coptic) and among English translations, only the KJV includes it.

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:25** Now, to Him [God the Father] Who is able to strengthen you [logistical grace support] in accordance with my gospel [Paul's divinely commissioned message], the proclamation pertaining to Jesus Christ, in accordance with the revelation [disclosure] of the mystery [of the Church Age] which has been concealed through times eternal [past dispensations],

^{KW} **Rom. 16:25** Now, to the One who is of power to establish you according to my gospel, even the proclamation concerning Jesus Christ, according to the uncovering of the mystery which during eternal times has been kept in silence,

^{KJV} **Romans 16:25** Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begins his final salutation to the Roman believers by praising God the Father, Who is willing and able (Durative Present tense) to stabilize you with logistical grace support. He is able to strengthen us according to the standards of Paul's gospel, the public communication pertaining to Jesus Christ. Paul was the apostle chosen by God to present the unique doctrines of grace during the Church Age. This is why he calls it "my gospel." This gospel was in fact the unveiling of the mystery of the Church Age. The long silence, lasting for many prior dispensations, was finally broken with Paul's unique message to Church Age believers. This mystery had been sealed up for past ages (Intensive Perfect tense), but the time had arrived for its disclosure.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It must be understood that the writers of the Old Testament knew that there would be an age between the cross and the triumph. Our age was no mystery, but was foretold by the prophets. In several passages there are indications that the prophets spoke of "these days," the days of the Church. The fact of this age intervening between the first and second comings of Christ was no mystery. It was only the nature and scope of this age which was hidden from the prophets. All the details that lay between the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ were mystery, secret, hidden from the Old Testament believers. They had only known the broad, sweeping panorama. Paul was chosen by God for the express purpose of revealing this secret to the church. (D. Barnhouse)

The formation of the church, made up of Jews and Gentiles to form a body, was a mystery. The parable of the pearl parallels the mystery applicable to the church in this verse. The Lord is showing that within this present age, in addition to acquiring the treasure, Israel, He will also acquire for His personal possession that which was born through injury, the church. We observe (1) that the church, like the pearl, becomes the possession of the merchantman, Christ, by purchase; (2) the church, like the pearl, can only become His adornment by being lifted out of the place in which it was formed. This is to be related to the present age purpose. (J.D. Pentecost) The ages are the time periods within which God is revealing His divine purpose and program as it centers in the Lord Jesus Christ. (L. Chafer) This present age, dating from the rejection of the Messiah by Israel unto the coming reception of the Messiah by Israel at His second advent, is viewed in Scripture as a mystery. (J.D. Pentecost)

The Lord had a twofold purpose in the use of parables, namely, both to reveal and to conceal great truths. There was, first, that inner circle of followers who received His Word with joy, and who, like those who shared in the secret counsels of other kingdoms, were gifted to know the mysteries of the Messianic reign, long hidden, but now about to be made known. These should realize the truth of the proverb, "Whosoever has, to him shall be given." This proverb expresses in an enigmatic way a most weighty and wonderful law of experience in the things of God. He who is gifted with a desire to know God, and to appropriate rightly the provisions of His grace, shall increase in wisdom and knowledge more and more by the manifold revelations of divine truth. But the man of opposite character, who has heart, soul, and mind wherewith to love God, but is unwilling to use his powers in earnest search for the truth, shall lose even what he seems to have. His powers will become weak and worthless by inactivity, and like the slothful servant in the parable of the talents, he will lose that which should have been his glory. (M. Terry)

Rom. 16:25 Now (transitional conj.), to Him (Dat. Adv.; God the Father) who is able (δύναμαι, PMPTc.DSM, Durative, Substantival, Articular; willing and able) to strengthen (στηρίζω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb; establish, confirm, support, stabilize) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; logistical grace support) in accordance with (according to the standards of) my (Poss. Gen.) gospel (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Paul was the apostle chosen by God to present the unique doctrines of grace during the Church Age), i.e. (ascensive conj.), the proclamation (Adv. Acc.; public communication) pertaining to Jesus Christ (Obj. Gen.), in accordance with the revelation (Acc. Gen. Ref.; unveiling, disclosure, the long silence is now expressly broken) of the mystery (Obj. Gen.; top secret body of doctrine concerning the Church Age) which has been concealed (σιγάω, Perf.PPTc.GSN, Intensive, Attributive; kept silent, secret) through times (Loc. Time; ages, dispensations) eternal (Dat. Measure; idiom for past history),

^{WHO} **Romans 16:25** Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑμᾶς στηρίξαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν μυστηρίου χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σεσιγημένου

^{VUL} **Romans 16:25** ei autem qui potens est vos confirmare iuxta evangelium meum et praedicationem Iesu Christi secundum revelationem mysterii temporibus aeternis taciti

LWB Rom. 16:26 But now [during the Church Age] has been revealed, through the prophetic writings [the canon at the time of Paul], in accordance with the decree of the eternal God, having been revealed to all Gentiles [in the new dispensation] for the purpose of obedience [to the plan of God] from doctrine [obedience to the Christian faith as a system of Truth].

KW Rom. 16:26 But now has been made known through prophetic writings according to the mandate of the eternal God, having been made known with a view to the obedience to the Faith among all nations,

^{KJV} **Romans 16:26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The mystery of the Church Age has now been revealed (Dramatic Aorist tense) through the prophetic writings (witnessed by the law and prophets per Romans 3:21) in accordance with the decree of the eternal God. The prophetic writings were the canon of Scripture at the time of Paul. At that time, God was revealed (Constative Aorist tense) to all Gentiles, an emphasis on the beginning of the new dispensation. There was a purpose behind the revealing of the Church Age at that time. The purpose was for Gentile believers to become obedient to the plan of God by adhering to the Christian faith as a system of Truth. This plan is also the purpose for our existence on earth today. Obedience to the Word of God as a system of divine Truth is the goal of the Christian way of life. In a manner of speaking, the Church Age, above all other dispensations, is the age of the intake, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

From all eternity God, in His eternal purpose, ordained to save the nations in Jesus Christ. The mystery which had been hidden for interminable ages has now been revealed through Jesus Christ, as foretold by the Law and the Prophets, so that all nations might believe and obey Him. (J. Edwards) The mystery of God's work in Christ, while not experienced or understood in its fullness in the OT period, was nevertheless testified to by the OT. Prophetic writings will therefore refer to the OT. (D. Moo)

The essence of the mystery was this, that one day the Gentiles would not only be entering God's kingdom in large numbers, but would be fellow-sharers, participants on equal terms, with the elect from among the Jews. It was this mystery that had been hidden for long ages past, for though the decision had been made in God's eternal plan and though

even during the old dispensation there had been foreshadowings of the realization of God's promise of salvation for both Gentile and Jew, the period of fulfillment on any large scale had not been reached until now. But now, the new dispensation having arrived, and the gospel being proclaimed far and wide, this mystery was being made manifest, was becoming abundantly clear. It was being manifested in the fulfillment of prophecy. (W. Hendricksen)

Rom. 16:26 But (adversative conj.) now (Temporal adv.; during the Church Age) has been revealed (φανερῶω, APPTc.GSM, Dramatic, Temporal), through the prophetic (Descr. Gen.; not yet in the canon at the time of Paul) writings (Abl. Means; Scripture), in accordance with the decree (Acc. Gen. Ref.; commandment) of the eternal (Adv. Gen. Time, Descr.) God (Poss. Gen.), having been revealed (γνωρίζω, APPTc.GSN, Constativ, Culminative) to all (Acc. Spec.) Gentiles (Acc. Dir. Obj.; emphasis on the new dispensation) for the purpose of obedience (Acc. Purpose; to the plan of God) from doctrine (Abl. Source; K. Wuest: obedience to the Christian Faith as a system of truth),

^{WHO} **Romans 16:26** φανερωθέντος δὲ νῦν διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν κατ' ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη γνωρισθέντος

^{VUL} **Romans 16:26** quod nunc patefactum est per scripturas prophetarum secundum praeceptum aeterni Dei ad oboedionem fidei in cunctis gentibus cognito

^{LWB} **Rom. 16:27** To God, alone wise [omniscient] through Jesus Christ [the revelation of the wisdom of God], to Whom is glory unto the ages [forever]. Acknowledge it.

^{KW} **Rom. 16:27** To God alone wise, through Jesus Christ, to Him [God alone wise] be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

^{KJV} **Romans 16:27** To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. <Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.>

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's final praise is to God, Who alone is wise due to divine omniscience. And the revelation of this wisdom of God can be seen through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom all glory originates and culminates. In other words, God gets the ultimate glory, not man.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We do not go far in Paul's writings before we discover that he presents God as absolutely sovereign. The sovereignty of God is the most important of all theological doctrines, and we

cannot read far in any of Paul's writings without finding this absolute sovereign God. (D. Barnhouse)

Rom. 16:27 To God (Dat. Ind. Obj.), alone (Dat. Measure) wise (Dat. Ref.; omniscience) through Jesus Christ (Prep. Gen.; the revelation of the wisdom of God), to Whom (Dat. Ref.) is (ellipsis, verb supplied) glory (Pred. Nom.; God gets the glory, not man) unto the ages (Acc. Extent of Time; forever). Acknowledge it.

^{WHO} **Romans 16:27** μόνῳ σοφῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [ᾧ] ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Romans 16:27** solo sapienti Deo per Iesum Christum cui honor in saecula saeculorum amen

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