

# **Focus Upon Rome**

## **Year 4, Quarter 2**

**This study covers the latter part of Paul's third journey. Paul's sights are set further westward and he hopes to travel to Rome and beyond. However, he must first return to Jerusalem and complete unfinished business there. His three-month stay in Corinth produces the Roman epistle, the great treatise upon justification by faith. The quarter will focus upon this letter.**

### **Outline**

#### **Week 1: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Paul Comes to Corinth; Introduction to Romans
- ◆ Salutation (Rom 1:1-7)
- ◆ Paul's Desire to Visit Rome (Rom 1:8-17)
- ◆ The Gospel: God's Power unto Salvation (Rom 1:16-17)
- ◆ The Reprobate Gentile World (Rom 1:18-32)

#### **Week 2: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ The Righteous Judgment of God (Rom 2:1-16)
- ◆ The Guilt of the Jews (Rom 2:17-24)
- ◆ True Circumcision (Rom 2:25-29)
- ◆ Anticipating Objections (Rom 3:1-8)
- ◆ All the World Guilty (Rom 3:9-20)

#### **Week 3: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Righteousness Through Faith (Rom 3:21-26)
- ◆ One God Who Justifies (Rom 3:27-31)
- ◆ The Examples of Abraham and David (Rom 4:1-8)
- ◆ Abraham the Gentile (Rom 4:9-17a)
- ◆ The Quality of Abraham's Faith (Rom 4:17b-25)

#### **Week 4: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ The Benefits of Faith (Rom 5:1-5)
- ◆ Salvation for the Undeserving (Rom 5:6-11)
- ◆ Death from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:12-14)

- ◆ The Offense vs. The Gift (Rom 5:15-19)
- ◆ Grace Greater Than Sin (Rom 5:20-21)

### **Week 5: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ “Shall We Continue in Sin?” (Rom 6:1-7)
- ◆ “Do Not Let Sin Reign” (Rom 6:8-14)
- ◆ Slaves of Righteousness (Rom 6:15-19)
- ◆ The Wages of Sin vs. The Gift of God (Rom 6:20-23)
- ◆ The Illustration of Marriage (Rom 7:1-6)

### **Week 6: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ God’s Holy Law (Rom 7:7-12)
- ◆ The Good Law, The Sinful Man (Rom 7:13-16)
- ◆ The Struggle to Do Right (Rom 7:17-20)
- ◆ Conflicting Laws (Rom 7:21-23)
- ◆ The Wretched Man Delivered (Rom 7:24-25)

### **Week 7: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ No Condemnation to Those in Christ (Rom 8:1-11)
- ◆ The Spirit of Adoption (Rom 8:12-17)
- ◆ The Hope of Future Glory (Rom 8:18-25)
- ◆ All Things Work Together for Good (Rom 8:26-30)
- ◆ More Than Conquerors (Rom 8:31-39)

### **Week 8: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Paul’s Love for His Jewish Brethren (Rom 9:1-5)
- ◆ God’s Choice of Isaac and Jacob (Rom 9:6-13)
- ◆ God’s Use of Pharaoh (Rom 9:14-18)
- ◆ The Potter and the Clay (Rom 9:19-29)
- ◆ Israel Has Stumbled (Rom 9:30-33)

### **Week 9: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Submitting to God’s Righteousness (Rom 10:1-13)
- ◆ A Disobedient and Contrary People (Rom 10:14-21)
- ◆ “Has God Cast Away His People?” (Rom 11:1-10)
- ◆ The Grafting In of the Gentiles (Rom 11:11-22)
- ◆ The Re-grafting of the Jews (Rom 11:23-36)

### **Week 10: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ A Living Sacrifice (Rom 12:1-8)
- ◆ A Variety of Virtues (Rom 12:9-21)
- ◆ Relationship with Civil Authority (Rom 13:1-7)
- ◆ Love: The Fulfillment of the Law (Rom 13:8-10)
- ◆ “Put On the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 13:11-14)

### **Week 11: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Dispute Among Conscientious Brethren (Rom 14:1-8)
- ◆ Answering to God (Rom 14:9-13)
- ◆ Pursuing Peace and Edification (Rom 14:14-19)
- ◆ The Violation of Conscience (Rom 14:20-23)
- ◆ The Example of Christ (Rom 15:1-6)

### **Week 12: The Roman Epistle**

- ◆ Jew & Gentile Unity (Rom 15:7-13)
- ◆ Apostolic Reflections (Rom 15:14-21)
- ◆ Future Traveling Plans (Rom 15:22-33)
- ◆ Personal Greetings (Rom 16:1-16)
- ◆ Warning, Benedictions and Doxology (Rom 16:17-27)

### **Week 13: Paul’s Return to Jerusalem**

- ◆ From Corinth to Miletus
- ◆ Interview with the Ephesian Elders
- ◆ From Miletus to Tyre
- ◆ From Tyre to Caesarea
- ◆ Paul’s Reception by the Jerusalem Church

## MEMORY VERSES: YEAR 4, QUARTER 2

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**Week 1:** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.

☞ Romans 1:20

**Week 2:** Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

☞ Romans 3:20

**Week 3:** Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all ...

☞ Romans 4:16

**Week 4:** And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

☞ Romans 5:3-4

**Week 5:** Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

☞ Romans 7:4

**Week 6:** O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 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.

☞ Romans 7:24-25

**Week 7:** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

☞ Romans 8:16-17

**Week 8:** I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, “You are not My people,” there they will be called sons of the living God.

☞ Romans 9:25-26

**Week 9:** Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

☞ Romans 11:22

**Week 10:** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

☞ Romans 12:1

**Week 11:** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

☞ Romans 15:3

**Week 12:** Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy ...

☞ Romans 15:8-9a

**Week 13:** And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

☞ Acts 20:32

**Day 1: Paul Comes to Corinth; Introduction to Romans**

After writing Second Corinthians from Macedonia and announcing his intended visit, Paul now makes his way southward to Achaia and Corinth (Ac 20:1-3a). Luke gives no details other than the duration of Paul's stay. It is during this three months that Paul writes the Roman epistle, probably January – March A.D. 57 or 58.

The Roman correspondence is the most sublime treatise on God's redemptive plan in the New Testament. It presents a scholastic challenge as the student grapples with such lofty concepts as grace, faith, justification, law and (S)pirit. But it is also inspirational as Paul speaks of peace, hope, love, victory and glory. The book may be broadly divided into two sections: a propositional treatise (chs. 1-11) and a practical tutorial (chs. 12-16).

1. What did Paul do on his way to Greece (or Achaia, the southern Greek peninsula)?
2. How is the time-frame of January-March substantiated?

**Day 2: Salutation (Rom 1:1-7)**

Paul's salutation is filled with buzzwords, key concepts which will be developed in the body of the epistle: gospel, seed of David, Son of God, resurrection, Spirit, grace, apostleship, obedience, the faith, all nations. As he did in Galatians, Paul links the gospel directly to prophecy in the "Holy Scriptures" (Rom 1:2; Gal 3:8, 11). The gospel, culminating in the offer of salvation to *all* mankind through His crucified and resurrected Son, was in God's mind from the beginning. And Paul, defying his critics and detractors, confidently asserts his heavenly calling of apostleship unto this gospel.

3. What was the ultimate declaration of Jesus' divine Sonship?

**Day 3: Paul's Desire to Visit Rome (Rom 1:8-15)**

Paul has great concern not only for those brethren whom he has converted but for Christians everywhere. He assures the Roman brethren "*that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers*" (Rom 1:9). His growing desire is to visit Rome and establish the brethren by whatever gift he might impart. This he would have done earlier but other obligations prevailed (1:11-13; see Rom 15:18-24). Paul will indeed visit Rome but under circumstances he cannot as yet foresee.

4. In what two ways is the term "faith" used in Rom 1:5 and 1:8?
5. What had been Paul's major aim in preaching the gospel (Rom 15:20)?

## Day 4: The Gospel: God's Power unto Salvation (Rom 1:16-17)

These verses may be considered the encapsulated theme of Romans. Salvation from sin has been vested in the gospel of Christ, and *everyone*, upon the condition of comprehensive belief, can participate in its benefits. In the gospel, not the Mosaic Law or any other philosophy or scheme, is the righteousness of God revealed (1:17). Scan ahead to Rom 10:3 where Paul indicts the Jews for being “*ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness.*” The “*from ... to*” construction of 1:17 seems to be a literary tool to stress the fullness of a point (“**from** faith **to** faith” [Rom 1:17]; “**of** death **to** death ... **of** life **to** life” [2 Cor 2:16]; “**from** glory **to** glory” [2 Cor 3:18]). In other words, the righteousness of God can be fully summarized in the term “faith.” Producing saving faith is the be-all and end-all of the gospel.

6. What is Paul's attitude toward the gospel for which he has suffered so much?

## Day 5: The Reprobate Gentile World (Rom 1:18-32)

Paul now establishes his first premise from which the remainder of his argument will flow. He draws a moral sketch of mankind: a collection of rebellious sinners totally alienated from God and without any redeeming quality or ability within his own resources. *All* men, Jew and Gentile alike, are in a depraved, spiritually deficient condition. This is not said to denigrate mankind per se; Paul's aim is to starkly set God's glorious salvation against the black background of man's unworthiness and thus highlight our complete dependence upon and submission to Him as our eternal Savior. Paul will focus upon the Gentiles in this section and extend his indictment to the Jews in chapter two.

Paul accuses the Gentiles for failing to comprehend the knowledge of God which may be garnered from the material creation (Rom 1:18-23). The earth and the surrounding universe is more than a habitable environment; it is a testament to the Creator in its vastness, precision of design, balance of nature and other physical phenomena. Callous and clueless is the man who has not been spiritually moved by some aspect of creation. Rather, the wonders of creation have historically induced men to worship *nature itself* as a god. This, says Paul, is grievous error and profound foolishness.

God's response to such willful rejection was to “*give them up*” to their own idolatrous philosophies and the immoral excesses they engendered (Rom 1:24, 26, 28). Thus from time immemorial the Gentiles *as a class* (though with occasional individual exceptions) have been infected with such diseases of the soul as enumerated in Rom 1:24-32. Those who practice such things are worthy of death and subject to the wrath of God (1:18, 32).

7. What can be seen of God through His creation? What can **not** be seen?

8. What did the Gentiles do with the truth of God (Rom 1:25)?

9. What does unrighteousness of men do to the truth of God (Rom 1:18)?

**Day 1: The Righteous Judgment of God (Rom 2:1-16)**

Paul now expands his indictment of sin from the completely amoral Gentile to the man who lives with some degree of ethical awareness. Does simply recognizing right and wrong exempt one from judgment? No, says Paul, not when “*you who judge practice the same things*” (Rom 2:1-3). Paul stresses active performance in 2:6-10: “deeds”; “doing good”; “works what is good.” He is not insinuating that an individual can be saved by law-keeping, for that is the very point denied by both Galatians and Romans (Gal 3:10-12; Rom 3:27-28). He asserts that mere *access* to law or possession of moral discrimination does not make one righteous; it is what one *does* that counts: “*for not the **hearers** of the law are just in the sight of God, but the **doers** of the law will be justified*” (Rom 2:13). Even the Gentiles, who do not have a written, codified law like the Mosaic Law, acknowledge a standard of acceptable behavior concerning which their conscience condemns violations thereof (2:14-15). This judicial condemnation of the conscience is itself witness that guilt is present in those who have “*sinned without law*” (i.e., written, codified divine law; comp. Rom 4:15; 1 Cor 9:20-21). This justifies God’s judgment.

1. What ultimately leads one to repentance?
2. T/F Jews will be excused from judgment simply because they had the Law of Moses.

**Day 2: The Guilt of the Jews (Rom 2:17-24)**

The principle of judgment according to moral practice is universal; it applies to “*the Jew first and also to the Greek*” (Rom 2:9-10). Thus Paul impeaches the Jews for behaving precisely like the Gentiles whom they condemn and he nullifies every self-justifying boast they advance (2:17-24): Yes, God had been good to the Jews, but this was to induce their repentance; yes, the Jews condemned evil but practiced the same; yes, the Jews possessed **THE** Law, but the Gentiles were also amenable to law (though it came by different means than direct revelation); yes, the Jews were to be light in a dark world but instead gave occasion for blasphemy; yes, the Jews had circumcision but this merely obligated them to live by covenant law which they failed to do (developed in the next section). Paul methodically and systematically places all men on the same level - sinners.

3. How did the Jews view themselves (Rom 2:17-20)? What should we learn from this?

**Day 3: True Circumcision (Rom 2:25-29)**

The Jew had come to see circumcision as privilege rather than obligation. He felt justified by this external mark. But Paul argues against righteousness by fleshly operation; the physically branded Jew is not less wicked than the unscarred Gentile. On the other hand, the uncircumcised Gentile who strives to live obediently, that is, who is circum-



cised *in heart*, judges (or condemns) the disobedient but circumcised Jew. Again, it is moral performance which is at the heart of human righteousness, and Paul is arguing that *no one* can be counted righteous purely upon this basis.

4. A “true” Jew, circumcised in heart, seeks praise from whom?
5. Relate this mistaken notion of the Jews to modern times. What might we substitute (as the Jew did circumcision) for genuine righteousness?

### Day 4: Anticipating Objections (Rom 3:1-8)

Paul realizes that his stinging indictments of the Jews will be countered and he pauses long enough to brush it aside (he will develop these themes in more detail later in Romans). *Objection #1*: “Paul, are you saying that because *some* Jews were unfaithful God is now breaking His word?” (Rom 3:3). Paul’s response: “*Certainly not!*” God is above reproach and all His ways are truth and right. *Objection #2*: “Well, Paul, if the unfaithfulness of man magnifies the righteousness of God, isn’t it unfair of God to punish the sinner (since his actions provide opportunity for God’s glory to shine)?” (Rom 3:5). Paul’s answer: “*Certainly not!*” Otherwise, sin would be non-existent, but God still calls “a lie” a lie. *Objection #3*: “Paul, if law-keeping cannot save a Jew or anyone else, then your doctrine logically justifies law-breaking in order to receive God’s goodness. We’ve heard this is what you teach” (3:8). Paul’s reply: We teach no such thing. That is slander, pure and simple, and those who say such will be justly condemned.

6. In spite of the corporate failure of the Jews, what blessing had they given the world?
7. Give an example where someone might argue that a sin or crime should be overlooked because it produces something good (Rom 3:5). How would you answer this?

### Day 5: All the World Guilty (Rom 3:9-20)

Paul quotes a variety of Old Testament scriptures to substantiate his argument that all are sinners. Note the terms such as “all,” “none,” “not one,” “every,” “all the world.” This deplorable condition of mankind is not by genetics or physical relationship to Adam; it is because all **choose** not to live by the standards they themselves know (refer back to Rom 2:8-9, 27 and the description of the reprobate in ch 1). This is a dark, depressing picture indeed, and it flies in the face of humanistic arrogance. Man, alone, is ruined and undone. Romans 3:20 is transitional. Man left to law only is in a hopeless condition for law – Moses’ Law or otherwise – was never meant to justify man. That is not the purpose of law, “*for by [the] law is the **knowledge** of sin*” (Rom 3:20). But it is precisely here in man’s hopelessness that God intervenes with justification “*apart from the law.*”

8. What is the root of all transgression (Rom 3:18)?
9. By what is no flesh justified in the sight of God?

**Day 1: Righteousness through Faith (Rom 3:21-26)**

Paul now introduces the concept of righteousness or justification according to the gospel. Justification cannot be according to law, for all men are violators of law. Righteousness, then, must be "*apart from [the] law*" (Rom 3:21). (**Note:** Brackets [] indicate when the article "the" is not in the Greek text. The concept of "law" in Romans has reference to a law/works-system wherein no guilt is incurred via perfect compliance. The primary example of such a system is "**the** Law" between God and Israel.) Justification, Paul says, is "*through faith in Jesus Christ*" (3:22). Thus Paul contrasts two systems: a "law/works-system" and a "faith-system." The faith-system provides a medium whereby transgression may be forgiven – the blood of Jesus (3:24-25). God offers this medium by grace, and it is appropriated by the faith of each individual, Jew or Gentile, who so desires it.

1. To what did the Law and Prophets witness?
2. What did God patiently forbear in order to bring this faith-system into existence?

**Day 2: One God Who Justifies (Rom 3:27-31)**

The universal sinfulness of man and the possibility of justification solely upon the faith-system which God unilaterally conceived and implemented completely removes any ground of boasting by man (Rom 3:27). The Jews had come to see themselves as God's exclusive possession and righteous through the Law of Moses. But they were mistaken on both counts. God is also the God of the Gentiles (3:29), and the Law *condemned* the Jews as transgressors (3:19). The only conclusion possible given the facts: "*a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of [the] law*" (3:28). This being true, justification is universally available via the exact same standard; there is not one arrangement for Jews and another for Gentiles (3:30). Justification "by faith" means by a "faith-system" and says nothing in and of itself about the **quality** or **character** of that faith. What *kind* of believing (3:22) or faith which results in justification is more fully developed in ch 4.

3. To what kind of works does Paul refer in Rom 3:27?
4. Does justification by faith mean law is unimportant (Rom 3:31)? Explain.

**Day 3: The Examples of Abraham and David (Rom 4:1-8)**

Two illustrious ancestors of the Jews are now cited to substantiate Paul's case for justification by faith. Abraham, the genetic father of the nation, was expressly said to be righteous on account of his belief in God (Rom 4:3). This belief was not some momentary, mental apprehension but rather a lifetime of trust in and submission to the will of God. The assessment of Abraham in Gen 15:6 is in reference to his belief in God's assurance

that he will produce the child promised. This belief is commensurate with Abraham's already proven obedience in leaving Ur, traveling to Canaan, living the life of a nomad, building altars to God's honor and paying tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of God. The same assessment is made of Abraham later in life when he again accepts God's promise of fatherhood after his procreative functions have ceased (Rom 4:18-22) and later still when he obediently offers Isaac (by intent) as a sacrifice (Jas 2:23).

David is cited for a different purpose as he *"describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works"* (Rom 4:6). David's fellowship with God depended heavily upon forgiveness (4:7-8). Though guilty of various sins, David was still considered faithful by his godly response to those sins. Under a faith-system, sin is erased from the believer's account and *"his faith is accounted for righteousness"* (4:5). It is not *Christ's* faith substituted for the sinner's but the believer's own faith which remains after the removal of impurity. Forgiveness appropriated by faith is man's **only** hope, but it is all he needs for God is *"the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"* (3:26).

5. What had Abraham done which removed his ground for boasting before God?

6. What does "does not work" refer to in Rom 4:5? What kind of work? Any work?

#### **Day 4: Abraham the Gentile (Rom 4:9-17a)**

Paul now points out that Abraham was declared righteous **before** circumcision and that circumcision was merely *"a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised"* (Rom 4:11). The Jews had it backward. They thought that circumcision *made one righteous!* But the father of their own nation was righteous *as a Gentile*. Paul now connects this argument back to the promise that Abraham would be *"heir of the world"* (4:13). If this promise rested upon law it would be *"of no effect because [the] law brings about wrath"* (4:14b-15a). *"Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace"* and thus available to *"those who are of the faith of Abraham"* (4:16). Note again the two contrasting, mutually exclusive systems.

7. How can Abraham be father of both Jew and Gentile?

#### **Day 5: The Quality of Abraham's Faith (Rom 4:17b-25)**

Paul describes the quality of Abraham's faith in reference to the birth of Isaac. Note the phrases: *"contrary to hope, in hope believed"; "not being weak in faith"; "did not waver"; "strengthened in faith"; "fully convinced"* (Rom 4:18-21). It was this kind of confidence, and the obedience which flowed from it, which serves as a model for us. *"It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead"* (4:24). We today serve the same God as Abraham, and He calls upon us to have the same trust in His promises as Abraham did. So, do **you** believe that Jesus was raised from the dead??

8. How is God the "God of life" in these verses?

**Day 1: The Benefits of Faith (Rom 5:1-5)**

After detailing the wretched state of man in his sin, Paul now highlights the blessings of man justified from sin by faith. Note the descriptive terms: peace, grace, rejoice, hope, glory (Rom 5:1-2). But lest anyone misunderstand, Paul affirms that this blessed state does not preempt suffering and trial: “*we also glory in tribulations*” (5:3). Paul knew very well that spiritual richness and fellowship with God often resulted in hardship from a contrary world, but he also knew that God would support him and strengthen his faith.

1. Describe how tribulation ultimately strengthens the Christian’s hope.
2. How has the Holy Spirit poured out God’s love into our hearts?

**Day 2: Salvation for the Undeserving (Rom 5:6-11)**

Paul now clearly indicates the degree of God’s love for sinful man upon which rests eternal hope: “*Christ died for the **ungodly** ... while we were **still sinners** ... when we were **enemies***” (Rom 5:6, 8, 10). While in such a pitiful, unlovable state, God sent His Son to provide the basis of our reconciliation to Him. This truth should be sufficient to remove all doubt that God is willing to forgive and justify us on the basis of our faith. What more can He do to prove His love?

3. Do humans ever die for each other? For what kind of a man will one give his life?
4. Justification by the blood of Christ saves us from what?

**Day 3: Death from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:12-14)**

In the latter half of chapter five Paul contrasts the sinful state of affairs introduced into the world by man with the remedy introduced by Christ. Beginning with the very first humans, sin and spiritual death entered the world and have affected all (mentally competent) individuals since. Note the crucial explanatory phrase “because all sinned” in Rom 5:12. Adam’s descendants did not *inherit* his sins; otherwise, their sin would be *exactly like his*. However, spiritual death continued “*even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam*” (5:14). This truth reveals the power and pervasiveness of sin. Satan has enticed all men to transgress God’s law in a variety of ways. Sin did not exist until Adam and Eve’s first act. Since then, all have willingly engaged in it and have been unable to provide either a vaccination or a cure.

5. If spiritual death existed between Adam and Moses, what must also have existed?
6. Adam was a \_\_\_\_\_ of the coming Savior.

## Day 4: The Offense vs. The Gift (Rom 5:15-19)

What Adam introduced resulted in the death of many; what Christ introduced brought grace to many (v 15). Adam's offense brought judgment and condemnation; Christ's gift provided justification (v 16, 18). Adam's offense instituted a reign of death; Christ's gift inaugurated a reign of life (v 17). (**Note:** The NKJ translators make Rom 5:13-17 parenthetical with the main line of thought flowing from 5:12 to 5:18.) But neither side of the contrast is flavored by the concept of "unconditional." Adam's sin was not *unconditionally* passed on to men via genetics; he merely introduced that of which everyone else partook. Likewise, Jesus' free gift is not *unconditionally* bestowed upon all. It is available to all who willingly desire and embrace it. In fact, the whole context of Romans thus far has stressed willful participation on man's part. This is especially important as the contrast of Rom 5:19 is considered. If the first part of the verse is unconditional (*inherited* sin), then the second part must also be unconditional (*universal* salvation). Paul concludes this section on the remedy for sin (Rom 3:21-5:21) by contrasting two prototypes of the human race: Adam played the first card of sin and death and all followed suit. On the other hand, Jesus "broke the trump suit" of justification and all who choose can play trump and defeat death. The free gift trumps the offense.

7. What kind of death came from Adam's offense in this context?
8. On which side of the above contrasts does man get what he deserves?

## Day 5: Grace Greater Than Sin (Rom 5:20-21)

The establishment of additional law after the original offense only served to multiply sin. That was not the intent of law, but that was its effect given that man consistently violates divine law. Nevertheless, as man's sin abounded so did the grace of God. Man's sinfulness could not exhaust the love God had for His creation. Paul has now argued the universal sinfulness of man and the scheme of God to correct this fatal condition. This scheme reflects glory unto God for His grace, mercy and love. True, man participates by faith, but this is not to his credit. God graciously accepts submissive trust instead of absolute obedience and provides the ground of such an alternative – the death of His own Son. To God be the glory!

9. What reigned over man through death?
10. T/F The abounding sin of man resulted in God's ever-rising anger.

**Day 1: “Shall We Continue in Sin?” (Rom 6:1-7)**

In Romans 6-8 Paul progresses from the basis of justification to the moral lives of those who are justified. This subject is developed by considering four opposing questions to the principle of justification by faith (Rom 6:1, 15; 7:7, 13). **Question #1: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?** (6:1). That is, if God’s grace was greater than man’s sin and provided salvation while man was yet in his sins, why not just stay in sin and allow God’s grace to abound yet more? The opponent argues that grace allows man to be comfortable in sin. But this position fails to understand the motivation by which one embraces the Lord as his Savior. The new life of a Christian does not begin until something dies. That something is his former self, the “old man” whose body was governed by sin (6:6). The penitent sinner who comes to Jesus desiring freedom from guilt and condemnation is assured that his former life and its sordid past is completely “crucified” and “buried” when he submits to baptism (6:4, 6). He has thus “died to sin” (6:2) and is freed from its dominion (6:6-7). Genuine faith yearns for liberty from sin and that bond is broken from one’s very conversion to Christ.

1. To what three important concepts is baptism tied in Romans 6:3-4?
2. What follows the death of the old man (Romans 6:4)?

**Day 2: “Do Not Let Sin Reign” (Rom 6:8-14)**

Let us not misunderstand: Paul does not argue that *temptation* to sin ceases to exist at one’s conversion or that the Christian will never transgress. Rather, the Christian does not have to surrender to sin’s power and dominion over his life. Whereas the *death* of Christ was emphasized in Rom 6:1-7, here in 6:8-14 His resurrected *life* of holiness and service is presented as a parallel: “... *the life that He lives, He lives to God*. **Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be ... alive to God ...**” (6:11). Note the phrases that engage the human will: “reckon yourselves,” “do not let,” “do not present” (6:11-13). Because we are not “under law but under grace” (6:14), we have every incentive to live a godly life knowing that Jesus now lives such a life and that sin cannot dominate us apart from our consent.

3. What two phrases speak of sin as a controlling force in a person’s life?
4. What aspect of sin encourages us to obey it (Rom 6:12)?

**Day 3: Slaves of Righteousness (Rom 6:15-19)**

**Question #2: “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?”** (Rom 6:15). The opponent argues that Paul’s denial of salvation via a

law-system gives license to sin. Paul changes illustrations to deflect this contention. He speaks of “slaves” eight times (through 6:22) to drive home the point that a man will either be a slave of righteousness or a slave of sin by his own choice. Because justification is not by a law-system does not mean that man has no obligation to **obey law**. This passage directly answers the Calvinistic “once saved, always saved” error. Once saved ... and then enslaved to sin again ... is uncleanness and lawlessness resulting in death (6:16, 19).

5. What was fundamental to the Romans breaking their enslavement to sin (Rom 6:17)?

6. Why did Paul speak in “human terms” to illustrate his point?

#### **Day 4: The Wages of Sin vs. The Gift of God (Rom 6:20-23)**

Lest the Roman Christians become enamored with sin through some deviant doctrine, he reminds them of the shame and disgust produced by sin and the ultimate demise of the sinner. The conscientious man who reflects upon his sins will remember the pain caused more than the pleasure reaped.

7. What is the fruit or benefit of living as a slave to God?

#### **Day 5: The Illustration of Marriage (Rom 7:1-6)**

This is a *continuation* of Paul’s response to the second question, not an aside on the subject of divorce and remarriage. Reference to marriage merely illustrates one’s relationship to law. The general rule of marriage: A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. When he dies, she is free from the law which obligated her to him; the “marital law” is no longer in force. **The parallel:** Before Christ all men were held accountable to God under law (the Law of Moses being a type of justification by law). But through the body of Christ, man’s bondage or covenant to law was broken and man was free to be “married to another”; i.e., a faith/grace-system (7:15). Spiritual adultery does not occur because mankind is no longer obligated to a law-system, for “*you also have become dead to the law ... now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by*” (7:4, 6; see also Gal 3:13). Under law only one result was possible: “*the passions of sins which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death*” (7:5). If this spiritual “husband” (law) had not died, then men would remain hopelessly doomed to sin and death. Having been freed from law and sin (“*the strength of sin is the law*” – 1 Cor 15:56), why would a Christian again make himself a slave of sin? This, according to the illustration, would be like a woman returning to her husband’s corpse and attempting to serve it as a wife – a grotesque thought indeed!

8. What is to result from union with Christ as a “second husband” (Rom 7:4)?

9. Contextually, what does “in the flesh” (Rom 7:5) describe?

**Day 1: God's Holy Law (Rom 7:7-12)**

**Question #3: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin?”** (Rom 7:7). The detractor would twist Paul’s teaching that the “passions of sins ... were aroused by the law” (Rom 7:5) into an accusation that the law produced sin. This Paul strenuously denies. *“On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law,”* he answers. Some teach that man is born with an innate sense of right and wrong, but Paul flatly states that God’s revealed law is the ultimate source of what is right. Granted, that law seeps into our consciousness through social mores, parental influence and other cultural vehicles, but evidence is lacking that a sense of right is programmed from birth. The law does not produce sin; rather, *“sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire”* (7:8). Sin is here personified or treated as a living entity. Sin, Paul says, deceived him into disobedience, thus bringing condemnation upon himself (7:10-11). This is not the fault of the law. Man often makes the mistake of blaming something (-one) else when he himself is responsible for his actions.

1. How does Paul say he knew covetousness was wrong?
2. How was Paul *“alive once without the law”*?
3. How does Paul characterize the law of God in Romans 7:10, 12?

**Day 2: The Good Law and the Sinful Man (Rom 7:13-16)**

**Question #4: “Has then what is good become death to me?”** (Rom 7:13). Paul’s statement, *“And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death”* (Rom 7:10) would lead to the accusation that God gave law to bring death to man. Again, Paul contrasts the good law with self-willed man: *“the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin”* (7:14). Paul speaks of the human capacity to recognize a standard which is higher than his own behavior (7:15-16). When our conscience condemns our failure to act righteously, we *“agree with the law that it is good”* (7:16).

4. What did the law tell man about sin (Rom 7:13)?

**Day 3: The Struggle to Do Right (Rom 7:17-20)**

The man who would be justified by law is faced with the frustration of sin dominating his life. He fights a running battle with his will and his behavior: he inwardly wishes to do better than he does in practice (7:19). Twice he says that sin dominates and controls him as he strives to live righteously by law only: *“It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me”* (7:17, 20). He is not trying to deny personal responsibility for sin; rather, he is simply saying that sin becomes a controlling force in every man’s life under law.



5. Compare Romans 7:19a and James 4:17. What point is made in both places?
6. How do we feel when we do not live according to what we know to be right?

### **Day 4: Conflicting Laws (Rom 7:21-23)**

Paul continues this description of a man at war with himself: he inwardly delights in God's law but *"I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind"* (Rom 7:22-23). The debate has long raged: is Paul speaking in this section of a *Christian* or someone in the pre-Christian dispensation who strives to be justified by law? While Christians do struggle against temptation and acutely feel the anxiety of an offended conscience, the context and language favors the futility of striving for righteousness while under a law-system. Consider these three contextual features:

1) *Paul is responding to real or imagined objections raised by those who would favor justification by law.* His basic answer is "being under a law-system will not work." The fault is not in the law but the pervasiveness of sin within the human being. Under law, men have universally become transgressors and enslaved to sin. His purpose here is not to describe the *Christian under grace* but the *God-fearing man under law*.

2) *Paul's description of himself is incompatible with what he has already said about the life of a Christian.* Note his description in detail: He speaks of himself (the first person "I" simply makes Paul representative of all who strive for righteousness under law) as dead or "killed" (7:9, 11). But the Christian enjoys "*newness of life*" (6:4, 11). He says, "I am carnal, sold under sin" (7:14), but in being coming to Christ "*our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away*" (6:6). He then describes the domination of evil in his life as "*sin dwells in me*" (7:17, 20), yet he had earlier commanded the Romans, "*Do not let sin reign in your mortal body*" (6:12). He laments being in "captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (7:23), but he had previously urged Christians to "*not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin*" (6:13). Before their redemption Christians "*were* (past tense) *slaves of sin*" (6:17, 20), but upon conversion they are "*set free from sin*" (6:18, 22). How can Paul be describing his life as a child of God in Rom 7:13ff when the Christian life is said to be something completely different in Rom 6?

{See Day 5 for the third contextual feature.}

### **Day 5: The Wretched Man Delivered (Rom 7:24-25)**

3) *Freedom from this wretched man dominated by sin is said to be "through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Paul rejoices in thanksgiving that the man who serves the law of God in his mind but the law of sin with his flesh (7:25) is delivered in Christ. Through grace and redemption in Christ the godly man can finally and absolutely be free from his sins.

7. What does this passage say to those who believe they can be saved by good deeds?

**Day 1: No Condemnation to Those in Christ (Rom 8:1-11)**

Romans 8 is profound, sublime and difficult all at the same time. Having begun with the misery of man's sinful state (Rom 1-3), Paul now reaches a crescendo of hope and victory for the sinner in Christ. After speaking of the wretched man who cannot overcome sin on his own (Rom 7:13-25), Paul rejoices that *"there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus ..."* (8:1). But note the obligation to orient one's life toward spiritual things: *"walk ... according to the Spirit"; "set their minds on ... the things of the Spirit"; "spiritually minded"; "not in the flesh but in the Spirit"; "live by the Spirit"; "led by the Spirit"* (8:4-6, 9, 13-14). This describes the man whose life conforms to the will of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit. Those who so live escape the condemnation of sin via the forgiveness wrought by Christ (8:3). The opposite of this spiritual mindset: *"walk according to the flesh"; "set their minds on the things of the flesh"; "carnally minded"; "in the flesh"; "does not have the spirit of Christ"; "live according to the flesh"* (8:4-6, 8-9, 12). "Life" is obtained by those who are in Christ; "death" and "condemnation" await those who serve the flesh.

1. What is "enmity against God"? What is "enmity"? Who cannot please God?
2. How is law "weak through the flesh"?

**Day 2: The Spirit of Adoption (Rom 8:12-17)**

Two figures are used in this section to describe the Christian's present state: debtor and son. Before redemption man was "sold under sin" (7:14), but Christ made us "free from the law of sin and death" (8:2). This redemption places us under debt to Christ, not as fearful slaves but as children of our heavenly Father (8:14-15). But how can we be sure of this acceptance into God's family? *"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God"* (8:16). This is not some mystical inner voice but two rational lines of evidence: our own desire to do what is right (*"I delight in the law of God according to the inward man"* – 7:22) and the promises/assurances of God made known to us by the Spirit's revelation. We **can** know whether we are a child of God or not, and therefore we can know whether we are saved or lost.

3. By whom are the sons of God led?
4. What do children of God enjoy along with Christ?

**Day 3: The Hope of Future Glory (Rom 8:18-25)**

Sonship and suffering go hand in hand (8:17). Contextually, the suffering appears to be the struggle between the flesh and spirit. Whatever the case, Paul continues to say that

such suffering as may be endured in this life *“is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* (8:18). Elaborating on this future glory and *“the revealing of the sons of God”* (8:19), Paul personifies creation and says that all things yearn for the final consummation (8:19-23). He does not intend to make inanimate creation a living entity but simply highlights the universally negative effects of sin. There is no aspect of creation which has remained untouched by sin, and it is as if the rocks and hills and trees all cry out for deliverance. (For a similar figure see Lk 19:40: *“... if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”*). It is this hope of *“the adoption, the redemption of our body”* (8:23) that spurs the Christian onward through suffering.

5. What is the fundamental nature of hope (Romans 8:24)?

6. How many times is an “eager waiting” mentioned in this section?

### **Day 4: All Things Work Together for Good (Rom 8:26-30)**

Paul has outlined some of the stress and strains which accompany human life. Our longing to live as we know we should, our hope for the redemption of our body, the affliction which comes from righteous living in an evil world – all these things affect us in ways difficult to verbalize. How do we approach our Father and adequately express the groanings of our heart? There are two views Rom 8:26-27: 1) the Holy Spirit serves as intercessor in an objective capacity, or 2) the Holy Spirit teaches us via the Scriptures how to address the issues of life before God. The context seems to favor the latter.

Considering the great blessings of redemption from sin, sonship in God’s family and the hope of eternal life, Paul summarizes *“all things work together for good to those who love God”* (8:28). Contextually, “all things” refers to the spiritual blessings which have been made available through Christ and the Holy Spirit. God had been working “behind the scenes” through the centuries to call and justify a special people (8:29-30). This has been fulfilled and all who desire salvation may receive it from the hand of God.

7. Unto what did God predestine men?

### **Day 5: More Than Conquerors (Rom 8:31-39)**

Paul finishes this section with a flourish. So filled with the awe and wonder of what God has done for sinful men, he declares (by a series of questions) that **nothing** can ever separate man forcibly from God’s love. If the stench of moral and spiritual pollution didn’t cause Him to abandon us, then there is no other force which will drive Him away. Note that the context does not address whether man may forsake God, but this is how the passage is erroneously used to support Calvinistic perseverance. Paul’s purpose in this chapter is to lift the Christian’s spirit and give him confidence that God is dependable and trustworthy. Sonship is liberating; hope is enduring; love is irrevocable.

8. In what things are Christians “more than conquerors”?

**Day 1: Paul's Love for His Jewish Brethren (Rom 9:1-5)**

Chapters 9-11 consider the impact of the gospel upon the Israelite nation. What of the previous 1500 years of special status which they had enjoyed? In the extension of sonship to all nations by faith has God in some way defrauded the Jews or reneged on His promises to them? Has Paul turned on his own people? Is he anti-Jewish? Paul affirms his infinite love for his brethren by wishing himself lost for their sakes if such would save them (Rom 9:3). The issue is not how much God (or Paul) loves the Jews but God's sovereign right to extend divine fellowship to whomever He chooses.

1. In spite of persecution at their hands, what does Paul feel for his Jewish brethren?
2. According to the flesh Christ was a \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom 9:5).

**Day 2: God's Choice of Isaac and Jacob (Rom 9:6-13)**

The Jews, who in the past had enjoyed such a rich, intimate and unique relationship with God are now largely alienated from Christ and excluded from His church. Has God somehow failed them (9:6)? Paul reminds the Jews that God utilized His sovereign prerogative in choosing them in the first place. The fact that they were genetic descendants of Abraham was meaningless apart from the divine determination that "*in Isaac your seed shall be called*" (9:7) rather than Ishmael or other of Abraham's children (Gn 25:1-2, 6). Further, God exercised His prerogative in selecting the younger twin, Jacob, as the progenitor of the twelve tribes (9:10-13). This choice was not merited by Jacob as it was made before birth, before he had "*done any good or evil*" (9:11). Paul is not arguing that God arbitrarily chose individuals to be saved or lost but that He made blessings available to the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *as a class*, just as He is now doing for the Gentiles in the gospel.

3. The children of \_\_\_\_\_ are the true seed of Abraham.

**Day 3: God's Use of Pharaoh (Rom 9:14-18)**

In view of God's sovereign selections, "*Is there unrighteousness with God?*" (9:14). Far from it, for though God deals with sinful men He does so with mercy and compassion (Rom 9:15) as it suits His purposes. God is not compelled to extend mercy, and those who are undeserving of it are in no position to argue about how and to whom it is dispensed: "*... it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy*" (9:16). Given Pharaoh's obstinate heart it was God's right to ask of Pharaoh that which He knew he would resist, thus hardening Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh *could* have responded obediently and been blessed, but he didn't and God was entirely within His sovereign right to use Pharaoh's rebelliousness to His own glory.

4. In what circumstances did Pharaoh's heart grow hard (see Ex 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:34; 10:1-3)? Did God harden Pharaoh's heart apart from Pharaoh's own will?

#### **Day 4: The Potter and the Clay (Rom 9:19-29)**

Paul defends God's right to use His creation as He sees fit. He does not determine the evil or the good of a man, for that is chosen by each according to free will, but God does have the right to use the "clay" to make a vessel of honor or dishonor (contrast Moses and Pharaoh). It was God's right to patiently endure centuries of sinfulness (vessels of wrath) in order to create a special people unto Himself (vessels of mercy). Furthermore, this intent was foretold even in the Jewish scriptures. Hosea spoke about aliens becoming the people of God (Rom 9:25-26); Isaiah indicated that a mere remnant of Israel would be saved (Rom 9:27-29). God had mercifully blessed Israel and they rejected Him. God mercifully tolerated both them and unbelieving Gentiles until He could set in place a redemptive plan for both classes. What's more, He had mercifully unveiled His intentions step by step through the prophets. The bottom line: the Jews had no right to complain or charge God with injustice in accepting the Gentiles, for the Jews themselves did not deserve what favor they had received. We must not whittle on God's end of the stick. We should accept with gratitude what grace and goodness is extended by God, realizing that justice alone would demand our condemnation.

5. For what are vessels of wrath prepared? Vessels of mercy?
6. What contrast is made between Israel and Sodom and Gomorrah?

#### **Day 5: Israel Has Stumbled (Rom 9:30-33)**

What can be fairly concluded regarding the many Gentiles in Paul's day who entered the kingdom and the many Jews who rejected it? The fault does not lie with **God** but the **Jews** who do not seek the kingdom "*by faith*" (Rom 9:32). The obstacle they face is the Messiah, Himself, who so disappoints their expectations of what a Messiah should be. "*For they stumbled at that stumbling stone*" even as the prophets foretold (9:32-33).

7. By what was Israel still trying to be saved (Romans 8:32)?
8. Describe the "stone of stumbling" from Ps 118:22-23; Is 28:16-17. Where does Jesus quote these passages?

**Day 1: Submitting to God's Righteousness (Rom 10:1-13)**

Chapter 10 highlights the stubbornness of fleshly Israel. Paul characterizes them as having zeal without knowledge, and in their ignorance they continue to pursue righteousness on a basis which cannot provide it (a law-system – 10:2-5). **God's** righteousness involves acknowledgement of and submission to Christ **by faith** (10:6-10). The gospel is *"the word of faith which we preach"* (10:8; 1:16) and when believed in the heart and confessed with the mouth results in salvation (10:9-10). **Remember, Paul is not fighting Calvinism here!!** He is condemning his Jewish brethren for rejecting the Messiah, and he stresses that belief in Him and calling upon Him for salvation (10:11-13) is the **only** way salvation can be attained. This is *God's righteousness by faith*.

1. How is a man made righteous by a law-system (Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:10, 12)?
2. To whom is salvation by faith made available (Romans 10:11-13)?

**Day 2: A Disobedient and Contrary People (Rom 10:14-21)**

Paul emphasizes that God has done everything possible to make faith available to the Jews. Apostles and prophets with divine credentials had been sent to all Israel: *"Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world,"* but *"Lord, who has believed our report?"* (Rom 10:18, 16). Again, Paul quotes the Jews' own Scriptures to show that they should have been informed and prepared for the events which had transpired both in relation to their Messiah and the inclusion of the Gentiles (10:19-20). However, the prophets of old and the current inspired preaching met resistance in hardened Jewish hearts.

3. Who does Paul quote in this section to make his points against the Jews?
4. True faith in God comes from listening to what source?

**Day 3: "Has God Cast Away His People?" (Rom 11:1-10)**

God has not rejected the Jews as a class but has accepted a remnant (including Paul) on essentially the same basis as He always accepted Jews – **faithfulness** to His covenant statutes and ordinances. Note carefully: *No Jew was ever acceptable to God simply upon genetics. Even under the Law of Moses the **true** Jew was the one who responded in faith and obedience.* There was always only a remnant who so honored and respected God. The perception of Jews in the first century was that God had rejected them, but *any Jew who came to God in faith – leading ultimately to Christ* (Rom 10:4) – *could still be in covenant relation with Him.* The problem was not **God's rejection of them** but **their rejection of God**: *"God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and*

ears that they should not hear, to this very day” (11:8). This hardening was similar to that of Pharaoh: God hardened both by making demands they did not want to meet.

5. What great prophet felt that Israel had entirely rejected God?
6. In Paul’s day there was a remnant of Jews according to what?
7. T/F The remnant (11:5) and the elect (11:7) refer to the same group.

#### **Day 4: The Grafting In of the Gentiles (Rom 11:11-22)**

In the remainder of Romans 11 Paul makes several observations concerning the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles regarding salvation. First, Paul says that the sinfulness of the Jews has resulted in salvation for the Gentiles, and he hopes that the inclusion of the Gentiles will provoke some Jews to jealousy and cause them to return to God (11:11-15). Next, Paul warns the Gentiles not to arrogantly draw the wrong conclusion from their change of fortunes with the Jews. Using a horticultural figure, Paul reminds the Gentiles that the Jews are the root and fatness of a cultivated olive tree and that the Gentiles are wild branches grafted into and supported by that root (11:16-18)(i.e., the Messiah had come from the Jews and was attested to by the Hebrew Scriptures). Lest the Gentiles reason that they were superior to the Jews because they had been grafted in, Paul further reminds the Gentiles that the natural Jewish branches had been broken off due to their unbelief *and the same thing could happen to them if they were not careful*. “Do not be haughty, but fear,” he warns them, knowing full well that his own brethren fell through pride (11:20).

8. What two sides of God’s character must be respected?
9. Upon what condition may one continually receive God’s goodness?

#### **Day 5: The Regrafting of the Jews (Rom 11:23-36)**

Paul continues with the figure of grafting to explain that any Jew who does not “*continue in unbelief will be grafted in again*” (11:23). “*And **so** all Israel will be saved*” (11:26); that is, “in this way” – via casting off unbelief and coming to the Lord Jesus – all the Jews who desire salvation may obtain it. This passage does not teach some future national restoration of Israel but establishes the same condition for the salvation of all men: faith in the Son of God. Neither Jew nor Gentile have cause to be conceited against the other, “*For God has committed **them all** to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all*” (11:32). Thus Paul’s argument has come full circle. Though all are sinners, God has seen fit to extend mercy to all alike, Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or free.

10. What is the essence of new covenant (Rom 11:26-27; comp. Hebrews 8:12)?
11. When Paul thinks of God’s mercy to all, how does he respond (Romans 11:33-36)?

**Day 1: A Living Sacrifice (Rom 12:1-8)**

Paul has now concluded his main thesis and in the remainder of the epistle urges the practical implementation of these principles in the Christian's life. Far from being a doctrine that fosters slackness, the mercy of God compels the recipient of that mercy to present himself to God as "*a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service*" (12:1). Crucial to the good functioning of the local body of believers is humility which respects each one for the "*gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us*" (12:6). He then exhorts the Roman brethren to exercise their particular aptitudes properly (12:6-8).

1. Where does spiritual transformation begin?
2. How does God deal "to each one a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3)?

**Day 2: A Variety of Virtues (Rom 12:9-21)**

Opponents of Christianity criticize it for being "heaven-oriented" and thus apathetic toward earthly concerns. Nothing could be further from the truth. The *truth* is that heavenly perspectives ennoble earthly relationships and obligate Christians to the highest standard of behavior. Consider the following: be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference, bless those who persecute you, associate with the humble, live peaceably with all men, repay no one evil for evil, do not avenge yourselves, etc. These qualities combined with the other exhortations to diligence, patience, humility, goodness, peace and generosity would make for a harmonious, beneficent society *if they would be faithfully enacted*. It is when these principles are violated that we bring trouble upon ourselves.

3. What does Romans 12:11 urge upon Christians?
4. What two qualifications accompany "live peaceably with all men"?
5. In context, how might we be overcome by evil (Romans 12:21)?

**Day 3: Relationship with Civil Authority (Rom 13:1-7)**

The Roman Empire would eventually condemn Christians for being disloyal and subversive to the State, but such would be a false charge. Refusal to idolize the Emperor was not the same as being rebellious. Paul clearly instructs the Romans (and us) to "*be subject to the governing authorities*" (Rom 13:1). Paul does not make any value judgments for or against particular governmental structures but simply makes the point that civil law has God's approval. God's standards of behavior, voluntarily chosen by those with



transformed minds, are not chosen by everyone. Therefore, there is a perpetual need for enforced compliance with man-made laws to maintain good order in society. What an uncivilized jungle the world would be if scofflaws, substance abusers, sexual predators, wild-eyed vigilantes and every other stripe of criminal offender ran loose with impunity. While vengeance is prohibited to the *individual* (Rom 12:19), it is granted to the collective for the State “*does not bear the sword in vain; for he is **God’s minister**, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil*” (13:4). **All** governments conceived and enacted by sinful men suffer corruption, but this is no reason to sidestep one’s responsibility to them: “*Render, therefore, to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due ...*” (13:7).

6. What keeps us from being “unafraid of the authority”?
7. What does Romans 13:5 say about breaking the law and “getting away with it”?
8. Under what circumstances might a Christian justifiably break civil law?

#### **Day 4: Love: The Fulfillment of the Law (Rom 13:8-10)**

As Jesus before him (Mt 22:36-40), Paul summarizes the law (*any* divine law, whether of Moses or Christ) in benevolent, equitable treatment of one’s neighbor (Rom 13:8-10). The mutual love between God and men has already been stressed in the main gospel thesis. Paul’s purpose now is to transform that love for God which redeemed and forgave into love for those creatures made in God’s image.

9. From which category of the ten commandments does Paul quote (Romans 13:9)?

#### **Day 5: “Put On the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 13:11-14)**

Paul completes these general exhortations with a sense of urgency: “*it is high time to awake out of sleep ... the day is at hand*” (13:11-12). Sober, circumspect thought will eliminate frivolous revelry, drunkenness, sexual license, strife and envy which so disturbs society. The admonition is for “**us** to cast off the works of darkness ...”, that is we Christians. Not only are these things a blight upon society; they are particularly unsightly when present among God’s family. Again, those who “*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*” adopt His character and His attitudes. Christianity is not some philosophical platitude but a practical profession of the spirit of Christ.

10. What two things are Christians to put on in this passage?
11. Find an alternate way of saying “make no provision for the flesh” from earlier in the Roman epistle.
12. What is nearer now than when we first believed? What does this mean?

**Day 1: Dispute Among Conscientious Brethren (Rom 14:1-8)**

It is ironic that Christians today are in dispute over the very passage that was written to quell disputes. Paul now turns from moral obligations to resolving conflicts among those who differ in certain aspects of faith. The situation involves a “weak” brother – one whose lingering scruples or immature conscience will not allow him to participate in liberties that others do (eating meat, refraining from observing days), and a “strong” brother – one who partakes of liberties with certainty of God’s approval. Paul finds fault with the attitude of each toward the other. The strong despised the weak and the weak judged the strong as unfaithful (Rom 14:3). Paul urges that “*each be fully convinced in his own mind*” (14:5). This does not mean that each Christian is a law unto himself but that each bears the obligation to base his behavior upon his own convictions. One crucial factor true of these differing brethren: each acts out of respect unto God (14:6). Granted, one is weak in regard to what law enjoins, but his intention is to honor God. This conscientiousness should elicit a considerate response from the opposing brother.

1. What makes the brother in question “weak in the faith” (Romans 14:1)?
2. Before whom do we ultimately stand or fall for our convictions?

**Day 2: Answering to God (Rom 14:9-13)**

Among conscientious people who wish to do right there is a tendency to impose one’s own scruples and standards upon others. This can lead to overstepping our bounds and rendering unjust judgments. Paul emphasizes that **Jesus** is Lord (14:9) and Judge (14:10). The Christian must be on guard against such harsh and unfair treatment.

3. Who will eventually bow before and confess Christ?
4. What should we concentrate upon in our relations with others (Romans 14:13)?

**Day 3: Pursuing Peace and Edification (Rom 14:14-19)**

Whereas many of Paul’s earlier comments concerned the weak judging the strong, the emphasis now rests upon the strong Christian’s obligation to the weak. Love, enjoined in Rom 13:8-10, demands that the strong forego any liberty by which a brother is grieved and destroyed (14:15). This does not mean that a Christian must bend to every whim and fancy, but where a brother is genuinely spiritually undermined the strong must sacrifice whatever is necessary for “*the one for whom Christ died.*”

5. What two things does the Christian strive for (Romans 14:18)?

## Day 4: The Violation of Conscience (Rom 14:20-23)

Note Paul's description of the "weak" brother: he considers something unclean (even though it is clean – 14:14); he doubts (14:23a); he does not eat from faith (14:23b). "*Whatever is not from faith is sin*" (14:23c) broadens the scope of transgression to include the willful violation of what one *thinks* to be wrong. And the impetus to so act comes *directly* from the example of the strong. This likewise broadens the scope of transgression to include placing a stumbling block in the path of a brother. It was not sinful for either the strong or the weak to eat *per se*. But when the strong eats so as to encourage the weak to eat (and thus violate his conscience) **both** transgress. However we apply these principles, we must think soberly about our behavior and its impact upon others.

6. What is "the one for whom Christ died" (Romans 14:15) called in Romans 14:20?

7. What does it mean to have faith "to yourself before God" (Romans 14:22)?

## Day 5: The Example of Christ (Rom 15:1-6)

In joining God's family the Christian renounces interest only in himself and expands his concern to the welfare of others in the family. This is in the spirit of the Lord who "*did not please Himself*" but willingly bore the reproaches of others (Rom 15:3). We should be like-minded toward our brethren so that we are able to "*with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom 15:6).

8. What Psalm is quoted in Romans 15:3? Where else is this Psalm quoted in the NT?

9. What two qualities are attached to both God and the Scriptures (Romans 15:4-5)?

**Note:** Debate rages over which issues Romans 14 may properly apply. It seems reasonable to me to apply the passage to certain questions over which brethren have historically differed in conscience: serving in the military or as a policeman, observing Christmas as a secular holiday, using different versions of the Bible, women speaking in Bible classes, women worshipping without a covering, using the church building for weddings or funerals, allowing women in business meetings, etc. In these cases those have the scruple judge the other to be sinning, even as the "weak" brother "judged" the strong as a sinner in Romans 14:3-4, 10. In a proper application of Romans 14, a distinction must be made between mere disagreement and the actual violation of conscience. Many controversies today revolve around "seeing it my way" instead of causing brethren to stumble in faith. Where such is a legitimate danger, Paul speaks clearly: "*It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles ...*" (Rom 14:21). Disagreement must be resolved with wisdom and prayer by each local church as it handles its own affairs. The Lord's church is not a denomination where a few are appointed to speak or make policy for the many. Attempts to circumvent or wrest clear truth must be rejected whether on divorce/remarriage or some other issue. May God help us to apply Romans 14 so as to be true to His word, considerate of the weak and fair to all.

**Day 1: Jew & Gentile Unity (Rom 15:7-13)**

Paul's next exhortation indicates that the controversies of chapter 14 sprang from Jew/Gentile tensions. He urges the Romans to "*receive one another*" (Rom 15:7) and then cites four OT passages indicating God's ultimate purpose of incorporating the Gentiles under the Messiah's rule (15:9 – Ps 18:49; 15:10 – Dt 32:43; 15:11 – Ps 117:1; 15:12 – Is 11:10). One of the greatest obstacles the gospel faced in its infancy was Jewish exclusivity, the notion that the Jews alone were the perpetual favored ones. Paul has already addressed this in his earlier thesis but now addresses the ethnic hangovers among the Christians in Rome.

1. For what reason(s) has Jesus become "a servant to the circumcision"?
2. God is the "God of ..." what (Romans 15:5, 13, 33)?

**Day 2: Apostolic Reflections (Rom 15:14-21)**

Paul begins to "wind down" his epistle by making some personal observations in relation to the Roman brethren. He does not want them to construe this bold, energetic epistle as a lack of confidence in them; rather, he is discharging his responsibilities as "*a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles ... that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable*" (Rom 15:16). In keeping with his original commission (Ac 9:15; 26:16-18), Paul had worked in cooperation with the Holy Spirit "*to make the Gentiles obedient*" and had concentrated his efforts thus far to preach "*from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum*" (15:18-19). Thus Paul has a huge, personal stake in promoting harmony among Jewish and Gentile believers: it represents the success of his life's work as an apostle.

3. What does Paul feel the Romans are competent in doing (Romans 15:14)?
4. What was Paul's main aim in preaching from city to city (Romans 15:20)?

**Day 3: Future Traveling Plans (Rom 15:22-33)**

Paul has a definite sense that his mission has been accomplished as far as the Adriatic Sea and he now must press on to Rome and to Spain. He reiterates his great desire to see the Romans (Rom 1:10-15; 15:23) and to enlist their assistance in his further travels, but he must first return to Jerusalem with the offerings he has collected "*for the poor who are among the saints ...*" (15:25-26). As Paul explained to the Corinthians (2 Cor 9:10-15), this was not a mere humanitarian mission but an olive branch, a good-will gesture from the Gentiles to their Jewish brethren: "*... they (Gentiles, jj) are their (Jews, jj) debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their (Jews, jj) spiritual things, their (Gentiles, jj) duty is also to minister to them (Jews, jj) in material things*" (Rom 15:27).

Paul, however, recognizes the inherent dangers which lie ahead. Playing mediator between two hostile parties is often a thankless, no-win situation. Thus Paul begs that the Roman brethren “*strive together with me in your prayers to God for me*” (15:30). Three things are of particular concern (15:31-32): 1) “*That I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe*”; 2) “*That my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints*”; 3) “*That I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.*” We shall see how God’s providence addresses these requests.

5. To what did Paul subject all his plans (Rom 1:10; 15:29, 32)?

6. What is the “fruit” of Romans 15:28?

#### **Day 4: Personal Greetings (Rom 16:1-16)**

This catalog of names and associates indicates how widely known brethren were and how sketchy is Luke’s history in Acts. Luke presents only the main landmarks of Paul’s movements and work and omits many personal details which would fill out Paul’s life more completely. We are also reminded how mobile people in the first century were.

7. Where were Priscilla and Aquila now? How are they viewed by Paul and others?

8. What is noteworthy about Andronicus and Junia?

9. What would you conclude about women in the early church from Rom 16:1-6, 12?

#### **Day 5: Warning, Benedictions and Doxology (Rom 16:17-27)**

Knowing that internal strife does far more harm than outward opposition, Paul gives a final sober warning to “*note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them*” (Rom 16:17). Christians, in the interest of self-preservation and defense of the truth, must be diligent, alert and discriminatory regarding their associations. Brethren who conscientiously differ can act with due respect toward one another and fellowship one another. But brethren who selfishly push their agenda to the point of discord and strife, serving “*their own belly*” and deceiving “*the hearts of the simple*” (16:18), are not to be tolerated. Romans 16:20 contains the second of three benedictions at the epistle’s close (15:33; 16:20, 24). A soaring doxology (an expression of praise) which briefly summarizes God’s now-realized eternal purpose in Christ concludes the Roman letter (16:25-27).

10. Who was Paul’s amanuensis? (Look it up.)

11. What is now true about the mystery “*which was kept secret since the world began*”?

12. In what did Paul want the Romans to be “wise” and “simple” (or “innocent”)?

**Day 1: From Corinth to Miletus**

After writing to the Romans about his deep love for his Jewish brethren, Paul's short stay in Greece comes to an ominous end with his countrymen planning his murder (Ac 20:3). This plot is but the first shower of the tempestuous storm awaiting him in Jerusalem. Prudence dictated a land journey to Philippi while Paul's entourage sailed for Troas (Ac 20:4-5). These men had been chosen by the churches participating in the contribution to the Jerusalem saints (2 Cor 8:16-24), and making such a hazardous journey without "travelers checks," in addition to the consideration of financial integrity, made group travel wise. Note the "us/we" in Ac 20:5-6. Apparently Luke has again joined Paul (see last mention in Ac 16:16-17. Has Luke been in Philippi all this time??). As the group reunites in Troas, Luke includes an anecdote from the Lord's day worship that is of great significance today. He simply says, "*on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread ...*" (Ac 20:7). This is the most explicit statement in the Scriptures indicating the day of the week on which the memorial supper was observed and thus provides apostolic sanction for our practice today. In his haste to reach Jerusalem Paul sails into Miletus and sends for the Ephesian elders (20:13-17).

1. What time of the year is this trip made?
2. Why did Paul avoid the city of Ephesus?

**Day 2: Interview with the Ephesian Elders**

Paul's discourse concerns the past (Ac 20:18-21, 31, 33-35), the present (20:22-28, 32) and the future (20:25, 29-30, 38). Paul maintains his personal integrity, something he had to do repeatedly in his epistles. As he reflects upon his present journey the storm-clouds darken: "*I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me*" (20:22-23). God always gives His servants enough information to equip them for challenges ahead. But while threats to Paul are outward, he warns the Ephesian elders against dangers from within (20:30). Apparently Paul's words were taken to heart (Rev 2:2-3).

3. What drove Paul on through "many dangers, toils and snares" (Acts 20:24)?
4. Describe how Paul had faithfully declared "the whole counsel of God" in Ephesus.

**Day 3: From Miletus to Tyre**

Paul and company now sail from Miletus to Tyre where they stay for a week (Ac 21:1-6). As in previous cities along his journey, Paul is advised by prophetic revelation of what

awaits him at Jerusalem (21:4). We must make Ac 21:4 and 20:22-23 harmonize. It seems completely contradictory to assert that Paul's entire mission is of his own accord and in violation of the will of God while the Holy Spirit compels him forward. It would appear that the phrase *"They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem"* represents their own concern for Paul's safety based upon the information supplied by the Spirit; viz., that Paul would face adversity. Still Paul presses onward not oblivious to but accepting the danger.

5. How do the brethren in Tyre bid farewell to Paul?

## **Day 4: From Tyre to Caesarea**

Paul's next ports of call as he works his way southward are Ptolemais followed by Caesarea (Ac 21:7-14). It is during Paul's lengthy stay Caesarea that Agabus, in the spirit of Old Testament prophets, vividly acts out Paul's coming arrest and imprisonment. This last confirmation of Paul's fate distresses Paul's traveling companions and they, together with the brethren from Caesarea plead *"with him not to go up to Jerusalem"* (21:12). This is reminiscent of Peter's trepidation when Jesus informed the apostles that He would likewise suffer in Jerusalem (Mt 16:21-22). But Paul is as resolute as Jesus was. He insists that he will not change his plans; he is ready to die if necessary to unite the Jewish and Gentile brethren.

6. What evangelist lived in Caesarea? How are his daughters distinguished? Where was this evangelist last mentioned?

7. T/F There was a church in Ptolemais.

## **Day 5: Paul's Reception by the Jerusalem Church**

The courageous apostle now makes his way to the murderous mother city of the Jews (Mt 23:34-37). What a tense and anxious ascent this must have been for those who loved Paul (Ac 21:15-25). Luke notes, in answer to Paul's prayer-request of the Romans, *"And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly"* – Ac 21:17; see Rom 15:31b). Paul is not shunned or rejected by the Jewish brethren, but they do have a concern: rumors are rife that Paul has been teaching Jewish converts to *"forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs"* (Ac 21:21). This was not true, for those elements of Mosaic law not in contradiction to the law of Christ may be freely observed even as Paul had previously completed a vow at Cenchrea (Ac 18:18). To squelch the rumors the elders propose that Paul engage in a rite of purification with four men who had taken a vow and thus demonstrate *"that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law"* (21:23-24). This must be seen in the light of Paul's attitude of becoming a Jew to Jews *"that I might win Jews"* (1 Cor 9:20). Thus the stage is set for Paul's arrest, imprisonment and eventual witness before Caesar in Rome.

8. Compare Acts 21:20 and Romans 11:1, 5 and comment on them.