

Basic Training Bible Ministries

Presents



2023 Alabama Conference

**Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church
Bridgeport, Alabama
June 2–4, 2023**

The Transformed Life Paul's Gospel in the Book of Romans

"The just shall live by faith." – Romans 1:17

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice ... do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." – Romans 12:1–2

"The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried." – G.K. Chesterton

To Chesterton's point, I would add that the Christian ideal has too often not been tried, because the sound teaching of it has been found wanting in our churches.

Note: Contrary to popular opinion, the book of Romans is not simply about how to be saved, or even how to live the Christian life. It is an apologetic (defense) of four things, all mentioned in Paul's theme statement:

*"For **I am not ashamed** of the gospel of Christ, for it is **the power of God to salvation [deliverance] for everyone who believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For **in it the righteousness of God is revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, **the just shall live by faith.**"* – Romans 1:16–17 (emphasis added)

1. Paul prepares to defend the Gospel that he preached from several accusations:
 - a. That it brought into question the faithfulness of God (Rom. 3:3; 9:6).
 - b. That it was anti-Jewish (Rom. 3:1; 9:1–3; 10:1; that Paul had betrayed his heritage, Acts 21:28).
 - c. That it was anti-Law (Rom. 3:19–21; 9:30–32, in that Paul taught Jews to "forsake Moses," Acts 21:21).
 - d. That it was anti-nomian in conduct (Rom. 3:8).
2. Paul prepares to defend the righteousness (faithfulness) of God in His dealings with Israel (Rom. 3:3–8; 9:6, 19).
3. Paul will demonstrate the power of God to save (deliver), both from eternal condemnation and from temporal defeat in life.
4. He will show that God's power to deliver comes only by faith.

In many ways, true spirituality is so easy to miss because it is so simple. If you were to ask the greatest prophet who ever lived how to demonstrate genuine repentance, here is the answer you would get:

"So the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?' He answered and said to them, 'He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise'." – Luke 3:10–11

AN OVERVIEW OF ROMANS

A helpful, but oversimplified, viewpoint on Romans is given in *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*:

1. Why does the sinner need to be saved? (**Condemnation**: chapters 1–3).
2. How is the sinner to be saved? (**Justification**: chapters 4–5).
3. What is the effect of salvation on the sinner? (**Sanctification**: chapters 6–7).
4. Will the sinner remain saved? (**Preservation**: chapter 8). To the above four given by Wilmington, we might also add:
5. What is the result of persistent living by faith? (**Transformation**: chapters 12–15). However, this format completely ignores Romans chapters 9–11, which, contrary to modern thought is, rather than a “parenthesis,” the grand culmination of Paul’s argument to that point, as we shall see. This section reveals God’s plan to “work all things together for good” (Rom. 8:28), by using Israel’s rejection of the Gospel so as to bring the good news to the Gentile world.

Note: The book of Romans is the only book in the Bible that takes us from creation (Rom. 1:20) to eternity future (Rom. 8:20–23). It shows us God’s plan for all of human history.

The Three “Therefores” of Romans

These are three pivotal, or “hinge” statements that summarize the previous sections of the book. It is vital to understand the points they make, so as to follow the flow of the book.

1. **Romans 5:1**, *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace [let us have peace] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
2. **Romans 8:1**, *“Therefore [there is] now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”*
3. **Romans 12:1–2**, *“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. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*

As we will see, in these summary statements, we find **Justification**, **Sanctification**, and **Transformation**. You will also notice the parentheses supplied above in Romans 5:1 and 8:1. These are two of the most controversial passages in the book of Romans, and we will deal with them as we get to the text (see **Appendix A**). Romans 12:1 has a surprise of its own, which we’ll note in due time.

In each of these passages we have both a summary of the preceding section of the book, and an introduction to what follows. By using these “hinges” to the book, we can gain an insight into Paul’s arguments.

If we take the three texts simply as they appear in the KJV/NKJV we have the following progression:

1. Our **position** (5:1). As the result of justification by faith we have a permanent standing of peace with God (reconciliation).
2. Our **potential** (8:1). The facts of regeneration and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit make it possible for us to “*walk according to the Spirit.*”
3. Our **purpose** (12:1). To find and fulfill the will of God for our lives, by living the transformed, victorious Christian life.

The “Therefore” of Justification
(Romans 5:1)

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have [let us have] peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Principle: The transformed life begins with justification by faith. The exhortation and command of Romans 12:1 would be futile, apart from the assurance of full and free justification (Rom. 5:1), and the indwelling and enabling work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:1–4).

This is a statement, whether taken as an indicative (“*We have peace*”) or as a subjunctive (“*Let us have peace*”), summarizing chapters 1–4. Following is a brief review of Paul’s argument so far:

1. In Romans 1:1–17 we have his introduction and theme statement. The main focus is the gospel message.
 - a. Paul was called and separated to the gospel ministry (v. 1).
 - b. **Note:** We have in the recorded life of the apostle Paul one of the greatest examples of a transformed life (see **Appendix B**).
 - c. The Gospel is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophetic Scriptures (v. 2).
 - d. The focus of the Gospel is the Person of Jesus Christ, in His royal lineage from David, and His demonstrated deity (vv. 3–4).
 - e. The Gospel is for all nations, “*obedience to the faith*” being believing in the gospel message (v. 5).
 - f. The gospel message reveals both the power and the righteousness of God to save all who believe (vv. 16–17).
 - g. The Gospel is consistent with Habakkuk 2:4, revealing that we are both justified by faith, and are to live by faith (v. 17).
 - h. Paul exemplifies three attitudes to the Gospel:
 - 1) “*I am a debtor*” to preach the Gospel to all men (v. 14).
 - 2) “*I am ready*” to preach the Gospel in Rome (v. 15).
 - 3) “*I am not ashamed*” of the gospel message (v. 16).
2. From Romans 1:18 to 3:20, we see the three main destructive effects of those who “*suppress the truth in unrighteousness*” (1:18):

- a. Idolatry (Rom. 1:18–32). This section actually lays the groundwork for chapter 9. The problem here is that idolatry results in an automatic hardening of the heart against God, who then confirms that hardness (vv. 24, 26, 28). Idolatry, a violation of the first two commandments (Exod. 20:1–6), has a disastrous effect on the human soul.
- b. Religion/philosophy (Rom. 2:1–16). This leads to arrogance and a sense of superiority. Paul makes four crucial points:
 - 1) God’s goodness, shown to all men (Acts 14:17), is designed to lead us to repentance (v. 4).
 - 2) God will deal justly and fairly with all men (vv. 6, 11).
 - 3) All men have not only the witness of creation (Rom. 1:20–21) but also the witness of their own conscience, (vv. 15–16), which point to the day of final judgment.
 - 4) Those who persist in seeking God will find Him (v. 7; Jer. 29:13).
- c. Judaism/legalism (Rom. 2:17–3:20).

Note: In Romans 3:1–8 **three questions** are asked, diatribe-style, that are crucial to the argument of Romans 9–11 and are in fact answered by Paul there. These were likely questions Paul had heard from critics many times.

- 3. The doctrine of justification by faith is introduced and explained in Romans 3:21–31, including critical issues in Romans:
 - a. All mankind stands condemned by God as sinners (v. 23).
 - b. Justification is a free gift of God’s grace, apart from the Law, offered to all men, and applied to all who believe (vv. 21–22).
 - c. This gift is the result of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who now becomes our “mercy seat” (v. 25).
 - d. The work of Christ on the cross covers all sins, past, present, and future (implied by the phrase “*passed over*,” referring to all sins previous to the cross) (v. 25b).
 - e. By this means of justification, God demonstrates His righteousness (see Rom. 3:4) in justifying sinners without compromising His character (v. 26).
 - f. Faith excludes all boasting, since we are justified without reference to the Law, by faith alone (vv. 27–28).
 - g. God demonstrates that He is the God of all men by justifying both Jews and Gentiles by grace through faith alone (vv. 29–30).
 - h. The Gospel vindicates the Law, both in declaring all to be sinners, and in the truth that Jesus Christ, our “mercy seat” fulfilled the Law in every way (v. 31).
- 4. Finally, in chapter 4, Paul uses Abraham (primarily) and David (incidentally) to confirm that this teaching was known and practiced by Old Testament Saints.
 - a. In vv. 1–4, Abraham (from Gen. 15:6) illustrates justification apart from works, on the basis of God’s grace through faith.

- b. In vv. 5–6, David is brought in as a witness (from Psalm 32:1–2) that God totally forgives and does not impute sin to the believer. Then in vv. 9–12 Paul again uses Abraham to prove that justification is apart from circumcision (see 2:28–29).
- c. In vv. 13–22, Paul moves on from Abraham’s initial act of faith to his spiritual growth in faith (moving in the direction of Rom. 8:1 and 12:1–2). This is pictorial of the phrase “*from faith to faith*” in Romans 1:17.
- d. The final application in vv. 24–25 is that we who believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like Abraham, trust in “*God who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did*” (v. 17), in this way showing our spiritual lineage from Abraham our father (4:11–12).

Summary

While the truths revealed in chapters 1–4 are valuable and can stand alone as they relate to God’s plan of salvation for all men, there are elements Paul has woven into this section that are laying the foundation for his rebuke of Israel in chapters 9–11. These are chiefly:

- 1. That idolatry is the ultimate denial of God, a violation of the first two commandments (Exod. 20:1–6), and a cause of both the hardening of the heart and the judicial action of God that follows. This will explain his charge that by rejecting Jesus Christ, and trusting in their own righteousness, they have committed idolatry, and are suffering the just punishment for it.
- 2. That religious arrogance, producing judging of others, actually amplifies the guilt and condemnation of those who judge.
- 3. That Israel, having all the advantages of God’s revealed Word, have not received it in faith, and instead sought to justify themselves.

It is the failure to relate Paul’s points in chapters 1–3 in general, and the three questions of Romans 3:1–8 in particular, that has resulted in the false and injurious interpretations of Romans 9–11 that have prevailed for centuries.

First Steps in the Transformed Life (Conclusion of Romans 5:1–5)

Principle: Justification is the first, and greatest, step of the transformed life! Until one trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior there is no power for genuine life-changing effect. Note what we “have” as a result of being justified:

- 1. **Peace with God:** this is both a present reality, “*we have peace*” (standing/position) and a potential experience “let us have peace.” It is worth noting that both ideas are expressed in relation to our reconciliation in vv. 10–11.
- 2. **Access to God:** Our prayer life will play a vital role in our pursuit of transformation. We have an open door into the Throne Room of God (Heb. 4:14–16). In Romans

8:26–28 we will see how crucial our prayer life really is. The phrase “*in which we stand*” is perfect tense, “we have taken our stand, and remain standing in grace.”

3. **Bold rejoicing:** The word “*rejoice*” literally means triumphant and confident boasting. Interestingly, this word can be taken as either an indicative or a subjunctive (according to the *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament* – Rienecker and Rogers). This could either be translated as “We rejoice” or “Let us rejoice.”
4. **Hope for time and eternity:** The word “hope” in the Bible never means “hope so” positive thinking. It refers to unwavering assurance, absolute certainty. We have this hope of sharing the eternal glory of God, but we also have hope in our trials, knowing that they result in spiritual growth, **if we face them in faith.**
5. **The love of God infused by the indwelling Holy Spirit:** The in-filling of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) and the life of fellowship with God (John 15:4; 1 John 1:7) result in the cognizant awareness of His never-ending love for us. This love was shown by Christ’s death for us when we were:
 - a. Without strength (v. 6a).
 - b. Ungodly (v. 6b).
 - c. Sinners (v. 8).
 - d. Enemies (v. 10).

Although these five things all relate to the present possessions of every believer, apart from clear and accurate instruction, combined with personal obedience, they remain unknown and untapped spiritual resources.

The “Therefore” of Sanctification (Romans 8:1)

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Principle: The transformed life requires daily sanctification.

Once again, we have a two possibilities for this verse, both of which are true:

1. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. This is again a **positional** statement. Every believer is imputed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:3, 7–8, 24), and all our sins were laid on Jesus Christ on the cross (2 Cor. 5:21).
2. If we include the phrase on “*walking according ... to the Spirit,*” we are now on **practical** ground. A disobedient lifestyle will definitely bring the condemnation of divine discipline and shame (1 Cor. 11:34; 1 Tim. 3:6; Titus 3:10–11; James 3:1; 5:9, 12).

The “*therefore*” of Romans 8:1 reviews the principles developed in chapters 5–7:

1. **The Potential** of our union with Christ (chapter 5). This is summarized in two phrases:

- a. *“We shall be saved from wrath ... by His life”* (vv. 9–10). The wrath of God refers to His settled antagonism to the rebellion that is sin, as revealed in Romans 1:18–32 and 2:5. We who believe are delivered from all eternal wrath, but in life, disobedience to God still results in suffering the consequences of our sin (Eph. 5:6–7; Col. 3:5–6). We are saved from the experience of temporal wrath *“by His life,”* which is resurrection life (Rom. 6:9–13) imparted to us by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:4; 8:11).
- b. *“[We] will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ”* (v. 17). At the moment of our eternal salvation, we are made alive, raised up, and seated with Christ at the Fathers’ right hand (Eph. 2:4–6). We begin our exercise of ruling authority when we *“reign in life,”* that is, take control of the kingdom of our own soul. As Romans 7 will show, this is possible only by surrendering to the Holy Spirit.

Note: This section of Chapter 5 is considered by many to be one of the most complex and difficult passages to interpret. However, the main thrust is that whatever was lost in Adam, *“much more”* was gained by Jesus Christ. This is shown by five contrasts:

- The offense vs. the gift (vv. 15–16),
- The reign of death in Adam vs. the reign of life in Christ (v. 17),
- Condemnation from the sin of Adam vs. justification by the righteousness of Christ (v. 18),
- Adam’s disobedience vs. Christ’s obedience (v. 19), and
- Our defeat under the Law, vs. our victory in Jesus Christ through God’s grace (vv. 20–21).

The false definition of justification is often stated as “Justification=Just as if I never sinned” is rejected in this chapter. The three *“much more”* statements declare that in Christ we have been lifted to a position and status with God that far surpasses that of Adam in innocence. Not only is our lost human sovereignty (*“dominion,”* Gen. 1:26, 28) restored, but we are to *“reign”* as king-priests (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 5:10).

2. **The Practice** of our union with Christ (chapter 6). Paul now takes the truths of chapter 5 and begins to put them into practice. A simple formula for the chapter is as follows:

- a. **Knowing** (vv. 1–9). As was stated in Romans 5:1–5, it is one thing to have spiritual resources, it is another to know and to utilize what we have. In this section Paul tells us three things we must know:
 - 1) The **purpose** of the baptism of the Spirit (vv. 1–4). We know that Paul is speaking of the baptism of the Spirit here because it is this that spiritually

unites us with Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). The purpose is found in the phrase “*even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” We ought to experience the resurrection life of Christ.

- 2) The **power** of the baptism of the Spirit (vv. 5–7). This is seen in that the power of the sin nature is “*done away with*” (neutralized) and replaced by His resurrection life.
 - 3) The **permanence** of the baptism of the Spirit (vv. 8–10). Just as the death of Christ was a “once-for-all” event, so also is our union with Him. This is what is referred to as “eternal security.” “*We shall also live with Him*” is a future certainty, and also a present possibility. See the **Appendix D** on the **Baptism of the Spirit**.
- b. **Reckoning** (vv. 11–12). The word translated “*reckon*” here is the same one translated “accounted” in Romans 4:3 and 5. It means to “impute” or to “take into account.” The truths of vv. 1–10 must be believed and acted on if they are to have any effect in our lives. The negative command “*do not let sin reign*” in v. 12 parallels the “*do not present*” of v. 13. As those who have been united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, we now have a choice whom we will serve.
- c. **Presenting** (vv. 13–23). The choice mentioned above is carried out as we choose to “*present*” our bodies as servants either to the sin nature, or to God. Paul will pick up on this crucial idea in Romans 12:1–2. Three times in this section Paul emphasizes the choice to “*obey*” sin is a voluntary “slavery,” but obedience to righteousness is an evidence of having been “*set free.*” It’s worth taking note of how many times each of these words are used in this section.
3. **The Pitfall in regard to our union with Christ** (chapter 7). Before moving on to the full enjoyment of our liberty and power in Christ, Paul deals with the most common pitfall that plagues the lives of most young believers. This is possibly the greatest area of failure in churches throughout Church history. It is the pitfall of trying to live the victorious Christian life in the energy of the flesh, or we would say, by “will-power.” As Warren Wiersbe puts it, “*Too many Christians are burdened with religious rules and regulations and good resolutions, not realizing that it is impossible to find holiness through their own efforts.*” (*Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the New Testament*, introduction to Romans 7). Wiersbe goes on to show a simple breakdown of chapter 7:
- a. **Two husbands** (vv. 1–6). Not only have we died to sin (Rom. 6:2, 6, 11) but we have also died to the Law (Rom. 7:4–6). The Law not only magnifies sin (Rom. 5:20), but it also awakens the sin nature. This will become part of Paul’s indictment of unbelieving Israel in Romans 10:1–4. Just as we must consider ourselves dead to sin, so we must do with the Law (vv. 4–6). The “*newness of the Spirit*” (v. 6) is the only power by which we can walk in the “*newness of life*” (Rom. 6:4).

b. **Two discoveries** (vv. 7–14). In his own Christian experience, Paul came to discover that (v. 14):

- 1) The law is spiritual, “*holy ... just ... and good*” (vv. 12, 14).
- 2) The believer is (naturally) carnal, “*sold under sin ... in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells*” (vv. 14, 18).

His point here is that when the sinful nature is confronted with the perfect demands of the Law, it will inevitably revolt and do the very things that are prohibited. This is because the “mind of the flesh” is hostile to God (8:7). Paul is not talking here about his life in unbelief, but his early experience as a believer. This is clear from vv. 5–6, “*For when we were in the flesh ... but now we have been delivered.*” The problem now is, how can we as a child of God “*serve in the newness of the Spirit*” (v. 6)?

Various expositors take the “*alive*” in v. 9 to refer either to his childhood, before his Bar Mitzvah, or to his early Christian experience. I am convinced of the second position. In either case, the principle remains the same: When confronted with the Law, the inevitable reaction of the sin nature is to rebel. In vv. 7–14 Paul reveals, by his own experience, that the sure way not to do it is to attempt it in the energy of the flesh. Mark Twain wrote somewhere that “man’s basic nature is like that of a mule. Once he knows what you want him to do, he is sure to do the opposite.”

This reveals one of the great errors in our churches. All too often, the new believer is thrilled for a while in the experience of being “*alive in Christ*” (Eph. 2:5). However, it is not long before they are confronted with laws, rules, and regulations, and their new-found life becomes a form of death. The problem of course is that the fundamental truths of Romans chapters 5–8 are simply not taught.

- c. **Two principles** (vv. 15–25). These are “*the law of sin*” (vv. 21, 23) and the “*law of the Spirit of life in Christ,*” not stated until Romans 8:2. Paul uses the term “law” in this section in the sense of a working principle. In common terms, what he calls “*the law of sin*” is the impossibility of fulfilling the Law of God by human effort or will power. By contrast, “*the law of the Spirit*” is the power of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the “*righteous requirement of the law*” (Rom. 8:4). Note his use of the singular, as opposed to our feeble attempts to keep many laws, rules, and regulations. This “requirement” is fulfilled in Romans 13:8–10 by the Spirit.

The demoralizing experience Paul recounts here is the inevitable result of seeking to live the Christian life in the energy of the flesh. The “*newness of life*” (6:4) that ought to be the normal Christian life, can only be experienced as we walk in “*the newness of the Spirit*” (7:6). Paul’s cry for deliverance in v. 24 leads him back to the only Deliverer, “*I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!*” This deliverance is now explained in Chapter 8.

Principle: The moment a new believer is confronted with the demand to “keep the law” or to “live the Christian life” they have been doomed to failure. The first thing they must understand is that they can’t do it! Then they need to be instructed as to what union with Christ means (chapters 5), and how to live in the resurrection power of the Spirit (chapters 6 and 8). **This was precisely the failure of unbelieving Israel as related in Romans chapters 9–11.**

Conclusion:

Based on the assurance and confidence of our standing in Christ, and the crucial role of our prayer life (Rom. 5:1–5), we have now come to the central issue of the Christian life, which is the combination of clear, accurate, **sound teaching** regarding our **position** in Christ, with a faith-reliance upon the **indwelling Spirit** to do what God has promised He will do for us in our **practice**.

The Spirit of God and the Word of God are like the two components of epoxy. Neither of them will work without the other! They must be mixed together in equal amounts if they are to achieve the goal, which is nothing less than “**the transformed life**.”

THE ESSENCE OF ROMANS 8

What does every Christian think of when Romans 8 is mentioned? It is usually one of the following three things:

1. There is no condemnation to those in Christ (v. 1).
2. God works all things together for our good (v. 28).
3. We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (v. 37).

These are all certainly great thoughts, but there is so much more to Romans 8, from the standpoint of the victorious Christian life!

The text of Romans 8:1, along with that of 5:1, is one of the controversial verses of the book. To see the divergence of opinion on these passages, see **Appendix A**.

The chapter divides into three sections of great doctrinal value:

1. **Deliverance**—The Spirit of Liberation (Rom. 8:1–11).
The yearning to be set free is satisfied in the Spirit-filled life. If we take the reading of v. 1 as written in the NKJV, the condemnation could include the self-condemnation described in chapter 7.

God accomplished through the sacrifice of our Lord what the Law could never do: He made us new creatures in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), indwelt by His Holy Spirit. When we walk in the power of the Spirit of God, we fulfill “*the righteous requirement of the law*” (v. 4), as seen in Romans 13:8–10.

But how can we walk in the Spirit? Paul reveals that it is all about our mind-set (vv. 5–8). This is the “*renewing of the mind*,” which is coming up in Romans 12:1–2. By keeping our focus on the Word of God, rightly taught, and trusting in the Spirit of

God to make it real in our lives, we find the spiritual liberation we long for. Whenever our fellowship with God is compromised, we simply confess our sins to Him, and rest in His restoration and renewed filling (1 John 1:7, 9; Eph. 5:18; 2 Tim. 2:19–21).

Since the Holy Spirit takes up residence within the newly created human spirit, at the moment that we enter eternal salvation (Eph. 1:13–14; 4:23–24), Paul makes it clear in vv. 9–11 that if anyone does not have the indwelling of the Spirit, it is because they are unsaved. And he stresses that with the purpose of the indwelling of the Spirit to empower us with the resurrection life of Christ (v. 11). This “*life*” referred to here is the same life by which we are delivered from the wrath of God in our lives (Rom. 5:10).

2. **Debtors**—The Spirit of Adoption (Rom. 8:12–25).

As “*debtors*” we have responsibilities to God to live according to the Spirit. It is in this very sphere of indebtedness that Paul declares himself to be a “*debtor*” to the ministry of the Gospel (Rom. 1:14).

The **adoption** spoken of here is not like the western idea of what we think of in the term. The word is *huiiothesia*, which means “adult son-placement.” In the ancient sense, it was the placement of a natural son into the position of adult status, with full rights to inheritance and privilege. Craig S. Keener, in *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, explains, “*Roman adoption, which could take place at any age, canceled all previous debts and relationships, defining the new son wholly in terms of his new relationship to his father, whose heir he became.*” He uses the analogy of God’s “adoption” of Israel in the Exodus (see Rom. 9:4). Here, they were led out of slavery and into the covenant, as sons having full access to their privileges.

“Out of Egypt I have called My Son.” – Hosea 11:1 (Matt. 2:15)

By means of regeneration, we each experience our own “Exodus.” What Paul argues for here in vv. 12–25 is that we should not follow the example of Israel after they came out of Egypt. For if you live according to the flesh (the carnal Christian experience) “*you will die*” (v. 13), just as the majority of that generation, while all experiencing the same spiritual blessings, “*were scattered in the wilderness*” (see 1 Cor. 10:1–11).

In an analogy to entrance into the promised-land, Paul exhorts us to claim our birthright. This includes five marvelous possibilities:

- a. Living by the power of the Spirit (vv. 12–13).
- b. Being led and guided by the Spirit (v. 14). It is important to distinguish between Paul’s use of “*children*,” which applies to all who trust in Christ, and “*sons*” (v. 14). The word for sons is *huios*, which refers to an adult son. It is the claiming and experiencing of the privileges and responsibilities of our “*adoption*,”—our placement as adult sons in His family.

- c. Relating to God, not in fear, but as to a beloved Father (v. 15). “*Adoption*” (*huios + tithemi*) is the very idea portrayed in the return of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–24). This is a picture, not of salvation (the prodigal was already a son), but of restoration from a life of disobedience. The son in the pigpen is precisely what we see in Romans 7, and again in Romans 8:5–7, and 12–13a. When the son returned to the Father, analogous to confession and correction, his full rights and privileges are restored.
- d. Enjoying the comfort of the inner witness of the Spirit (v. 16).
- e. Anticipating the eternal reward of being “*joint heirs with Christ*” (v. 17). This will inevitably involve suffering in a sinful world, but all suffering endured in faith and fellowship with God will be richly rewarded (Rom. 5:1–5; 2 Tim. 2:12).

The idea of eternal reward leads Paul to contrast our present sufferings with the glory of our eternal expectation (vv. 18–25). Remember that the word “*hope*” here speaks of confident expectation based on the unfailing promises of the word of God. Ultimately, all creation will share in the glorious liberation of our redemption. It is worth noting as well that while our “*adoption*” is a reality from the moment that we believe (Eph. 1:5), its full experience will not be known until we enter into eternity.

3. **Destiny**—The Spirit of Transformation (Rom. 8:26–30).

The working of God in the lives of those surrendered to His will has as its ultimate goal the conformity of each and every believer to the image of Christ. The question for each of us is, how much of that work will be accomplished in our lives here and now? We ought not to look at v. 28 without taking into account the surrounding areas of cooperation in the text (see **Appendix F**).

God knows His plan from beginning to end (vv. 29–30). We can entrust the outworking of that plan to Him. However, this does not absolve us of the spiritual responsibilities of sons. The word “*called*” in v. 28 speaks of those who respond to His invitation to join Him in this plan, as Jesus defines it in the parable of Matthew 22:1–14.

4. **Dauntlessness**—The invincibility of the Christian warrior (vv. 31–39). This is without doubt the most comforting, and also convicting, passage in the entire Bible. If we truly believe what Paul says here of our security and standing before God, how is it that we are so often doubtful and fearful? The passage is entwined with three declarations of the love of God for us in Christ (vv. 35, 37, 39). Our success in experiencing the transformed life (12:1–2), is dependent on our firm conviction that what Paul says in these verses is absolutely true. In the flyleaf of his Bible, the great Missionary David Livingstone had handwritten this verse ...

“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

– Matthew 28:20b

Beneath it he had written, “*This is the word of a Gentleman of the utmost integrity, so there’s the end of the matter.*” He chose to live his life based on the absolute certainty of the promise of Jesus Christ. We all ought to do the same! In fact, we could say that Romans 8:31–39 is but an exposition of Jesus’ promise at the end of Matthew.

Summary: Chapter 8

The key to this chapter is found in the repetition of mention to the Holy Spirit. Ask the average Christian to define the spiritual life and they will talk about Bible study, or prayer, or obeying God’s commands, but none of these activities are spiritual unless the believer is under the control of the Holy Spirit. This is **the Spirit-filled life**. Apart from the control of the Spirit of God, all other efforts are energy of the flesh, Romans 7-type efforts, and are unacceptable to God.

The “Therefore” of Transformation **(Romans 12:1–2)**

*“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. And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”* (emphasis added)

The word “*transformed*” (*metamorphoo*) is the same word translated “*transfigured*” in Matthew 17:2. What happened on the Mount of Transfiguration is that the true inner nature of Jesus was made visible.

The **means** by which this is accomplished is “*the renewing of the mind*,” which can only come about as a result of clear, accurate, and sound Bible teaching. It speaks of a daily pursuit of a life-long objective. Every day we must:

1. **Wash**—1 John 1:9.
The first lesson Jesus taught the disciples in the upper room was the need for daily cleansing (John 13:8–10).
2. **Eat**—Matthew 4:4.
The nourishment of the soul is far more important than that of the body. We eat three times (or more) a day. How often are we in the Word?
3. **Walk**—1 John 1:7.
Fellowship demands agreement and participation. We walk in the light as we apply the things we learn, not in the energy of the flesh, but by faith and dependence on the Holy Spirit.
4. **Work**—Ephesians 2:10.
God has a work for each of us to accomplish. He has work for us to do each day, and those works accumulate to a life-long purpose. This is a work of cooperation with God through life (Phil. 1:6).
5. **Rest**—Matthew 11:28–30.
We must learn to rest in the security and provisions Jesus Christ has made for us. The once-for-all rest of eternal salvation must lead into the moment-by-moment rest of faith (Heb. 4:9–11).

Principle: The transformed life first takes place within (chapters 1–8), and then affects all our outward conduct. Transformation is not complete until it affects every area of our lives.

*“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely
... spirit, soul, and body.”– 1 Thessalonians 5:23*

Here, in Romans 12:1–2, Paul reaches back to the idea he introduced in Romans 6:13 about the offering of our body to God. He has shown us the pitfall we all meet along the way (chapter 7), as well as the premises upon which this transformation is made in our lives (chapters 5, 6, 8).

It is important to recognize that in these verses we have an urgent appeal, “*I beseech you therefore,*” and a command, “*present your bodies a living sacrifice.*” Both of these are based upon “*the mercies of God.*” We quite naturally see this as including all that Paul has taught from Romans 1:1 onward. However, it is too often overlooked that Paul never speaks of God’s mercy until chapter 9. Then, he refers to it **nine times!** This is both because Paul wants to use Israel to demonstrate God’s mercies to the Jewish nation, as well as to show their rebellion in the face of His grace.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS 9–11

It would require far too much space to deal with all the issues in these chapters. These notes will seek to hit the main ideas relating to the challenge of Romans 12:1–2: that of presenting our bodies as a thank-offering for all of God’s abundant mercies.

1. **Israel’s past (chapter 9):** Election to privilege, rejection of potential.

Note: I highly recommend *The Word of God has not Failed* by Aaron Sherwood (Lexham Press, 2015) for more clarity on chapter 9. It is important to distinguish between corporate and personal election. Both Israel in the past, and the Church in the present, are elect entities based solely on the sovereign good pleasure of God. However, personal appropriation of the privileges and blessings of those entities is based on faith response. This is made clear everywhere in Scripture and is the basis of Paul’s theology expounded in Romans (Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:16–17; 2:28–29; 4:3; 10; 16:21).

a. The privilege of Israel’s election (vv. 1–5).

Note first of all in vv. 1–3 (and 10:1) that Paul’s prayer, inspired and attested to by the Holy Spirit, is out of line with the will of God, **if we accept the reformed view of this chapter.**

Eight unique privileges are listed here, culminating in the coming of Christ into the world. In Scripture, eight is the number of new beginnings, and it is reception of Jesus Christ by faith that makes this spiritual new beginning possible. (See election: **Appendix G**).

b. The history of Israel’s election (vv. 6–13).

To bring Jesus Christ into the world, a selection process was necessary. The issue here is not personal salvation, since it is clear from Scripture that

Ishmael was a believer, and possibly Esau as well. It is clear that this “election” of the nation of Israel required a process of selection, meaning others had to be “rejected,” not that they might be lost, but rather that by Christ coming into the world all may be included in the invitation of the gospel (Rom. 3:23–4; 11:32).

- c. Is God now unrighteous in rejecting national Israel (vv. 14–29)? Paul is here answering questions introduced in Romans 3:1–6. The essence of Paul’s imaginary objector’s claim is, if God chose Israel, and God is faithful, then He cannot now “reject” Israel.

Without going into great detail, suffice to say that based on the Old Testament passages Paul quotes, and especially the order of them (he puts Exod. 33:19 before Exod. 9:16), he is showing that Israel has now, in rejecting her Messiah, committed the same idolatrous sin Pharaoh committed: “*Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice ... I do not know the Lord*” (Exod. 5:2). Remember that when God said to Moses, “*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*” (v. 15; Exod. 33:19), God was speaking about those who had just committed the sin of idolatry with the golden calf. This idolatry continued throughout Israel’s history (Amos 5:25–27). Pharaoh, and all of Egypt, were idolaters, which is why the plagues were God’s judgment “*against all the gods of Egypt*” (Exod. 12:12).

Just what was the form of Israel’s idolatry that caused them to be cast off as a nation? This Paul shows in vv. 30–33 and 10:1–3.

- d. The nature of Israel’s idolatry (vv. 30–33).

By rejecting God’s offer of righteousness through faith in Christ, and turning instead to the works of the law, the Jews of Paul’s day had made an idol of the law, and of their own self-righteousness. To them, Jesus Christ was a stumbling-stone instead of the Cornerstone.

Point: Contrary to Israel’s claim that God doesn’t keep His word, Paul replies that the very judgment they are suffering is because God is faithful to all His promises!

2. **Israel’s present (chapter 10):** Potential deliverance, but persistent unbelief.

- a. The basis of the national rejection of Israel (vv. 1–13).

The essence of Israel’s failure was that they wanted a “righteousness” that gave them cause to boast. From the very beginning, Moses made it clear that if one wanted to be justified by law, he must obey every command. However, Moses also made it clear that salvation was not something hard to obtain, that it was as near as one’s mouth and heart. Thus, they rejected faith-righteousness, which came through Jesus Christ. He was an offense to them, because He offered eternal life to all: Jew, Gentile, even Samaritan, on the

same terms—simple childlike faith, for “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” This they could not tolerate.

In all of the confrontations of Jesus with the religious leaders of Israel, He challenged their idolatry of the Temple, the Sabbath, circumcision, and the Law.

b. The door of faith is still open to individual Jews (vv. 14–17).

In these verses, Paul puts together a “string of pearls,” called a *catena*. In this way, he lets the prophets make his argument for him. The “*gospel of peace*” (v. 15; Isa. 52:7) is still being offered to the Jewish people. “*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (v. 17).

These Old Testament passages show that the salvation message preached by Paul is consistent with what Moses and the prophets spoke of, for “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”

c. God keeps His word, for blessing or cursing (vv. 18–21).

It is important to note that in v. 18, Paul indicts Israel for rejecting the witness of creation itself. By doing this, he again links them to the issue of idolatry, as we saw in Romans 1:18–23. Therefore, God will fulfill the warning from Deuteronomy 32:21, using “*a foolish nation*” (i.e., the Church, a spiritual nation, 1 Pet. 2:9–10) to provoke Israel. In vv. 20–21 God will be found and known by the Gentiles, who did not seek Him, but were sought by Him through Christ (Matt. 18:11; Luke 19:10). Meanwhile, Israel remains a rebellious people, who will now suffer the fate described in chapter 11.

3. **Israel’s future (chapter 11):** Israel’s remnant and ultimate restoration.

The gist of this chapter is an answer to Paul’s rhetorical question: “*has God cast away His people?*” Paul offers three proofs in rebuttal of this claim (see also 15:8):

a. Exhibit one: Paul himself (v. 1).

As a believing Israelite, Paul is proof that God has not rejected His people.

b. Exhibit two: The faithful remnant (vv. 2–10).

The example of Elijah from 1 Kings 19 shows that even in times of Israel’s deepest rebellion, God always had a remnant of faithful believers. Verse 6 states a truth that is fundamental to all of Romans, the addition of any works to grace nullifies the nature of grace (see 4:4). If we mix grace and works, we have changed them both by definition.

As a result of their continuing rebellion, Israel has suffered the consequences of that unbelief (vv. 8–9). The hardening that God imposed on Pharaoh (9:17) will now be imposed on Israel as a nation. God deals fairly with all peoples and at all times. This blindness will continue until after the Rapture of the Church (v. 25).

- c. Exhibit three: The olive tree analogy (vv. 11–28).
In this illustration, Paul shows God doing something “*contrary to nature*” (v. 24). This means that His formation of the Gentile-dominated Church is supernatural. Yet, He will, in time, use the Church to bring the nation of Israel back to faith.
- d. Exhibit four: God proving the truth of Romans 8:28 and 29–36.
“*For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable*” (v. 29). We often use this verse to apply to individuals, but Paul is using it for the nation. What God had gifted and called them for (see 9:4–5) will yet prove out in their final experience. Unfortunately, it will take the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jer. 30:7), the Tribulation Period, to make this a reality.

In the meantime, God proves the truth of Romans 8:28 historically, by using Israel’s rejection of Christ to make Him known to the Gentiles around the world. The future return of Israel to the faith is proof that the Church has not replaced Israel. Verse 32 can be connected back to Romans 3:23–24 to again show the consistency of Paul’s line of argument. He ends with a doxology of God’s riches of mercy, wisdom, and judgment. To Him be all glory!

THE EVIDENCE OF THE TRANSFORMED LIFE (Romans 12:3–15:33)

So far, chapters 1–11 have confirmed the point made earlier, that transformation is first within, and only then, external and observable. I stress once more that failure to recognize this leads to discouragement and defeat in many Christian lives. If pastors fail to teach foundational doctrines regarding our position and privileges in Christ, maturity and transformation will not occur. It does no good to berate believers for failing to live the victorious Christian life, if we have failed to give them the spiritual foundation and tools on which to build. It is on the basis of the truths laid down in the previous chapters that Paul now turns to what the transformed life looks like. Time and space only allow for an overview and a few highlights.

1. Transformation within the Church (chapter 12).

Three things stand out in this chapter, that are clear evidence of the transformed life: humility toward God (v. 3), service to others (vv. 4–8), and love for all (vv. 9–21). The enemies of these qualities are hypocrisy (v. 9), apathy (v. 11), and arrogance (v. 16). The effects of such a transformed life on others are love (vv. 9–10), joy (vv. 12, 15) and peace (v. 18). The secret to such a life is a diligent and dedicated prayer life (v. 12).

2. Transformation in Society (chapter 13).

Throughout the world, Christians are the best of citizens, and yet they are persecuted above all others. Our conduct in society is a powerful witness to the Lord we love and serve. Only the love produced by the Spirit can sustain us and keep us on track (vv. 8–10). Government is not infallible, and our submission and obedience are not absolute. Both in Daniel (chapters 1, 3, 6) and in Acts (Acts 4:19; 5:29) we see that our highest authority is always the Word of God, and we will suffer for this attitude. Human rulers like to think there is no one above them. By our actions, we remind

them that they will also answer to Him who rules all things. If we live in the light of our Lord's return (vv. 11–14) we will not only be effective as witnesses, but we will also be living the victorious Christian life.

3. **Transformation in relation to the weak (chapters 14—15).**

There will always be weak and strong among the household of the saints. Learning to live by the “law of love” (1 Cor. 8:1–13; Rom. 13:8–10) means that “*We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves*” (Rom. 15:1). In reality, there are four laws that guide us in our pursuit of the life of power and victory in the spiritual life.

- a. The law of **liberty** (1 Cor. 10:23).
We have freedom to do anything not forbidden in Scripture.
- b. The law of **expediency** (1 Cor. 10:23–33).
However, we are to consider how our conduct affects others.
- c. The law of **love** (1 Cor. 8:6–13).
Love for our Lord, and for fellow believers, will at times limit our enjoyment of freedom for the sake of others, so as not to cause them to stumble.
- d. The law **supreme sacrifice** (1 Cor. 9:1–2; 19–27).
Paul exemplified this law in his life, by giving up many things, even though permitted in Scripture, for maximum effect in his ministry of the Gospel.

In these final chapters, Paul is teaching us to consider these laws as we live out our lives, so as to be a witness to the lost, and a help and support to those younger in the faith, who need our support.

GREETINGS AND SUMMARY (Chapter 16)

Fifteen times in this section Paul sends greetings to people in Rome by name. All of them had served with Paul in some capacity. Some were believers before Paul. Some expositors have suggested that there may have been as many as fifteen different congregations included here, who were meeting in house groups in Rome.

How wonderful would it have been to be named commendably by Paul in the inspired Word? But we all need to remember that our story is still being written, and we are helping to write it by our choices each day. Be sure that you write a great story!

“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.”

– Romans 16:25–27

Appendix A: The Romans 5:1 and 8:1 Controversy.

The following is a sample by great interpreters of the various views on these two passages. These are given in no particular order and are abbreviated for the sake of space. The issue in each case is whether we are talking about our **position** in Christ, or our **practice** as Christians.

1. Robert Haldane: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*who walk ... after the Spirit.*”
2. John Murray: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
3. William Shedd: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
4. Charles Spurgeon: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
5. John Phillips: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
6. M. R. Vincent: 5:1 “*let us have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
7. James Dunn: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
8. Syriac Bible: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
9. Sanford C. Mills: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
10. John Brown: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
11. Randolph O. Yeager: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
12. William Sanday and Arthur Headlam: 5:1 “*let us have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
13. C. H. Dodd: 5:1 “*let us enjoy peace.*” 8:1 “*no doom for those in Christ.*”
14. Karl Barth: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
15. Charles Hodge: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*to those who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”
16. J. Vernon McGee: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
17. J. B. Lightfoot: 5:1 “*let us have peace.*” 8:1 He gives no opinion.
18. William Barclay: 5:1 “*let us enjoy peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
19. Donald Grey Barnhouse: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*no condemnation to those in Christ.*”
20. Tom Holland: 5:1 “*we have peace.*” 8:1 “*who walk ... according to the Spirit.*”

These examples show how difficult it may be to work out what is the correct text. However, a word from Randolph O. Yeager, a great Greek exegete, is very helpful. Regarding the Romans 5:1 and 8:1 controversy, he says, “*Robertson (A. T.) is sure that echwmen (the subjunctive) has the best support. Both ideas are true. Peace can be defined both as absence of war and absence of worry. Whichever one of these two ideas is taught in Romans 5:1 (and 8:1), the other is also taught elsewhere in Scripture ... this is why no theologian builds his system upon a proof text. Rather, we depend upon the total message which emerges when we ‘study to show ourselves approved unto God—workmen that need never to be ashamed, because we rightly divided (and fitted together) the Word of Truth’*” (2 Tim. 2:15) (Randolph O. Yeager, *The Renaissance New Testament*, Vol. 11, Romans 5:1, pg. 414).

Appendix B: The Life of Paul as an Example of the Transformed Life.

1. Paul is introduced in Acts as a hateful, murderous person (Acts 9:1–2). In 1 Titus 1:13, he refers to himself as “*a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man.*” The word translated “insolent” is *hubristes*, which means “*a sadist ... the word indicates one who in pride and insolence deliberately and contemptuously mistreats and wrongs and hurts another person just for hurting sake and to deliberately humiliate the person*” (*Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Rienecker and Rogers).

2. After his Damascus Road experience with Jesus Christ, he is identified as a “*brother*” (Acts 9:17).
3. Next, we find him growing in grace and truth as a “disciple” (Acts 9:22–26).
4. In the Antioch church, he is listed last among five prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1).
5. He is then sent out as a missionary, apparently under the leadership of Barnabas (Acts 13:2).
6. It was on the island of Paphos, where Saul took charge, that we see him coming into his own as an apostle (Acts 13:6–12).
7. At this point, the mission team is referred to as “*Paul and his party*” (Acts 13:13). We see that Paul demonstrated humility and patience, until God promoted him to prominence. What an example of a transformed life!

Appendix C: “Wrath” in Romans (from Romans 1:18)

1. The word “*wrath*” is from *orge*, which speaks of “the deep-seated anger of God against sin” (*Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Rienecker and Rogers). It is His abiding hostility to all that is a violation of His righteousness and holiness.
2. As illustrated in Romans 1:18–32, God’s wrath involves both the consequences of sin, and His judgment of it. Sin hardens the heart and blinds the eye of the soul to God. Persisted in long enough will result in God “turning us over” to the judgment of that sin (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).
3. The willful rejection of God’s grace brings inevitable and increasing wrath and judgment (Rom. 2:4–6).
4. The law brings wrath because it reveals our sinfulness (Rom. 4:15).
5. Once we are justified by faith, deliverance from wrath (divine displeasure and discipline) depends on our daily walking in the resurrection life of Christ (Rom. 5:9–11; 8:11). The word “*wrath*” in Romans 5:9 is not talking about eternal judgment, but judgment in time.
6. The wrath of God is poured out on those who make themselves “*vessels of wrath prepared for destruction*” (Rom. 9:22) by their obstinacy and refusal to believe and/or obey God (2 Tim. 2:20–21).
7. Jesus Christ endured the wrath of God against all sin for all men, that all might have the chance to escape His wrath in eternity (Rom. 3:21–31; 10:4–13).

Appendix D: “Peace” in Romans (from Romans 5:1)

1. God offers peace to all who believe (Rom. 1:7).
2. This peace is found by all who diligently seek it (Rom. 2:4, 6–7, 10; Jer. 29:13).
3. All men are by nature sinners in rebellion against the peace of God (Rom. 3:10–18).
4. Peace with God is the result of His work of reconciliation through Christ and must be received by faith alone (Rom. 5:1, 9–11).
5. We who believe can only experience and enjoy the peace of God when we are in fellowship with God, what Paul calls “*spiritually minded*” (Rom. 8:6).
6. The gospel message is called “*the gospel of peace*” (Rom. 10:15) because it brings men into reconciliation with God, by faith in Jesus Christ.
7. Our present enjoyment of the kingdom of God is “*righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*” (Rom. 14:17).
8. When we live life in the power of the Holy Spirit, we not only enjoy the peace of God, but “*the God of peace*” is with us (Rom. 15:13, 33).

Appendix E: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit (from Romans 6:3–5)

The baptism of the Spirit is one of 5 works of the Holy Spirit which are accomplished at the moment we receive eternal salvation. These are the means by which “*all things have become new*” (2 Cor. 5:17).

1. The **baptism** of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:1–6), by which we are eternally united with Christ, and share the benefits of His work. This gives us a **new spiritual position** before God.
2. The work of **regeneration** (Titus 3:4–6; John 3:3, 7; 2 Cor. 5:17). By this we are provided with a **new life**.
3. The permanent **indwelling** of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16–17; Rom. 8:9–11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). This gives us **new power**.
4. The impartation of a **spiritual gift** (1 Cor. 12:7, 11; 1 Tim. 4:14; Rom. 1 2:3–8; 1 Pet. 4:10–11). In this we gain a **new purpose**. The **sealing** of the Spirit, which is the guarantee of our eternal security (Eph. 1:13–14; 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:21–22; 2 Tim. 2:19). Finally, by this sealing we have a **new destiny**.

Appendix F: The True Promise of Romans 8:28

“Now we have surely come to know that to those who are characterized by loving God He works all things together [with them] for good, to those who are being called according to His providential plan.” (Literal translation from the Greek)

Note: This promise is predicated on **seven other “together” statements** in this chapter, which speak of a cooperative effort between God and those “*who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*” (v. 4), because they are “*debtors*” as adult “*sons*” to the spiritual life (vv. 12–17). These co-operations were introduced in vv. 16–17.

1. We are co-witnesses (v. 16).
2. We are co-heirs (v. 17a).
3. We are co-sufferers (v. 17b).
4. We will be co-glorified (v. 17c).
5. We are co-workers with the Spirit (v. 26), specifically in our prayer life.
6. We will ultimately be co-formed—conformed to His image (v. 29).
7. We will be co-possessors of all things (v. 32.).

The verse everyone knows about (v. 28) is often taken without reference to the idea of spiritual cooperation Paul has in mind here. That is why he includes the phrases, “*to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose*”.

Appendix G: “Election” in Romans

1. The first mention of election in Scripture is that the Messiah (the Lord Jesus Christ) is the Elect One of God (Isa. 42:1). Under the law of first mention, this defines election in all further references. It also suggests that all election in some way speaks of a relation to Christ, whether physically, as of the nation of Israel, or spiritually, as of all who believe.
2. Israel as a nation was selected by the sovereign will of God to bring the Savior into the world (Rom. 9:4–5). The seven listed privileges in this passage leading up to the Savior were all

designed to point to Him and teach about Him so as to lead members of the nation to Faith (Rom. 9:4–5; 10:1–7).

3. When Israel, as a whole, rejected Jesus Christ—the Elect One of God, the nation was rejected and fell under the wrath of God (Matt. 23:13–39; Rom. 9:22–24).
4. Paul’s use of Isaac, as the child of promise (Rom. 9:6–9), makes the same point as in Galatians 4:21–28, that entrance into the privileges and blessings of God’s Elect One (Isa. 42:1; Rom. 9:5) must be by one’s personal faith response.
5. Paul proves, in Romans 9:14–18 and 10:1–3, that in rejecting the Messiah in favor of their own works-righteousness, Israel became guilty of idolatry, and would suffer the consequences of it (Rom. 1:18–32).
6. Due to their rejection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 9:30–32; 10:1–3, 16–21), God sovereignly hardened and blinded the nation (Rom. 11:7–10), just as Paul had already illustrated in Romans 1:18–32.
7. Due to the unbelief of the “elect” nation in God’s “Elect One,” Jesus Christ, they have ceased to be “elect” and God has “elected” a new entity—the Church—until such time when God restores Israel again, in faith and obedience (Rom. 11:11–29).
8. Jesus Himself gives us a clear definition of election from God’s point of view in the parable of Matthew 22:1–14. In the last verse, He declares, “*For many are called, but few are chosen.*” The word “chosen” (*eklektoi*) is translated “elect” or “chosen” 23 times in the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation and, in the parable, Jesus shows that response to the invitation is what separates the “elect” from the “non-elect.”
9. In connection with the above, the Bible makes it clear that Israel’s refusal to answer the divine call resulted in their present rejection and judgment (Isa. 65:12; 66:4; Jer. 7:13; 35:17; Matt. 22:1–14; Luke 14:15–24; Rom. 10:16–21; 11:21).
10. It is worth pointing out that while Augustinian/Calvinist theologians make sovereignty the foundation of God’s actions, David reveals that “*Righteousness and Justice are the foundation of His throne*” (Psalm 97:2), which is precisely Paul’s argument in the book of Romans (Rom. 2:5; 3:3–4, 21–26; 10:1–4). This righteousness is clearly something we can know and understand (Gen. 18:25), not some secret, hidden, inscrutable working behind the scenes.

Appendix H: God is Able

1. God is able to save forever those who believe (Heb. 7:25).
2. God is able to supply our every need (2 Cor. 9:8).
3. God is able to deliver all who are tempted (Heb. 2:18; 2 Pet. 2:9).
4. God is able to sustain the weak (Psalm 37:24; Rom. 14:4).
5. God is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24).
6. God is able to surpass all expectations and requests (Eph. 3:20).
7. God is able to raise us up in resurrection in the likeness of His Son (Heb. 1 1:19; Phil. 3:21).

Appendix I: The Faithfulness of God

1. God is faithful to forgive our sins (Psalm 103:3; 1 John 1:9).
2. God is faithful to keep us saved (John 10:28; 2 Tim. 2:13).
3. God is faithful to deliver us through temptations (1 Cor. 10:13).
4. God is faithful to keep His promises (Rom. 8:28; Heb. 10:23).
5. God is faithful to fulfill His plan for us (1 Thess. 5:24).

6. God is faithful to us times of suffering (1 Pet. 4:19).
7. God is faithful to strengthen us (2 Thess. 3:3).
8. God is the faithful partner of our union with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9).
9. Jesus Christ is a faithful and merciful High Priest (Heb. 2:17).
10. Jesus Christ is synonymous with faithfulness (Rev. 19:11).

Appendix J: The Daily Disciplines of the Christian Life (with Romans 12:2–3)

1. Wash—1 John 1:9; John 13:10; 2 Timothy 2:20–21.

*“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that you present your bodies ...”*

2. Eat—Matthew 4:4; John 15:7, 9–10.

“a living sacrifice ...”

3. Walk—John 1:7; 2:2; Galatians 5:16.

“holy, acceptable to God ...”

4. Work—Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 6:1.

“which is your reasonable service ...”

5. Rest—Matthew 11:28–30; Hebrews 4:1, 9–11.

*“be transformed by the renewing of your mind ... that you may prove what is that
good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*

Appendix K: The Mystery of God (Romans 16:25)

1. The “*mystery*” mentioned in Romans 16:25 refers to the new dispensation we call the Church Age, as well as the doctrines that relate to the Church.
2. The term “*mystery*” as used by Paul refers to truths previously unrevealed and unknown, but now revealed to the believers of the Church Age, which Paul calls “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (Eph. 3:2). This does not mean God’s grace was not working in Old Testament times, but that it was not known in its fullness until after the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
3. This “*mystery*” was inaugurated with the incarnation of Jesus Christ—the second member of the Godhead—as a member of the human race (1 Tim. 3:16).
4. This mystery incorporates all new revelation to the Church, the Body of Christ (1 Tim. 3:9).
5. The relation of the Church Age believer to Christ is likened to that of marriage between a man and woman (Eph. 5:30–32).
6. The plan of God is unique for every Church Age believer who is living in what Paul calls “*the dispensation of the fullness of times*” (Eph. 1:7–10). This unique plan is called “*the mystery of His will*” in Ephesians 1:9. All this means that we have unique provisions and potential never before experienced by any believer in the Old Testament dispensation.

7. The doctrines of this mystery were never before revealed and involves the creation of a new people—the Church—a force capable of taking on the “*principalities and powers*” of the fallen realm (Eph. 3:3–12; 6:10–18).
8. These newly revealed doctrines of this mystery age include provisions never before known to man (1 Cor. 2:6–10; Eph. 1:3).
9. Chief among these provisions is the indwelling of the believer by the Godhead, so as to function as the Body of Christ on Earth (Col. 1:13–18; 2:24–27; Rom. 8:9–11).
10. This indwelling is but one of the five works of the Holy Spirit accomplished in us at the moment we believe (see Appendix E):
 - a. The **baptism** of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:1–6), by which we are eternally united with Christ, and share the benefits of His work.
 - b. The work of **regeneration** (Titus 3:4–6; John 3:3, 7; 2 Cor. 5:17).
 - c. The permanent **indwelling** of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16–17; Rom. 8:9–11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).
 - d. The impartation of a **spiritual gift** (1 Cor. 12:7, 11; 1 Tim. 4:14; Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Pet. 4:10–11).
 - e. The **sealing** of the Spirit, which is the guarantee of our eternal security (Eph. 1:13–14; 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:21–22; 2 Tim. 2:19).

Bibliography

Barclay, William. *The Letter to The Romans*. The Daily Study Bible. The Saint Andrew Press, 1955.

Barnes, Albert. *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*. Baker Book House, Original printing 1884 by Blackie and Son.

Barnhouse, Donald Grey. *Romans—Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954.

Barth, Karl. *The Epistle to The Romans*. Oxford University Press, 1968.

Brown, John. *Analytical Exposition of The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to The Romans*. Baker Book House, 1981.

Conybeare, W. J. and Howson, J. S. *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1976.

Denney, James. *St. Paul's Epistle to The Romans*. The Expositor's Greek Testament. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

Dodd, C. H. *The Epistle of Paul to The Romans*. Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1949.

Dunn, James D. G. *Word Biblical Commentary, Romans 1–8, Romans 9–16*. Word Books, 1988.

Emerton, J. A. and Cranfield, C. E. B. *The Epistle to The Romans, The International Critical Commentary*. T. and T. Clark Limited, 1975.

Foreman, Kenneth J. *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*. The Layman's Bible Commentary. John Knox Press, Second printing, 1963.

Forster, Roger and Marston, Paul. *God's Strategy in Human History. Volume 1—God's Path to Victory, Volume 2—Reconsidering Key Biblical Ideas*. Tyndale House, 1973. Reprinted by Bethany House, 1989.

Forster, Roger and Marston, Paul. *Paul's Gospel in Romans & Galatians*. PUSH Publishing, 2016.

Haldane, Robert. *An Exposition of Romans*. Mac Donald Publishing Company, 1800's (Publishing date not given).

Hodge, Charles. *Romans—The Geneva Series of Commentaries*. The Banner of Truth Trust, 1835, 1975.

Hodges, Zane C. *Romans—Deliverance from Wrath*. Edited by Robert N. Wilkin. Grace Evangelical Society, 2013.

- Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary—New Testament*. IntersVarsity Press, 2014.
- Lamsa, George M. *The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts (Syriac Version)*. A. J. Holman Company, 1957.
- Lightfoot, J. B. *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*. Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.
- Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Romans—Atonement and Justification*. Zondervan Publishing House, 1970.
- McGee, J. Vernon. *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee*. Thomas Nelson Inc., 1983.
- Mills, Sanford C. *A Hebrew Christian Looks at Romans*. Dunham Publishing Company, 1968.
- Murray, John. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1959, 1965.
- NET Bible, Biblical Studies Press, 2007.
- Phillips, John. *Exploring Romans*. Moody Bible Institute, 1969.
- Rienecker, Fritz and Rogers, Cleon. *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*. Zondervan Publishing House, 1980.
- Sanday, William and Headlam, Arthur C. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to The Romans*. T. & T. Clark, 1902.
- Shedd, William G. T. *A Critical and Doctrinal Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*. Klock and Klock Christian Publishers, 1879, 1978 reprint.
- Sherwood, Aaron. *The Word of God Has Not Failed: Paul's use of the Old Testament in Romans 9*. Lexham Press, 2015.
- Spurgeon, C. H. *Spurgeon's Devotional Bible*. Baker Book House, 1981.
- Vincent, Marvin R. *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976.
- Walvoord, John F. and Zuck, Roy B. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary – New Testament*. David C. Cook, 1983.
- Wiersbe, Dr. Warren W. *Expository Outlines on the New Testament*. Calvary Book Room, 1982.
- Wilmington, Dr. H. L. *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1984.
- Wright, N. T., *Paul for Everyone*. Romans, Part 1, Chapters 1–8; Romans, part 2, Chapters 9–16. John Knox Press, 2004.
- Yeager, Randolph O. *The Renaissance New Testament*. Pelican Publishing Company, 1983.