

Introduction to Romans

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Introductory Matters

Authorship

External evidence favors Pauline authorship. Numerous post apostolic writers attribute the epistle to Paul. They include Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and Hippolytus. Even heretics, such as Marcion, indicated that Paul wrote Romans. Moreover, every list of New Testament books before the second century includes Romans with Paul's letters. For example, the Muratorian fragment indicates that Paul wrote Romans.¹

Internal evidence also favors Pauline authorship. With Tertius serving as his amanuensis (16:22), Paul claims to be the author of the letter (1:1). Romans mirrors Pauline logic and style. The same ideas, terminology, and theological viewpoint found in Paul's other letters are discernible in Romans. For example, the notion of building application (12–16) upon doctrine (1–11), which is so conspicuous in Romans, is also evident in Paul's other letters (Eph 1–3; 4–6; Gal 2–4; 5–6). Other common ideas found in Romans and other Pauline writings include justification by

¹ Daniel Wallace, "Romans: Introduction, Outline, and Argument," online: www.bible.org, accessed 15 August 2005, 1.

faith rather than Law (Rom 3:20-22; Gal 2:16), the body metaphor to describe the church (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12), and the collection for the needy Jerusalem saints (Rom 15:25-28; 2 Cor 8-9). In addition, the information presented about Paul in Romans is consistent with what is spoken of Paul elsewhere. Such pieces of information include his identification with the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5), his association with Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16:3; Acts 18:2-3, 18-19), his journey to Jerusalem with an offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem (Rom 15:25-27; Acts 19:21; 20:1-5; 21:15, 17-19; 1 Cor 16:1-5; 2 Cor 8:1-12; 9:1-5), and his intention to visit Rome (Rom 1:10-13; 15:22-32; Acts 19:21). In sum, when the internal and external evidence is considered, there is little wonder why the view of Pauline authorship for Romans is the consensus of the scholarly world.

Unity

Many believe that the last two chapters of Romans comprise a second letter that was not originally part of Paul's epistle to the Romans. They believe these last two chapters were actually a Pauline letter to the Ephesians that was later appended to Romans. Several arguments are used to bolster this position. First, Marcion's text lacks the last two chapters of Romans. Second, the second section mentions those connected with Ephesus, such as Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16:3; Acts 18:19, 26; 1

Cor 16:19) and Epaenetus (16:5). Third, in Romans 16, Paul greets numerous people in Rome as if he knew them. How did Paul know all of these people having never visited Rome? Fourth, Romans 15:33 furnishes an appropriate conclusion to the letter. Fifth, some Latin manuscripts omit the second section.

However, most of these arguments are answerable. First, Marcion typically removed information that did not agree with his theological agenda. Second, because Priscilla and Aquila previously lived in Italy and only left because of Claudius' imperial decree, it is possible that they eventually returned to Rome when their circumstances changed. Third, those addressed in Romans 16 could have been mutual friends that Paul encountered elsewhere on his missionary journeys. Interestingly, Paul similarly greets many he knew in Colossians although he never visited the church. Fourth, all the major manuscripts support the unity of the letter. In fact, no extant manuscript lacks the second portion of the letter. The idea of a second letter also fails because it would be strange to have a letter containing only greetings. In sum, the scholarly consensus is that Paul is the author of the entire letter to the Romans.²

Destination

² Ibid., 2-3; Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 372.

The book was written to the believers in Rome (1:7, 15). Rome was founded in 753 B.C. By the time Paul wrote the epistle, Rome was the greatest city in the world. Its population consisted of over 1 million inhabitants. Because Paul did not found the church in Rome, various theories have arisen concerning how the church began. Some speculate that Peter founded the Roman church. However, this seems unlikely considering the fact that Peter is never addressed in the letter. Moreover, if Peter had founded the church, Paul would not have written to the church because of his policy not to build on another's foundation (Rom 15:20). In fact, 4th century church father Ambrosiaster stated that Peter was not the founder of the Roman church.³ Others contend that Priscilla and Aquila founded the church because they were in Rome in A.D. 49 before being expelled by Claudius' edict (Acts 18:2). Still others argue that people from the churches that Paul had established in Macedonia and Greece founded the church in Rome. Probably the most likely explanation is that converts from Rome who heard Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10) returned to their homeland and founded the church. It is likely that the church grew as other believers, such as Priscilla, Aquila, and Phoebe, migrated to this strategic city.

Although Romans 16:5 was addressed to a single church, it is more likely that the letter was addressed to several churches within Rome. According to Romans 1:7,

³ Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Romans," online: www.soniclight.com, accessed 15 August 2005, 2.

the letter was written to all the saints in Rome.⁴ The believing status of those addressed is beyond dispute since they are called “saints” (1:7) and Paul indicates that their faith was already recognized (1:8). Apparently, between the church’s founding and Paul’s letter to the church, the saints at Rome had developed a favorable reputation throughout the Christian world. At the time Paul wrote, the church had already been established for several years (15:23).

The congregation had a sizeable Jewish population. This Jewish population is evidenced by the fact that Rome had a small colony of Jews (Acts 28:17), that Romans makes extensive use of Old Testament citations, and that the letter addresses numerous Jewish issues and individuals (1:16; 2:17-3:8; 3:21-4:1, 7:1-14; 9–11, 14:1-15:12; 16:3, 7, 11). However, because the Jews are addressed directly (2:17), the implication is that the congregation consisted predominantly of Gentiles (1:12-14; 11:13, 17-31; 15:14-16). It makes sense that the congregation was predominately Gentile given the fact that the church was located in Rome, which was the capital city of the entire empire. Because Rome was within the sphere of Paul’s apostolic ministry and because Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-8), it is a safe inference that the Roman believers were primarily Gentile (Rom 1:13; 15:14-16).

⁴ Although the word *ekklēsia* occurs in Romans 16:1, 4, 5, 16, 23, it does not occur in 1:7 and is never used regarding the totality of the Christian community at Rome.

Date and Place of Writing

Paul probably wrote the letter around A.D. 57 toward the end of his third missionary journey (15:19; Acts 20:1-3). Paul had completed the project of raising money for the impoverished saints in Jerusalem (15:26). Paul's plan was to arrive in Jerusalem (15:25) on Pentecost (Acts 20:16) after spending the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Philippi (Acts 20:6). Paul wrote the letter from Corinth (Acts 20:1-3). Gallio became proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18:12) in A.D. 51-52. If about five years is allowed not only for the completion of Paul's second missionary journey but also for the three years that Paul spent in Ephesus, then a date of A.D. 57 for the composition of Romans seems appropriate. Moreover, Festus replaced Felix as the governor of Judea in A.D. 58. Thus, Paul's three months in Greece (Acts 20:3) probably took place in A.D. 56-57 if one works backward from A.D. 58.⁵

The Corinthian place of writing is seen in the fact that Paul sends a greeting from Gaius (16:23) who Paul was with in Corinth (1 Cor 1:14). It is also seen in the fact that the letter was dispatched by Phoebe from Cenchrea, which was Corinth's eastern harbor (16:1). The Corinthian place of writing is also seen in the fact that Paul sends a greeting from Erastus the city treasurer (16:23). Elsewhere, Erastus is described as being in Corinth (2 Tim 4:20). Interestingly, a first century inscription in

⁵ John Grassmick, "An Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans" (unpublished class notes in NT 205A Exegesis of Romans, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 2001), 9.

Corinth reads, “Erastus, the commissioner of public works, laid this pavement at his own expense.”⁶

Occasion for Writing

After completing the collection for the impoverished saints in Judea (15:26), Paul was ready to deliver the love gift to Jerusalem (Rom 15:25). Instead of going from Corinth to Jerusalem, he went to Philippi in an attempt to avoid a plot on his life by the Jews (Acts 20:6). Thus, he gave the letter to Phoebe at Cenchrea (Rom 16:1-2). She then delivered the letter to Rome.

Purpose

Paul wrote Romans with several purposes in mind. First, Paul wrote to prepare the Roman believers for his long awaited visit (Rom 15:22-24). Apparently, Paul wanted to come and visit them (1:9-10, 11-15; 15:23, 29, 32) but had been thwarted several times (1:13; 15:22). Second, Paul desired to change his base of operations to Rome. As Paul’s ministry began to shift away from the East and toward Spain in the West (15:23-24), Paul needed his base of operations to shift as well. Just as Antioch

⁶ Wilkinson and Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*, 373.

had been Paul's base of operations for his first two missionary journeys and Ephesus had been his base of operations for his third missionary journey, Paul desired Rome to become his new base of operations for his Westward missionary expansion. It is logical for Paul to select Rome as his new base of operations since it was the most influential city in the empire. In order for the church at Rome to constitute Paul's new base of operations, the saints in Rome needed to be doctrinally grounded. Thus, in Romans, Paul gave them a systematic theological treatment of the gospel. Third, Paul desired to provide the church with a firm theological grounding. Because an apostle did not found the church, such grounding was necessary.

Fourth, Paul wrote in order to resolve Jew/Gentile tension. Because such conflict had been brewing in the other churches that Paul established (Acts 20:3; Gal 5:1), it is likely that such conflict was in its initial stages in Rome as well (Rom 14:1-15:13). Thus, Paul explained the proper role between Jew (Rom 1:16; 3:1-2; 9:4-5) and Gentile (3:30; 11:25) within God's church. Fifth, Paul wrote to vindicate God's righteousness by refuting various charges brought against the righteousness of God (1:18-32; 3:25-26; 9:14; 11:33). Sixth, because of imminent danger, Paul believed that his death could be imminent as well (15:31). Thus, he wanted to preserve what the Lord had shown him regarding the gospel before he died. Seventh, he wanted to insulate the Romans from false teachers (16:17-20). Although Paul earlier indicated that the Romans were mature (15:14-16), perhaps Paul was pursuing "preventive

maintenance” by preempting a problem before it began. Eighth, Paul wrote to counter a growing anti-Semitism that probably began with Claudius’ edict to expel all Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2). Paul counters such anti-Semitism by explaining the prominent role that Israel has occupied and is yet to occupy in God’s redemptive program (9–11).

Theme and Structure

The theme of the book is that the righteousness of God has been revealed and that people can enter into this righteousness through the gospel (1:16-17). The entire contents of the book revolve around this theme. The first three chapters explain why humanity needs the gospel. They argue that all have sinned and are therefore under the just condemnation of God. Romans 3:21-5:21 contends that people can receive right standing before God through faith alone in the Gospel. The next three chapters (Rom 6–8) explain how the gospel works its way out in the believer’s life through progressive sanctification.⁷ Paul then explains that believers can trust the promises that God has made to them because He will be faithful to keep the promises that He has made to His covenanted people Israel (Rom 9–11). In the last section of the book

⁷ Many see chapters 1–8 comprising an entire unit regarding the righteousness of God.

(Rom 12–16), Paul explains how the gospel is practically manifested in the daily lives of believers. Service is the dominant theme in these last five chapters.

Message

The gospel allows people to attain the righteousness of God through justification, sanctification, glorification, and service toward one another. Because God has not cancelled His promises to Israel, neither will He cancel His promises to those who believe the gospel.

Unique Characteristics

Several unique characteristics can be seen in Romans. First, it represents a systematic presentation of a case. Second, it is the most theological of all of Paul's letters. Third, it represents the most theological treatment of the gospel found anywhere in Scripture. Although Romans is Paul's sixth letter chronologically, it appears canonically as his first letter. Such an arrangement testifies to its theological thoroughness. It makes sense that Paul would reserve this systematic treatment for the Roman believers since their church was located in the most influential city in the empire. Thus, Paul understood if the gospel was clearly and thoroughly presented in

Rome, this presentation would universally benefit the empire as well. Fourth, the letter makes outstanding theological contributions to a broad range of other subjects, such as natural revelation, hamartiology, soteriology, eschatology, and Israelology. The book also contributes to one's understanding of how to live the Christian life.

Fifth, it represents the most formal of Paul's letters. It is actually a formal treatise within a personal letter. Sixth, it is the longest of all of Paul's letters. Seventh, it draws extensively from Old Testament citations. At least one half of Paul's Old Testament citations are found within Romans. Seventh, it is one of the few personal letters that Paul wrote to a church that he had no personal contact with. Colossians represents a similar type of letter. Eighth, this letter has had a tremendous influence on prominent Christians throughout church history. Romans significantly influenced Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and Wesley. Wallace observes that Romans "...stands behind virtually all great movements of God in the last 1900 years."⁸

Outline⁹

- I. Salutation (1:1-17)
 - A) Greeting (1:1-7)

⁸ Wallace, "Romans: Introduction, Outline, and Argument," 1.

⁹ This outline has been adapted from Harold Hoehner, "Outline of Romans" (unpublished class notes in NT 205A Exegesis of Romans, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 2001), 1-16. Another outline consulted was that of John Grassmick, "The Epistle to the Romans: An Outline and an Interpretive Translation" (unpublished class notes in NT 205A Exegesis of Romans, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 2001), 1-206.

1. Writer: Paul (1:1)
 - a) Bond-servant of Christ (1:1a)
 - b) Called an apostle (1:1b)
 - c) Set apart for the gospel of God (1:1c)
2. Subject: gospel (1:2-6)
 - a) The gospel was predicted in the Old Testament (1:2)
 - b) The gospel is centered on Christ (1:3-6)
 - i) His birth: Davidic descendant (1:3)
 - ii) His appointment: Son of God as confirmed by the resurrection (1:4a)
 - iii) His name: Jesus Christ (1:4b)
 - iv) His gift: grace and apostleship (1:5-6)
 - (a) Paul's apostolic mission (1:5)
 - (b) The Romans as the recipients of grace (1:6)
3. Recipients: the Romans (1:7)
- B) Paul's desire to visit Rome (1:8-15)
 1. Proof of Paul's desire to visit Rome (1:8-10)
 - a) Paul's thanksgiving for their faith (1:8)
 - b) Paul's prayer for them (1:9)
 - c) Paul's prayer to visit them (1:10)
 2. Reasons why Paul wanted to visit Rome (1:11-15)
 - a) To impart a spiritual gift (1:11-12)
 - b) To obtain some fruit (1:13)
 - c) To fulfill his apostolic obligations (1:14-15)
- C) Theme of the letter: the gospel (1:16-17)
 1. Power of God unto salvation by faith (1:16)
 2. Righteousness of God attained by faith (1:17)
- II. Sin: (1:18-3:20)
 - A) Condemnation of the Gentile (1:18-32)
 1. Revelation of and reason for God's wrath (1:18)
 2. God's self revelation in creation renders mankind inexcusable (1:19-20)
 3. Mankind's rejection of the knowledge of God (1:21-23)
 - a) Resulting in foolish thinking (1:21-22)
 - b) Resulting in idolatry (1:23)
 4. God abandons mankind to passion and its consequences (1:24-32)
 - a) Mankind given over to impurity and idolatry (1:24-25)
 - b) Mankind given over to immorality (1:26-27)
 - c) Mankind given over to depravity (1:28-32)
 - i) Announcement of judgment (1:28)
 - ii) Man's sins enumerated (1:29-31)
 - iii) Man's animosity toward God (1:32)
 - B) Condemnation of the moralist (2:1-16)
 1. God will judge hypocrisy (2:1-5)
 - a) God's judgment will fall on the hypocrite (2:1-3)
 - b) God's judgment may not be immediate granting time for repentance and (2:4)
 - c) God's judgment is sure (2:5)
 2. God will judge according to works (2:6-11)

- a) Statement of the principle (2:6)
 - b) General applications (2:7-8)
 - i) Eternal life to those who do good (2:7)
 - ii) Wrath to those who do unrighteousness (2:8)
 - c) Inversion of applications (2:9-10)
 - i) Wrath to those who do evil (2:9)
 - ii) Glory to those who do good (2:10)
 - d) God judges impartially (2:11)
3. God judges according to obedience to his revelation (2:12-16)
- a) General principle (2:12)
 - i) For those without the Law (2:12a)
 - ii) For those under the Law (2:12b)
 - b) Application of the principle (2:13-16)
 - i) For those under the Law (2:13)
 - ii) For those without the Law (2:14-16)
 - (a) Gentiles' internal Law (2:14)
 - (b) Evidence of the Gentiles' internal Law (2:15)
 - (c) Judgment based upon the Gentiles' internal Law (2:16)
- C) Condemnation of the Jew (2:17-3:8)
1. The Jews revered God's Law but disobeyed it (2:17-24)
- a) Advantages of being a Jew (2:17-20)
 - i) Specific advantages (2:17-18)
 - (a) Called a Jew (2:17a)
 - (b) Reliance upon Law (2:17b)
 - (c) Boasted in God (2:17c)
 - (d) Knew God's will (2:18a)
 - (e) Approved of what was essential (2:18b)
 - (f) Instructed in God's Law (2:18c)
 - ii) Presumed advantages (2:19-20b)
 - (a) Guide for the blind (2:19a)
 - (b) Light for those in darkness and (2:19b)
 - (c) Corrector of the foolish (2:20a)
 - (d) Teacher of the immature (2:20b)
 - iii) The Jews had the Law (2:20c)
 - b) Hypocrisy of the Jews (2:21-24)
 - i) Hypocrisy (2:21-22)
 - (a) Teach others but not yourself (2:21a)
 - (b) "Do not steal" but you do (2:21b)
 - (c) "Do not commit adultery" but you do (2:22a)
 - (d) Detest idols yet rob temples (2:22b)
 - ii) Result (2:23-24)
 - (a) Dishonor to God (2:23)
 - (b) Gentiles blaspheme (2:24)
2. The Jews revered circumcision yet disobeyed God (2:25-29)
- a) Circumcision only profits Law keepers (2:25)
 - b) God looks at uncircumcised Law keepers as circumcised (2:26)

- c) Uncircumcised Law keepers condemn sinning Jews (2:27)
- d) The true Jew is one inwardly rather than outwardly (2:28-29)
- 3. Paul responds to objections (3:1-8)
 - a) First objection (3:1-2)
 - i) Question: what advantage is there to being a Jew? (3:1)
 - ii) Answer: the Jews have God's Law (3:2)
 - b) Second objection (3:3-4)
 - i) Question: does Jewish unbelief nullify God's faithfulness? (3:3)
 - ii) Answer: God is faithful to His promises (3:4)
 - c) Third objection to (3:5-8)
 - i) Question: if Jewish sin enhances God's glory then why should God condemn them? (3:5)
 - ii) Answer: that would prevent God from condemning sin in the world (3:6)
 - iii) Answer: Paul should be praised rather than condemned for the allegation that he taught license (3:7-8)
- D) Condemnation of the world (3:9-20)
 - 1. The charge: all are under sin (3:9)
 - 2. The proof: the Old Testament confirms that all are under sin (3:10-18)
 - a) All are unrighteous (3:10-12)
 - b) Sins of speech (3:13-14)
 - c) Sins of action (3:15-17)
 - d) Source of sin: no fear of God (3:18)
 - 3. The application: the Jews are guilty and therefore the entire world is guilty and accountable to God (3:19-20)
- III. Salvation (3:21-5:21)
 - A) Justification explained (3:21-31)
 - 1. Righteousness manifested (3:21-23)
 - a) Kind of righteousness: apart from the Law (3:21a)
 - b) History of righteousness: spoken of by the Law and the prophets (3:21b)
 - c) Means of righteousness: by faith alone (3:22a)
 - d) Extent of righteousness: to all who believe (3:22b-23)
 - 2. Provision of righteousness (3:24-26)
 - a) Justification (3:24a)
 - b) Redemption (3:24b)
 - c) Propitiation (3:25a)
 - d) Purpose: vindication of God's righteousness (3:25b-26)
 - i) Past forbearance of God (3:25b)
 - ii) God as both just and justifier (3:26)
 - 3. Results of righteousness (3:27-31)
 - a) Excludes human boasting (3:27-28)
 - b) Eliminates Jew-Gentile distinctions (3:29-30)
 - c) Upholds the Law (3:31)
 - B) Justification illustrated (4:1-25)
 - 1. Introduction (4:1-3)
 - a) Introductory question (4:1)
 - b) Logical inference of boasting if Abraham was justified by works (4:2)

- c) Key Old Testament text (4:3)
- 2. Exposition of Genesis 15:6 (4:4-25)
 - a) How Abraham was not justified (4:4-16)
 - i) Not by works (4:4-8)
 - (a) Proof from logic (4:4-5)
 - (b) Proof from the Old Testament (4:6-8)
 - ii) Not by circumcision (4:9-12)
 - (a) Because it came about after Abraham's justification (4:9-10)
 - (b) Because of its intention as a mere sign (4:11a)
 - (c) Conclusion: Abraham is the father of the believing (4:11b-12)
 - 1. Father of believing uncircumcised (4:11b)
 - 2. Father of believing circumcised (4:12)
 - iii) Not by the Law (4:13-16)
 - (a) Inheritance of promise acquired by faith (4:13)
 - (b) Inheritance acquired by Law nullifies faith and promise (4:14)
 - (c) Inheritance by Law forces the Law into an unintended purpose (4:15)
 - (d) Inheritance by faith makes Abraham the father of all believers (4:16)
 - b) How Abraham was justified (4:17-22)
 - i) God as object of Abraham's faith (4:17)
 - ii) Obstacles to Abraham's faith overcome (4:18-21)
 - (a) Abraham believed despite perceived impossibilities (4:18-19)
 - (b) Abraham believed in God's omnipotence (4:20-21)
 - iii) Outcome of Abraham's faith: justification (4:22)
 - c) Application of justification to all believers (4:23-25)
- C) Benefits of justification (5:1-11)
 - 1. Peace (5:1)
 - 2. Hope (5:2)
 - 3. Benefits strengthened through trials (5:3-5)
 - 4. Christ's atonement expresses His love (5:6-8)
 - 5. Believers will be saved from God's future wrath (5:9)
 - 6. Reconciliation (5:10-11)
- D) Justification is universally applicable because of the act of Christ as humanity's representative head (5:12-21)
 - 1. Adam's sin resulted in sin and death to all (5:12)
 - 2. Adam's sin explains the existence of sin and death in the world prior to the Law (5:13-14)
 - 3. The effects of Adam's sin is surpassed by the effects of Christ's act (5:15-17)
 - 4. The act of the representative head brings consequences upon all under the head (5:18-19)
 - 5. Although the entrance of the Law reveals man's sinfulness, such sin is surpassed by the sufficiency of God's grace (5:20-21)
- IV. Sanctification (6-8)
 - A) Believer's relationship to sin (6)
 - 1. Believers have been set free from sin (6:1-14)
 - a) False inference and emphatic denial (6:1-2a)
 - b) Thesis stated (6:2b)
 - c) Thesis explained: the believer's baptism into Christ (6:3-11)

- d) Thesis applied (6:12-14)
 - i) Believer is not to let sin reign in his body (6:12)
 - ii) Believer is not to be an instrument of sin but God (6:13)
 - iii) Believer is under grace and not Law (6:14)
- 2. Believer is a slave to God's righteousness (6:15-23)
 - a) False inference and emphatic denial (6:15)
 - b) Thesis: people are slaves to the master they habitually obey (6:16)
 - c) Believer's new status (6:17-18)
 - d) Exhortation (6:19-20)
 - e) Enslavement reveals destinies (6:21-23)
 - i) Past (6:21)
 - ii) Present (6:22)
 - iii) Summation (6:23)
- B) The believer's relationship to the Law (7)
 - 1. The believer's freedom from the Law (7:1-6)
 - a) Legal illustration (7:1)
 - b) Marriage illustration (7:2-3)
 - c) Application of marriage to Christ (7:4-6)
 - i) The fact of new marriage (7:4a)
 - ii) Fruit bearing is the purpose of the new marriage (7:4b-6)
 - (a) Statement of purpose: fruit bearing (7:4b)
 - (b) Past fruit (7:5)
 - (c) Present fruit (7:6)
 - 2. Although the Law is holy, sin used it to usher in death (7:7-12)
 - a) Is the Law sin? (7:7a)
 - b) Answer (7:7b-11)
 - i) Emphatic no (7:7b)
 - ii) Purposes of the Law (7:7c-11)
 - (a) Define sin (7:7c)
 - (b) Provoke sin (7:8)
 - (c) Instrument of death and not life (7:9-11)
 - c) Conclusion: the Law is holy (7:12)
 - 3. Although the Law is holy it is powerless to deliver someone from sin (7:13-25)
 - a) Law is spiritual and man is carnal (7:13-25a)
 - i) Contrasts between Law and man (7:13-14)
 - ii) Man's inability to have victory (7:15-20)
 - (a) Man cannot prevent wrong (7:15-17)
 - (b) Man cannot do right (7:18-20)
 - iii) Reality of the conflict within man (7:21-25a)
 - (a) Description of the conflict (7:21-23)
 - (b) Victory over the conflict (7:24-25a)
 - b) Man serves two laws (7:25b)
- C) The believer's relationship to the Spirit (8)
 - 1. Indwelling Spirit has transferred believers from death to life (8:1-11)
 - a) Life in the Spirit freed the believer from condemnation (8:1-4)
 - i) No condemnation for the believer (8:1)

- ii) Spirit set the believer free from sin and death (8:2)
 - iii) God condemned sin through Christ (8:3-4)
 - b) The indwelling ministry of the Spirit will empower believers (8:5-11)
 - i) The Spirit and the flesh pursue mutually exclusive agendas (8:5-8)
 - ii) Description of the empowerment provided by the Spirit (8:9-11)
 - 2. Believers are obligated to the Spirit and not to the flesh (8:12-17)
 - a) Believer is no longer obligated to the flesh but rather to the Spirit (8:12)
 - b) Reason: flesh = death, Spirit = life (8:13)
 - c) Life in the Spirit described (8:14-17)
 - i) Leading indicates sonship (8:14)
 - ii) Sonship indicates childship (8:15-16)
 - iii) Childship indicates heirship (8:17)
 - 3. Believers endure present sufferings in hope of future glory (8:18-30)
 - a) Because future glory exceeds present sufferings (8:18-25)
 - i) Proposition stated (8:18)
 - ii) Proposition proved (8:19-25)
 - (a) From nature (8:19-22)
 - 1. Statement of the expectancy nature (8:19)
 - 2. Reasons for nature's expectancy (8:20-22)
 - a. Creation awaits future freedom (8:20-21)
 - b. Creation experiences present travail (8:22)
 - (b) From the believer's experience of waiting for a redeemed body (the 8:23-25)
 - b) Because of the assistance of the Spirit (8:26-27)
 - i) General help (8:26a)
 - ii) Specific help (8:26b-27)
 - c) Because all things work together for good (8:28-30)
 - i) Proposition stated (8:28)
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- G) Benediction (16:25-27)

Argument

In the introductory section (1:1-17), Paul begins by greeting his readers (1:1-7). This greeting consists of three parts. First, Paul describes himself as the writer (1:1). Paul wants his readers to understand that he is a servant and an apostle of God who has been set apart for the purpose of disseminating the gospel. It would be important for Paul's readers to understand his God-ordained role in order to accept the contents of the letter, which represents the most thorough treatment of the gospel found anywhere in Scripture. Second, Paul briefly describes this gospel that he will be presenting (1:2-6). The gospel is not something that he imaginatively manufactured. Rather, it is part of the unfolding plan of God as revealed in the pages of the Old Testament (1:2). The gospel is also centered on the person and work of Christ. He is the long-awaited Davidic heir (2 Sam 7) and the Son of God as confirmed by His resurrection.¹⁰ Through the gospel of Christ, Paul received his apostolic call to be its disseminator to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). This gospel also allowed the Roman Christians to receive proper standing before God. Third, Paul mentions his readers, who are the Roman believers (1:7). These readers should be the first to hunger for Paul's

¹⁰ The Greek text reveals a sequential order. First Christ was the seed of David and then His Sonship was confirmed through his resurrection. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

exposition of the gospel since they had been personally touched by it. This gospel had transformed them into beloved saints giving them peace and grace before God.

In the introductory section, Paul also describes his desire to visit Rome (1:8-15). Paul wanted to visit the Roman believers because he longed to see how the gospel had affected them. Paul's longing to visit them is evidenced by his thanksgiving for their faith (1:8), his prayer for them (1:9), and his prayer to visit them (1:10). Paul desired to visit the Roman believers in order to further establish them in the faith (1:11-12),¹¹ to see them become even more fruitful in Christ (1:13), and to fulfill his apostolic mission of ministering to the Gentiles (1:14-15).¹² Paul concludes this introductory section by returning to the subject of the gospel that he will be unfolding throughout the letter (1:16-17). Not only does the gospel allow people to experience the complete (past, present, and future) saving power of God (1:16), but it also allows a person to access the righteousness of God through faith (1:17; Hab 2:4). Thus, Paul is not ashamed of the gospel.¹³

However, a person who does not think he needs the gospel will never appreciate its saving power. Just as a person will never submit to chemotherapy if he first does not understand that he has cancer, a person will never submit to the gospel until he first understands his own sinful condition. Thus, in the next section (1:18-3:20), Paul details man's sinful condition in order to help his readers appreciate their need for the gospel. He begins by discussing the Gentiles' guilt before God (1:18-

¹¹ The spiritual gift (1:11) probably has to do with spiritual blessings in general rather than Paul ministering his spiritual gift (s). When Paul discusses spiritual gifts elsewhere he typically enumerates them (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12; Eph 4). Paul does not follow this practice here.

¹² Paul's "indebtedness" (1:14) sprang from his apostolic calling.

¹³ This statement (1:16) represents a figure of speech known as a litotes. It attempts to communicate a point through a negative statement. Thus, Paul is actually saying that he is proud of the gospel. Many argue that the emphasis upon the gospel going to the Jew first is no longer applicable because the Jewish rejection of Christ becomes more permanent in Acts 28:23-29. However, this interpretation seems inconsistent since most would take the identical expression relating to Jewish tribulation (2:9), judgment (Ezek 20; Matt 25), and glory (2:10) as still being in effect for the future.

32). Paul first speaks of God's anger with the Gentiles (1:18a).¹⁴ The reason for such anger is because, God having disclosed Himself through creation (1:19), renders mankind accountable to search for truth (1:20).¹⁵ However, instead of searching for God, man has taken the self-disclosure of God in creation and suppressed it (1:18b). Such suppression has resulted in futile thinking (1:21-22) and an idolatrous worship of the creation over the creator (1:23). Because of this suppression, God has allowed mankind to have its own way. He has turned man over to impurity and idolatry (1:24-25), immorality (1:26-27), and depravity (1:28-32). This depravity has resulted in man's involvement in numerous sins (1:29-31) and is ultimately rooted in man's hatred toward God (1:32). Thus, the Gentile world stands condemned before God.

Unfortunately, not only is the Gentile world condemned before God, but the religious world stands condemned as well (2:1-3:8). The moralist is the first religious person that Paul deals with (2:1-16).¹⁶ The moralist thinks he has right standing before God because he is essentially a "good person." However, the moralist is condemned because of his hypocrisy. While he condemns sinful behavior in others, he practices these same sins. God's judgment will fall on the hypocrite. Although God's judgment may be postponed in the present granting the moralist time for repentance, it will inevitably come to pass (2:1-5). The moralist is also condemned because God will judge on the basis of works (Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12). God's judges impartially. Those who do good will be

¹⁴ God's present anger against the Gentiles is demonstrated through the present tense of the verb "reveals."

¹⁵ "Divine nature" (1:20) refers to what God is like. The addition of the *iota* gives the word this meaning. It is spelled $\kappa\epsilon\iota\omicron\theta\varsigma$. Similarly, the addition of the *iota* in $\omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$ gives the word the meaning "heavenly." Arius attempted to apply this concept to God's nature. This usage is distinct to "divine nature" as used in Colossians 2:9. Because the *iota* is omitted ($\kappa\epsilon\omicron\theta\varsigma$), the word means God Himself. Similarly, the omission of the *iota* in $\omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\varsigma$ gives this word the meaning "heaven." This is the view of God as taught by Athanasius. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

¹⁶ Some believe that the moralist is a Jew. However, this seems unlikely since Paul addresses the Jew directly later on in the chapter (2:17). In addition, Paul is speaking to those who are without the Law (2:12-16). The expression "every man" (2:1) alerts the reader to the fact that Paul has a different category in mind than simply a Jew.

rewarded with eternal life¹⁷ while those who do wrong will be punished. This standard is problematic for the moralist because Paul has already emphasized his sinful hypocrisy (2:6-11). Finally, the moralist is condemned because he will be judged based on revelation. For example, those under the Law will be judged based on their obedience to the Law. Similarly, God has written his Law through conscience on all men. Because men routinely violate their consciences, God will hold them accountable for their infractions of this internal Law (2:12-16). Thus, the moralist stands condemned before God.

The second religious person that the Paul deals with is the Jew (2:17-3:8). The Jew stands condemned before God. Although he reveres God's Law, he disobeys it. The Jews enjoyed many benefits. However, the height of Jewish advantage was their possession of the Law. Yet, the Jew routinely disobeyed the Law. This disobedience resulted in dishonor to God and gave the Gentiles an opportunity to blaspheme God (Rom 2:17-20; Isa 52:5; Ezek 36:20). The Jew also revered circumcision yet disobeyed God. Such disobedience is problematic for the Jew because what God valued was obedience rather than mere physical circumcision (2:25-29).¹⁸ Thus, the Jew also stands condemned before God.

However, such condemnation of the Jew would naturally lead Paul's readers to voice three objections. Paul seeks to rebut these objections (3:1-8). First, if the Jew is condemned, is there any advantage to being a Jew? Paul answers this objection by arguing that the advantages of the Jews are tremendous. The height of Jewish advantage is their possession of God's oracles (3:1-2).¹⁹

¹⁷ This is a reference to the hypothetical standard that the moralist would be held accountable to had Christ never entered the world. This point is equally applicable to the reference to the Jew keeping the Law (2:13).

¹⁸ 2:29 does not speak of Gentiles becoming Jews but rather Jews becoming true Jews. Although circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, the heart of the Jew must be right for the covenant to have any value.

¹⁹ The word translated "oracles" (3:2) is "logia." It probably refers to God's covenant program with the nation.

Second, does Jewish unbelief nullify God's faithfulness to his promises?²⁰ Paul answers this objection by contending that God is faithful (Pss 116:11; 51:4). He has every intent of keeping the promise that he has made to the Jewish nation (3:3-4).²¹ Third, if Jewish sin actually enhances God's glory by giving God an opportunity to forgive, then why does God condemn the Jew for sin (3:5)? Paul answers this objection by noting that if God were unjust in condemning sin in the Jew, then He would also be unjust in condemning sin in the world (3:6).²² Furthermore, by applying this same logic, Paul should be praised for teaching license. Yet, because of the misunderstanding that Paul was teaching license, he was being condemned rather than praised. Thus, Paul's opponents are logically inconsistent (3:7-8).

Not only are the Gentile and religious person condemned before God, but the world as a whole also stands condemned before God (3:9-20). Paul begins this section with the charge that all are under sin (3:9). Paul then furnishes proof from the Old Testament to demonstrate the universality of sin (3:10-18).²³ He assembles a series of imprecatory Psalms²⁴ to demonstrate that all are unrighteous (3:10-12), have committed sins of speech (3:13-14) and action (3:15-17), and lack a

²⁰ 3:4 marks the first of ten appearances of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in Romans (3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11). Whenever this expression is used in the letter, Paul follows a three-fold pattern. First, Paul states a correct premise drawn by Paul's audience. Second, Paul states an incorrect inference his readers have drawn from the premise. Third, Paul offers a response. Here, the right premise is Jewish unbelief. The wrong inference is that Israel has been permanently cut off. Paul's response is that God will be faithful to His promises to Israel.

²¹ Paul will resume this discussion in chapters 9–11.

²² The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 3:6 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that man's unrighteousness gives God an opportunity to demonstrate His righteousness. The incorrect inference is that it is wrong for God to judge evil. Paul's response is that God will judge the world.

²³ Interestingly, Paul's proof comes from Scripture rather than human experience.

²⁴ Pss 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isa 59:7; Ps 36:1. The imprecatory Psalms are aimed at David's enemies. The implication seems to be that sinners are also God's enemies (Rom 5:10).

fear of God (3:18). Thus, the Jews²⁵ as well as the entire world stand guilty and accountable before God (3:19-20).

Now that Paul has demonstrated the universal guilt of mankind (1:18-3:20), his audience will naturally appreciate the cure to this dilemma. This cure is the gospel of Christ (3:21-8:39). Paul first deals with how the gospel is initially received. Thus, Paul first explains justification by faith alone (3:21-5:21). Paul offers an initial explanation of the righteousness of God available by grace through faith (3:21-31). Paul explains that this righteousness through the gospel was foretold in the Old Testament and is available apart from the Law to all who believe (3:21-23).

Paul continues explaining the gospel by using various terms that his readers were familiar with from other realms of life (3:24-26). The first term is justification. It is a legal term. It refers to the declaration of innocence an accused receives when found innocent in a court of law (Deut 25:1). Because Christ's righteousness has been transferred or imputed to the believers when he believes the gospel, the guilty sinner receives a similar declaration of innocence from God.²⁶ Such justification comes by God's grace rather than human merit (3:24a). The second term is redemption. It was a term used on the slave market. It refers to the purchase of a slave. Christ, through His sacrificial death, purchases the sinner from slavery to sin when he believes the gospel (3:24b). The third term is propitiation,²⁷ which means satisfaction. Because Christ bore the wrath of a holy God in the place of the sinner, God's anger against that sinner's sin has been satisfied. Now, through faith alone, a person can be unconditionally accepted before God (3:25a).

²⁵ The mention of the Jews in 3:19 represents an *a fortiori* argument from the lesser to the greater. If the Jews who had God's blessing failed, certainly the world that did not have God's blessings would also fail. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

²⁶ Justification means to declare righteous based on imputation. It does not mean to make righteous. Saying that justification refers to making one righteous leads to a Roman Catholic understanding of soteriology.

²⁷ Paul use of "propitiation" (*ilasthrion*) is a direct reference to the mercy seat in the tabernacle. This same word is only used elsewhere in Hebrews 9:5. There it depicts the mercy seat. The fact that the noun ends in *hrion* also creates a strong connection to the mercy seat since nouns with such an ending typically denote place. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

Christ's work on the cross vindicates God in two ways (3:25b-26). First, although God in the past exercised forbearance in dealing in finality with the sin question, it was not because of any weakness or vacillation on His part. Rather, it was because He knew Christ's future death would pay the sin debt in full (3:25b). Second, Christ' death fully satisfied God's holy wrath against sin thus allowing him to unconditionally accept the sinner. Thus, God can accept the sinner without compromising the holiness of His character (3:26).²⁸ The gospel ushers in three natural repercussions (3:27-31). First, it excludes boasting since it is received as a gift rather than by human merit (3:27-28). Second, it eliminates Jew-Gentile distinctions since both groups are saved the same way, which is by faith alone rather than by the works of the Law (3:29-30). Third, its truth is consistent with the Law rather than contradictory to it since the Law was already given to a redeemed people for purposes of sanctification rather than justification (3:31).²⁹

Paul then proceeds to illustrate the gospel. He strategically selects Abraham because he was the first Jew. If Paul can show that Abraham's justification was by faith alone, then he can show that what he is teaching is nothing new nor radical. Rather, it is consistent with the foundation of God's redemptive program. After asking how Abraham was justified (4:1), Paul notes that if it was by works then Abraham could boast (4:2). Such boasting would obviously be inconsistent with what Paul articulated at the end of the previous chapter (3:27-28). Paul then cites a key Old Testament text (Gen 15:6), which teaches that Abraham was justified by faith alone (4:3).³⁰ Paul then spends the rest of the chapter expounding upon Genesis 15:6.

²⁸ Such a transaction allows God to be both just and justifier.

²⁹ The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 3:31 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that both Jew and Gentile are justified by faith alone. The incorrect inference is that faith nullifies the Law. Paul's response is that the principle of faith is not at cross-purposes with the Law. The Law was given to a redeemed people for purpose of sanctification rather than justification.

³⁰ Exactly what Abraham believed in order to be justified is a matter of debate. Some say that Abraham simply believed God's promise that he would have a son. Others see more Christology in the content of Abraham's faith. They

He first explains how Abraham was not justified (4:4-16). First, Abraham was not justified by works (4:4-8). If works had justified him, God would merely be giving him what He owed him. Yet, this could not be since the gospel involves unmerited favor (4:4-5). In fact, the Old Testament (Ps 32:1)³¹ similarly indicates that David's sins were forgiven apart from works (4:6-8).³² Second, Abraham was not justified based upon circumcision (4:9-12). This is because Abraham was justified before circumcision was instituted (4:9-10; Gen 15; 17). Moreover, circumcision was a mere outward sign of preexisting faith (4:11). Because justification is by faith alone, God is both the Father of the believing circumcised (4:11b) and the believing uncircumcised (4:12). Third, Abraham was not justified by keeping the Law (4:13-16). Abraham was to receive his inheritance by faith rather than adherence to the Law (4:13). In fact, if Abraham were to receive his inheritance by obedience to the Law, it would nullify both faith and the promises (4:14). It would also force the Law to be used for an unintended purpose since the Law was never intended to be an instrument of justification. (4:15). However, because Abraham was justified by faith rather than Law, he serves as a prototype of all who are justified by faith (4:16).³³

Next, Paul explains how Abraham was justified (4:17-22). The object of Abraham's faith was God (4:17). Moreover, he believed God in spite of the seeming impossibility of God's promise that he and Sarah would have a son (Gen 15:5; 17:5) at their advanced age (4:18-19). Abraham was

argue that Abraham had an awareness of previous messianic promises that God had made (Gen 3:15). Thus, Abraham connected these promises with what God promised him in Genesis 15.

³¹ Psalm 32 represents one of David's penitent Psalms.

³² Although Abraham lived under the Old Testament dispensation, he was justified by faith. Thus, Paul's use of Psalm 32 demonstrates that God's method of justification is the same in any age. Interestingly, while Abraham's justification give him something positive (righteousness), David's justification covered something negative (his personal sins). Thus, Paul's point is that the only way to attain righteousness or cover unrighteousness is through justification by faith alone.

³³ Believer's are like Abraham in that both are justified by faith alone (Gal 3:7). Just as believers can imitate God's character in some respects (Matt 5:44-45) believers can imitate Abraham's justification. The fact that the "promise" in Galatians 3:29 is singular indicates that Christians merely imitate Abraham's justification by faith alone. They do not take over the entire Abrahamic Covenant.

more impressed with God's omnipotence than the seeming impossibility of his circumstances (4:20-21). The outcome of Abraham's faith was right standing before God (4:22; Gen 15:6). Paul concludes the chapter by applying the example of Abraham's justification to his audience. If people will place their trust in Christ, just as Abraham trusted in God's ability to keep His promises, then they too will be justified just as Abraham was justified (4:23-25).³⁴

Paul next explains six benefits³⁵ that the believer enjoys because of his justification (5:1-11). First, the believer has peace with God (5:1). Second, the believer has hope. His justification guarantees his future participation in God's program (5:2). Third, the spiritual blessings that God has bestowed upon the justified believer are not eradicated because of trials. Rather, these blessings are enhanced through trials (5:3-5). Fourth, the atonement gives the believer a tangible manifestation of Christ's love (5:6-8). Fifth, because Christ has absorbed the wrath of God in the place of the believer, those justified are exempted from all future divine wrath (5:9). Sixth, the justified believer has been reconciled to God (5:10-11).³⁶

In the final section on justification (5:12-21), Paul explains how justification overcomes the effects of the fall.³⁷ Adam's sin introduced sin and death to all of humanity (5:12).³⁸ Such an

³⁴ The repetition of "because of" in 4:25 indicates that our sins drove Christ to the cross and our justification drove Him out of the tomb. Both events are retrospective. Otherwise, Christ's work on the cross would never have been completed. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

³⁵ These benefits all seem to relate in some way to the security of the believer.

³⁶ Because *katallassw* is used rather than *diatassomai* in 5:10, the verse is dealing with one-way reconciliation rather than two-way reconciliation. The reference to "saved by His life" (5:10) probably refers to being saved from God's wrath rather than Christ's present session. This seems to be the better interpretation in light of the immediate context (5:9). Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

³⁷ These verses might also be answering the question, "how can one man save all of humanity?" The answer is if one man can make the whole race guilty, then one man can save humanity. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

³⁸ Federal headship is the view that Adam as our representative plunged humanity into sin. We must suffer from the consequences of his act since he was our representative head. However, this view opens the door to someone saying Adam acted differently than we would have. A better view is seminal headship, which teaches that all sinned in

explanation of the origin of sin and death makes it understandable why they both reigned in the world even before the giving of the Law (5:13-14).³⁹ However, the effects of Adam's act of disobedience have been surpassed by the effects of Christ's act of obedience (5:15-17).⁴⁰ Both Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience had universal ramifications because the act of the representative head brings consequences upon all under that head (5:18-19). Although the Law reveals man's sinfulness, such sin is surpassed by the sufficiency of Christ's obedience (5:20-21).⁴¹

Paul continues discussing the gospel by noting the power that it has in assisting believers in overcoming sin in their daily lives. Thus, Paul now shifts the focus away from the gospel's power to justify (3:21-5:21) and toward its power to practically sanctify (6-8). On this subject of practical sanctification, Paul first deals with the believer's relationship to sin (6). Paul emphatically denies that believers should continue to live in sin so that God's grace may be magnified as He continues to forgive them (6:1-2a).⁴² Paul explains that the believer has died to sin (6:2b). Before a person's conversion, he is obligated to yield to his sin nature. However, the believer is no longer similarly enslaved. He has the newfound capacity to tell his sin nature "no." This is because of the believer's co-crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection with Christ (6:3-11).⁴³ Because of this newfound

Adam. At any rate, Romans 5:12 refutes the idea the people are sinners because they sinned. On the contrary, people sin because they are sinners.

³⁹ The Law had the function of exposing sin. Seminal headship explains infant mortality. If infants died before the Law was present, then they must have sinned in Adam. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

⁴⁰ Christ's life should not be viewed as a mere parallel of Adam's life. What Christ did exceeded what Adam did.

⁴¹ The *ina* clause with the subjunctives indicates a purpose clause in verse 20. Thus, the verse means that the Law was added for the purpose of increasing sin, and for the purpose of increasing grace.

⁴² The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (*mh genoito*) in 6:2 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that man's unrighteousness causes God's grace to overflow (5:20). The incorrect inference is that man should continue to sin to give God an opportunity to demonstrate His grace. Paul's response is that believers have died to sin.

⁴³ The verb translated "reckon" in verse 11 is *logizomai*. It is an accounting term meaning to put in the book exactly as true. In other words, believers are to think about themselves in the same way Paul has described them in

position,⁴⁴ Paul exhorts the believer not to allow sin to reign in his mortal body (6:12), not to allow his body to be an instrument of sin but rather an instrument of God (6:13),⁴⁵ and not to allow sin to have mastery over him because he is under grace rather than Law (6:14).

Rather than continuing to live in sin, the believer should instead become a slave to God's righteousness (6:15-23). Paul emphatically denies that believers are to continue in sin because they are now under grace (6:15).⁴⁶ He explains that people become slaves to whomever they habitually obey, whether to sin or righteousness (6:16). However, because of the believer's new identification with Christ, he has been freed from enslavement to sin and re-enslaved to righteousness (6:17-18). Because of this new position, Paul exhorts believers to no longer use their bodily instruments for sinful purposes but rather to enslave them to righteousness (6:19-20). Although the believer's past enslavement to sin resulted in shame and death (6:21), the believer's present enslavement to righteousness results in sanctification and an enhanced spiritual life (6:22-23).⁴⁷

Paul next discusses the believer's relationship to the Law (7). Paul explains that the believer has been emancipated from the Law (7:1-6). By way of illustration, the legal system has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives. However, such jurisdiction lapses the moment a person dies. Similarly, a woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. However, upon his death she is free

Romans 6. The fact that this verb is a present imperative implies that believers are to continually think this way about themselves.

⁴⁴ This newfound position is only understandable if several key terms and expressions found in the first part of chapter 6 are defined and described. "Old man" (6:6) refers to the unregenerate self. "Body of sin" (6:6) refers to sin using the body as its instrument. "We shall also live with Him" (6:8) refers to the present enjoyment of life since this verse appears in a context that deals with the present. "Once for all" (6:10) describes Christ' death as a single event thereby defeating the Roman Catholic notion of transubstantiation.

⁴⁵ The negative command in 6:13 is the inverse of the positive exhortation that Paul will mention in 12:1.

⁴⁶ While the present tense in 6:1 indicates that the question involves continual sin, the use of the aorist in 6:15 indicates that the question involves occasional sin. The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 6:15 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that believer's are free from the Law and under grace. The incorrect inference is that believers can continue to sin. Paul's response is that believer's should become slaves of righteousness.

⁴⁷ Verse 23 probably has to do with the quality of the believer's spiritual life since it is found in the sanctification section of the letter.

to remarry (7:2-3). In the same way, the believer's death to sin means that he is no longer under bondage to the Law (7:4a). Now, he is in a new relationship with God, which allows him to bear fruit unto God and serve Him in the newness of the Spirit (7:4b-6). However, Paul wants to make clear that this discussion in no way implies that the Law is sinful (7:7-12).⁴⁸ This is a notion that Paul emphatically denies (7:7a-7b).⁴⁹ It is true that the purpose of the Law is to provoke (7:7c) and define (7:8) sin thus becoming an instrument of death and not life (7:9-11).⁵⁰ However, the Law in and of itself is holy (7:12).⁵¹

Although the Law is holy, it lacks the ability to deliver someone from the power of sin (7:13-25).⁵² Sin rather than the Law causes death (7:13).⁵³ This is because the Law is spiritual and man is carnal (7:14). Man through his own strength can never adhere to the Law (7:15-20). Because of his sin nature, he cannot prevent himself from doing wrong (7:15-17). Nor can he do the good that he wants to do (7:18-20). An internal conflict rages within him between a desire to do right and

⁴⁸ Because Paul had previously explained that they had died to sin (6:2) and the Law (7:4), perhaps his readers speculated that the Law is sinful

⁴⁹ The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 7:7 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that the Law stimulates sin. The incorrect inference is that the Law is evil. Paul's response is that the Law is divine and sin is the culprit.

⁵⁰ There are four interpretations of the meaning of verse 9. Some believe it refers to Adam in the garden. However, if this is true what is the meaning of sin's revival? Others believe it refers to Paul as a child. Still others believe it refers to Paul as a Pharisee. According to these views, Paul was shown his inadequacy as a sinner after his exposure to the Law. A final view sees Paul living under grace as a believer until he tries to keep the Law under his own power. This fourth view is preferable since verse 9 is in the sanctification section of the epistle. In what sense does the Law result in life (7:10)? The Law gave prosperity and life in the land to Israel as she obeyed the Mosaic Covenant (Deut 4:1; 5:33; 8:1; 16:20; 30:16, 19).

⁵¹ This type of understanding of the Law would come from an Old Testament verse, such as Psalm 19:7-8.

⁵² Some have seen this section organized into three parts. First, a statement is made (7:14, 18a, 21). Second, proof for each statement is given (7:15-16, 18b-19, 22-23). Third, a conclusion is given (7:17, 20, 24). All three conclusions indicate that the sin principle within man rather than the Law is the culprit.

⁵³ The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 7:13 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that the Law reveals sin. The incorrect inference is that the Law is bad. Paul's response is that the Law cannot sanctify.

constant failure due to his sin nature.⁵⁴ This conflict will rage within him as long as he seeks to keep the requirements of the Law through his own resources (7:21-23, 25b).⁵⁵ Although the Law lacks the power to deliver from sin, there is help available through a source that transcends the Law. This source is Christ (7:24-25a). He assists the believer through the indwelling ministry of the Spirit.

This thought forms a natural transition into the next section where Paul deals with the believer’s relationship to the Holy Spirit (8). Although the Law lacks the power to assist the believer in living the sanctified life, such empowerment can come from the indwelling Spirit. The Spirit has transferred the believer from death to life (8:1-11). Such transference (8:2) means the believer is no longer under condemnation (8:1).⁵⁶ The Spirit is able to make this transfer because Christ’s death satisfied the righteous demands of the Law (8:3-4). Because the Spirit and the flesh pursue mutually

⁵⁴ The conflict described here seems to be different from the conflict described in Galatians 5. Note the following chart taken from Constable, “Notes on Romans,” 83.

	<u>Romans 7</u>	<u>Galatians 5</u>
Opponent of the sin nature	Whole Christian person	Holy Spirit
Condition of the believer	Under Law	Under grace
Result of the conflict	Inevitable defeat	Defeat or victory
Nature of the conflict	Abnormal Christian experience	Normal Christian experience

⁵⁵ Is the man described in Romans 7 a believer or an unbeliever? Some would say an unbeliever because of the bondage he is under, 7:14 describes the believer in a different way than 6:3, Romans 8:1 marks the transition between the believer and unbeliever, and there is no reference to the Holy Spirit in chapter 7. However, these arguments are inadequate. Believers can be in bondage, chapter 7 deals with the believer’s relationship to the Law and chapter 6 deals with the believer’s relationship to sin, 8:1 marks the transition between the believer acting independently of the Spirit and the believer depending upon the Spirit, and there would be no need to mention the Spirit in chapter 7 since it deals with the believer’s relationship to the Law. It seems better to argue that the man in view in Romans 7 is a believer for the following reasons: 7:7-13 are in the past tense while 7:14-25 are in the present tense, the description is of Paul as an unsaved man in Romans 7 contradicts what he said about himself in Philippians 3:6, the sanctification section of the letter is in chapters 6–8, the description in chapter 7 is consistent with the experience of most believers, 7:25 indicates that the conflict continues even after deliverance has been given by Christ, and Paul indicates that he delights in God’s law in chapter 7 yet Romans 3:10-12 indicates that this is impossible for an unbeliever. Despite the adequacy of these arguments, many have attempted to answer them. For example, the transition in verb tenses could simply be stylistic, Philippians 3:6 is describing the believer’s standing before others while Romans 7 is describing the believer’s relationship to God, Romans 6:6-8 describes the believer’s preconversion experience, the conflict is only perceived since the believer is dead to sin, Romans 7:25 is merely a summary statement, and an unbelieving Pharisee can delight in God’s Law. Constable, “Notes on Romans,” 82-83.

⁵⁶ Although the Law condemns, the believer has a new relationship to the law.

exclusive agendas (8:5-8), the Spirit within the believer will empower him to live the spirit filled life (8:9-11).

Because of these resources resident within the believer, he is no longer obligated to the flesh. His obligation now is to the Spirit (8:12-18). After stating this basic principle (8:12), Paul explains that those who live according to the flesh experience death⁵⁷ while those who live according to the Spirit experience life (8:13). Paul then proceeds to describe life in the Spirit (8:14-17). Being led by the Spirit indicates that a person is a son of God (8:14). Sonship in turn is indicative of being a child of God (8:15-16). Being a child of God in turn is indicative of being an heir of God (8:17).⁵⁸

The fact believers have such an inheritance allows them to endure hardships in this life (8:18-30). This is because of their realization that future glory exceeds present sufferings (8:18-25). This principle (8:18) can be proved from nature. Creation endures the consequences of the Fall because it lives with the expectancy of its future redemption (8:19-22). This principle also finds illustration in the lives of believers who endure the physical consequences of the Fall because of their expectation of receiving a redeemed body (8:23-25). Believers are also able to endure suffering because of the assistance of the Spirit. The Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses and intercedes for them as well (8:26-27). Believers are also able to endure suffering because of the realization that God uses all circumstances to bring to pass the various phases of their salvation (8:28-30).⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Some sort of temporal death must be in view since the death is spoken of here is addressed to believers in the sanctification section of the letter. “You” is in the second person plural.

⁵⁸ Because 8:17 contains first class conditions, it is better to translate them with the word “since” rather than “if.”

⁵⁹ “Foreknow” (*proginwskw*) in 8:29 means to elect, to determine beforehand, or to look upon with loving interest ahead of time. This is how the word is normally used (Acts 2:23; Rom 11:2; 1 Pet 1:2, 20). God is the subject in each of these occurrences just as God is the subject in 8:29. In only two instances does the verb mean to know beforehand (Acts 26:5; 2 Pet 3:17). However, God is not the subject in these latter two uses.

Because God will bring to pass all phases of the believer's salvation, the Christian is secure in Christ (8:31-39). Such security is a reality for the believer because of his relationship to the Father (8:31-33). The Father protects (8:31), provides for (8:32),⁶⁰ and justifies (8:33) the believer. Such security is also evident through the believer's relationship to adversity. Tribulation can never separate the believer from Christ. Such separation is impossible even if the tribulation takes the form of charges (8:34), trials (8:35-37; Ps 44:22),⁶¹ and other miscellaneous categories (8:38-39).

These promises of security would naturally lead Paul's audience to wonder if God would keep His promises to His covenanted nation Israel (Gen 15). At the time Paul wrote, Israel was in unbelief. She had rejected her own messiah. Thus, it seemed as if God had broken His promises to Israel. Perhaps Paul's audience began to reason that if God can break his promises to Israel, then He could also break His promises of security to the believer. Paul rebuts this objection by explaining that God has not broken his promises to Israel in spite of her present unbelief. In fact, God has a grand design in mind by which He will vindicate every promise He has made to His chosen nation. Paul outlines this plan in Romans 9–11.⁶² Paul understands that if his readers can better grasp God's purpose to keep His promises to Israel, then they will more fully trust His promises to them in the area of security.

In Romans 9:1-29, Paul explains that Israel in the past was elected. After expressing grief over Israel's unbelieving condition (9:1-2), Paul proves his grief by wishing that he would be cut off from Christ if that would mean that Israel would be brought to faith (9:3). The reason for Paul's sorrow had to do with Israel's numerous privileges afforded to her by her status as God's elect nation (9:4-5). However, Paul goes on to argue that Israel's present unbelief is not inconsistent with

⁶⁰ The Father's provision for the believer is seen in His provision of the Son (8:32a) and in His provision of all things (8:32b) for the believer.

⁶¹ The citation from Psalm 44:22 demonstrates that believers of every age have always suffered.

⁶² Thus, in this section, Paul takes up the discussion he left behind in 3:3-4.

God's promises. God has always worked through individuals within the nation. In other words, the same distinction that God made within Old Testament national Israel between the elect and non elect Jews is the same distinction that God was making in Paul's day (9:6-13). Thus, the mere existence of some unbelieving Jews in Paul's day was not inconsistent with God's past pattern (9:6). Paul offers two pieces of Old Testament proof to demonstrate that what was happening in his own day was consistent with God's past pattern. First, Paul cites God's choice of Isaac over Ishmael (9:7-9; Gen 21:12; 18:10). Second, Paul cites God's choice of Jacob over Esau (9:10-13; Gen 25:23; Mal 1:2).⁶³

The notion of God presently rejecting unbelieving Israel would naturally lead to two objections. Paul seeks to rebut these (9:15-29). The first objection (9:15-18) is that God is unrighteous (9:14a). After emphatically denying this objection (9:14b),⁶⁴ Paul offers proof of God's mercy (9:15-18). God confers mercy on whom He wills (9:15; Exod 33:19). Paul then uses the example of God's hardening of Pharaoh (Exod 9:16) to show that He is free to elect those who will play both positive and negative roles in the accomplishment of His purposes (9:16-18).⁶⁵

The response to the first objection would logically lead to the content of the second objection (9:19-29). If God elects, is God just in holding the non-elect man morally responsible (9:19)? Paul responds by noting that God's status as the creator gives him the right to elect (9:20-21). After rebuking the creation for asking such an irreverent question (9:20), Paul exhorts the

⁶³ In the first selection, two different children from two different women were involved. In the second selection, two different children from the same woman were involved since the children were twins. Does 9:13 indicate that God hated Esau? "Rejected" is probably a better translation since the context of Malachi 1:2 indicates that God gave Israel promises that he did not give to Edom.

⁶⁴ The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 9:14 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that God elected Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau. The incorrect inference is that God is unfair. Paul's response is that God is merciful.

⁶⁵ It seems that in some cases God exercises the prerogative of double predestination, which involves electing some to damnation. Many contend that God hardened Pharaoh in response to his own self-hardening. However, Exodus 4:21 indicates that God planned to harden Pharaoh even before he hardened his own heart. God as the potter has the right to fashion some vessels for noble purposes and others for ignoble purposes (9:21).

creation to humbly submit to the will of the creator. Paul does this through the illustration of the clay and the potter (9:21). Then Paul responds to the objection by noting that God elects in order to demonstrate His mercy (9:22-23). Such mercy can be seen in the fact that God in the past has patiently endured the non-elect vessels (9:22) as well as the elect ones (9:23). In fact, God will ultimately extend mercy to all believers (9:24). Such mercy will be extended to both Gentile (9:25-26; Hos 2:23; 1:10)⁶⁶ and Jew (9:27-29; Isa 10:22-24; 1:9).

Paul then moves into a discussion of Israel's present rejection (9:30-10:21). In this section, Paul shows that Israel's present state of unbelief is due to her own fault rather than due to God's fault. Thus, God cannot be blamed for Israel's unbelief. He cites three reasons for Israel's unbelief. First, Israel fell in to unbelief because she pursued righteousness by Law rather than by faith (9:30-10:4). While the Gentiles arrived at righteousness by faith, Israel failed to achieve such righteousness because she pursued it by Law rather than faith (9:30-31). Because she sought to be justified by works rather than faith, she stumbled over Christ (9:32-33; Isa 28:16; 8:14). Paul's desire is for Israel to come to faith (10:1). However, she lives in spiritual ignorance (10:2) because she has sought righteousness by works (10:3) rather than through faith in Christ (10:4).⁶⁷

Second, Israel ignored God's teaching that righteousness is by faith alone rather than through works (10:5-13). The Old Testament reveals the futility of righteousness by keeping the Law (10:5; Lev 18:5). However, God's message of faith righteousness was accessible to Israel (10:6-8). It was near Israel through the incarnation of Christ just as God's prescription for prosperity in the land was also accessible to the nation (Deut 30:11-14).⁶⁸ Such righteousness is only realizable

⁶⁶ Although the Hosea citation involves Israel, the point of correspondence in the analogy would be that God chose a remnant from the nation just as he chose a remnant from among the Gentiles.

⁶⁷ The notion of Christ being the "end of the Law" (10:4) means that righteousness is found in Christ rather than the Law.

⁶⁸ The point of correspondence in this analogy is the nearness of the message (Rom 10:8; Deut 30:14).

through faith (10:9-10).⁶⁹ Faith righteousness is available to all (10:11, 13; Isa 28:16; Joel 2:32). Since righteousness comes by faith rather than the Law, it is the common source of justification for both Jew and Greek (10:12).

Third, Israel refused numerous opportunities to accept God's righteousness by faith (10:14-21). After enumerating the five steps necessary for a person to be given the opportunity to believe the gospel (10:14-15), Paul indicates that Israel refused to believe in spite of the fact that these steps were followed in presenting her with the gospel (10:16-17; Isa 53:1).⁷⁰ This point would naturally lead to two objections regarding whether Israel has had a fair opportunity to hear the gospel. Paul seeks to rebut these objections (10:18-21). The first objection is that Israel never heard the gospel (10:18a). Paul responds by noting that Israel did hear because the message of the gospel went out everywhere (10:18a; Ps 19:4).⁷¹ The second objection is that Israel never understood the gospel (10:19a). Paul responds that God's message was understandable because the Gentiles received it (10:19b-20; Deut 32:21; Isa 65:1). In sum, the problem of Israel's unbelief cannot be blamed upon God. Rather, her unbelief has to do with the hardness of her own heart (10:21; Isa 65:2).

Thus far, Paul has shown that God's character as a covenant keeper should not be called into question. Israel's present unbelief does not mean that God has broken His promises to the nation. God has always worked through an elect remnant within the nation (9:1-29). In addition, Israel's unbelief has to do with her own stubbornness rather than God's unfairness (9:30-10:21). Paul then moves into Romans 11 where he will complete his argument by contending that God will keep all promises

⁶⁹ The confession is made to God (Phil 2:11). However, this is not a two-step justification process of belief and confession. The summary statement in verse 11 places the emphasis upon belief. Confession is probably mentioned in 10:9-10 because what naturally comes out of a person's mouth is evidence of what is already taking place within his heart (Matt 12:24-35; Jas 3:11-12).

⁷⁰ Isaiah 53:1 records the future lament of Israel for her previous unbelief.

⁷¹ Although Psalm 19:4 is a general revelation text, Paul applies it to the fact that Israel had ample access to the gospel.

that He has made to Israel.⁷² Paul first explains that Israel's rejection is neither total nor final (11:1-10).⁷³ The existence of a remnant of believing Jews demonstrates that God has not taken His hand off Israel. Paul's conversion shows the existence of such a remnant (11:1). A similar remnant existed in Elijah's day (11:2-4; 1 Kings 19:10, 14, 18). At the present time, a similar remnant exists while the rest of the nation has been hardened (11:5-10; Deut 29:4; Isa 29:10; Ps 69:22-23).⁷⁴

However, God used the hardening of the nation to bless the Gentiles (11:11-15).⁷⁵ Because of the Jewish rejection of their messiah, Christ died on a cross and paid the penalty for the sins of the world. Thus, the gospel came to the Gentiles because of this Jewish rejection (11:11-12). Therefore, Paul's responsibility was to export the gospel to the Gentiles. Yet, Paul understood that his ministry had a Jewish purpose. Gentile reception of the gospel through his ministry was provoking God's special nation to jealousy. This was causing her to desire her place of spiritual privilege back (11:13-14). Paul explains that if Israel's rejection of Christ blessed the Gentiles, her acceptance of Christ will bring even further blessings to the Gentiles. These blessings will be realized through the establishment of the millennial kingdom (11:15).

In fact, Israel's covenants guarantee her future restoration (11:16-24). By way of illustration, an entire lump of dough is holy if the initial piece is holy. In addition, the entire tree is holy if the roots are holy. Similarly, the entire nation of Israel is holy because of her foundational covenants

⁷² The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 11:1 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that Israel rejected her messiah. The incorrect inference is that God has totally rejected Israel. Paul's response is that Israel's rejection is not total.

⁷³ The lack of totality of Israel's hardening is dealt with in Romans 11:1-10. The lack of finality of Israel's hardening is taken up in verse 11.

⁷⁴ The totality of these verses indicates that Israel's hardening existed from one generation to the next.

⁷⁵ The existence of the phrase "may it never be" (mh genoito) in 11:11 alerts the reader to the typical Pauline threefold pattern. The correct premise is that the majority within Israel had been hardened. The incorrect inference is that Israel's hardening is final. Paul's response is that Israel's hardening is not final.

(11:16). Paul uses the illustration of the olive tree to teach the same truth (11:17-24).⁷⁶ He first uses this illustration to warn the Gentiles against pride (11:17-22). Just because Gentile believers, as represented by the wild branches, have been grafted into the olive tree (11:17) does not mean that the Gentiles should become arrogant (11:18). They should not suffer from the misconception that Israel has been permanently set aside (11:19). If God can remove Israel from the place of blessing, He can do the same to the Gentiles (11:20-22).⁷⁷ Paul also uses the illustration of the olive tree to hint at Israel's restoration (11:23-24). If Israel does not continue in unbelief (11:23a), God will bring her back to the place of blessing (11:23b). If God can graft unnatural branches into the tree, how much easier will it be for God to re graft the natural branches back into their own tree (11:24)?

Such a re-grafting is what God has in mind (11:25-32). Israel's hardening is partial and will only last until He has completed His purposes among the Gentiles. Once the last elect Gentile has been reached with the gospel (11:25),⁷⁸ then God will restore Israel (11:26a) by fulfilling her covenants (11:26b-27).⁷⁹ Thus, God promises to Israel's patriarchs guarantees her future restoration even in spite of her present unbelief (11:28-29). In sum, God's program involves an extension of mercy to Gentiles (11:30), Jews (11:31), and all who are disobedient (11:32). The gravity of this plan causes Paul to explode into a doxological hymn. There he highlights God's wisdom, knowledge, and wealth (11:33-36; Isa 40:13; Job 35:7; 41:11).⁸⁰ In conclusion, Paul has shown that

⁷⁶ In this illustration, the root of the tree represents the Jewish patriarchs. The natural branches are the Jews. The unnatural branches are the Gentile believers. Participation in the root refers to participating in the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant.

⁷⁷ These verses cannot be talking about loss of salvation since Paul affirmed security in Romans 8:18-39. Rather, they are dealing with Jews and Gentiles collectively rather than individual salvation.

⁷⁸ The full number of Gentiles refers to those that are destined to be reached with the gospel in the church age (Acts 15:14).

⁷⁹ The Davidic Covenant seems to be referred to in 11:26b through the reference to the messianic deliverer (Isa 59:20). The Abrahamic Covenant seems to be referred to in 11:27a (Isa 59:21; Gen 17:4). The New Covenant seems to be referred to in 11:27b (Jer 31:34).

⁸⁰ How could God take a tragedy, use it for the Gentiles' blessing, and still fulfill His purposes for Israel? Because of God's capacity to turn such tragedy into triumph, Paul explodes into a doxology.

the Romans can trust the promises that God has made to them (8:18-39) because God plans to keep His covenants with Israel. In this section (9–11), Paul has vindicated God’s character as a promise keeping God.

“Therefore” (12:1) alerts the reader to the fact that Paul has transitioned out of the doctrinal section of the letter (1:18-11:36) and into its practical section (12–16). In this section, Paul urges his readers to take the doctrinal truths that he has unfolded in the previous section and apply them to daily life.⁸¹ Paul first explains how the gospel manifests itself in the lives of believers through service (12:1-15:13). Paul begins by dealing with service within the church (12:1-13). First, Paul exhorts believers to offer themselves as living sacrifices to God (12:1-2). Such a sacrificial lifestyle will be evident in the believer’s life when he no longer imitates the pattern of the world system (12:2a) but rather has his mind renewed by God’s value system (12:2b).⁸² Second, Paul exhorts believers to appraise themselves in humility and discover how God has gifted each of them (12:3). Such gifts are necessary for the proper functioning of the church (12:4-5). Paul then goes on to enumerate some of the gifts of the Spirit that he desires his audience to employ (12:3-8). Third, Paul exhorts believers to demonstrate genuine love toward one another (12:9-13).⁸³

Paul then explains how the gospel is to affect the believer’s life as he engages society (12:14-13:14). Believers have a duty to love all men (12:14-21). They are to bless their persecutors (12:14), empathize with all (12:15), associate with the lowly (12:16), promote grace and peace (12:17-18), and conquer evil by doing good rather than taking revenge (12:19-21; Prov 20:22;

⁸¹ “Mercies of God” (12:1) refers to the doctrinal content of the first eleven chapters.

⁸² The “will of God” (12:2) always refers to God’s general will for all believers.

⁸³ The heading of this paragraph is 12:9a. The rest of the paragraph (12:9b-13) demonstrates love in action through a series of ten imperatival present participles.

24:29).⁸⁴ Believers also owe a duty to the state (13:1-7). They must submit to the state (13:1-2) because it has the God ordained function of praising those who do good and punishing evil doers (13:3-4). Thus, the believer owes the state submission, support, and honor (13:5-7). The believer also owes his neighbor a duty of love (13:8-10).⁸⁵ As he fulfills this obligation, he will automatically obey the relational elements of the Law (Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17; Lev 19:18). Finally, the believer is to exhibit godly conduct (13:11-14). He is to exhibit moral alertness through his recognition that the final phase of his salvation (glorification) is imminent (13:11-12b). Living with this expectancy should cause the believer to change his “spiritual clothing” (13:12c) as well as behave properly (13:13-14).

Believers can also serve one another by exhibiting proper deference to the weaker brother (14:1-15:13).⁸⁶ If one believer has certain convictions based upon weak knowledge,⁸⁷ then the brother with stronger knowledge should not judge him (14:1-12). Paul gives three reasons for postponing such judgment. First, God has accepted both (14:1-5). God fully accepts those who want to adhere to food and calendar laws as well as those who do not. Thus, each servant is responsible to his own master. Second, both belong to God (14:6-9). Both the weaker and stronger brother are thankful to God and responsible to live and die for Him. Third, both will be judged by God (14:10-12). Judgment amongst the brethren is premature because both will be judged by God (Isa 45:23).

⁸⁴ Heaping burning coals on a person’s head may refer to shaming an enemy though love. Others believe it refers to God’s judgment.

⁸⁵ This verse does not teach that a believer should never borrow money. Rather, it teaches that a believer should leave no debt outstanding.

⁸⁶ In this context, the libertine is regarding with contempt the weaker brother and the legalist is judging the libertine.

⁸⁷ Does such weaker knowledge emanate from Judaism? In Judaism, there is not necessarily a distinction between vegetables and meat. Thus, the weaker knowledge probably emanated from Greek philosophy. However, such Greek philosophy had influence over weak Jewish believers. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

The stronger brother should not use his freedom in a way that tears down the weaker brother (14:13-23). Freedom should be curtailed in the pursuit of love (14:13-18).⁸⁸ The stronger brother's goal should be to edify the weaker brother rather than to destroy his faith (14:19-20a). Although all food is lawful, the exercise of such freedom is to be done only in connection to what edifies the weaker brother (14:20b-21). Both the stronger and weaker brother should act in accordance with conscience. The stronger brother should act in faith toward God while the weaker brother should follow the dictates of his conscience (14:22-23).

The stronger brother should not live solely to please himself but rather should help the weaker brother (15:1-6). This principle finds ample illustration of the life of Christ (15:3a) and the Old Testament (15:3b-4; Ps 69:9). If the strong follow this principle, it will naturally lead to unity (15:5) and God's glory (15:6). Believers should mutually accept one another (15:7-13). Christ's example of servant hood (15:7b) to both Jew (15:8)⁸⁹ and Gentile (15:9-12; Ps 18:49; Deut 32:43; Ps 117:1; Isa 11:10)⁹⁰ illustrates the principle of mutual acceptance. To the extent that believers follow this principle, they will experience peace, hope, and joy (15:13).

⁸⁸ 14:17 does not deny an earthly kingdom. Rather, the verse is simply saying do not emphasize the physical aspect of the kingdom at the exclusion of its spiritual components. This is a common way of communicating in Scripture (Hos 6:6; Matt 6:19-20; 1 Cor 4:20; 1 Pet 3:3-4). The kingdom in this verse may be futuristic. Paul normally uses the kingdom in this way. The fact that the kingdom is portrayed in the Old Testament in terrestrial terms also argues for its futurity. Although ἐστίν is in the present tense, use of the futuristic present is common. A de jure/defacto distinction is also common in Scripture (Phil 3:20). This distinction sees a difference between the legal right of the believer and what is in fact a reality. A futuristic understanding of the kingdom in this verse does not mean that the concept is inapplicable since knowledge of the future always affects one's behavior in the present (2 Pet 3:11). Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004. Other ways of viewing the kingdom in this verse is by seeing it as connected to the mystery kingdom (Matt 13) or the universal kingdom.

⁸⁹ 15:8 deals a significant blow to replacement theology when it speaks of the confirmation of the covenants and the existing Jew/Gentile distinction. Stanley Toussaint, class notes of Andy Woods in BE2050A Seminar in Pauline Literature, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2004.

⁹⁰ God's purpose was always to bless the Gentiles. This is seen in the way Paul assembles these verses from the totality of the Old Testament. Verses are found from the Law (Deut 32:43), the prophets (Isa 11:10), and the writings (Ps 18:49; 117:11).

In the conclusion (15:14-16:27), Paul first explains his motivation for writing the letter (15:14-21). Although Paul was persuaded of the Roman Christians' maturity (15:14), he still spoke boldly to them throughout the letter (15:15a). His divine appointment as an apostle to the Gentiles (15:5b-16) as well as His effectiveness in this role (15:17-21; Isa 52:15)⁹¹ gave him both the incentive and authority to speak with such boldness to them. Next Paul mentions his intention of visiting Rome (15:22-33). Paul affirms his past (15:22) and present (15:23) desire to visit Rome. He desires to visit them while he is en route to Spain (15:24). However, first Paul will go to Jerusalem in order to present the impoverished Jewish believers with an offering from the saints in Achaia and Macedonia (15:25-29). In the interim, Paul requests prayer from the Roman believers. Specifically he asks for deliverance from unbelieving Jews, that the Jerusalem believing Jews will accept the offering, and that his anticipated visit to Rome will become a reality (15:30-33).

Paul also commends to the Romans Phoebe, the bearer of the epistle (16:1-2). He recommends her to them on the basis of her faithfulness in the ministry.⁹² Paul also greets numerous saints in Rome that Paul knew (16:3-16).⁹³ Paul also offers a brief warning against false teachers (16:17-21). After giving the characteristics of false teachers (16:17), Paul warns that such people are to be avoided because of who they are serving (16:18a) and the deception that they will introduce

⁹¹ Isaiah 52:15 concerns the Gentiles.

⁹² Diakonos probably refers to Phoebe's servant hood rather than the fact that she occupied the office of a deacon. In the New Testament, "the diakon word group rarely functions with a technical nuance." In addition, this word is applied to others also connected with a particular church that we know were not deacons (Col 1:7; 1 Tim 4:6). *The NET Bible*, (Biblical Studies Press, 2001), 2137, n. 10.

⁹³ Priscilla and Aquila (16:3) have a long history with Paul. They were initially expelled from Rome (Acts 18:2). They met Paul in Corinth where they all practiced their tent making trade (Acts 18). When Paul went to Ephesus, he took Priscilla and Aquila with him (Acts 18:18). However, he left them in Ephesus when he went to Jerusalem (Acts 18:19). While in Ephesus, they mentored Apollos (Acts 18:24-28). They ministered to Paul while he was in Ephesus on his third missionary journey because they sent greeting through Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor 16:19). They eventually returned to Rome (Rom 16:3). Finally, they returned to Ephesus (2 Tim 4:19). How could Paul have personally known those in Rome when he never visited Rome? He knew many by reputation. Many were mutual friends that Paul met on his journeys. Paul typically went to the population centers (Jerusalem, Syrian Antioch, Philippi, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus). Many of those he met invariably ended up in Rome, which was a population magnet. Thus, there is no reason to conclude that this section was part of a separate letter.

(16:18b). Although Paul remains optimistic that the maturity of the Romans will prevent them from falling under the spell of false teachers (16:19a), Paul continues to exhort them to use wisdom (16:19b). After promising the church ultimate victory (16:20), Paul extends a greeting to the Romans from those who were with him at Corinth (16:21-24). Paul closes the letter with a standard doxology (16:24; 15:33), which was designed to remind them of the power of his gospel as well as its consistency with prior revelation (16:25-27).

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⁹⁴ Best and Cranfield are examples of a critical commentaries. Godet, Bruce, and Moo are examples of exegetical commentaries. Barnhouse, Ironside, Johnson, and Stifler are examples of expositional commentaries. Thomas and Wiersbe are examples of devotional commentaries.