
FROM THE MINISTRY OF



THRUthe**BIBLE**

ONE HOUR IN
ROMANS

FOR PERSONAL OR SMALL GROUP STUDY

DR. J. VERNON MCGEE

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You are about to spend time in one of the most important books of the Bible. For many in every generation, God has used this book of Romans to change thinking, deepen faith, and comfort hearts. It could be that God will use this study in your life to teach, comfort, convict, encourage, or stir you towards a deeper faith in Him and greater effectiveness in living the Christian life.

Before you dive in, ask Him to do that right now. Pause as you begin and ask Him to quiet your heart and awaken your mind to the greatest subject of the ages: His great salvation. Invite Him to do whatever work He wants in your heart as you discover the depth of this eternal truth.

Dr. McGee believed the book of Romans to be so important, he didn't want you to miss anything God has for you in its pages. He prepared this "One Hour in Romans" as a survey lesson to give you a broad brush over the book as foundation to the more in-depth study of Romans on our Bible Bus journey. We've also added a few questions at the end of each section to encourage you to stop and ask—"What did I just learn?" and "How might God want me to apply this to my life?" These prompts can be engaged with individually or as a group.

If you've been on the Bible Bus for long, you know that in the beginning of every complete journey through the whole Word of God, Dr. McGee refreshes our memory of how to study the Bible. In review, these seven steps are especially important as we begin our survey of Romans.

Let me urge you to do something that will pay you amazing dividends: Read Romans regularly. This epistle requires all the mental make-up we have, and in addition, it must be bathed in prayer and supplication so that the Holy Spirit can teach us. Yet every Christian should make an effort to know Romans, for this book will ground you in the faith. –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

DR. MCGEE ENCOURAGES YOU TO:

1. **Begin with prayer.**
2. **Read the Bible.** The average time to read the entire book of Romans is under one hour.
3. **Study the Bible.** We'll follow Dr. McGee's lead here as he points out important points.
4. **Meditate on the Bible.** Take notes on your study, underline important points, and then review them later. What truths is God impressing on your mind?
5. **Read what others have written on the Scriptures.**
6. **Obey what you learn.**
7. **Pass it on to others.**

Meditation is something God taught His people. The Word of God was to be kept in front of the children of Israel all the time so that they could see it and think about it. (Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9.) It was to be written in their homes, on the doorposts over the door. God told them to talk about His Word when they ate, when they would lie down at night. He told them to write the Word of God everywhere, and it would be burnt into their hearts and lives. –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

INTRODUCTION

The book of Romans contains the great gospel manifesto for the world.

The only remedy for man's sin is the perfect remedy God provided in Jesus Christ for a lost humanity. This is the message of Romans.

Devote yourself to its study and you will:

- Understand the basic facts about salvation
- Be convicted about things related to your faith
- Find practical insight into Christian service

The true masterpiece of the New Testament and the very purest gospel It can never be too much or too well read or studied. The more it is handled, the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes. –Martin Luther on Romans

The great theme of this epistle humbles me: The righteousness of God. I have attempted to proclaim this message over the years. However, the world doesn't want to hear or accept it. It likes to hear about the glory of mankind and exalt man instead of God. But if we do not see mankind for who we are—totally corrupt and a ruined creature without God—we will never find a remedy.

The thief on the cross had been declared unfit to live in the Roman Empire; that's why he was being executed. But the Lord Jesus said He was going to make him fit for heaven: "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). God takes lost sinners—like you and me—and brings us into His family as His sons and daughters. He does it not because we have any merit in us whatsoever, but because Christ died on the cross. Romans teaches this essential truth.

THE MAJOR DIVISIONS OF ROMANS

	FOCUS	EMPHASIS
Part 1: Romans 1—8	What does it mean to be saved?	FAITH
Part 2: Romans 9—11	What about Israel?	HOPE
Part 3: Romans 12—16	How should I conduct my life?	LOVE

PART 1

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?



READ:
Romans 1–8



Listen at [TTB.org/Romans](https://www.ttb.org/Romans) (optional):
Programs 4422-4441

The apostle Paul opens his letter to the Romans with a great statement and the key to this letter:

CHALLENGE TO MEMORIZE

○ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation 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

Paul isn’t ashamed, because the gospel has inherent power for a specific thing: *Salvation*. That is the end and the effect of the gospel.

Salvation embraces everything from justification to glorification; it is both an act and a process. It is equally true that I *have been* saved, I *am being* saved, and I *shall be* saved.

You can’t work for or buy God’s righteousness; you can do nothing but accept it by faith. Justification by faith means not only the subtraction of sin but the addition of righteousness—all so we might stand before God complete in Christ. God saves on no other ground than that you trust Jesus.

You can be religious and still be lost.

If the ministry of *Thru the Bible* has done one thing, it has held up a mirror to people who thought they knew God. As they listened to the Word of God, they realized they were sinners, lost before Almighty God. A family in San Pedro, California, listened to our study of Romans for three months as we hammered away—“You’re a sinner, you’re a sinner, you’re a sinner.” They resented it and wrote me two angry letters: “We are active church members, and you tell us we are sinners! We are tired of hearing it.” Well, I didn’t write and tell them they could tune us out if they were tired of it, and apparently they kept listening. Finally, that entire family came to know Jesus Christ. I tell you, you can be religious and still be lost.

Yes, friends, we are all sinners.

Sin is the subject from Romans 1:18—3:20. Romans doesn’t try to prove we are sinners, it just states it as fact. In other words, it is a revelation.

That God’s wrath is revealed against sin is a historical fact. An example? Remember Sodom and Gomorrah? God destroyed these cities because of their sin. They reached the place of perversion, always characteristic of a degraded civilization.

You may read Romans 1:18-33 and think, *Well, that’s certainly not a picture of me! I can thoroughly agree with God.* But just wait. Next we have the revelation of the sin of good people. That is difficult for a great many people to accept, so Paul deals with it directly.

Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself, for you who judge practice the same things. –Romans 2:1

He does not mean these respectable people do the identical things as those living without Christ. Instead, the minute we judge anyone who is in sin, we immediately establish the principle that whoever is above us can judge us also for not measuring up to their standards. When you look down at the drunkard or the pervert today and say his sin is abhorrent, God in His position as He looks down at you—a so-called respectable person—can say (and does say), *“You are a sinner, and you have come short of My glory. You, in My sight, are just as much a sinner as that person is in your sight.”* That is exactly what Paul establishes here.

SIX WAYS GOD WILL JUDGE GOOD PEOPLE

PRINCIPLE #1

GOD KNOWS THE REAL YOU

But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth [reality] against those who practice such things. –Romans 2:2

God will judge according to the facts. You will not be able to secure a lawyer and claim some technicality. When you come before God, He judges you according to reality. He knows your own heart better than you do. You and I cannot claim what we often do before other people: “*Oh, I’m innocent. I’m a good citizen. I pay my debts. I never even get a traffic ticket.*” You may not get a traffic ticket, but in God’s sight you are a sinner, my friend, and He will judge people according to reality, not according to some defense you hatch up.

PRINCIPLE #2

OUR LIVES WILL BE SCRUTINIZED

Who “will render to each one according to his deeds.” –Romans 2:6

God will judge good people according to their deeds at the Great White Throne. His books will be opened, and every sinner will be judged according to his works—not those little good things you like calling attention to, but your entire life will be scrutinized. God will judge you according to the facts.

PRINCIPLE #3

WE’RE ALL JUDGED BY THE SAME STANDARD

For there is no partiality with God. –Romans 2:11

The fact that you may be educated and have been brought up surrounded by a good environment gives you no advantage over some poor soul who can’t read or write and is living in the direst circumstances. God will judge you both by the same standard. There is no respect of persons. We are not talking about salvation here, but the basis on which God judges the human family.

PRINCIPLE #4

OUR BEST COULD NEVER BE GOOD ENOUGH

For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified. –Romans 2:13

You’ve heard the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments and you think they’re wonderful. You should; they are. The question is, *do you keep them?*

I was speaking several years ago before a club of some sort. I sat next to a man who asked me, “What’s your racket?” I told him I was a preacher, and immediately he began to cover up. He told me he was an officer in a certain church and about all the good he did. Then he said, “The Sermon on the Mount is my religion.”

I reached over and shook hands with him. "I want to congratulate you," I said. "That's the best religion I know anything about."

"I thought you'd think so."

"But I'd like to ask you a question. How're you doing with it?"

He began to fumble for words. "What do you mean?"

"You say that's your religion. I want to know, are you keeping it?"

"Well, I try to."

"But that's not it," I said. "Religion is not something you try out. If that's your religion, I hope you're keeping it."

"I'm doing my best."

"But I can't find anything in the Sermon on the Mount about doing your best."

"Well now," he backpedaled, "I feel that a man ought to do his best."

"Yes, I think so, too, but does your best enable you to keep the Sermon on the Mount? Let me be specific. It says in there that if you are angry with your brother, you are guilty of murder. Are you a murderer? Have you ever been angry with anyone?" He had to admit that he had been. "Also," I said, "if you so much as look upon a woman to lust after her, you're guilty of adultery. How are you doing with that one?" He began to hedge, and I said, "Look, if I were you, I'd change my religion, because you are not keeping it. You'd better get yourself a religion you can keep, brother, because you're doing nothing with that one at all."

May I say to you, friend, when folk say the Sermon on the Mount is their religion, all they mean is, "I just vote for the Sermon on the Mount. I think it's a nice thing." It's God's Law for this earth during the Millennium; it's a wonderful Law, and it is His standard. But if we examine our hearts, we know we can't measure up to it—no one can, not even the most respectable.

Therefore, God will judge people on this basis: Not on being *hearers* of the Law but *doers* of the Law. When you get up before God and say, "Well, I kept the Ten Commandments," He's going to ask you one by one, "Did you keep this one? How about this one?" May I say to you, that is God's standard, and every honest person *knows* he comes short of the glory of God.

PRINCIPLE #5

WE ALL FALL SHORT; WE MISS THE MARK

Who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them.

–Romans 2:15

Your conscience either excuses or accuses you. The man I mentioned who said, “I do the best I can,” is excusing himself. He says, “Well, after all, we’re all human.” And I can’t think of a truer statement than that! We *are* human, and that is the reason we fall short.

PRINCIPLE #6

THERE WILL BE NO SECRETS AT THE JUDGEMENT

In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. –Romans 2:16

That part of your life you have kept hidden, God intends to bring out—provided you do not come and accept His salvation. He will turn you wrong side out; He is really going to look at you when you come before Him. Irwin Moon said, “If God put my life on the screen and I had to sit there and look at it, I’d make a hole in the wall to get out of there. I don’t want to see it.” I don’t think you want to see yours, either. But if you turn down God’s salvation, you *do* have to face Him on this matter.

These six principles outline the way God will judge “good” people. Wouldn’t you rather Jesus stand up for you in court, offer His nail-print hands and say, “These debts have been paid. I died in their place.”

Some think they will escape judgment because they are religious. Of course, the Jewish people illustrate this for the simple reason they had the only God-given religion. He tells them what they have: “You have the Mosaic Law; you have been an instructor of the people; you have *boasted* yourself of this; but as you have been teaching others not to steal, do you steal?” That is the tragedy of liberal preaching today. They teach people to be moral and ethical—yet they are still lost. God finds the religious person the most difficult in the world to reach. Church members are the hardest people to lead to Christ.

SECULAR THINKERS WHO THINK THE SAME WAY AS THE WORD OF GOD

We must say of ourselves that we are evil, have been evil, and—unhappily, I must add—shall be also in the future. Nobody can deliver himself; someone must stretch out a hand to lift him up. –Seneca

I see no fault committed which I, too, might not commit. –Goethe

Every man knows that of himself which he dares not tell his dearest friend.

–Dr. Samuel Johnson

In review of God's manifold blessings, the thing I seem most to thank Him for is the conviction of sin. –Tholuck

The saint with the most tender conscience today is more aware of sin than anything else. If you're not conscious of sin in your life, my friend, you are in a dangerous place. You're like a man in an ice storm, who thinks he's comfortable but is actually freezing to death. He wants to lie down in the snow and sleep, but if he does he will die. Many people today live like this—numb, unconscious of the fact they are sinners in God's sight. –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

HOW DOES GOD SAVE US?

How are we saved? *Through God's righteousness.*

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference. –Romans 3:21, 22

Man is helpless and hopeless—paralyzed and unable to save himself. But God has provided a righteousness that enables us to stand before God.

RIGHTEOUSNESS PROVIDED

God provides this righteousness to us not by us working or paying for it, but God *gives* it to us. We can receive it only by faith. Let me illustrate: I am wearing a watch given to me by members of my board. It was handed to me in a little box with the words, “This is a gift.” I have never paid one penny for this watch. All I had to do was believe they were honest and sincere in offering it to me, and when they held it out, I reached my hand out by faith and took it. That is the only way in the world you can get saved today, because salvation is a *gift*. You don’t work for a gift; you can’t pay for a gift; you can’t promise God anything. If you are going to receive His gift, you must reach out your hand in faith and receive what God has to offer.

That gift comes through Jesus’ death on the cross and the redemption He wrought for us. Why did He have to do this?

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. –Romans 3:23

There is no exception in the human family—we are all sinners.

That doesn't mean there is no difference in sinners. Certainly, some are worse than others, and God recognizes that. But I have found when flying over a rugged area that when I look down from that elevation, I can't tell the height of the hills. In fact, when you get up that high, you can't tell a molehill from an anthill from a mountain. They all look the same when you get up there. When God looks down at you, my friend, though you may think you are head and shoulders above somebody else, you are on the same level—"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

I have an old illustration about the game of "jumping to Catalina," an island located off the coast in Southern California. It is about 25 miles directly across to Catalina from the pier in Santa Monica. Let's suppose we get to the pier, and we run and jump off the end to see who can jump to Catalina. Now up to the present, nobody has made it. There have been some mighty good jumps, and it's a delightful game because when you jump, you get wet, and you can say to the other fellow, "I jumped farther than you did." And it is true—some jump farther. But no matter how far you jump, you won't make Catalina. All come short of Catalina, although some jump farther than others. All fall short of the glory of God, too. Although some are not as great sinners as others, none has measured up to His standards. For that reason, you and I today need His redemption.

Being justified freely [without a cause; that is, the cause is not within us] ***by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*** –Romans 3:24

What God does, He does by His grace; what God does by His grace, He does joyfully. He does it freely, without holding back. God doesn't parcel out grace as if He might run out of His supply. My friend, when He bestows grace on you, He goes the limit. He is not stingy. He bestows His grace and His love upon you freely without a cause, and it's all "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." So when you come to the Lord Jesus Christ,

*Your best resolutions must wholly be waived,
Your highest ambitions be crossed off;
You never need think you will ever be saved,
'Til first you've learned you are lost.*

–Author unknown

If today I had the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job, the meekness of Moses, the strength of Samson, the obedience of Abraham, the compassion of Joseph, the tears of Jeremiah, the poetic skill of David, the prophetic voice of Elijah, the courage of Daniel, the greatness of John the Baptist, and the endurance and love of Paul, I would still need redemption through Christ's blood—the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. –Dr. J. Vernon McGee

My friend, you and I need the blood of Christ for our salvation—we have no other hope. That cross is the way God has saved individuals from the very beginning to the very present hour—because Paul says:

Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed. –Romans 3:25

The “sins that were previously committed” are not *your* past sins but sins committed before Christ’s death on the cross. God has always had only one way of saving sinners, and that is through the cross of Jesus Christ. Everyone God ever saved in the Old Testament, He saved on credit. He did not save them because they brought a little lamb. The blood of lambs and bulls and goats could not take away sin, but instead they pointed to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ died on the cross, that was the payment that made it possible for God to redeem those who had lived in the past. And by faith today, you and I look back to Him for our salvation.

To demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. –Romans 3:26

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO BE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH?

Abraham, who was justified by faith *before* the Law, believed God. Here's what Romans 4:5 says about believing God.

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. –Romans 4:5

BUT TO HIM WHO BELIEVES...	"Oh, but I ought to do something."
BUT TO HIM WHO BELIEVES...	"Well, shouldn't I join the church and be baptized?"
BUT TO HIM WHO BELIEVES...	"Shouldn't I promise God I'll live a better life?"
BUT TO HIM WHO BELIEVES...	"But don't you think I ought to offer God something?"
BUT TO HIM WHO BELIEVES...	"I'm happy to work for my salvation."

Look back at that verse—who does God justify? The good people? No. God justifies the “ungodly,” the worst kind of people. The only people God saves is ungodly people. God has never yet saved a good person. Not only has God never saved a good person, He never will save a good person. Do you know why? Because no one is good. *All* are ungodly.

The Lord Jesus says, “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Luke 5:32). He came to “give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). For what kind of folk? Ungodly people.

Now I don't want to be unloving, but please take this to heart: If you have never come to God as a sinner for salvation, you are not saved today. Until you come as a sinner to God, He cannot save you. He is in the business of saving *sinners*. That's the only kind. Many people would defend their dignity and their status, rather than let God save them. My friend, when you come to Him you have to come as the sinner you are. He only saves ungodly people.

Abraham simply believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. It is not only the subtraction of sins in justification by faith, but it is the addition of the righteousness of Christ that enables you to stand in His presence.

John Bunyan said, "When God showed me John Bunyan as God saw John Bunyan, I no longer confessed I was a sinner, but I confessed I was sin from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet." My friend, that's the way God sees you this very minute. He sees you as a lost, undone sinner.

Now I recognize this is not popular today. Even in fundamental circles this type of preaching is going out of style fast, because people want to hear something that tickles their ears. But God still says you must come to Him as a sinner, because that is what you are. He tells you who you are, my friend, and we come on *His* terms and His terms alone. The Lord Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Being justified by faith produces wonderful results in our lives. As a believer in Jesus Christ, you now possess these eight things:

1 PEACE WITH GOD

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. –Romans 5:1

"Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" comes to your soul when you trust Christ as Savior and are certain that God no longer has any charge against you. Your salvation is for keeps. That is wonderful peace!

2 ACCESS TO GOD

Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand ... –Romans 5:2a

God's child has access to a heavenly Father who listens to you. It is wonderful having someone to go to and talk with about your problems. He always hears and answers, and sometimes He shows He is a good Father by saying "no." He answers according to His wisdom, not according to our will.

3 HOPE

... And rejoice in hope of the glory of God. –Romans 5:2b

The child of God has a blessed hope of the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

4 TRIUMPH IN TROUBLE

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. –Romans 5:3, 4

The world does not join the two words “affliction” and “joy,” but the child of God can be confident that God's discipline is under God's control for his good and God's glory.

5 LOVE

... The love of God has been poured out in our hearts ... –Romans 5:5

What kind of love is this? Love for our fellow man? No. That's elsewhere. Love for God? No.

This love poured in us is the assurance that God loves us. These are desperate days, and we need to know God loves us.

6 THE HOLY SPIRIT

... The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. –Romans 5:5

The Holy Spirit is the One who, among other things, actualizes or makes real the love of God in the hearts of believers. To face life today we should be very conscious of the fact that God loves us.

7 DELIVERANCE FROM WRATH

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. –Romans 5:9

What is this wrath from which we will be saved? Jesus calls it the Great Tribulation. Believers have been saved from the penalty of sin; He is constantly saving us from the power of sin; and He is going to save us in the future from the presence of sin. This means every believer will leave this earth at the Rapture. We are saved from wrath through Christ.

8 JOY

And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. –Romans 5:11

We joy in *God!* He has worked out a plan to save us because of His love for us. Rejoice in God for these wonderful benefits of salvation!

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO GROW IN CHRIST?

When we are saved by faith, God begins the work of sanctification in us. When we get saved, we're still the same kind of people. Therefore, God wants to move into our lives and sanctify us, make us better than we are. His method, of course, is through the Holy Spirit. This section, Romans 5:12—8:39, presents this process of growth in a wonderful way.

POTENTIAL SANCTIFICATION

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. –Romans 5:12

When we read “because all sinned,” understand this is not talking about our acts of sin. Rather it refers to the sin Adam committed when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden which, God says, is also your sin and my sin. Many will resent that. Maybe you're thinking, “*Why should I be charged with Adam's sin? I don't want Adam being the one to choose for me. I want to make the choice.*” Well, my friend, whether you like it or not, the choice of your ancestors turns out to be your choice as well.

My grandfather lived in Northern Ireland at a time of great persecution. He was a Scotsman, but he left home and came to the United States, eventually ending up in Texas, where he's buried. Years ago when he decided to come to the United States, I came to the United States. His decision was my decision.

Adam's decision is our decision whether we like it or not. That was God's way in order that He might justify you and me by faith. That is the basis of sanctification, because now He is enabled to take us out of the old Adam and put us in the new Adam. That new Adam is the Lord Jesus Christ. We are put in Him by faith, and that is the method by which God is able to sanctify us today.

POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? –Romans 6:1

God's answer is right there in verse 2: "Certainly not!" If you think because you are saved by grace you can live in sin, you are not saved, my friend. The verse is clear. If you have been saved by the grace of God, you will not go on living in sin. You have been given a new nature. He tells us three things that must be ours if we are to be sanctified.

1 FIRST, WE ARE TO KNOW SOMETHING:

Or do you not now that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? –Romans 6:3

A literal translation would be: Are you ignorant that so many of us who were identified into union with Jesus Christ were identified in His death?

2 THEN WE ARE TO IDENTIFY WITH SOMETHING:

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death –Romans 6:4

This verse has nothing in the world to do with water; rather, the word "baptize" means identification with something. We are identified with Christ. When Christ died, I died. And if you are in Christ today, you died too. When He was raised from the dead, you and I were raised from the dead so that now we are in a new head of the human race, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. –Romans 6:6

These are things we *know*. When Paul says your "old man" is crucified with Him, he doesn't mean your father; he means your old nature is crucified with Him. Paul is not saying the old nature is eradicated. He is saying that since the old man was crucified, the body of sin has been put out of business so that from now on "we should no longer be slaves to sin."

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. –Romans 6:8

Let me repeat that when He died, we died with Him.

3 NOW WE ARE TO COUNT ON SOMETHING:

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. –Romans 6:11

Count on the fact that God has put you in Christ and you are now in the Lord Jesus. We are no longer to live in the old nature, but we are to live in Christ—just as a bird lives in the air and a fish lives in the water.

PRACTICAL SANCTIFICATION

And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

–Romans 6:13

When you are saved, you are given a new nature, and that new nature enables you to be obedient to God. Paul is saying you and I are to obey God. Obedience is now the mark of this child of God. Lawlessness on the part of those today who claim to be Christians reveals whose they are. Lawlessness is not a mark of a believer at all. If you are a believer, you are not lawless; you are obedient to Him. The reason my favorite hymn is “Trust and Obey” is because these two go together:

*When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way.
While we do His good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.
Trust and obey
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.*

You see, if you trust Him for your salvation, you will be given a new nature so that you can be obedient to Him. That old nature you have is in rebellion against God. But you have a new nature if you are God's child, and you will want to be obedient to Him.

POWERLESS SANCTIFICATION

Now Romans 7 tells us we can't obey in our own strength. It is powerless sanctification.

Two great truths come out of this. The first one is:

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells –Romans 7:18a

You and I have nothing good in our flesh. The old nature can never do anything that is pleasing to God. Why? That's the second great truth:

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. –Romans 8:7

We have an old nature—even if you are redeemed your old nature will be with you until your dying day. That old nature is in rebellion against God. For instance, sometimes you don't want to hear the teaching of the Word of God, and you have to somehow bring yourself to it. That old nature can think of anything to rebel against God. It hates the Word of God. It doesn't love to pray. That old nature is in rebellion against Almighty God. Can you identify with those feelings?

But if you are a believer, you have a new nature. This is what our new nature looks like:

... For to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. -Romans 7:18b

The apostle Paul, explaining this, found out there was no good in his old nature and there was no power in his new nature.

GOD'S NEW PROVISION FOR SANCTIFICATION

Now this is where God moves on the scene, and we have His provision for sanctification.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus -Romans 8:1

Romans 7 describes Paul's failure as a believer. Likely it was after he was converted on the Damascus Road experience. He found failure in the Christian life. But even then there was no condemnation, because he was in Christ. His failure didn't wreck his salvation, but he wasn't happy. He had no joy or power in his life.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. -Romans 8:2-4

Believers have a new nature, but we still have no power in our own strength. You just can't do it; you can't live for God on your own. Only as we yield to Him, and obey Him, can we please Him.

It is only by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that we can live for God. See how clear this is:

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. -Romans 8:5, 6

If you are to have life and peace—that is, a Christian life filled with the fruits of the Holy Spirit—it must be by the power of the Holy Spirit. You can never achieve them on your own.

Let me illustrate in a personal way: That Vernon McGee! I know this fellow (I've known him for a long time), and I want to tell you very candidly that I'm sick of him. He has failed me; he has let me down so many times. I know that whatever he produces, God just cannot use. That which is of the flesh is nothing in the world but an abomination unto God. But that which the Holy Spirit can and will produce—God will use that, my friend. It is the only thing that has any eternal value.

Romans 8 develops this even more as it explores the believer's security in this life.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. -Romans 8:28

It doesn't make any difference what comes to you—good things, bad things, dark things, bright things, lovely things, mean things—because whatever comes, God will see to it that it works for good in your life. You can be sure of that. It is something the child of God needs to hold onto.

Not only that, but God says that during all of this, “I can hold onto you, because when I started out with you, I not only foreknew you, but I predestined you; and when I predestined you, I called you; and when I called you, I justified you; and when I justified you, I glorified you” (see Romans 8:29, 30). In other words, God says, “When I called you, I knew I could carry you through to the end. It won't depend on your performance. It will depend on Me.” And I say very candidly that if I don't make it through, it's going to be God's failure and not mine. I'm already a failure, but He is not nor will He be. Paul says in Philippians 1:6, “Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Therefore—

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? –Romans 8:31

How glorious, how wonderful! Why is it true? Well, who can condemn a child of God? Christ died for us, He is risen again, He is even at the right hand of God, and He makes intercession for us. My beloved, can you have anything better than that in this life or in the life to come? He is on your side today. You can't lose—because of Him, not because of you. He has already declared you bankrupt and a failure and a sinner. But He says, “I am undertaking to see you through; I am undertaking to save you.”

Then we come to this important question:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? –Romans 8:35

As you read Romans 8:35-39, note the long list of things that could separate us from God. If you can think of anything he didn't name, you can include those, too. But the conclusion makes it worth it all: “I am persuaded that none of these things can possibly separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (see Romans 8:38, 39). This is God's glorious salvation.

PART 1

THINK ABOUT IT

1 IN YOUR BIBLE, RE-READ ROMANS 1–8.

Underline and ponder key verses like: 1:16; 3:23; 5:1, 8; 6:23; 8:1, 28, 37-39.

2 REVIEW SOME OF THE BASIC FACTS ABOUT SALVATION (fill in the blank):

You can be religious and still _____.

Our best could never be _____.

God begins the work of sanctification in us through _____.

3 WHY IS IT A GOOD THING TO BE CONVICTED OF SIN?

4 LIST THE EIGHT THINGS A BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST NOW POSSESSES:

○	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Circle the ones you have experienced recently.

Tell someone about what it's like to have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

PART 2

WHAT ABOUT ISRAEL?



READ:
Romans 9—11



Listen at TTB.org/Romans (optional):
Programs 4442-4447

Romans 8 closes on the high plane of triumph and joy: Nothing will ever separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 9 opens on the low plane of despair and sorrow. Obviously, something about this change of subject brought Paul heartbreak.

At the time of writing, the people of God faced a unique historical position and problem. Their church was now mostly Gentile, and the Jewish background has been all but forgotten. The assumption was that God was done with the Old Testament and the church is now heir to all its prophecies.

But now we learn that God's promises to the nation Israel will yet be fulfilled. Not only that, but God has made promises to the church, and today He calls out an elect people—both Jew and Gentile—to form the church.

All of God's actions are found in His own sovereign will. He functions through mercy in His dealings with Israel and all others—with you and me. Martin Luther gives a fitting introduction to this section: "Who hath not known passion, cross, and travail of death cannot treat of foreknowledge (election of grace) without injury and inward enmity toward God. Wherefore take heed that you don't drink wine while you are yet a baby." This is strong medicine Paul is about to give us.

GOD'S PAST DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

First, we discover who these people are:

Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises. –Romans 9:4

Israel has a long history with God. They are God's people, the Jews, and you cannot in any way disturb or destroy that.

If we have been saved, we are chosen in Christ, but not because of some natural heritage we might have. Judaism was the race that Jesus Christ came from, if you please. He was an Israelite. They were the ones to whom God gave a religion.

GOD'S PRESENT PURPOSE WITH ISRAEL

What is God's plan today for the nation of Israel?

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. –Romans 10:1

Jews today are as lost as any Gentile because they cannot be saved by religion. Even with a God-given religion, they are as far from God as anyone. Just as Gentiles need to be saved, Jews need to be saved also. And God is saving them today. God's present plan is that they be saved and brought into the body of believers, the church (see Ephesians 2:11-22).

GOD'S FUTURE PURPOSE WITH ISRAEL

But wait a minute. Does that destroy God's plan for the future? No. After God gets through with His plan for the church, Romans 11:1-2 says,

I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew

As soon as God completes His plan for the church—of calling out both Jew and Gentile as a people to His name and taking the church out of the earth—He will return again to the nation Israel and begin to deal with them.

PART 2

THINK ABOUT IT

1 RE-READ ROMANS 9–11.
Underline and ponder key verses like: 10:9, 13, 17; 11:36.

2 TRUE OR FALSE | God is done with Israel.

3 WHAT DOES GOD WANT MOST OF ALL FOR ISRAEL?

4 DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHOSE HERITAGE IS JUDAISM BUT WHO BELIEVES JESUS CHRIST IS THE MESSIAH? What would you like to ask them about how they discovered Jesus as their Savior?

PART 3

HOW SHOULD I CONDUCT MY LIFE?



READ
Romans 12–16



Listen at [TTB.org/Romans](https://www.ttb.org/Romans) (optional):
Programs 4448–4457

Now we're going to walk the gospel road in shoe-leather. This is where I like to walk.

If Romans 1–8 describes the faith in which we stand and Romans 9–11 gives Israel hope for the future, then Romans 12–16 pictures what love looks like in a Christian's life.

In Romans 1–8 we see the helmet of salvation and shield of faith. But in this last section, our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We are to stand in the battle; we are to walk in our life; we are to run in the race. We study now what a Christian does.

The Christian's conduct must be expressed in this world by our relationship to others—but these relationships must be regulated. It's easy to put down rules of conduct, but we're not freed from the Mosaic Law just to put us under another legal system. Romans 12–16 uses practical principles to guide us.

After the mountaintop of Romans 8–11, Paul now plunges us down to the plane of duty—and it is *plain* duty. This is where we all live and move and have our being.

OUR REASONABLE SERVICE

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. –Romans 12:1

A Christian's spiritual service is to present himself to God as a living sacrifice. A child of God can't live to himself. If you have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, God has a claim on your life. If you live selfishly, you'll just be miserable.

You cannot even live the Christian life until you present your total personality to God.

Then you have a relationship to the gifts of the Spirit, and there *are* gifts of the Spirit—many more than speaking in tongues. Each of the gifts mentioned here are meant to serve the body: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and showing mercy (see Romans 12:6-8).

Next we learn what our relationship should be with other believers.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. –Romans 12:9-13

What a marvelous command God gives to believers today. Through the Spirit's power, we are to do all this in our relationship with other believers.

Next we learn how to relate to those outside of Christ. We are to—

Repay no one evil for evil –Romans 12:17

We are not to avenge ourselves. The minute you and I attempt to punch the other fellow in the nose after he has punched us, we are no longer walking by faith. "Well," you might say, "I think somebody *ought* to punch him in the nose." Yes, you are right, *somebody* ought to. But let *God* do the punching. God says He intends to do it.

... "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. –Romans 12:19b

In effect, God says, "I will not permit any injustice to come to you that I will not straighten out someday. Now do not depart from the pathway of faith—don't hit back." When we hit back we are saying to God, "I can't trust You in this particular case. I'm going to have to take it into my own hands."

Turn vengeance over to God. My beloved, when we do, we heap coals of fire on those who are our enemies. Believe me, when God starts dealing with them, He's going to do a good job of it. I have watched that in my ministry. Oh, how many times I have wanted to take things into my own hands! But when I let God take over, I've seen Him move in. He does a much better job than any of us down here would do in dealing with folk. Turn them over to the Lord—that's what our attitude should be toward unbelievers.

Then we have a real relationship to government today. We are to obey the powers that be, and

... The authorities that exist are appointed by God. –Romans 13:1

We're inclined to say, "If you lived in our day with this crowd of politicians in office you wouldn't say that." Oh no? Remember that in Paul's day bloody Nero was on the throne in Rome, and Paul had even appealed his case before him. Despite the prevailing conditions, he could say, "Be obedient to the powers that be, for the powers that be are ordained of God"—whether it's bloody Nero or whoever is in office in your town. We have a relationship to government.

We also have a relationship to our neighbors (see Romans 13:8-10). Doesn't this sound a lot like the Ten Commandments? Our love for our neighbor is revealed in what we do rather than in what we say. You can talk about love all you want, but if you commit these acts against your neighbor, you have no love for him. Loving your neighbor is the fullness of the Law and is a fruit of the Spirit.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO OR NOT DO?

Separation is certainly misunderstood among believers today, because many have made up a little list of commandments they try to follow. "Don't do this, don't do that, don't do the other thing." That is not how Christian conduct should be understood. Instead, consider these three principles:

PRINCIPLE #1 CONVICTION

Whatever you do, do it with conviction.

One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. —Romans 14:5

Whatever you decide to do, be fully persuaded in your own mind. You are to have a *conviction* about what you do.

One reason we struggle with our behaviors is when we haven't anything in our hearts to take the place of these things we are told to give up. Often people go from one type of questionable activity to another. They straddle the fence, trying to go with the world and trying to go with God. Whatever it is, have conviction about what you do!

The world doesn't have a problem doing that. I have always watched the crowd that comes to the New Year's Day football game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. They come wearing their team's hats and shirts. I see the crowd from Wisconsin or Minnesota, and when I go to the Rose Parade route I like to kid them about the game—and believe me, you can get a rise out of a real fan. I like that. That's conviction, my friend. Oh, if we as Christians had more conviction!

Do you know why they fill up the Rose Bowl every New Year's Day? It's because of those who go with conviction.

My friend, you may have a fine congregation at your church, but if the members of your church had *real* conviction about going to church, the place would be packed out. That is what we need today—Christians who have conviction. It is the first thing that is needed in Christian conduct.

PRINCIPLE #2
CONSCIENCE

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. –Romans 14:22

Do you look back on your life and hate what you have done? Well, I don't know what you did wrong, but happy is the man who doesn't condemn himself with what he does. That's the reason I don't answer questions like, "Do you think it's wrong for a Christian to _____?" The answer is easy. For you it's wrong because you have a conscience about it. Otherwise you never would have asked. I have never been asked, "Do you think I ought to eat supper tonight?" Nobody has a conscience on that, you see. They ask only about that on which they have a conscience. I like to say to some of them, "Well, apparently for you it is wrong—you've got a conscience on it or you wouldn't have asked me. You can't go. But I don't have a conscience on it—so let me have your ticket!"

May I say to you, my beloved, we need to have a conscience on these things. And when we look back at what we've done and it raises a question—regardless of what it was—it was wrong. It's also wrong if you can't enter into it whole-heartedly. "Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves."

PRINCIPLE #3
CONSIDERATION

We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples [infirmities] of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. –Romans 15:1, 2

Consideration of others—it's that simple. Maybe you have a conviction about this or that and you can do it, and maybe your conscience doesn't condemn you for doing it. But how might it affect someone else? Take the other person into consideration.

A Christian does not please himself; he pleases his Lord. It is not a question today of whether it's right or wrong—that is not the standard of the Christian anymore—it is a question of walking in the light. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses [keeps on cleansing] us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

It is not *how* you walk, it is *where* you walk that counts. Are you walking in the light? Do you want to please Him? That is what is important. It is not to see how far you can go in doing questionable things and still maintain a Christian testimony. If that is the way you are living, you are living a shabby, shoddy Christian life.

Now, does this thing that we've been talking about work? Is it reality?

Paul closes the Epistle to the Romans by mentioning 35 people by name who lived among pagans in the Roman Empire under the rule of bloody Nero. These people walked in the light of God's Word down the streets of Ephesus, Jerusalem, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, and

Rome itself. These 35 people in a pagan civilization found that this epistle was true, and they lived for Christ in the first century.

It not only worked in the first century, but it worked in the second century, it worked in the third, the fourth, the fifth and the sixth, and it continues to work in this century, my friend. Christians today, like those in the first century, are walking the streets of this pagan world. Those who know Jesus Christ and are walking in the light as He is in the light have found out that these things in Romans are true.

The question is, have *you* found out they are true? Or is this all theory to you, only an ideal? I say to you right now that you can know whether these things are true or not. The Lord Jesus said if you will do His will, you will know His doctrine, you will know whether it's true or not (see John 7:17). Like the psalmist says, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good..." (Psalm 34:8). God wants you to do the experiment. It all begins at the cross, in a transaction with Him—it all begins when you come to Christ as your Savior.

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. –Romans 15:13

This is what a study of Romans should do for you. I trust it has given you joy and peace, strengthened your faith, and it has brought hope and power into your life, my friend.

PART 3

THINK ABOUT IT

- 1 IN YOUR BIBLE, RE-READ ROMANS 12—16.**
Underline and ponder key verses like: 12:1-2, 9-13; 16:25-27.
- 2 ASK YOURSELF, WHAT NEW TRUTH DID I LEARN IN THIS SURVEY OF ROMANS ABOUT GOD?** About me? About the gift of salvation?

- 3 WHAT VERSE(S) WILL YOU ASK GOD TO WRITE ON YOUR HEART THAT YOU WANT TO ALWAYS REMEMBER?**

- 4 TELL SOMEONE TODAY ABOUT THE DAY YOU DECIDED TO BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.** What motivated you?

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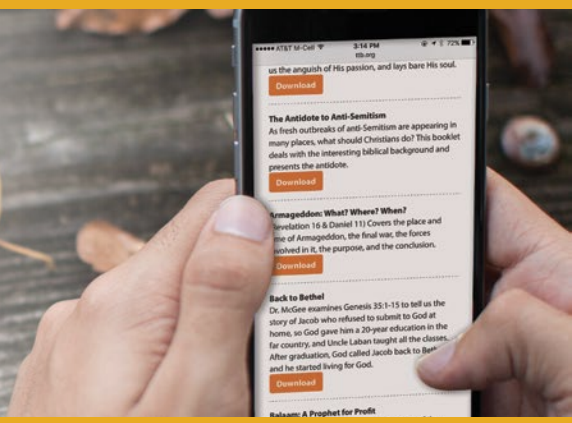


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