

## WHAT SHALL WE SAY TO GOD'S PLAN?



### Read: Romans 8:31–39

What then shall we say in response to God's eternal plan (8:31)? And "who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Paul asked these questions to prove that:

- a) He called each one by the preaching of His gospel (Acts 2:39).
- b) God knows each one of His sons and daughters and everything about them (Matt 10:30).
- c) He "justified them," or made them right with Himself (Col 1:21).
- d) He protects them from the evil one (John 17:11; 2 Tim 4:18).

God sees each of these steps in the life of the believer as already taken or finished. What He began in eternity, He will surely complete in eternity. If God gave His children "so great salvation," He would protect them and give them everything else they needed to grow in grace and a knowledge of His will (8:32; 2 Peter 1:3; 3:18).

Paul asked, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (8:35). He answers his own question by saying, "Nothing is able to separate us from the love of God (which is ours) in Christ Jesus (8:37–39). He will give us the victory over sin and evil, as we abide in Him (John 15:4), and trust Him for that victory (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Even death had no more control over Paul. He knew that his spirit would go to be with his Lord when he died (Eccl 12:7). He had nothing to fear. His enemies had no power to harm him and all nature, even the wild animals were under God's control (Romans 8:38–39).

Paul said that "he faced death all day long..." (8:36) His enemies thought of him as "a sheep ready to be killed." He took this thought from the Psalm where the writer complained about his enemies. Rather, Paul said, the Christian could rejoice in the triumph of Christ. Eternal glory with Christ's had become the hope of every believer who suffered in a hostile world.



### TALK ABOUT

1. Why do Christians suffer.....?
2. We see our adoption into God's family in three parts. Name them.
  - a) God knew us from.....?
  - b) Now we live as sons in.....?
  - c) We wait for.....?
3. Are you walking in God's path for you? How do you know?

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# *Unit Studies*

*in*

# *Paul's letter to the*

# R o m a n s *Part 1*

*By*

F r e d M o r r i s

**Introduction:** Romans chapters 9–16 are covered in a separate book. Find each Scripture in your Bible and read the section first. Then study the notes. Ask a friend to study with you. Bible verses are quoted from the New International Version of the Bible. Discuss “Talk About” questions.

## UNIT 1. Introduction

### Saul (later called Paul) was a Jew, a son of Abraham

He was a Pharisee trained in the law of God. He was taught by the best teachers in Jerusalem at that time (Acts 5:24). Saul had fought against Christians who called their faith in Jesus Christ “the Way” (Acts 9:2; 22:4).

Saul was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians there when he had a vision and heard Jesus speaking to him (Acts 9:1:15). He believed “the truth” and was baptized. After that he went everywhere telling the gospel message. He preached to fellow Jews first, then to the Gentiles.

His letter to the Romans is a very important defense of the gospel. In God’s sight, Jews and Gentiles were the same, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Both groups needed to be saved.

Because Paul preached “Jesus Christ and the resurrection” he was put in prison. He wrote this letter to Christians – Jews and Gentiles.

How the Christian community began in Rome is not known, though some evidence suggests that it began about 50 CE. The historian Suetonius reports that in 49 C.E. the emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because of disturbances over ‘Chrestus’ (probably a mistake for ‘Christus’ or Christ).” Acts 18:1–3 reports that Aquilla and Priscilla were among those who were expelled and those who returned when Claudius was dead. Others who had returned may have included several from Paul’s extensive list in Chapter 16. It has always been my understanding that the Christian church in Rome was large by the time Paul wrote Romans.

There might have been tensions between the Gentile Christians and the Jewish Christians who had returned to Rome. This may have led Paul to write this letter to Jewish converts to establish them in their faith.

Another source speculated that chapter 13 may have been a response to the anti-Jewish attitude of the Romans, which was seeping into the Christian community. About this time there were deadly tax riots in Puteoli and a killing of believers in Alexandria. Evidence supports the theory that there was tension between the Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians.

As far as Rome was concerned, the authorities thought of the Jews and Christians as one and branded them “trouble makers.”

Every Christian should study the Book of Romans. “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last” – a righteousness that God demands of each one of us (Romans 1:17)!

#### TALK ABOUT

1. Who was Paul.....(Gal 2:1–10)?

God’s will for us is that we be like His Son (2 Cor 3:18). Everything that God allows to happen to a Christian has that goal. As we allow Him, God makes us like Jesus Christ. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. “For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work His good pleasure” (Phil 2:13 NASB).

We cannot imagine anything better than what God has planned for us. We trust Him to do what is best for us. He is the potter; we are the clay (Jer 18).

Paul lists a golden chain of events which God initiates. All these happen to “those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Rom 8:28):

- a) From eternity God foreknew them. He knows everything about us (Heb 4:12–13).
- b) He predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of His Son...(Rom 8:29).
- c) Those He predestined, He also called (Rom 8:30) – His call came to the ear and to the heart. He does not force anyone to do anything against their will.
- d) Those He called, He also justified – they are accepted as righteous in His sight.
- e) Those He justified, He also glorified – a future state in heaven.

In eternity God acted in all points (a–e). In His eyes all five steps in our salvation have already been completed. Yet He gives man the freedom to choose Him. He calls us, each one, by the preaching of the gospel (Rom 10:14–15). We are the objects of the ‘call’ (kaleo) that comes to us from God. The ‘call’ is God’s invitation to come into His Kingdom and be made like His Son, Jesus. God gives man the freedom to accept His invitation, His call, or to reject it.

God determined (pro-orizo) who these special ones were before they were born (Rom 8:29). His purpose for them was to conform them to the likeness of His Son, “that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

Holiness is God’s work of conforming us to the image of Christ. This process embraces the whole of sanctification.

All that God purposed for us is to honor our Savior and Lord. “That He might be the firstborn...” the great pattern and the leader of the Church.

He took captivity captive, and ascended first into heaven (Eph 4:8). We follow in His train.

The cycle of death and decay – Paul called it “the law of sin and death” – is broken when we obey the call of the gospel. The guilt of sin is taken away when we are justified in God’s sight.

As we live for God in this world, our likeness and identity with the Son is being perfected in suffering. And out of the sufferings of this life we will be caught away and glorified. This was God’s purpose from eternity (Eph 1:4).

#### TALK ABOUT

1. Are blessing and “riches in Christ” the same.....(8:17)?
2. Paul saw past his suffering to the.....he would have with Christ.
3. What does the Holy Spirit do while we wait in hope.....(8:27)?
4. Why do we live like poor saints when all the Father has is ours....?

God's promise and oath are like an anchor our souls in heaven (Heb 6:19). The Holy Spirit is God's deposit and our guarantee (Eph 1:13–14).

In this life we enjoy "the first fruits of the Spirit." Under the law, the first fruits was that first bundle of barley cut from the field. That first sheaf was the farmer's hope of a full harvest. The Holy Spirit is like the first fruits.

The Holy Spirit is the seal or guarantee (a deposit) that full adoption into God's family in heaven is in store. The whole world waits for harvest. "The harvest is the end of the age..." (Matt 13:39).

Believers wait eagerly for their "adoption as sons and the redemption of our bodies" (8:25; Eph 1:4). This is their hope. Christians are already sons of God, but they must wait for God to complete their adoption when Jesus Christ comes again to take them to His home in heaven (John 14:2–3). They are sure He will do this because the Holy Spirit in them is God's guarantee of future glory (Eph 1:14).

Our adoption into God's family is seen in three parts:

1. God knew His family and chose them in eternity (Eph 1:5).
2. They live in the world as His sons and daughters (Gal 3:26).
3. They wait for full adoption and the redemption of their bodies (8:23).

"For in this hope we were saved..." (8:24). When we put our faith in Jesus Christ we have this hope of future glory (Gal 5:5). Faith waits patiently "for what we do not yet have" (8:24–25). We cannot see it, so faith and hope combine to work patience in us. Hope may grow dim and faith may doubt, so Paul reminds the believers: "the (mighty) Spirit (of God) helps us in our weakness..." (8:26). The Holy Spirit helps our weak faith see the New Jerusalem up ahead (1 Cor 13:12).

In our suffering and waiting, we do not know how to pray. Should we ask God to deliver us from this pain? Or should we ask for more grace to bear it? Often, we do not know our own hearts, but the Holy Spirit knows us completely. "He pleads for us in harmony with God's own will" (8:27 TLB).

## ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD



### Read: Romans 8:28–39

Even in our suffering, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

Do you doubt that God is working for your good (Romans 8:28)? He works only good. He makes everything come together "for good" as we trust and obey. We do not always feel or see this happening, but we believe God's word of promise (Jer 29:11).

We have been called "to His purpose," not to our own agenda. We choose to follow and the Spirit shows us the way. If our way is through pain and suffering, He will work it out for our good. That is His promise (Gal 5:25).

As we "walk in the light," we accept what happens as God's plan for us, and He works all the details for our good. We give all back to Him. Easy places and hard places, given back to Him, will be for our good.

2. What was it that changed Paul.....(Acts 9:1–16)?
3. Who did he write this letter to.....(1:7)?
4. Why did Paul want to go to Rome.....(1:14–16)?

## PAUL, A SERVANT OF GOD



### Read: Romans 1:1–7

Most of Paul's letters begin like his letter to the Christian church at Rome. He called himself "a servant of Jesus Christ..." (1:1). He was Christ's slave (Lev 25:39). There were many slaves in Rome. A slave was not free to do as he wished. Paul was not a slave to any man, but to God. He thought of himself as not his own (1 Cor 6:20), but 'sold' to God and serving Him.

Paul, the Apostle, wrote this letter to "saints." The word "saints" looked back to the Old Testament – to the faithful few in Israel (Dan 7:22). In good times and bad, they were faithful to God. They stood ready to serve Him even unto death. God's saints today are like this remnant of godly people (Ezra 9:8).

Paul said he was "called to be an apostle and set apart" or sanctified. Sanctified means separated from sin to live a holy life. He was called out of the world of sinful men, never to go back to his old way of life. He belonged to Jesus. He believed the words of Jesus and obeyed them (Mark 1:15).

God called Paul by the gospel and told him to preach. Paul preached the "gospel God promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures" (1:2).

When the gospel is preached, God calls men and women: a) Out of the world of sin. b) To belong to Jesus Christ (1:6). c) To live holy lives (1:7). d) For His name's sake and to bring glory to His name (1:5).

What is the gospel that Paul preached? "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried. He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3). That is the message Paul preached.

## GOD GAVE MEN HIS PROMISE

God made a great promise to all men. It was "regarding His Son...who was a descendant of David" (1:3). When Adam sinned, God promised a 'seed.' This person was Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Gal 3:16). Jesus Christ came to earth and died on the cross to redeem men from sin. By His death He destroyed the power that Satan had over men because of sin (Col 2:15).

God gave His promise to men of faith:

- a) To Abraham and Isaac and Jacob (Gen 16:10; 21:13; 25:16).
- b) To King David (1 Kings 2:45; 2 Samuel 7:16).
- c) To the prophets (Isaiah 7:14; 11:1–5).
- d) And His promise is to us, also (Acts 2:39; Galatians 3:29).

All through the years men of faith like Abraham and David held on to God's promise. Then, in the fullness of time, Jesus was born (Luke 1:27). David had a great and wise son, Solomon, but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was greater

than Solomon (Matt 12:42). Jesus filled up all the promises God made to the Jewish ancestors and to David (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7).

## JESUS WAS ALL GOD AND ALL MAN

Jesus had two natures. His human nature and His God-nature. These two natures were perfectly joined in one person. He was “declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead” (1:4). When we declare something, we tell it out. God told the world that Jesus Christ was God. He did this by raising Him from the dead. Jesus Christ came from heaven, lived on earth, and returned to heaven again (Acts 1:9).

- He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Lk 1:35).
- He was anointed by God’s Spirit for His ministry (John 1:32–33).
- He was approved when the Father spoke from heaven (Matt 17:5).
- His body was resurrected from the dead (Acts 13:32–34).
- He was received back into heaven (Acts 1:9).
- He sat down at the right hand of The Majesty in heaven (Heb 1:1–3).

Jesus Christ is Lord of all (Phil 2:9–11). Paul made Jesus Christ ‘Lord’ or ruler of his life. He believed the Christians in Rome had done this also. To Paul Jesus was “Jesus Christ our Lord” and Israel’s Messiah (1:4).

“Through Him and for His name’s sake, we received grace...” (1:5). Paul said, “We received grace and apostleship...” God gave Paul a special vision of Christ (Acts 9:4–5). He called Paul to be an apostle, one sent with a message (2 Cor 8:23). Jesus’ twelve disciples were called apostles (Luke 6:13). Later many others were called ‘apostle.’

Paul remembered what he was like before Christ met him on the road to Damascus. He was a proud Pharisee who killed Christians (Acts 8:3).

A great light stopped Paul on the road to Damascus and he heard Jesus speak to him. From that day, Paul began to tell others about Jesus Christ.

Christians receive God’s grace. Grace is God’s favour toward sinners who deserve only death. First men receive grace when God forgives their sins. Then God gives them grace to live for Him. He fills them with His Spirit and sends them out to be “fishers of men” and to tell others about Him.

God calls men to “obedience that comes from faith” (1:5). God is loving and kind. He will forgive man’s sin for Christ’s sake. When we repent and confess our sins, God calls us to live a holy life – to be a saints! (1:6–7). We turn from our old ways and go God’s way (2 Corinthians 5:17).



### TALK ABOUT

1. How was Jesus declared to be the Son of God.....(1:4)?
2. Paul said he was (circle the correct answer) a Gentile a prophet an apostle
3. Can anyone be called a “saint”.....(1:7)?
4. Paul wished the Christians in Rome.....and.....(1:7)?
5. Why did Paul call himself a servant and not just an apostle (1:1)?

## ADAM DRAGGED ALL CREATION DOWN INTO DEATH



### Read: Romans 8:19–27

When Adam sinned, he dragged the whole creation down with him into death and decay (8:21). At that time, God “cursed the ground” because of Adam’s sin (Gen 3:17). Now the whole creation suffers pain and decay because of the curse. All creation hopes and waits for Christ to come again to redeem His people and bring in “a new heaven and a new earth” (8:19; 2 Peter 3:10–13).

Pollution and decay, sickness and death, remind us that all is not well with our person or with the world. Men have forgotten God’s commands and walk in their own selfish ways. They groan and complain as they walk.

Ever since Adam sinned, “the whole creation has been groaning...” Paul said (8:22). It has been subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the One who subjected it...” (8:20).

Paul spoke of creation as if it were a person. How does he know that creation groans, and waits, and is frustrated? It does not really matter as Paul is speaking of the Christian’s coming glory and the waiting period.

Looking at a world without God, Solomon said, “Everything is meaningless” (Eccl 1:2). The word ‘meaningless’ is the same as the word ‘frustration’ which Paul used here.

Part of the frustration comes because the creation was not willfully disobedient. It was God’s will to curse the earth and cause it to bring forth “thorns and thistles” (Gen 3:18).

Man is above nature. Man is God’s highest creation. God sent His only Son to die for man. Yet creation is so joined with mankind that Paul does not separate the two when he thinks of the coming day of liberation (8:21).

In this world, we do not know who is a son of God and who is pretending. But Judgment Day will reveal everything. The Church waits for Christ to come again and restore the first glory, the glory we had in Adam in the garden of Eden. Then creation was perfect in every way. Now man and nature share the pain of sin. They are bound up together in decay and death. Now, we both groan to be free from pain and suffering.



### TALK ABOUT

1. Paul said “all creation g.....?” Why does it groan?
2. What is creation waiting so eagerly for (8:23)?
3. Must Christians expect to suffer in this world? Why?
4. Who cries out “Abba, Father” in the believer’s heart?
5. Did any Old Testament priest or prophet ever call God “Father”?

## UNIT 22. LIVING IN THE HOPE OF FULL ADOPTION

We too, live every day waiting for Jesus Christ to come again: We “who have the first fruits of the Spirit”...wait eagerly (8:23).

The first fruits of the farmer’s harvest is like a guarantee of more to come.

Under the New Covenant, all that has changed. We can “come to God’s throne of grace with confidence to receive mercy and find grace to help us in our times of need” (Heb 4:16)

Because we are ‘family,’ we should not act like fearful slaves, but we should behave like God’s very own children, adopted into the bosom of His family and calling to Him “Father, Father” (8:15). “Abba,” is Aramaic for father.

No slave could come freely as a son does or call his master, “Father.” Slaves always came to the master in fear. Many Roman Christians were slaves. And many had been in bondage to idol worship before they believed the gospel. Their idol gods demanded homage.

The Jews always thought of themselves as “sons of God” because of their heritage. Now Paul gives “sons and daughters of God” a new meaning. Later he applies this same definition to “sons of Abraham” (9:7–8). Men and women are “sons and daughters” because they have the Holy Spirit within them. He cries out “Abba, Father.”

The Holy Spirit not only marks us as God’s children, He also assures us of our place in God’s family (Gal 4:6). He is the deposit and guarantee of full adoption.

God gave the title of “Son” to Jesus. He was the perfect Son and obeyed His father in everything (Matt 2:15). Now Christ gives the same title to His children. They are “sons and daughters” (2 Corinthians 6:18) and they can come freely (even boldly) to their Father in heaven (Hebrews 4:16).

## JOINT HEIRS WITH JESUS CHRIST

“Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if...we share in His sufferings...” (8:17; Matt 25:34). A person who inherits is an heir. God’s children are rich spiritually, but suffer physically.

Christ, as a Son, inherited from the Father and we share in that inheritance.

The Father in Jesus’ parable said to the elder son, “everything I have is yours” (Luke 15:31). We are all one family with Christ and we inherit with Him. His sons and daughters are His Church. They will serve Him in the world and suffer for Him (John 17:11).

The Jews were sure they were God’s inheritance and that they would inherit the Promised Land. God’s promise embraces all believers, and the inheritance is an abundance of spiritual blessings in God’s Kingdom. Jesus told Pilate, “My Kingdom is not of this world...My Kingdom is from another place” (John 19:36).

We are heirs only because of Christ’s suffering. Jesus told His disciples, “In the world you have tribulations and trials and distress and frustration...” He said. “But be of good cheer...I have overcome the world” (John 16:33 Amplified Bible).

“If we share in His sufferings...we may also share in His glory” (8:17). “Yet what we suffer now is nothing...to the glory He will give us later” (TLB).

Suffering did not stop Paul preaching. In his sufferings his faith grew stronger and he rejoiced (Col 1:24). The Holy Spirit made heaven seem so real to him, so certain, that he could rejoice in his trials.

Isaac Watts said this best when he wrote the words:

“I must fight if I would reign – Increase my courage, Lord!  
I’ll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy word.”

## UNIT 2. PAUL WANTED TO VISIT ROME



### Read: Romans 1:8 –13

Paul wrote, “I thank God...for you all...I remember you in my prayers at all times...” (1:8–9). Paul also wrote “always keep on praying for all the saints.” He did this himself. He prayed for the Christians in Rome. When he heard good reports of their faith, he prayed for them all the more (1:8).

Because many people visited the great city of Rome, news of their faith had spread to every corner of the known world. These Christians faced great trials. In the early churches many believers showed great courage and witnessed boldly for their Lord. Many were killed for their faith.

“I pray that now at last by God’s will the way may be opened for me to come to you” (1:10) Paul asked God to make it possible for him to go to Rome. He had long hoped to visit the Christians there. He may have prepared to go, but he was not able to go (1:13). He wanted to go because:

- The Lord had told him to go there (Acts 23:11).
- To see the Christian brothers and sisters in Rome.
- To give them some spiritual gift to make them stronger in their faith.
- To harvest more spiritual fruit from among them.
- To preach the gospel in Spain (1:15).



### TALK ABOUT

- Where had the Roman’s faith been spoken of.....(1:8)?
- Paul wrote to.....them in their.....(1:12)?
- What gift did Paul want to give to them?.....(1:11–12)?
- What blessing (gift) can you share with others.....?

## THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD



### Read: Romans 1:14–17

Paul said, “I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks...” (1:14). He felt a great burden or debt to preach the gospel “first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” God had freely forgiven him. Now he must share the good news with others: Greeks, barbarians (people who knew nothing of God), wise, foolish...anyone and everyone must hear!

He wrote, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then the Gentile” (1:16). The gospel was for all men! From first to last the gospel was “revealed from God.” If God had not given His word of truth; if God had not sent His Son, the Messiah, no one could be saved.

Almighty God has shown His love to us in Christ (John 3:16). Now He wants to give His own righteousness to those who believe in Jesus Christ. By faith they will live – with God’s life in them – and show forth His righteousness (Hab 2:4). Righteousness is a right relationship with God (2:13).

Natural man tries his best to be righteous, but he cannot. Man always fails (3:10). True righteousness belongs to God alone. God showed His righteousness:

- a) In His 'image' in man (Gen 1:27, Eph 4:24).
- b) In the Law.
- c) In the gospel (2 Tim 1:10).

In the beginning God gave Adam and Eve His righteousness as part of His image in them (Ephesians 4:24). Adam was righteous in his spirit. When Adam sinned, God's righteous nature in him was twisted and spoiled (Gen 3:12).

God sent Jesus Christ to give man back the righteous nature he lost when Adam sinned. By faith in Christ, sinful man is made righteous again. God gives the believer His own rightness. All man has to do is believe on Jesus Christ and God will declare him righteous (Acts 16:31).

A holy God said the person who believes is justified or made right in His sight. Once declared righteous, that person will be kept righteous by the shed blood of Jesus (1 John 1:7–10). The power of Jesus' blood is always there to cleanse those who confess their sin and turn from it (Romans 8:2–4). This truth was "first for the Jew," then for the Gentile. Paul included all men. The Jew came first historically, but not in God's favor (1:16).



### TALK ABOUT

- 1. How does God give us His gift.....(1:16)?
- 2. How is God's righteousness shown.....(1:17; 5:8–11)?
- 3. How can a person be right with God.....?
- 4. Are you ashamed of the gospel?.....?

Paul thought of those who had never heard the gospel. He said, "What may be known about God is plain. Since the creation of the world...His eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen" (1:20).

No man can see God and live, so God revealed Himself to man in creation, conscience and history. Finally God revealed Himself in Christ (Heb 1:1). God does not hide Himself. He can be seen in His creation. His divine nature can be known "from what He has made," so men are without excuse.

## UNIT 3. MEN HAVE NO EXCUSE



### Read: Romans 1:18 – 32

Paul is about to introduce the subject that fills the first half of the Book of Romans which is justification by faith. He will explain how God justifies the vilest of sinners and accepts them in Christ.

Paul begins with the 'depravity of man.' Man is lost in sin.

The cure for man's sin is the gospel of Jesus Christ (1:16–17).

God's patience with sinners is infinite – 2 Peter 3:9,15

Yet God's patience has a limit – Gen 6:3. Two aspects or opposite sides of God's character

God is perfectly righteous and just.

The believer's body is 'dead' to sin's appeal. His spirit is alive, for Christ has pardoned him and given Him new life (8:10; John 5:24). Even our dying bodies have a new quality of life. We are quickened by God's Spirit living in us (Col 2:13 KJV). His immortal life flows into our mortal bodies. His eternal Spirit moves over our natural spirits to bring us peace and to change the way we think and act.

Because of Christ's life in us, we have no reason or obligation to obey our old sinful natures. And, as we yield to God's Spirit in us, we slowly lose our desire for the old ways.

## SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD



### Read: Romans 8:12–15

Paul has given us an overview of God's work in the believer (8:1–11). The Trinity worked for our salvation. God has done everything for us sinners:

He gave the law which pointed to man's sinful mind (8:7).

He sent the Son "to be sin offering" (8:3).

Only those who have the Holy Spirit can claim to be sons (8:9).

The old sinful nature will shout to get its own way. It will demand attention, but the believer has no obligation to respond or cooperate. If we fall back into our old ways, the Holy Spirit is right there within us to make us feel guilty and help us to repent. Jesus said the Spirit would "convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8).

The Holy Spirit will speak to a believer again and again about a sin in his or her life. If the believer goes on in his sinful ways, the Spirit will withdraw and he will not hear God's voice any longer (Eph 4:30).

"Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God...For you received the Spirit of sonship" (8:14). You are "of the same family" and heirs with Christ (Heb 2:11–12; 8:17).

Only 'family' will be saved from judgment, as it was in Noah's ark. Those who refused to join the 'family' were shut out!



### TALK ABOUT

- 1. Who helps the new believer control his lusts and passions?
- 2. How do we get the Holy Spirit to live in us?
- 3. The Holy Spirit assures us of that we are .....of God?
- 4. What happens to those who refuse to join God's family?

## UNIT 21. WE ARE NOT LIKE FEARFUL SLAVES



### Read: Romans 8:15–18

Under the Old Covenant, no one called God "Father." Men could approach God only through the High Priest of Israel. Even He fell short of God's standard and feared God's judgment.

Christian. When we fail, God's Spirit points to our sin and gives us grace to repent and confess our sin to God (1 John 1:9). He is our Counselor and guide. Jesus said, "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit's presence and power in the believer brings shame each time we miss God's standard of holiness (7:7–13). He prompts us to confess our sin and repent.

God's law of "life in the Spirit" is greater than the sin-death law. As we trust Christ, we continue to be set free by this greater law. Here Paul tells us how we can overcome our old sinful nature. Not eradicate it, but 'sit on it' and hold it down! We have the Holy Spirit to help us, but not many believers recognize the Holy Spirit as a special gift from God (Eph 1:13–14).

### OUR MIND CONTROLS OUR WILL

The mind controls a person's actions. The sinful mind is hostile to God. The sinner has a mind out of control. The sinful mind will not yield to God's Spirit and "those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God" (8:7–8).

Jesus said, "Out of men's hearts (minds) come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'." (Mark 7:21–22).

Before we are saved, we set our minds on sinful things. Now we set our minds on the things of God. The Spirit tells us what to think about and what to do (Phil 4:6–8). We "live by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit" (8:5; Gal 5:25). As we yield to the Spirit, He changes our desires and we begin to want what the Holy Spirit wants (8:5).



#### TALK ABOUT

1. Who can condemn the person who trusts in Christ? (circle one) the devil                      no one                      the law
2. Paul names two laws that work in the world. Can you name them? .....(8:2)?
3. How does the Holy Spirit help us please God.....(8:5)?

### UNIT 20. IF ANYONE DOES NOT HAVE THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST



#### Read: Romans 8:9–10 (Galatians 5:19–23)

Paul said, "You are controlled by your new nature if you have the Spirit of God living in you" (8:9 The Living Bible). Paul makes it very plain. If you have not trusted Christ as your Savior, you do not have the Holy Spirit living in you and you will continue to live as you always did. You may tidy up the outside, but you will yield to your sinful mind (the law of sin and death) and you will remain an enemy of God.

"But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin (or in respect to sin), yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness" (Romans 8:10).

His hatred of sin is demonstrated by the flood and the cross.

The Holy Spirit was always in the world, striving with the spirits of men (Gen 6:1–6). But men rejected God's truth and violence filled the earth. The world in Noah's day was exceedingly wicked, so much so that God wiped the earth clean and started again with a remnant of mankind, Noah and his family.

### TRANSGRESSIONS OF THE OLD COVENANT

What happened to the sins committed under the Old Covenant? God accepted the blood of sacrifice to 'cover' the sins of the people and of the nations so that He could draw near to them.

Did God forgive their sins and take them away? No, not for a moment! "The gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshipper" (Hebrews 9:9).

All the sins committed under the Old Covenant were rolled forward to the cross. We might think of the Old Covenant as a huge tidal wave or tsunami. As it rolled across the centuries it gathered up all the filth and debris of wickedness and carried it forward. All the sin and filth of all time was rolled forward to the cross where our Lord Jesus bore it away forever for those who believe. He bore the curse of sin past, present and future, in His own body.

Andrews Murray said, "The sins of the ages of the First Covenant, which had only figuratively been atoned for, had gathered up before God."

Christ, "through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, to cleanse our consciences from acts (sins) that lead to death...For this reason Christ is the mediator of a New Covenant...now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:14–15).

What happens to sins committed under the New Covenant? God forgave them at the cross. Paul wrote to believers, "God made you alive with Christ. He forgave all our sins..." – past, present and future (Col 2:14). All the sins committed under the New Covenant look back to the cross: "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree..." (1 Peter 2:24).

"There was One who was willing,  
To die in my stead  
All the sins of my life to forgive.  
All the way to the cross  
He was willing to tread,  
That a soul so unworthy might live"

### THEY DID NOT GIVE GOD THANKS

God gave all men and women the means by which they could know Him: a) In creation (Psalm 19). b) In conscience (Rom 2:15). c) The testimony of godly men (Gen 6:9). d) In the Person of the Son (Hebrews 1:1; John 4:42). e) In the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:2–5).

God was never without witness in the world (Acts 14:17).

But men and women were not thankful for the revelation God gave them. And God left them to their own ignorance and sin.

There was nothing man could do to get back into fellowship with God, so God took the initiative. He revealed His righteousness in the law and then in the gospel. There is no other righteousness; God alone is righteous.

God imputes His righteousness to us when we believe the gospel. And we 'walk' in that righteousness by faith (1:17).

## THEY SUPPRESS THE TRUTH

Three times Paul said, "God gave them over V 24,26,28 – God left them to go their own way – down, down, down. God's righteous decree was death (Rom 6:23). Gross immorality took over and violence filled the earth as men and women worshipped their bodies. A medical doctor told my wife, "When they come to me for treatment, they are completely messed up, not just physically, but mentally and psychologically."

When God's law of marriage is flaunted, men and women suffer. Ignore natural laws and you will get hurt. And when you break God's laws, you will suffer the consequences.

The Pharisees suppressed the truth. Their ungodly lives and false teaching prevented others from entering heaven.

One of the truths sinners suppress is the truth of their own sinfulness – "You are Okay," they say. "Everyone is doing it."

In all this sort of talk, we can hear Satan's deceitful words to Eve, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat...'" (Genesis 3:1).

God said there is nothing in natural man that would appeal to Him. Nothing that could help man get out of the pit of sin and shame.

Yet God loves us intensely, sins and all. There is no person too disgusting for God to touch with His grace. Jesus touched the leper (Matt 8:1–3) and, down through the centuries, God has saved the vilest of sinners.

Good works cannot make us worthy of Christ's touch...it is pure grace.

Jesus said the Pharisees suppressed the truth " (Matt 23:14).

## GOD GAVE THEM OVER TO GO ON IN SIN

In Romans 1 Paul introduced the sin problem. God revealed Himself to men and women in many different ways as we have seen. He gave them a conscience that could know right from wrong. They were not grateful and turned away from the Creator to worship the sun and stars and idols they fashioned with their own hands.

Man rebelled against his Creator God. Those who turn away from God soon become depraved and immoral.

Because of sin "God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth (1:18).

God revealed His wrath against sin when Jesus Christ died on the cross. God poured out His wrath on the Son "who bore the sins of the whole world in His body on the tree." He bore the curse of sin for our sakes (Gal 3:13).

Paul speaks of 'code of law' as the expression of God's Holy will as it is revealed to us in the Bible. But Satan has his law also. Satan's law controls natural man's sinful nature. Paul called Satan's law "the law of sin and death." The law of sin and death is like a natural, physical law and just as certain to punish the one who breaks it.

That we are forgiven and justified by God is wonderful, but what of the old sin nature that has held us in its grip? We have been "slaves to the law of sin," operating in our flesh. That old sin nature does not go away (Gal 5:17).

If you break a natural law you get hurt. If you fall from a tree, the law of gravity causes you to hit the ground hard. Likewise, sin always brings judgment. When you do wrong there are consequences. God's judgment may not come in this life, but it is stored up for those who reject His Law and His Savior.

Drop a piece of paper. It will fall to the ground. The natural law of gravity, pulls it down. Put your hand out and catch it. Your hand holds the paper up, so that it cannot fall. Your hand is like God's power which comes to us by His Spirit. The law of sin and death pulls us down, but God's Spirit, in control of the believer's life, holds that person to the higher moral standard God has set for His children.

Sin is quick to condemn us. After it entices us and we do wrong, sin brings out the God's law and reads it to the guilty sinner. Christ came and died so that "all the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us..." (8:4).

## OVERCOMING BY THE POWER OF GOD'S SPIRIT



### Read: Romans 8:5–9

From the day we are born again (John 3:5,8), the believer lives "according to the Spirit" (8:4). We have a new power living in us (Eph 1:13). The Spirit's power sets us free from claims "the law of sin and death" made on us. Paul called the Spirit's power "the law of the Spirit of life," or the law of the life-giving Spirit (8:2). Law here means controlling force. Sin controlled our lives.

Faith in Christ frees us from guilt and brings us the power of God's Spirit (8:9). Up to this point, Paul has only spoken of the Holy Spirit twice!

The moment a person believes, he or she receives the Holy Spirit. The person may not feel any different. If they are waiting for a great feeling, they may be disappointed. They can be sure they have the Holy Spirit because that is what God promised.

The Holy Spirit comes to take up residence in the believer. He is there to help us control our thoughts and actions. The Spirit does not make the day to day decisions, he leaves that to us. But He is always present to show us the way of truth (John 16:13).

"He lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17). Count on the Spirit's help. Ask for more of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). As we allow the Spirit of God to "control our minds," we have peace in our hearts (8:6; 12:2; Gal 5:22–25).

The Spirit does many things: "He convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). He does the same work in the



In chapter 8 Paul turned away from the “written code” of law which he could not live up to (chapter 7). He cried out in anguish “Who will rescue me from this body” on which the law pronounced a death sentence. He affirms that only Jesus Christ could help him (Rom 7:24–25).

So he opens chapter 8 with a new perspective. God’s law no longer condemning the believer (8:1), Every Christian is controlled by “the law of the spirit of life.” The Holy Spirit has written this new “law of love” on his heart or her heart according to God’s promise (Jer 31:31–34; Hebrews 8:10).

This new law (the New Covenant), which God promised long ago, is greater far than “the law of sin and death.” For what the law (the written code) was powerless to do – in providing grace to help the sinner overcome sin – God did by sending His own Son...” (Romans 8:2–3; Col 2:14).

## JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN JESUS

God gives us His righteousness to:

Make us right in His sight. “God justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (3:26). Paul said, “There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the power of the life-giving Spirit...has freed me from the vicious circle of sin and death” (8:1–2 TLB).

Enable us to stand against our fleshly nature (Gal 5:17). We put to death (continue to do this) the evil deeds done in the body (8:13)

Overcome our weaknesses. The Holy Spirit gives us power to do this.

Paul knew that: a) God’s law condemned him (3:23). b) His own acts condemned him (7:15). c) Satan said to him, “you are a sinner.” d) Other people condemned him.

However, Paul assured the believer that he or she is freely and completely forgiven and that God does not condemn the one who has faith in Jesus. Jesus took that condemnation for them when he carried their sins to the cross and died in their place. By faith in Jesus, they are freely pardoned.

Jesus Christ came “in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering” (8:3). In this act of mercy, “God condemned sin” in sinful man once for all.

To overcome sin and temptation, we must keep our eyes fixed on Christ (Heb 12:1–2), not on what others say or on how poorly or how well we do. When we take our eyes off Christ and look at ourselves, we are always disappointed.

Paul often used the example of the Olympic runner. Every one who runs in the race, runs to win the prize (Phil 3:14). Every runner disciplines himself and trains hard. Every runner keeps his eye on the goal.

## THE REALITY OF DAILY LIVING

All men are born with a sinful nature and live under the law of sin and death. Their condition is hopeless. That is why God stepped in and sent His Son to die for sinners. The moment Adam sinned, God promised a remedy, a Redeemer (Gen 3:15). God kept His promise in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:15).



## TALK ABOUT:

1. Why all the evil in the world?
2. Did God’s Spirit stop speaking to the people in Romans 1:29–32?
3. God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world (Acts 17:30–31). Who will be the Judge?

## UNIT 4. THE JEWS HAD NO EXCUSE



### Read: Romans 2:1–5

Paul had described the terrible sins of the heathen (Romans 1:28–32). He said God had judged them by “giving them over” or leaving them to go deeper and deeper into sin (Romans 1:24,26,28).

He wrote to his fellow Jews who may have pointed the finger at these vile sinners: “You therefore have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else...” (2:1). He asked his brother Jews, “Do you think you will escape God’s judgment” by unfairly judging others (2:3)?

The Jews thought they were better than all the other people and nations on the earth. In their own eyes, they stood closer to God. Paul was a Jew himself. He was a very high class Jew (Acts 21:39). He knew well how proud his people were of the trust God had given them (Rom 9:4–5). To them all other peoples were ‘Gentile dogs’ and to be despised.

Jesus said, “Do not judge, or you will be judged” (Matt 7:1). At the same time Paul said we must judge evil (Eph 5:11). The Jews judged others while doing the same things themselves. They were hypocrites. Did the sins listed in 1:29–31) apply to them, or to some other age?

The Pharisees, the would-be judges stand at the bar, condemned on the same charges as the Gentiles. Their lives showed the same pattern of behavior – knowing what God required yet willfully ignoring His demands. Their attempt to cover up their own sins would not turn aside God’s judgment (2:3).

## FAULTY WITNESS vs GOD’S TRUTH

The Jews’ judgment of others was based on ignorance and prejudice. God would judge them according to the truth (2:2). The basis of God’s judgment is truth. We only know in part, God knows everything perfectly.

The Jews had ignored God’s kindness while He waited long for them to repent. He had been very patient with Israel (Acts 17:27,30; 2 Peter 3:10,15). They presumed upon God’s kindness and cast aside His grace, the very thing which was meant to lead them to repentance. So God’s wealth of grace turned into a wealth of wrath, which they had stored up for themselves by their own actions (2:4–5). God judges thoughts and actions, not persons.

A man’s ways may seem right to him, “but the Lord weighs the heart” (Proverbs 21:2). “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death” (Prov 14:12).

God's anger against sin is great and terrible. If men do not repent they will not receive His grace and mercy (Heb 10:30–31).

Only by faith in Jesus Christ can we obtain salvation (Eph 2:8–9). Peter told the Jewish Rabbis, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).



### TALK ABOUT

1. Why do men have "no excuse".....(2:1)?
2. God's kindness leads men toward.....(2:4)?
3. How does God know what each person has done? (circle one)  
He keeps a book      He is Judge      He knows everything
4. What is the reward for doing good.....(2:10)?
5. Why should we not judge others.....(2:1)?

## UNIT 5.      GOD WILL GIVE EACH A REWARD



### Read: Romans 2:6–11.

"God will give to each person (a reward) according to what he has done" (Rom 2:6–7). The reward would go to those who "by persistence in doing good works seek glory and honor and immortality..."

Their works did not save them, but their good worship showed that they sprang out of the root of them.

The whole life of the believer is in view here. Many begin well, but do not go on. Paul said, run (the race of life) in such a way as to get the prize." The prize is the Master's "Well done!" (1 Corinthians 9:24).

The Jews would not escape the truth of their own Scriptures. They had the witness of their own prophets and they had rejected it. The verdict would be based on their actual behavior (see Matt 23). It would not be based on their failure to reach to the high ideals or their superior knowledge of the law.

Paul contrasts "those who persist in doing good" (both Jews and Gentiles) and their reward with "those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth (or suppress the truth by their wicked deeds) and follow evil" (2:7–8). The first will receive eternal life with Jesus Christ. (In other Scriptures Paul says men and women are not justified by these good deeds, but by the blood of Christ; 5:9; Gal 6:8). Their reward is glory in heaven, reigning with Christ in the splendor of God's presence. They will receive honor when their Master says "Well done" at the end of the race (2 Tim 1:10).

Paul makes it quite clear that these blessings are for the faith-righteous men and women, whoever they may be. Such living, driving faith produces those people who "do good" in God's sight (James 2:14–17). These men and women of faith will be rewarded, not on account of but according to their works.

The second group will receive "trouble and distress" in this present life and "wrath and anger" on the day of God's judgment (John 3:36). "For God does not show favoritism" (Romans 2:11).

Sin was like an enemy and Paul's life was like a battleground. He fought back hard. The spiritual man gazed at the ideal, Christ, but his natural self ran after sin. He did not want to give in to it, but sin won again and again. His life was like a hell on earth and he felt he could not go on.

"What a wretched man I am!" he cried out. "Who will rescue me from this body of death" (7:24)?

When Paul looked up from the battlefield, he saw Jesus Christ on the cross dying for him. Christ's death was his only hope. He must keep his eyes fixed on Jesus Christ (Heb 12:2).

'I am a slave to God's law of love,' he said to himself. 'I don't have to give in to this enemy any longer. Christ defeated sin and death for me when He died on the cross. I am one person in Him. I will not yield to my old nature.'

The old law with its penalty of death was gone, and in its place was the law of Christ's love (James 1:25).

In Christ, no one can condemn you (8:1). If God says you are not guilty, who will charge you? Believers have God's promise, "I will remember their sins no more" (Heb 8:12). The Evil One may stand against you as a person, but he cannot threaten you with your past. In Christ, your past, present and future sins are washed away by the blood of Christ (John 1:29)! You are under the blood!



### TALK ABOUT

1. The marriage of a man and a woman is a picture of? (circle one)  
the law      Christ and the Church      baptism
2. Paul said the Law showed him: (circle the correct answer)  
he was a Jew      he was a sinner      God hates sin
3. What happens to the Christian's old, sinful nature (Gal 5:16–18)?

## UNIT 19.      LIVING IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

**Introduction:** Note the sharp contrast from chapter 7, where Paul struggled with the law. The law, he said, "is holy, righteous and good." Yet the law condemned him (Romans 7:11–12). Near the end of chapter 7, Paul breaks out of his struggle into the sunshine of grace.

In chapter 8 Paul is living under the control of "the law of the spirit of life" (Romans 8:2), which dwelled within him and gave him victory over his old nature.

"The law of sin and death" was still present with him, but it had to give way to the greater "law of the Spirit." He wrote to the Christians at Galatia, "Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify (or feed) the desires of the sinful nature" (Galatians 5:16).

## WE ARE NOT CONDEMNED



### Read: Romans 8: 1–4

before in this letter to the Romans (4:15; 5:13).

Apart from the law, sin is not active. Sin is dormant until a line is drawn, then it urges the sinner to 'step over the line.'

If wet cement has a sign on it saying, "Keep off! Wet cement," someone will surely put their handprint in it. The sign is not at fault, but the person who trespasses. Paul agreed that in the presence of the law "sin sprang to life...and the commandment that that was intended to bring life actually brought death" (7:10). "Sin deceived me," he said.

Sin does deceive us. It says, "You will enjoy this," or "everyone else is doing it," or "nobody will know." It was not the law's fault.

Paul said, "the law is holy, righteous and good," but it puts men to death when it convicts them with the words, "the wages of sin is death" (6:23; Gal 6:7-8).

"The law is holy...righteous and good..." (7:12). Paul loved God's law and studied it with great energy. He tried his best to keep the law, but it was so far above him that he always failed (3:23).

"Did that which is good, then, become death to me?" he asked (7:13). The answer is that the sentence of death shook men and helped them repent. The gulf between God's demand and what man's sinful nature produced was enormous. It helped Paul realize the trouble he was in with the law and how much he needed a Savior.



### TALK ABOUT

1. Paul lived under the law and tried to obey it. Did the law help him?
2. What did Paul mean when he said he was "a slave to sin"?
3. The law pointed to man's sin and his need of a Savior \_\_\_ True?

## UNIT 18. A LIFE OF HOLINESS



### Read: Romans 7:14-25

"The law is spiritual; I am unspiritual..." (7:14). This verse has puzzled the best of Bible scholars. It seems most likely that Paul was thinking of his old nature as opposed to his new nature in Christ (Gal 5:16-17). He contrasted "the written code" (Col 2:14), which could not help him, with "the law of the Spirit" which God promised to write on every believer's heart (Jer 31:31-34). Paul called this "the law of the spirit of life" (Romans 8:2).

When we are saved, the old Adam-nature is not destroyed. Our old and new natures stand side by side, but they are not equals. We know from Paul's life that he starved his old nature so that it was soon dwarfed by his towering new nature (Phil 4:12).

The old nature hides, waiting an opportunity to bring our new Christ-nature down into sin. Paul laments, "I desire to do good, but I cannot carry it out" (7:18). The reason for this was that "nothing good lives in me" (in Paul's old nature). There was nothing in Paul's old nature that could help him keep God's law. And nothing in his old nature that could help him live the new life in Christ.



### TALK ABOUT

1. Who boasted that they kept God's law.....(2:17)?
2. The law judges men, but God's grace.....?
3. Is the praise of men important to you.....(2:29)?
4. God gave man a .....to help him know right from wrong.
5. Good works must grow out of faith \_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False (Jam 2:17) ?

## ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT



### Read: Romans 2:12-16

"All who sin apart from the law will perish..." in their sins. God gave the Gentiles the light of conscience, "The requirements of the law are written on their hearts" (2:12). They will not be condemned for failing to live up to a code of law they knew nothing about.

"All who are under the law will be judged by the law" (2:12). Paul noted that it was not enough to hear the law read on the Sabbath, or even to study the law as he had done. One must obey the law perfectly, and no man could do that (2:13; Jas 2:10). Nevertheless, those who worshipped God from the heart "will be declared righteous." God declares such persons righteous now by faith (Gen 15:6), and He will declare them righteous on judgment day. Society's standard is not God's standard. Comparing yourself with others is of no help.

On that judgment day, "God will judge men's secrets..." (2:16). This will take place only once. Everything will be open before the Judge, Jesus Christ (Rev 20:11-13).

God gives every new life a conscience. We all know we should behave in a certain way, but we fail to do so. Some Gentiles were sensitive to their consciences. They knew in their hearts the difference between right and wrong.

"Their moral awareness will serve in place of the law to judge them" (2:14-15).

"When Gentiles do by nature" means the natural man who did not have the law to direct or restrain his actions. After he acted, the man's conscience either accused him or defended his action (2:15). The actions of some Gentiles were commended by their consciences, even though they did not have the law to guide them. Some pagan societies cared for their sick and honored parents. These acts were commanded under the law of Moses.

The Jews thought of God's law as a charm. They thought it would make them immune from God's wrath against sin.

We might think of a court room with God as Judge. All those before the court are charged with speeding. At some time a policeman stopped them and gave them a ticket for speeding.

They had different excuses: "I did not see the speed-limit sign."

"I knew the State speed limit was 55 mph, but I wasn't looking..."

"I knew the speed limit, but I was keeping up with the traffic..."

The Judge will say to each one, "You are without excuse" (1:20;2:1).

If the Jews' ancient privileges and chosen status meant anything, it meant a greater responsibility fell on them. Again and again the prophets told the people, "God has chosen you, therefore obey Him" (Amos 3:2).

Again and again, Israel refused God's message and drove away or killed God's messengers (Amos 7:10-17).

Through His prophet Isaiah God said to Israel, "All day long I have held out My hands to an obstinate people..." (Isaiah 65:2). They refused God's grace and they were judged as Moses had said (Deut 4:26-28).



### TALK ABOUT

1. What did Moses prophesy about Israel (Deut 4:26-28)?
2. Did everything the prophets said come to pass? Why?
3. Will God reward those who are faithful to Him (2:6-7)?

## UNIT 6. THE JEWS DID NOT HONOUR GOD



### Read: Romans 2:17-24

These eight verses divide into three major thoughts:

The four "if" clauses: a) "If you can call yourself a Jew..." b) "If you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God..." c) "If you know His will and approve...because you are instructed in the law..." d) "If you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have the law...and truth -"

The four 'ifs' sum up the claims the Jews made for themselves.

All the 'ifs' center on knowing God's revealed law. Two verses (2:21-22) condemn the Jews for not keeping their own law.

Paul's conclusion (2:23-24) is that the Jews stand under God's wrath. He supports this conclusion by quoting a verse from the prophet Isaiah (Isa 52:5), "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

The pious Jew thought he was above all others. He relied on the fact that he knew God's law and he "bragged about his relationship to God" (2:17). Paul could speak like this to his fellow Jews because he had lived with the same arrogance and done the same things himself.

Before Paul met Jesus, he had trusted and served the law. He believed this was the way to gain favor with God and be righteous in God's sight (9:31-33). Men and women had to come to the "teachers of the law" to get the benefits of their great learning. The "teachers of the law" were sincere, but sincerely wrong because they trusted in their knowing the law to make them righteous in God's sight (9:31-32). They 'stumbled' over the One God sent to redeem them, Messiah Christ and rejected God's salvation.

## SOLD AS A SLAVE TO SIN



### Read: Romans 7:5-6

"When we were controlled by the sinful nature, sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death" (7:5). The law was not bad, but the sinful passion it aroused were bad. Man's nature is spoiled by the sin we inherited from Adam. So that God said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23).

Paul said, "We bore fruit for death." Our sinful nature could not produce anything righteous or holy. The only 'fruit' that comes out of a life that is under the law is the fruit of sin and death - "the wages of sin is death" (6:23).

Why this bad fruit? Because sinful passions aroused by the law work themselves out through our bodies. We rebel against the law and break it!

Paul called the law "the old way of the written code" (Col 2:14). The law once bound us, but we 'died' to the law. Released from the law, we serve in the new way of the Spirit. Life in Christ is called "the new way of the Spirit" (Romans 7:6).

The way of the Spirit is a new life of fellowship and service (6:14). This new way of "life in the Spirit" is just the opposite to the old way of life under a written code of laws and regulations (Jer 31:31).

## PAUL'S OLD WAY OF LIFE



### Read: Romans 7:7-13

Paul used his own early life as an example of a person living under the law (7:7-13). Then he speaks of his present life as a Christian (7:14-25).

He said, "I would not have known what sin was except through the law" (7:7). The law was not neutral. When it said, "Don't covet," it made him want to covet (7:8; Ex 20:17).

The law was like a grass seed in Paul's shirt. It irritated and bothered him because it pointed to his sin-nature. And it stirred up his sin-nature to want to disobey God's command. And, without Christ, he had no power to control his sin nature. When the law says, "Don't look or don't touch," it makes us want to look or touch all the more!



### TALK ABOUT

1. Man's nature is spoiled by sin \_\_ True \_\_ False?
2. We always have this sinful.....to trouble us (Gal 5:17).
3. Paul called the law "the old was of the written code" (Col 2:14).
4. What is the new way that is better than the law?

## APART FROM THE LAW

"Apart from the law, sin is dead" (7:8 NIV). (Paul used 'apart' as a preposition meaning 'without' or 'separate from'). He liked this thought. He had used it twice

- Give in to it Stand against it
- Christian baptism is a testimony to all that a believer is (circle one) Living for Jesus Without sin A church member
  - How can we be set free from sin's power.....?
  - After we 'choose Christ' what else must we do.....?

## UNIT 17. IN CHRIST YOU DIED TO THE LAW



### Read: Romans 7:1–4

Paul returns to the subject of law-keeping. All his fellow Jews – Paul calls them “brothers, men who know the law.” They had not converted to Christ, but tried to keep the law of Moses. And they told Paul that he should keep it also. He said to them, “The law has authority over a man only as long as he lives” (7:1). We know that the law, any law, has no authority over a person after he or she has died. The law concerns those who are alive.

The apostle used marriage to illustrate what he meant. God honored marriage by using this symbolism of husband and wife in the Old Testament. He said to His people Israel, “I remember...how as a bride you loved Me” (Jer 2:2).

The marriage law binds a man and a woman while both are alive. If the husband dies, the wife is released from “the law of marriage” (7:2). She is free to marry again.

“So, my brothers,” Paul wrote, “You also died to the law, through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another...Him who was raised from the dead...” (7:4). “Your husband, your master, used to be the Jewish law; but you ‘died’ as it were, with Christ on the cross; and since you are ‘dead’, you are no longer ‘married’ to the law, and it has no more control over you “(7:4 TLB).

The Christian has ‘died’ to the law, so he is free to marry a new partner, even Christ. “By dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law...to belong (as a spouse does) to another” (Rom 7:4,6).

God’s marriage law, given before Adam sinned (Gen 2:24), stands as a great example to us. The marriage of a man and woman is a picture of our joining with Jesus Christ in His life, death and resurrection (Eph 5:29–30).

Once, law was the believer’s master. Now Christ is the believer’s ‘husband’ and Master. Christ puts love in place of fear; grace in the place of rules, and freedom in place of chains. He loves us more than any human husband could ever love his wife (Eph 5:25–26). And in His love we “bear fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4; Phil 1:11).



### TALK ABOUT

- When is a wife released from the law of marriage.....(7:2)?
- Does the law have authority over us after we die.....(7:1)?
- What law did God give before Adam sinned.....(Gen 2:24)?
- Did Jesus take away the law’s authority over us (Matt 22:37–40)?
- How do we live in “the new way of the Spirit.....(7:4)?
- How did Jesus Christ “fulfill the Law?”.....?

## PAUL, THE PHARISEE, MET CHRIST

When Paul met Jesus Christ, all his trust in the law was swept away. He saw clearly that the Jews did not obey, indeed could not obey the law they were teaching to others.

He asked them, “You who teachers others, do you not teach yourself” (2:20)? Paul accused them of teaching the law, “You shall not steal,” then stealing from others. He said they taught others, “You shall not commit adultery,” but were adulterers themselves. They spoke against idols, yet they worshipped self-righteousness and greed. The Jews said they did not worship idols, even hated them, but they were all to ready to follow the disgusting heathen ways of their neighbors.

“You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?” Paul asked. Common people stored valuables at the temples. They bragged about keeping the law which said “You shall have no other God’s before Me” (Ex 20:3), but borrowed heathen patterns of worship from the Gentiles.

Their sins were well known. Jesus spoke “woes” against them (Matt 23). Now Paul pointed to the same sins. They boasted about knowing and keeping the law, but they did not honor God by keeping it (2:23). Because of this “God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles,” Paul said.

## A MAN IS A JEW IF HE IS ONE IN HIS HEART



### Read: Romans 2:25–29.

God commanded Abraham to circumcise all the males in his household (Genesis 17:9–14). Abraham obeyed God. All Jews circumcised their boy babies when they were eight days old.

Under the Old Covenant circumcision was the sign that that a man kept God’s covenant. Paul called it “a sign and a seal” (Rom 4:11). The sign showed that a man obeyed God’s law. The sign did not make the man ‘righteous’ or change his nature in any way as Paul pointed out (2:28–29).

Paul said, “A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly” (2:28; 9:8). “A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly” and has the faith and obedience of Abraham. A man or woman must have faith in the living God. He or she must have the Holy Spirit in his or her life (Rom 8:9).

The Holy Spirit ‘circumcises’ the believer’s heart (Col 2:11). As we yield to the Holy Spirit, old ways will be ‘cut off’ and new habits will take their place. “Such a man will receive praise from God,” Paul said.

“Those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He (God) will give eternal life” and they shall never perish.



### TALK ABOUT

- What does it mean to “circumcise the heart” (Col 2:11)?

## UNIT 7. NO ONE SEEKS GOD



### Read: Romans 3:1–4

Paul told his fellow Jews that being a son of Abraham (John 8:39), was not a passport to heaven. The Chief priests and teachers of the law did not agree with Paul and they objected to his preaching.

Paul asked them two questions and answered them in this chapter :

1. “What advantage...is there in being a Jew?
2. What value is there in circumcision?” (3:1)?

The Jews said everyone must keep the Law of Moses (Ex 20). But Jews who knew the law and practiced circumcision still broke the law (2:27). And they added their own traditions (Gal 1:14). Jesus said they had made their traditions equal to God’s commands and they did not keep either (Matt 15:6). Paul pointed them away from their traditions to “the very words of God” (3:2). He sought to teach them “the whole council of God” (Acts 20:27), not the traditions of their fathers.

Paul said the Jews had many advantages over the heathen Gentiles. God gave the nation of Israel all the privileges of a special people, all the care that a gardener would give to a special vine (Isaiah 5:1–7).

Paul listed some of the advantages God had given to the Jewish race (Romans 9:4–5):

- “Theirs is the adoption of sons (and daughters)...”
- “Theirs (is) the divine glory...” of His presence
- “Theirs (are) the covenants...” given to their ancestors
- Theirs “the receiving of the law...” given to Moses
- Theirs “the temple worship and the promises...”
- “Theirs (are) the patriarchs” and their testimony

And “from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all...” born a descendent (son) of David.

“They have been entrusted with the...words of God” (Rom 3:2).

### WHAT IF SOME DID NOT HAVE FAITH

The Jews “had been entrusted with the very words of God” (3:2). All people have a conscience and know in their hearts that there is a God. But only the Jews had God’s written revelation of Himself and God’s Law. God had revealed to them His purpose for them as a nation and as individuals.

If the Jews had such an advantage over the Gentiles, why would so many be judged and condemned by God? Does their disobedience prove that God is not faithful to His chosen people?

Paul said, “No,” God is not unfaithful to punish Israel for their unbelief (3:5; Heb 3:12–19).

Will God be so unfaithful as to abandon His people?

“Shall we sin because we are no longer under law but under grace?”

“Of course not,” Paul said.

God in His marvelous grace has set us free (6:15). We will not use our new freedom in Christ as an occasion to sin. We will offer ourselves willingly to serve our Lord. We are ‘slaves’ of love, bond-servants in His house (6:16–18; Lev 25:39).

Paul said that men without God are slaves to their sinful nature and to the habit of sin. Natural man’s sin nature turns away from God (Gen 8:21; Jer 17:9). Faith in Jesus Christ brings God’s forgiveness and sets men and women free from their old master, Satan.

“Under grace” a remedy for sin has been provided through Jesus Christ. Those who are “under grace” should and will keep God’s commandments “wholeheartedly,” or from the heart (6:17). Moses told the people, “They are not too difficult to learn and obey” (Deut 30:15–16).

### BE SLAVES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



### Read: Romans 6:19–23

“Just as you used to be slaves to all kinds of sin, so now you must let yourselves be slaves to all that is right and holy” (6:19 The Living Bible).

We can only say ‘no’ to sin because we have Christ’s power living in us. We stop living our old slave-life as we give the Holy Spirit first place in our lives. Where there is no holy living, there is no Holy Spirit. He tells us how to live and we obey Him. He teaches us the truth and that truth sets us free (John 8:32; 16:13).

“What benefit did you reap at that time,” Paul asked. “The benefit you reap (now) leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life” (6:22).

Christians are consecrated or set apart for God. They are distinct and different (Ex 8:23; Titus 2:14). They become more and more like Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:18). This is a process. Those who are joined to Christ become more like Him as they walk and talk together.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). Christ calls His children to holy living. The believer is free, but not to live as he pleases (5:17). He is freed from the principle of law-keeping as a means of salvation.

In Christ believers have a new destination. Their passport is changed from “going to Hell” to “going to Heaven.” God make this change as a free gift.

From that time on, the Christian fixes his or her eyes on God. We look for a new home, “an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in Heaven for you...” (1 Peter 1:4)



### TALK ABOUT

1. Shall we go on in sin to get more grace.....(6:15)?
2. What should a Christian do when he is tempted? (circle one) Run from it

## UNIT 16. WE ARE DEAD TO THE WORLD



### Read: Romans 6:12–14

Paul showed that the Christian life is all about doing what Christ tells us to do in the Gospels. It is a worshipping, doing, growing, serving life. Faith is an action word; it is not a gift we put away for safe keeping.

Paul states this truth in negative terms: “Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires” (6:12). ‘Reign,’ is the key word here! Paul makes each believer responsible for who reigns in his or her life. Christians obey the truth, do what is right and refuse to let sin reign in their mind and body.

When we are faced with a choice, we choose to do right. When the Holy Spirit says, “Don’t go there,” we stop and ask directions.

Then Paul repeats what he has said in positive terms: ‘Offer’ is the key word! We offer our hands, feet and our minds to God “as instruments” or tools to be used in working righteousness (Rom 6:13). The believer can only do this by the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within (John 3:8; Acts 2:38). They do this every time they come to God. They “offer (present, KJV) their bodies and their minds” to God to use in any way He wishes (Romans 12:1–2).

The Holy Spirit helps us obey God’s commands. He gives us more grace when the way gets harder. Day by day, we yield to His way and we grow up “into the full measure of Christ,” Eph 4:13), walking in step with the Spirit (Gal 5:25).

We rejoice in God’s way and Christ’s victory over sin and give Him praise and worship.

The words of the hymn tell this truth:

“Death has lost its old dominion,  
Let the world rejoice and shout!  
Christ, the firstborn of the living,  
Gives us life and leads us out (of sin and death).”  
– Charles Wesley

Paul concludes this section by saying, “For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace” (6:14). To be “under law” means to be under the dominion of sin and liable to its penalty.



### TALK ABOUT

1. How was Satan’s power over us broken.....(6:6)?
2. Christians are.....to show they are united with Jesus (6:3–4)?
3. Who must rule in a Christian’s life.....?
4. Now I belong to a.....Master, I will.....Him only.
5. The Christian life is a life of.....?

## SLAVES OF RIGHT LIVING



### Read: Romans 6:15–18

For all their lack of faith, God was then and still is faithful to His promise. “Let God be true, and every man a liar” (3:4). God will honor His word. He will be proved right when He judges (Psalm 51:3–4).



### TALK ABOUT

1. Discuss and learn the advantages God gave to the Jews (9:3–5).
2. Who is a true son of Abraham (Gal 3:29)?
3. What precious things did God put into the hands of the Jews?

## IS GOD BEING JUST?



### Read: Romans 3:5–8

Paul gave seven Scriptures to prove that God was just in judging the Jews (2:5; 3:5). It was not God who was unfaithful, it was Israel. Unbelief shut their forefathers out of the promised land and unbelief would shut them out of God’s rest in heaven (Hebrews 3:18–19; 4:1–13).

Paul took words from Psalm 51 where David admitted that he had sinned and that God was just and right in punishing him (Psalm 51:3–4).

Every time a sinner was proved to be in the wrong (by the law), and punished, God was proved to be just and righteous. This brought glory and honor to God (Rom 3:5).

Paul faced another objection from the Jews: Is not the punishment of the sinner (which brings glory to God) doing God a favor? Where is the justice in that? He used a human argument used by the Jews themselves (3:5,7). It amounted to a doctrine of “Let us do evil that good may result,” and Paul condemned the idea. Some Jews even said this was what Paul preached!

The Jews had God’s words in trust, but they had so mixed and confused the “very words of God” that they were of no value to them. They did not share God’s word with the Gentile nations, nor did they hold to His commands themselves. They had been entrusted with God’s revelation, but they had not taken the Scriptures to heart, nor obeyed them nor used them to bless others. Israel had failed to trust God.

### REVIEW:

Was God’s kindness a reason for man to sin? “Certainly not,” Paul said (3:6). If a man said, “Let us do evil that good may result,” he did not understand sin. If this is what the Jews thought, it was wrong (3:7). God could not be a just God and not judge sinners (Gen 18:25). Paul concluded: The Jew without Christ was not any better than the Gentile without Christ. They were both “under sin’s control” (3:9).

## UNIT 8. NATURAL MAN IS GODLESS AND LAWLESS



### Read: Romans 3:9–20

“What shall we conclude then? Are we (Jews) any better? Not at all....” (3:9).

Paul showed that man, without Christ, is under sin's control (3:9), and godless (3:10–12). Then he showed that natural man's conduct is evil (1:18–32; 3:13:17). He used quotations from the Psalms and the Prophets to paint this picture of the man (Jew or Gentile) without Christ:

- a) Their throats (mouths) are waiting to devour others.
- b) Their tongues deceive and teach things that are not true.
- c) Like snakes they have poison behind their lips (Psalm 5:9; 140:3).
- d) Their mouths are full of cursing (Psalm 10:7).
- e) Their feet are swift to shed blood (Isaiah 59:7–8).
- f) The way of peace they have not known.
- g) They have no fear of God (Psalm 36:1).

The Jews called Gentiles “dogs” and had nothing to do with them. But the Jews were equally guilty before God and would suffer the same judgment. Indeed, the Gentiles would stand before God and condemn these privileged Jews (2:27). Paul said there is no difference between a Gentile sinner and a Jewish sinner – “There is no one who does good...There is no one who seeks God” (3:10).

Because of their evil conduct, God is perfectly just in judging both Jew and Gentile. Gentiles had corrupted God's revelation in nature and Jews had disobeyed God's written law. So all the world (of men and women) stood guilty before God (Romans 3:19–20; 7:13).

How did the Jews make this big mistake? “They pursued a law of righteousness,” but did not attain it, “because they did not pursue a righteousness that comes by faith” (9:31–32). They tried to earn righteousness by obeying the law, but they always broke the law and failed to be righteous in God's sight (3:20).

This failure to obey the law showed up their sin and made them more conscious that they were sinners (3:20). This was the whole purpose of the law.



### TALK ABOUT

1. What advantages did Jews have.....(3:2)?
2. Does God love us anyway, no matter what we do?.....(3:3)?
3. How do we know that no one seeks God.....(3:11)?
4. What Scriptures prove this? Find Psalm 14:1–3 and 53:1–3.
5. What did the law do for sinners.....(3:20)?

## RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES THROUGH FAITH



### Read: Romans 3:21–24

The Jews regarded the other nations as “poor fools without God.” Pious Jews thought that having the law was enough. But they did not keep the law, so they did not attain to the righteousness God demands.

God said no one was good enough to go to heaven. Only those who have God's righteousness can live with Him heaven. So He has shown us a different way to gain righteousness and heaven, quite apart from the law. It is not really a

- a) Jesus' death – the believer goes down into the water (6:10).
- b) His burial – the believer goes under the water.
- c) His resurrection – the believer rises up out of the water. It is a seal or sign of his or her commitment.

The new man “has been freed from sin” or from sin's claim over him or her (6:7). He or she has a vital relationship with Christ. Sin must not be allowed to control the believer's actions or bring him or her into slavery again.

Christ is the believer's new Master. When a believer hears their old sinful self (sin nature) calling them to do wrong, he or she must say “No! I belong to a new Master and I will serve Him only” (Gal 5:17–18).

## THE BELIEVER'S NEW OUTLOOK



### Read: Romans 6:8–11

Of a person who is asleep we might say, “He is dead to the world.” So the world of sin makes no impression on the person who is “dead to sin.” Death no longer has any hold on or mastery over Christ. He passed out of sin's environment, never to enter it again. Now He is alive in glory and “we will also live with Him” in that same glory (6:8–10).

1. Christ died and was resurrected to eternal life. He cannot die again. For the Christian, who died with Christ, death has no power over him (6:9).
2. “The death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God” (6:10). This tells the believer how he must live; dead to the old, sinful ways and living for God every day. Christ's once-for-all-time death for the sinner completed His work (John 19:30). Our death to sin must be equally final.
3. How the believer sees himself – “Dead to sin, but alive to God” (6:8,11). “Count yourselves dead to sin...” (6:11). This is an accounting term and means to keep on calculating that you are “dead to sin.”
4. “Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires” (6:12). Sin and temptation remain as real enemies all our lives (7:18–19). But we can say “Yes” to the Holy Spirit and let Him control our desires. Yield your life to Him.
5. “Rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness (6:13). Put Jesus on the throne of your heart. Make Him King! Let Him make your faculties ‘weapons’ of right living. The era of law is over, now grace has taken over in your life and God's Spirit is in control.



### TALK ABOUT

1. We must be baptized in water to be saved \_\_ True \_\_ False?
2. The water of baptism washes away our sins \_\_ True \_\_ False?
3. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change \_\_ True \_\_ False?
4. Under the Old Covenant, what was the outward sign of obedience?



who held to the law, and from others who were against the law. They taught that believers could go on living in sin because God would forgive them anyway.

Paul said, "Of course not! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" Sin's power over us was broken when we became Christians and were baptized into Christ to become a part of His body (6:2-3; 1 Cor 12:13).

But how did we "die to sin?" Baptism is a witness to non-Christians. It is also a means of grace; it makes the believer a partner with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is not some magical rite that saves us from sin. It is a witness to men and to angels that a believer has been saved by the blood of Christ and will live only for Him.

"If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection" (6:5). Christ's resurrection gained for us righteousness; it also enables us to live a life pleasing to God.

Paul thought of the believer being joined to Jesus Christ:

- a) Faith in Christ brings our death to our old ways (6:1-6).
- b) We were "slaves to sin" and served Satan. Now we serve Christ (6:6).
- c) His resurrection brings us new life in the Spirit (6:7-10).
- d) We turn from sin to live holy lives committed to Him.

In God's sight, all this happens when we believe. In one act of believing, a Christian gains a personal share in Christ's death (1 Cor 12:13). We are baptized by the Holy Spirit into God's family. We die to our old ways and become "alive to God" (6:11; 2 Cor 5:17).

"We know that our old self was crucified with Him..." (6:6). Our faith in Christ must mean the death blow to our sinful past – our old, Adam-way of life. This work of God's Spirit in the life of the believer, is pictured for us in water baptism and our oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are one in spirit and in fellowship!



## TALK ABOUT

1. What are some of the 'freedoms' the Christian enjoys?
2. Which of the three freedoms listed at the beginning of this section do you think is the most important (Heb 2:14-15)? Why do men fear death?

## A SIGN OF NEW LIFE

Circumcision was the Old Covenant sign of this new relationship. It signified a cutting off of the old way of life. For the Christian, baptism in water means the same. In Paul's day, a man who believed was baptized by going under the water. This act of baptism followed quickly after the man said he believed in Christ. It was like acting out what God had done in his heart.

In water baptism every part of the person's body went under the water. This showed the completeness of his or her commitment to the Spirit of God.

A national pastor who spoke little English ably expressed this complete surrender. He said, "Water up to the knees. No! Water up to the waist. No! Water up to the chest. No! Water over the head. Yes!"

For the believer who is ready to surrender all to God, water baptism becomes a picture of:

new way, for the Law and the Prophets (the five Books of Moses and the Prophets, or the Old Testament) told about it long ago (Rom 3:21).

The righteousness God demands is "from God," and it is "apart from the law." God declares men and women righteous through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 4:22; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

When Jesus died on the cross, He opened this "new and living way" for men to come to God. Jesus said it is the only way (Heb 10:19-20; John 14:6). "Now God says He will let us go free – declare us righteous, not guilty – if we trust Jesus Christ to take away our sins" (Romans 3:21-22 TLB; 8:1). "There is no difference," God said. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23).

Those who believe this "are justified freely by His grace..." (3:24). So righteousness is a gift from God. No one can earn it. No one deserves it (3:12). God gives this gift of His own righteousness to all who believe in Jesus Christ. By His grace alone, those who believe have eternal life (John 5:24).

## THROUGH FAITH IN HIS BLOOD

God presented Jesus to be a sacrifice for sin (3:25). God gave the Son to the world to be a sacrifice for mankind. We sinners should have died, but Jesus died in our place. All God's anger fell on Jesus Christ on the cross.

And "through faith in His blood" we are saved from our sins. Because Jesus died in our place, God can freely forgive sinners who repent and turn away from their sins.

In this God showed His justice. The full price for sin was paid. Under the law, man's sin was 'covered' by the blood of animal sacrifices. Sin was not taken away, but moved forward to the cross (Heb 9:15). By the blood of Christ, all sin is taken away for those who believe in Jesus (John 1:29). God removes their sin and puts it "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).



## TALK ABOUT

1. Does God think of any people group as special? Why not.....?
2. Can a bad person get to heaven.....(3:24)?
3. Because God is perfectly just, He must.....all sin (6:23)?
4. How can anyone be made just (justified) in God's sight.....(3:24)?
5. How can we have clean hearts.....(1 John 1:9)?

## GOD PRESENTED HIS SON AS A SACRIFICE FOR SIN



### Read: Romans 3:25-26

God's mercy and love moved Him to present His only Son, Jesus Christ, as an offering, "a sacrifice of atonement" for the sins of the whole world (John 1:29). In the same way, the Son offered Himself "without spot," the perfect sacrifice (Heb 9:14).

The sacrifice was necessary to atone for sin and remove it forever from God's sight. Through faith in the blood of the sacrifice the sinner is redeemed

and his or her sin atoned for and taken away (3:25). All men and women are held prisoner by sin, or as slaves to sin. They need to be redeemed or freed from their bondage. That is the meaning of “redeem.”

Paul said, this one act of God satisfied His justice “because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished –” (3:25; Acts 17:30). Paul could not finish his thought. Translators of the new International Version of the Bible (NI V) indicated this with a dash.

The thought is so amazing it is offered and left without an adequate answer. This enormous and all-encompassing love of God is beyond human understanding. The wrenching, violent death of His only Son for the sins of the world somehow satisfied the just demands of a holy God and enabled Him to be just in offering a free pardon to every sinner.

### THE FORBEARANCE OF GOD

There is a perfect balance between God infinite patience and His perfect justice. We might think of it as a tension, but these two attributes of God’s character are in perfect harmony.

We do not understand God’s patience. He moves slowly against the sinner. He gives the sinner many opportunities to repent. He did not pour down burning sulfur on Sodom until after Abraham had prayed for any righteous remnant and not until Lot was out of the city. God sent ten plagues on Egypt, not one or two!” He gave Pharaoh more than enough chances to repent.

“Divine patience has kept us out of hell, that we might have space to repent and get to heaven” (Matthew Henry).

“In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the man (Jesus Christ) he has appointed. He has given proof of this...by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30–31).

Peter wrote, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

Sinners may think, “God is not going to punish me.” Nothing could be further from the truth. God’s justice may seem slow in coming, but it is sure: “Everyone who falls on that stone (Jesus Christ) will be broken to pieces...he on whom it falls will be crushed” (Luke 20:17–18).

Many may think God ignored the sins of the past.

### TO JUSTIFY THE ONE WHO HAS FAITH IN JESUS

God had another reason or goal in mind when He presented Jesus Christ to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world (3:25). “He did this to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the One who justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (3:26). God showed His justice and it showed that He is the One – the only One – who justifies those who have a personal faith in Jesus Christ.

His justice demanded the sacrifice of the perfect man and His kindness provided the Son to take the sinner’s place. It is all clearly pictured for us in

Some say there was no grace under the law (6:14). But that is not correct. God does not change. His grace has been toward man from the beginning. The law God gave to Israel was His ‘love gift’ to His people (Deut 33:3–4; 4:6–8; 6:24–25).

Later, in this same letter to the Roman Christians, Paul said, “The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good’ (7:12).

It was God’s purpose from the beginning “to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (5:21; Heb 9:12). The law pointed to God’s justice and to the sacrifice needed to satisfy His demand for atonement. All the preparations made under the law were temporary and culminated in the death of Christ. When Christ died, the law was buried and resurrected in the Gospel.



### TALK ABOUT

1. How did sin enter the world.....(5:12)?
2. What terrible thing did sin bring with it.....(5:12)?
3. Who brings God’s gift of grace to us.....(5:15)?
4. What happened to sinners before the law was given to Moses....?
5. Grace reigns where there is right living, Paul said. The result is: .....through.....(5:21)?
6. How can we “reign in life”.....(5:17)?
7. How do you know when Jesus is ruling your life.....?

## UNIT 15. ABUNDANT GRACE

**Introduction:** Paul’s thought of ‘abundant grace’ begins in 5:20–21. “How much more,” wonderful than the results of Adam’s legacy, is the gift of God’s grace. Men and women received the death sentence from Adam, the originator of sin. How much more will they receive a free pardon and Life from Christ, the originator of Life. Sin reigned in death, but Christ won the victory over sin. Now God’s abundant grace is more than enough to enable His people to reign in everlasting life.

### DEAD TO SIN – ALIVE IN CHRIST



#### Read: Romans 6:1–7 (John 17:20–23)

In Christ, the believer has a new-found freedom:

- Freedom from the clutches and power of sin (6:6).
- Freedom from the condemnation of the law (7:25).
- Freedom from the fear of death (8:21; Heb 2:14–15).

Paul set men thinking when he said, “Where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (5:20). “Then why not go on sinning,” some might ask.

Christians must not go on doing wrong things because God’s grace is so great. Paul answered this wrong idea, “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase” (6:1)? This wrong idea came from Jews

day Adam sinned, all living creatures died and their bodies returned to the dust (Gen 2:14).

Sin and evil got so bad that God sent the flood and swept away all but eight persons (1 Peter 3:20). Noah's wicked neighbors were all drowned in the flood (Gen 7:21).

Note: Paul used 'many' to mean that the group is large. When he used 'all' he meant the total number of a certain group.

God answered Adam's 'one' act of sin with 'many' acts of kindness and grace. In Jesus Christ, God's grace overflowed (John 1:16). It filled the whole earth. Now the "many" who receive it "reign in life...through Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:17).

The gift of the Son to bring life is much greater than the one trespass that brought death! Paul offers the gospel-gift as the only hope of mankind.



### TALK ABOUT

1. Why were men guilty when there was no law for them to break.....?
2. Evil got so bad that God wiped the world clean with a.....?
3. Did the flood change Noah's heart? Why not (Gen 9:20–21)?
4. How did eternal life come to all men who believed (5:17; John 3:16)?

## GOD GAVE ISRAEL THE LAW



### Read: Romans 5:18–21

God gave the Law to show man how easy it is for man to disobey God's commands and how difficult it is to keep them (Rom 5:20). The law was outward. God's moral law was written "on the heart."

- a) God's righteousness in man's conscience (1:21; Eph 4:24).
- b) Cain knew he had done wrong when he killed his brother.
- c) Man feels a need to worship and sacrifice for his sins (Gen 8:20).

It is not in God's nature to rule by law, for God is love. Love brings a person-to-person relationship or bonding. Love puts the other person first, hopes for the best and works to bring about the other's welfare. Love = grace. The Law God gave to Moses was added:

1. After sin came into the world (Gen 3).
2. After God called man to faith-righteousness (Gen 15:6).

The people of Israel could not stop breaking the law. Man knew he was a law-breaker. He was guilty and the Law said he had to die.

"But where sin increased, grace increased all the more..." (5:20). Grace is God's love moving toward man. God takes nine steps toward us. We only have to take one step toward God and He answers at once.

When we answer God's call and turn toward Him, He gives us faith. When we obey God's word, He leads us on in our faith. We begin to understand how great, how wide and deep His grace is. "He is the God of all grace..." (1 Peter 5:10). His grace is like the great sea tide; it is big enough to cover all our sin and to lead us on to glory.

Abraham's willingness to obey God and offer Isaac, the son of promise (Gen 22).

"Consider the kindness and sternness of God," Paul told the Roman believers (11:22). Both qualities are seen in God acts – His wrath against the sin of the world which came on Christ and His kindness in justifying the sinner who receives Christ's death and resurrection in faith.

## WHERE IS BOASTING?

What right have we to boast? If believers could do nothing to gain the position of being 'justified' in God's sight, then they have nothing to boast about. Paul said again, "A man is justified by faith apart from the law" (3:28).

"Is God the God of Jews only?" No! God is God of the whole world of men and women. "For God so love the world that He gave His one and only Son..." (John 3:16).

Jews may well ask, "Does faith, then, make the law of no value, end our customs, cancel our Scriptures?"

Was Paul saying, 'If you have faith you don't need the law?'

He answered, "Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law" (3:31).

Faith in Jesus Christ enables the believer to keep the law of love. Jesus gave Jews and Gentiles a 'greater law' that must rule in their hearts and show in their actions (Matt 5:1–12). He explained this higher law in the teaching He gave (Matt 5:13 – 7:27).

Faith in Jesus Christ and the power of His Spirit within, enables the believer to live according to this higher law. We do this without neglecting the commandments God gave to Moses on Mt Sinai. Believers uphold the law of Christ by the way they live. Their lives confirm that God's law stands for all time.



### TALK ABOUT

1. What moved God to make His Son a sacrifice for sin –
  - a) The sin of man? b) His love? c) The gospel?
2. What law is the believer commanded to keep?
3. How did Jesus express the law of love (Matt 5:3–12)?

## UNIT 9. ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

**Review:** Paul had already addressed the subject of God giving men and women His righteousness as a free gift. He does this in answer to a man's faith (3:21–31). Why would Paul continue the same subject and go over what seems to be the same ground again?

He wanted to convince the Jews that their law-keeping would not obtain God's righteousness.

The chapter divides into two parts:

1. Faith in contrast to law-keeping (4:1–12).
2. Faith and God's promise to Abraham (4:13–25).



### Read: Romans 4:1–8

To show the believers in Rome how important faith was and always will be, Paul turns their attention to the origins of the Jewish race. He tells them how their ancestor Abraham became right with God by faith (4:2–8). Not by circumcision (4:9–12), nor by keeping the law (4:13–17a), but by faith in God’s promise alone (4:3, 17b–25). Paul reminded his readers of:

- the blessedness of being right and at peace with God
- the method of justifying men in God’s sight
- the promises made to Abraham had not changed

Paul asked, “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter (of faith)” (4:1)?

The Scripture says, “Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness” (4:3; Gen 15:6). In heaven God marked ‘righteous’ beside Abram’s name. Why? Because Abram believed God and obeyed His command.

If Abraham – or any man – could be justified by what he did, he would have something to boast about (3:27). But no man can boast and say, “God saved me as a special favor...You cannot take credit...it is a gift from God” (Eph 2:8 NLT).

“Being saved is a gift; if a person could earn it by being good, then it would not be free – but it is free, ( 4:4–5 The Living Bible). When a person has faith in God, God says that person is righteous and the person is saved from God’s wrath (8:1).

Paul took words from David’s Psalm 32 to prove his point: “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him” (Psalm 32:1–2).

### NOT LIKE WAGES

God freely accepts the sinner who repents. The righteousness God gives to men and women is not like wages paid to a person for work he or she does. God gives (credits) His righteousness to men and women freely in answer to their faith (3:24).

Faith-righteousness was not a new idea; it was as old as Abraham and David (3:21).



### TALK ABOUT

1. Why did God say Abraham was righteous.....(4:3)?
2. How did Abraham become righteous.....(4:3)?
3. How were sins covered under the law.....(Psa 32:1)?
4. How can we share in God’s promises made to Abraham.....?
5. If God blessed men and women because of their faith, why the law?
6. What causes God to give a person the gift of salvation.....?

youth...” (Gen 8:21) Noah would make a new start, but man’s heart was not changed by God’s judgment (Rev 6:16).

Sin still ruled after the law was given to Moses (Ex 20). And it kept on ruling in the world. Sin’s power and rule can only be broken when we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior (6:6).



### TALK ABOUT

1. On what basis does God justifies the sinner (3:25; Heb 9:12)?
2. What does “reconciled to God” mean? Who reconciles the believer?
3. How was Adam like Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:45)?
4. Why is there “no transgression where there is no law” (4:15)?

## UNIT14. SIN WAS IN THE WORLD



### Read: Romans 5:16–17

Paul reduces the discussion to the lowest common level – two men! Because of Adam’s sin, death took control of all men. But because of God’s grace-gift in Christ, eternal life came to all men who believe. Men who know

Christ as their Savior – who receive the gift of God’s grace – reign in life with Christ now and will continue to reign with Him in heaven. They have everlasting life (John 3:16).

“Before the law was given, sin was in the world...and death reigned...” (5:14). How could men break God’s law if there was no law from Adam till the time of Moses?

Sin “was in the world,” as a force in men’s hearts and their actions showed it. And “death reigned.” Men broke God’s moral law written on their consciences and they died. They were cut off from the life of God!

One act of rebellion brought all the universe under the curse of sin. In the same way, one act of mercy brought universal blessing.

All men and women share in the sin of Adam. Men did not break any known law, but they were sinners by nature and acted accordingly. Every man was a law unto himself (Rom 5:9–10; Judges 21:25). “Adam opened the door to sin and let it loose in the world of men” (F.F.Bruce).

### GOD SENT A FLOOD

“The gift is not like the trespass...” (5:15). One act of sin brought a universal curse; the one gift of Christ brought just the opposite effect – it overflowed in life to many. Its effect was equally universal in its scope.

The one man’s sin brought God’s condemnation and judgment on all mankind. Everyone born into Adam’s race has sinned, yet the gift of Christ cleared all their trespasses and brought justification to those who believe (5:16).

The ‘trespass’ was really open rebellion against the Creator, Almighty God. And because of that trespass, “death reigned” over all creation (5:17). From the

Sin was like a squatter. It had no legitimate right to move in, but Adam opened the way for it to take up residence in him. Once inside, sin claimed “squatter’s rights” and refused to leave.

When you own property in some countries, you must hurry and put a wall around your property. If you don’t, squatters will build their shacks on your property and it will be very hard to move them off. They do damage to the property and harass the owner.

Sin did this to Adam and Eve. It moved in and occupied their nature. Their heart attitudes were changed. God said to Adam, “You will surely die” (Gen 2:17). God judged Adam’s sinful nature. He was cut off from the life of God – spiritual death and physical death came to Adam and Eve. Sin and death passed on to Adam’s children and to the whole human race, so that all men and women are cut off from God in their spirits. Their bodies, too, grow old and die, “for all of them sinned” (5:12).

In the first part of Romans, Paul showed that sinful man could not save himself. Then Paul showed how God declare the sinner righteous because of faith. Now Paul set life in Christ over against death in Adam. This comparison is broken off at verse 12 and picked up again at verse 18.

“Adam was a pattern of the One to come...” (5:14). Paul compares Adam’s role in history with Christ’s. Adam was the first man, the head of the race of mankind. Christ was the first God-man, the head of redeemed mankind (1 Cor 15:45). “Many died by the trespass of one man (Adam)...” (5:15). The “many” here is the same as the “all men” of Romans 5:12.

Adam was head of the human race. Adam and Christ both stood at the head of a race of people. Adam was the head of a race of sinners. Christ is Head of a new creation of saved men and women (2 Cor 5:17; 1 Cor 15:45). Adam brought death in the midst of life. Christ brought life in the midst of death.

Our bodies will die, but our spirits will live on to be judged by God (Heb 9:27). The life that Christ gives our born-again spirit will go on forever. The believer will be fully saved and enjoy all the blessings of righteousness.

Every child is born with a sinful nature. Our sin nature puts out arms like an octopus. They reach into every part of our lives. In homes where God is not known, this root of sin grows quickly. In godly homes it may be held back by the teaching and prayers of believing parents, but it is still there and it soon shows itself as a rebel spirit.

### WHERE THERE IS NO LAW

“But sin is not taken into account where there is no law...” (5:15). To be sure, the record-keeping is different where there are no specific commands to break (4:15). But the power of sin inherited from Adam was at work in the world and in men’s hearts. Because these sins were not against a direct command of God, they were not counted at the time.

Did Noah think, ‘It will be a wonderful new world now that sin is gone?’ If so, God had to remind him, “man’s bent is always toward evil from his earliest

## UNIT 10. ABRAHAM’S FAITH AND CIRCUMCISION



### Read: Romans 4:9–17

Is God’s blessing only for the circumcised (Rom 4:9–10)? No! The blessing was promised to Abraham before he was circumcised. God put “righteous “ beside Abraham’s name because he believed God and obeyed His command (Gen 15:6). The very same righteousness of God is credited to men and women when they have faith in God’s promise in Jesus Christ.

After Abraham had faith, God added the sign of circumcision. It was a “seal of the righteousness he had by faith...” (4:11). Abraham obeyed God’s command and circumcised all the men in his house (Gen 17:26–27).

So Abraham is the father of all who believe:

- a) All the uncircumcised who have a faith like Abraham’s.
- b) All the circumcised who walk in his footsteps of faith.

Circumcision was a very special sign. It did not make Abraham any more righteous than he was before he was circumcised. The sign only marked out men of faith and showed the world that they were God’s people (Eph 1:13).

This outward sign of circumcision showed that a change of heart had taken place. Unbelief had given way to faith. So Abraham and his family were marked as God’s family. They were cut off from the world to serve God. It showed that Abraham had a covenant relationship with God. Faith justifies a man, not the law.

### CIRCUMCISION

1. A symbol that spoke of a ‘change of nature’ from a sinful, disobedient nature to a trusting, obedient one.
2. The flesh of the foreskin was to be cut off, for it is by sexual contact and child-bearing that sin is passed from parents to children.
3. It was peculiar to men. Wives and daughters came under the covenant sign when the head of the house was circumcised, in that the man is the head of the woman (Eph 5:23).
4. God would have the ‘believing man’ offer some part of his own body – indeed, shed some of his own blood – as a sign of his loyalty ‘until Christ died for our sins’ (Rom 12:1–2).
5. Circumcision changed a secret part of the body, for true circumcision is ‘of the heart’ which only God knows (1 Cor 12:23,24).
6. Circumcision was to be carried out when the child was 8 days old. At that time it is less painful and there is less bleeding.
7. Children of ‘strangers and aliens’ were included, if the parents had faith in Yahweh. In the case of a slave, the ‘owner’ was responsible for their training in the things of God.
8. Parents who did not circumcise their children came under judgment, as did Moses (Ex 4:24,25).
9. Circumcision showed that all ‘laws and ordinances’ (regulations) were external and, in that sense, fleshly (Jer 31:33).

Like many other signs in the Old Testament, circumcision was a road-sign pointing forward and a 'shadow' of the reality still to come in Christ and the gospel (Col 2:16–17).



### TALK ABOUT

1. If faith was all God wanted, why did He add circumcision?
2. What is the 'mark' God places on New Testament believers?
3. Has God marked you as one of His own children (Eph 1:13)?
4. How will the world of men recognize God's mark on you?

### HEIR OF THE WORLD

God promised Abraham that he would be "heir of the world" of faithful men and women (Rom 1:20;4:13; Genesis 12:2–3; 15:5; 17:4). How this would happen is not clearly stated in the Old Testament. God said Abram would be the conduit through whom His blessing (4:6,9) would flow to the world.

Abraham's children of faith would be found the world over. From the one "seed of Abraham" came Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16), and the Christian Church worldwide.

The promise God made to Abraham had many parts:

- a) That man could have a right standing with God by faith (Gen 15:6).
- b) That Abraham's offspring would be like the dust in number (Gen 13:16)
- c) That a 'seed' to be born in Abraham's family line would bless the whole world (Gal 3:16).
- d) That Abraham's children would inherit the land.

All these parts of the promise were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. And all because Abraham had faith in God, obeyed His command and went forward to a place God would show him (Gen 12:1; Heb 11:10).

Abraham did not "receive what had been promised" (Heb 1:39–40). He did not live to see God bless the whole world, but his faith said "yes, yes" to God's promises. He put arms of faith around God's promises and held on to them (Heb 11:10, 13). Now Abraham's spirit waits for Christ to come again and gather all men and women of similar faith into His Kingdom – only "together with us" will Abraham be made perfect (Hebrews 11:39–40; Ephesians 5:27).

### THE LAW POINTED TO MAN'S FAILURE

"If those who live by the law are heirs, faith has no value...because the law brings wrath" (4:14). The law did not cancel God's promise or make it to have no meaning. The law served to point out how badly men failed to obey God's commands.

If the Jews, trying to live by the law, were the only heirs to God's promises, Abraham's faith would not count and the promises would be worthless.

Only by grace could the promise be made sure to all Abraham's seed. So the "promise came by faith, that it might be by grace" (4:16). The promise was guaranteed to Abraham and his spiritual children on the basis of their faith alone.

and saved from His wrath. Peace is made between a holy God and the sinner who believes. That sinner is restored to – made to be at peace with – the Father (2 Cor 5:18).



### TALK ABOUT

1. How does our faith bring glory to God.....(4:20)?
2. What is "the hope of the glory of God".....(5:2)?
3. How great is God's love for us.....?
4. How is God's love poured into our heart.....(5:5)?
5. What good comes from suffering.....(5:4)?
6. Why would any Christian rejoice in suffering.....?

### UNIT 13. PEACE AND JOY IN JESUS CHRIST



#### Read: Romans 5:9–11

God bases our justification on the once-for-all-time sacrifice of Jesus Christ (3:25; Heb 9:12). Paul has said that we are "justified by faith" in Christ (5:1). Now He says "we have been justified through faith in His blood."

Faith looks to the blood that was shed on Calvary (3:25). All the faith in the world would not have justified and saved us without the shed blood, "For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins" (Hebrews 9:22).

You cannot take the sinless blood of Christ out of the gospel, or there is no gospel at all!

Those who are justified are also saved from God's wrath at the final judgment (5:9; 8:1). God's final wrath will come on the world of sinners in the future. We are amazed that God justifies us now while we are yet sinners. How much more so when we realize that we are saved from His judgment.

"Not only is this so, but we also rejoice..." There is great rejoicing in heaven and on earth. The angels rejoice (Luke 15:10), the Christian Church rejoices, and the sinner can rejoice. He has been reconciled to God and has peace with God and joy "through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:11).

All who have been reconciled were once "God's enemies." There are two steps to reconciling the sinner to God: 1. God loved the world of sinners and sent the Son to die on the cross (2 Cor 5:19). 2. Sinners accept what Jesus did for them on the cross and are reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20).

### ADAM BROUGHT DEATH – JESUS CHRIST BRINGS LIFE



#### Read: Romans 5:12–15

When Adam rebelled against His Creator and disobeyed God's command, Satan moved in and took control of his spirit. They had disobeyed God's command and they would suffer the consequences.

Hope may seem to have no substance, but hope in Jesus Christ brings us God's love and the power of the Holy Spirit. We can depend on this hope paying off because the One we put our hope in is reliable. And He pours His love into our hearts. The Holy Spirit does this work in us (Phil 2:13).

## HELPLESS SINNERS



### Read: Romans 5:6–8

“While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly....” (5:6,8 NASB). God did not wait for sinners to repent of their lawlessness. His Spirit was at work before they even thought of repenting.

Sinners were in a hopeless state, weak because of sin and without any power to resist temptation or to escape sin's consequences (5:6). That was “at just the right time” on God's calendar.

“When the time had fully come, God sent His Son, Born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons” (Gal 4:4–5).

“Even if we were good, we really would not expect anyone to die for us...but God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners” (5:7–8 TLB).

To give one's life for another is the highest expression of human love. Sometimes we see this demonstrated by organ donors....restricted to family. The thought of giving one's life for an enemy, is outside our thinking. But that is what God did in sending Jesus to die for us.

## THE SPIRIT OF LOVE EXPRESSED

The Father loves the Son; the trinity is joined in the Spirit of love. Love in the trinity is like a never-ending circle. Such love must give, and give to satisfy its own nature.

God gave His best. He gave His one and only Son. Now we can trust Him to finish the work He began in us. Our hope of this can be firm and sure: Christ is able to save completely (forever) those who come to God through Him (Heb 7:25).

God hates sin. God and sinners are enemies. Sinners are: a) Hope-less (5:6). b) Helpless (5:8). c) God's enemies (5:10). But sinners saved by grace are God's friends. They have been “reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:18). It is as though God and natural man stood back to back facing away from each other. In Christ, God has turned toward man. Now God is waiting for man to turn toward Him. When we trust Jesus Christ to be our Savior, we turn back toward God.

“Since we have been justified by His blood (Christ died for us), how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath...” (5:9; 1 Thess 5:9).

God's wrath is against all sin and evil, but God's wrath came upon Christ. It was like a great Tsunami wave that gathered up in its force “the sins of the whole world” (John 1:29; Heb 9:15) and crashed down upon Christ as He hung on the cross. Now, through faith in Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to the Father

Abraham was our father in that he showed us the way of faith which leads to the righteousness which God demands. To inherit the promises, Abraham's children had to “walk in the footsteps of their father's faith.” That meant Jews, too, had to come to God by faith in Jesus Christ.

Christ came as the “seed” of Abraham (Gal 3:16). Gentiles also had to come into God's Kingdom by faith in Christ (Acts 10:34–48). By faith all believers receive and will enjoy the inheritance God promised to Abraham (1 Cor 3:22–23).



### TALK ABOUT

1. How could Abraham be the father of the faithful.....(4:16)?
2. What did God promise Abraham (Gen 17:1–8).....?
  - a) .....
  - b) .....
  - c) .....
3. All God's promises to Abraham pointed to.....(Gal 3:16)?

## UNIT 11. ABRAHAM HAD THIS HOPE



### Read: Romans 4:17–25

Romans 4:16–17 are parallel verses to 4:11–12. Both speak of Abraham as “the father of all believers, both Jews and Gentiles.”

God was pleased to make Abraham the father of “many nations” (4:17; Gen 15:5). This was only possible because Abraham believed that God could give life (a son) to dead bodies (4:17). For this reason He spoke of things that were not then existing as though they were present. That is true faith!

God said to Abraham, “Your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac” (Gen 17:19). Abraham did not stagger at this promise. “He did not waver through unbelief...” (4:20). He was made strong in his faith and he gave glory to God. His faith honored God: Abraham “being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised” (4:21).

“Against all hope, Abraham in hope...” waited for God (4:18). It was not Abraham's hoping that brought about this miracle, but God's grace and power. Abraham believed God could bring life out of his old (dead, as far as reproducing a child) body, since he was 99 years old (Gen 17:1). And Sarah was also too old (she was 89) to bear a child (4:19). Abraham and Sarah were both too old to have a son, yet God had promised them a son (Genesis 22:5).

Everything that was natural in Abraham said “Impossible!” But his faith in God's promise said “Yes, I believe...”

From the day Isaac was born, Abraham's very life was wrapped up in his son. When God told Abraham to sacrifice his son of promise, everything inside him said “No!, No!, No!” But his strong faith said, “Yes, I will obey God. If He takes Isaac from me, He can surely raise him again from the ashes.”

Abraham believed in the resurrection. He believed God could bring life out of death: a) God brought life out of their old (dead) bodies. b) By faith Abram received his son back from the dead (Gen 22:9–14; Heb 11:11,19).

We might wonder how this ancient story applied to us today. So Paul makes his statement that “Abraham is the father of all believers” personal. The things written about Abraham were not for him alone or for that time only, but they were also for us (4:23,24). All Abram’s spiritual descendants became righteous before God in the same way.

We can trust God’s words. What He said to Abraham He says to us. His promise to Abraham was universally valid, preserved in Scripture and applied by Paul (4:3). The Old Testament Scriptures were not just of and for the Jews. They tell how God receives and relates to men and women of all generations. He would deal with the readers of Paul’s letter to the Romans in the same way, on the basis of faith (1 Corinthians 10:11).

## THE SCRIPTURES STAND TRUE

Because God does not change, God’s promises do not change. All can learn from these examples of faith preserved for us in Scripture (Heb 11:1–40). Our duty is to “believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead” (4:24) and to receive the same righteousness that God gave to Abraham.

The promise God fulfilled to Abraham, He would fulfill again in Christ and again in every believer. So Abraham lived for the sake of Jesus Christ!

- a) Jesus Christ lived before Abraham (John 8:58).
- b) Christ lived in Abraham (1 Peter 1:11).
- c) Christ was the promised seed of Abraham (1:3; Gal 3:16).
- d) Abraham saw Christ’s day and rejoiced (John 8:56).
- e) The proper object of our faith is the One “who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (4:24; 1 Peter 1:21).



### TALK ABOUT

1. How did God bring life out of death for Abraham.....?
2. What credit does God give in return for faith.....(4:5,24)?
3. How were God’s promises to Abraham fulfilled in Jesus Christ.....?
4. Why does Paul stress the resurrection from the dead (4:24).....?

## UNIT 12. JUSTIFIED AND MADE RIGHTEOUS



### Read: Romans 5:1–5

This chapter continues the thought in 4:25: “Christ...put to death because of our misdeeds...secured our justification (our acquittal), making our account balance and absolving us of all guilt before God” (4:25 Amp. Bible).

“Therefore,” Paul said, “since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into the grace in which we now stand” (5:1–2).

Paul used ‘we’ as he identified with the believers in Rome to whom he wrote this letter. He said:

- we are justified freely by His grace (3:24).
- we have been justified through faith (5:1).
- we have been justified by His blood (5:9).
- we have gained access to God by faith
- the access is into the grace of God in which we now stand
- the access is possible because of a gift of God’s righteousness

Paul wrote about the righteousness that God gives, as a free gift, to all who believe the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:1–3). God gives those who believe His very own righteousness. He gives them this gift in answer to their faith.

Paul said, “He (Jesus Christ) was delivered over to death for our sins, and was raised to life for our justification” (Rom 4:25). This quotation of Isaiah 53:12 follows the Septuagint translation and may have been used as part of a ‘confessional’ by the early Christians.

## THE MEANS TO AN END

Christ’s death and resurrection were the means God used to bring about a change in our relationship with Him. We were enemies. He reconciled us and now we are friends, just as Abraham was called “a friend of God.” Because Christ bore our sins on the cross and rose again, God pronounces the sinner who believes “dikiosis,” – just, acquitted and free from guilt (Rom 4:25). This justification results in eternal life (5:18)

## THE RESULTS OF GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN US

Man was created with God’s holiness and righteousness as part of His ‘image’ in them (Gen 1:28; Eph 4:24). This ‘image,’ thought damaged by sin, is being restored in believes by the Holy Spirit.

Paul will show the results of God’s righteousness given to us and how the Holy Spirit works that righteousness in us to change our characters.

The first blessing is that “we have peace with God.” Peace is one ‘fruit’ brought into our lives by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22–23). We have peace in our hearts because the guilt of our sin is taken away. Paul called this “the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – “ (Phil 1:11).

When men are justified by God they have:

1. Peace with God (Col 1:20). We stand in a glow of God’s grace (5:2).
2. Access to God. We come directly to God (Eph 2:13–16; Heb 10:20).
3. A way to be cleansed from their sin and kept clean (1 John 1:9).
4. The hope of sharing in His glory (1 Peter 4:13).
5. We have strength to rejoice in our sufferings (5:3).

Christians can rejoice even in their sufferings (5:3). Suffering for Christ’s sake can make our hope stronger (8:18). Suffering helps to build a strong character (1 Peter 5:10) Suffering makes us push on to know Christ better (Phil 3:10).

Paul said, “Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured...His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us” (5:5).