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Expository Preaching on Romans

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THE APOSTLE PAUL's Providential PREPARATIONS¹

WHEN Paul and the other Apostles were called to enter upon their important duties, the world was in a deplorable and yet most interesting state. Both Heathenism and Judaism were in the last stages of decay. The polytheism of the Greeks and Romans had been carried to such an extent as to shock the common sense of mankind, and to lead the more intelligent among them openly to reject and ridicule it. This scepticism had already extended itself to the mass of the people, and become almost universal. As the transition from infidelity to superstition is certain, and generally immediate, all classes of the people were disposed to confide in dreams, enchantments, and other miserable substitutes for religion. The two reigning systems of philosophy, the Stoic and Platonic, were alike insufficient to satisfy the agitated minds of men. The former sternly repressed the best natural feelings of the soul, inculcating nothing but a blind resignation to the unalterable course of things, and promising nothing beyond an unconscious existence hereafter. The latter regarded all religions as but different forms of expressing the same general truths, and represented the whole mythological system as an allegory, as incomprehensible to the common people, as the pages of a book to those who cannot read. This system promised more than it could accomplish. It excited feelings which it could not satisfy, and thus contributed to produce that general ferment which existed at this period. Among the Jews, generally, the state of things was hardly much better. They had, indeed, the form of true religion, but were in a great measure destitute of its spirit. The Pharisees were contented with the form; the Sadducees were sceptics; the Essenes were enthusiasts and mystics. Such being the state of the world, men were led to feel the need of some surer guide than either reason or tradition, and some better foundation of confidence than either heathen philosophers or Jewish sects could afford. Hence, when the glorious gospel was revealed, thousands of hearts, in all parts of the world, were prepared, by the grace of God, to exclaim, This is all our desire and all our salvation!

The history of the apostle Paul shows that he was prepared to act in such a state of society. In the first place, he was born, and probably Educated in part, at Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia; a city almost on a level with Athens and Alexandria, for its literary zeal and advantages. In one respect, it is said by ancient writers to have been superior to either of them. In the other cities mentioned, the majority of students were strangers, but in Tarsus they were the inhabitants themselves.* That Paul passed the early part of his life here is probable, because the trade which he was taught, in accordance with the custom of the Jews, was one peculiarly common in Cilicia. From the hair of the goats, with which that province abounded, a rough cloth was made, which was much used in the manufacture of tents. The knowledge which the apostle manifests of the Greek authors, 1 Cor. xv. 33, Titus i. 12, would also lead us to suppose that he had received at least part of his education in a Grecian city. Many of his characteristics, as a writer, lead to the same conclusion. He pursues, far more than any other of the sacred writers of purely Jewish education, the Logical method in presenting truth. There is almost always a regular concatenation in his discourses, evincing the spontaneous exercise of a disciplined mind, even when not carrying out a previous plan. His epistles, therefore, are far more logical than ordinary letters, without the formality of regular dissertations. Another characteristic of his manner is that in discussing any question, he always presents the Ultimate principle on which the decision depends. These and similar characteristics of this apostle are commonly, and probably with justice, ascribed partly to his turn of mind, and partly to his early education. We learn from the Scriptures

¹ Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on Romans* (London: Banner of Truth, 1972), pp. 3-5.

Absorbed in the one object of glorifying Christ, he was ready to submit to anything, and to yield anything necessary for this purpose. He no longer insisted that others should think and act just as he did. So that they obeyed Christ, he was satisfied; and he willingly conformed to their prejudices, and tolerated their errors, so far as the cause of truth and righteousness allowed. By his early education, by his miraculous conversion and inspiration, by his natural disposition, and by the abundant grace of God, was this apostle fitted for his work, and sustained under his multiplied and arduous labours.

(Note:

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____
- (6) _____

THE DISTINCTIVE MESSAGE OF ROMANS

COMMENDED:

This epistle is the principal and most excellent part of the New Testament (William Tyndale in 1534).

When anyone gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture (John Calvin in 1539).

This Epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest Gospel, and it is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul (Martin Luther in 1552).

The Reformation was undoubtedly the work of the Epistle to the Romans, as well as of that to the Galatians; and the probability is that every great spiritual revival in the church will be connected as cause and effect with a deeper understanding of this book (Frederic Louis Godet in 1883).

It is the most remarkable production of the most remarkable man. It is his heart. It contains his theology, theoretical and practical, for which he lived and died. It gives the clearest and fullest exposition of the doctrines of sin and grace and the best possible solution of the universal dominion of sin and death in the universal redemption by the second Adam (Philip Schaff in 1910).

Romans is the most basic, most comprehensive statement of true Christianity (James Montgomery Boice in 1968).

I. INTRODUCED IN TWO THEMATIC VERSES (1:16-17).

A. The Possible Thematic Phrases:

1. The Gospel of Christ (Moo)
2. The righteousness of God revealed
3. The just shall live by faith

B. The Structure Of The Verses:

v 16a I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ (reason for v 15)

v 16b For it is the power of God unto salvation . . . (reason for v 16a)

v 17a For therein is the righteousness of God revealed . . .
(explanation of v 16b)

v 17b As it is written, "The just shall live by faith" (confirmation of v 17a)
(Exp: 1:16-17 funnel down to this quotation from Habakkuk 2:4.)

II. PROPOSED BY COMMENTATORS:

1. John Murray's Outline:

- I. SALUTATION (1:1-7)
- II. INTRODUCTION (1:8-15)
- III. **THEME (1:16-17)**
- IV. UNIVERSALITY OF SIN AND CONDEMNATION (1:18-3:20)
- V. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD (3:21-31)
- VI. CORROBORATION FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT (4:1-25)
- VII. FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION (5:1-11)
- VIII. THE ANALOGY (5:12-21)
- IX. THE SANCTIFYING EFFECTS (6:1-23)
- X. DEATH TO THE LAW (7:1-6)
- XI. TRANSITIONAL EXPERIENCE (7:7-13)
- XII. THE CONTRADICTION IN THE BELIEVER (7:14-25)
- XIII. LIFE IN THE SPIRIT (8:1-39)
- XIV. THE UNBELIEF OF ISRAEL (9)
- XV. VINDICATION OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS (9)
- XVI. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH (10)
- XVII. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL (11)
- XVIII. THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE (12-15)
- XIX. PAUL'S GENTILE MINISTRY, POLICY, AND PLANS (16)
- XX. GREETINGS AND CLOSING DOXOLOGY

2. Leon Morris' Outline:

- I. INTRODUCTION (1:1-15)
- II. **THESIS (1:16-17)**
- III. THE WAY OF DELIVERANCE (1:18-5:21)
- IV. THE WAY OF GODLINESS (6:1-8:39)
- V. THE PLACE OF ISRAEL (9:1-11:36)
- VI. CHRISTIAN LIVING (12:1-15:13)
- VII. CONCLUSION (15:14-16:27)

3. Douglas Moo's Outline:

- I. THE LETTER OPENING (1:1-17)
- II. **THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL: JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH (1:18-4:25)**
- III. THE ASSURANCE PROVIDED BY THE GOSPEL: THE HOPE OF SALVATION (5:1-8:39)
- IV. THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL: THE PROBLEM OF ISRAEL (9:1-11:36)
- V. THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE GOSPEL: CHRISTIAN CONDUCT (12:1-15:13)
- VI. THE LETTER CLOSING (15:14-16:27)

4. Thomas Schreiner's Outline:

- I. THE GOSPEL AS THE REVELATION OF GOD'S RIGHT. (1:1-17)
- II. GOD'S RIGHT. IN HIS WRATH AGAINST SINNERS (1:18-3:20)
- III. THE SAVING RIGHT. OF GOD (3:21-4:25)

- IV. HOPE AS THE RESULT OF RIGHT. BY FAITH (5:1-8:39)
- V. GOD’S RIGHT. TO ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES (9:1-11:36)
- VI. GOD’S RIGHT. IN EVERYDAY LIFE (12:1-15:13)
- VII. THE EXTENSION OF GOD’S RIGHT. THROUGH THE PAULINE MISSION (15:14-16:23)
- VIII. FINAL SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL OF GOD’S RIGHT. (16:25-27)

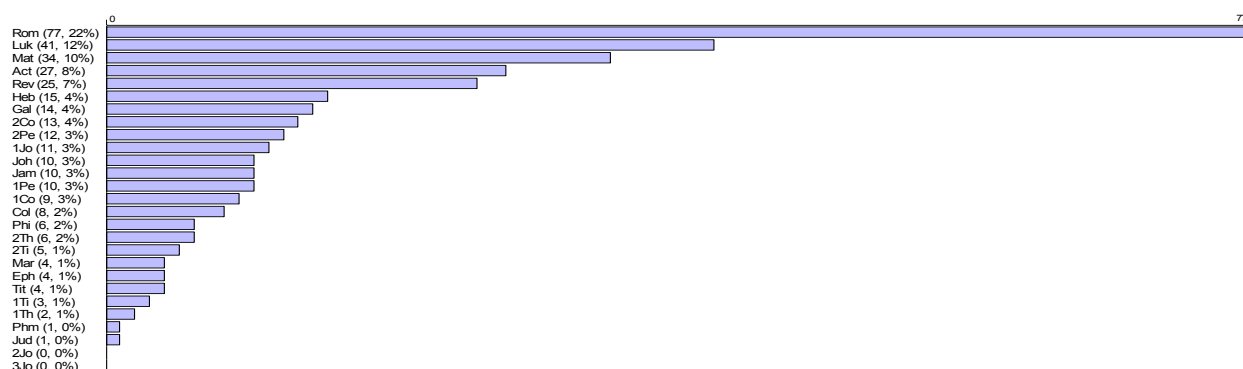
(Exp: Chooses “God’s righteousness,” and every point develops)

III. REVEALED IN REPEATED WORDS:

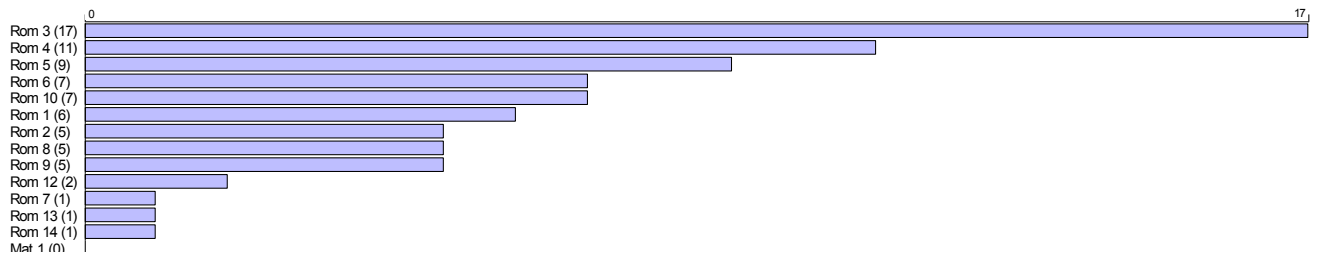
(Exp: Those that share the root *dikh* (“dika” = “right” or “justice”). Moo writes, *No set of words is more important for a correct understanding of Paul’s message to the Romans than those that share the root.* . . (p. 79).)

(Exp: 77 occ. of words with this root in 60 vv. There are 7,208 words in TR of Romans. A word in this word group, then, would occur every 93 words if they were evenly distributed through the book (but actually, all are in the first 10 chapters except 14:17). It seems, then, that this is what Paul keeps talking about—not the Gospel only, but the nature of what is contained in it and that in turn comes to characterize those who partake of it—something about righteousness. This word ought to appear in the theme (as Schreiner).)

Comparison of Frequency of *dikh* Root within NT Books



Distribution of *dikh* Root within Romans



IV. PERSONALLY UNDERSTOOD:

A. Theme: The Good News Of God's righteousness in providing our righteousness by faith alone.

B. Development:

1. The Explanation of it (1:18-11:36).
(Exp: Emphasizing believing it.)
2. The Application on the basis of it
(12:1-16:27).(Exp: Emphasizing living in light of it.)
 - a. Reflects Paul's theme verse (1:17):
The *Just* Shall Live by *Faith*
 - b. Accounts for an expression that occurs at both the beginning and the conclusion of the book—1:5; 16:26

--subjective genitive? Faith obeys ?

--appositional (epexegetical) genitive? Faith is the obedience ?

(Exp: Moo and Schreiner agree that it is both).

Paul may have intended both ideas, and this is the most likely solution (Schreiner, 35).)

V. THE THEME EXPLAINED:

(Exp: The righteousness of God. What does Paul mean by this?)

(Quot: Luther: *I greatly longed to understand Paul's Epistle to the Romans and nothing stood in the way but that one expression: "the justice of God," . . . (D. Martin Luthers Werke, vol. LIV in Weimar Ausgabe (1883),185, quoted in Roland Bainton, Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), 65).*)

A. Occurrences (No OT/only NT)

1. Romans 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22; 10:3 (twice). Also "his righteousness" (3:25, 26).
2. Elsewhere: II Cor. 5:21; Jam. 1:20; II Pet. 1:1
(Exp: Not always used in the same way. What are the options here in Romans 1:17?)

B. Possibility: Righteousness Which is God's
(His inherent Divine attribute)?

(Quot: Luther: *I greatly longed to understand Paul's Epistle to the Romans and nothing stood in the way but that one expression: "the justice of God," because I took it to mean that justice whereby God is just and deals justly in punishing the unjust. My situation was that, although an impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner troubled in conscience, and I had no confidence that my merit would assuage him. Therefore I did not love a just and angry God, but rather hated and murmured against him. Yet I clung to the dear Paul and had a great yearning to know what he meant* (Ibid).)

(Exp: But this understanding cannot be because 3:22 says it is
"by faith.")

C. Possibility: Righteousness Which God Gives
(a status or standing)?

(Exp: Genitive of source. "Righteousness which is from God." This is the position to which Luther came.² Held by Calvin, Cranfield, Ladd, Nygren, Ridderbos, and others. Phil. 3:9 definitely describes this way.)³

D. Possibility: God's Righteousness displayed _____?

(Exp: subjective genitive. "Righteousness which is being displayed by God.")⁴

(Quot: *Especially significant are the many places in the Psalms and Isaiah where God's "righteousness" refers to his salvific intervention on behalf of his people . . . If Paul is using this "biblical" meaning of the word, then his point here would be that the gospel manifests "the saving action of God"* (Moo, 71).

E. Possibility: Combination of C and B

1. C is that the Gospel reveals what God provides _____—
righteousness.

2. D is that the Gospel reveals not only what God provides (C), but also what He displays when He does so (confirmation: 3:25-26).

(Exp: Both what He is in saving and what He gives. He has a means of being righteous while still giving sinners a righteous standing. The Gospel is this good news.)

(Quot: *The act by which God brings people into right relationship with himself* (Moo, 74).)

² By the righteousness of God we must not understand the righteousness by which He is righteous in Himself but the righteousness by which we are made righteous by God. . . . Therefore blessed Augustine writes . . . "It is called the righteousness of God because by imparting it He makes righteous people" (Lectures on Romans: Glosses and Scholia, ed. Hilton C. Oswald, vol. 25 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut Lehmann (St. Louis: Concordia, 1972), 151).

³ C. E. B. Cranfield argues for this view for four reasons. (1) There are several occurrences of *dikaïosunē* in the Pauline letters that support it (10:3; Phil. 3:9; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:17). (2) The words *ek pisteōs eis pistin* point to the issue being how a man can be righteous, rather than the character of God's activity. (3) The Habakkuk quotation focuses attention on the justified man, not on God's act. (4) It better suits the structure of the argument of the epistle. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1985), I, 97-98.

⁴ Cranfield gives five reasons that some hold this view. (1) In 3:5 the genitive *qeou* must be subjective. (2) The fact that in v. 18 *qeou* is a subjective genitive and v. 17a and v. 18 are parallels. Also that *orōn* in v. 18 is an activity of God, therefore *dikaïosunē* is also likely to be. (3) The phrase *dunamis qeou* in v. 16b refers to an activity, and v. 17a is its explanation. (4) In the OT, when the reference is to God's righteousness, it is generally a reference to the activity of His saving power. (5) That "righteousness of God" was a technical term of late-Jewish apocalyptic for God's saving justice. Ibid., 96.

WHAT IS ITS MESSAGE? God's righteousness in providing our
righteousness by faith alone.

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS **EXPLAINED** (1-11)

9-11 Who Obtains It By Faith Alone: Election

II. GOD'S MERCIES IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE ARE **APPLIED** (12-16).

⁵ J. I. Packer clarifies justification succinctly when he writes, *Paul maintains that God justifies sinners on a just ground: namely, that Jesus Christ, acting on their behalf, has satisfied the claims of God's law upon them. . . So, when God justifies sinners on the ground of Christ's obedience and death, He acts justly. So far from compromising His judicial righteousness, this method of justification actually exhibits it. . . The gospel which proclaims God's apparent violation of His justice really reveals His justice. By this method of justifying sinners, God (in another sense) justified Himself.* "Justification," in *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), 685.

12:1-2 TO THE ALL-ENCOMPASSING RESPONSE:

Presentation

12:3-16:24 TO ENSUING CRITICAL RELATIONSHIPS:

Transformation

- 12 Ministering to Members of Christ's Body
- 12 Responding to those within and without Christ's Body
- 13 Submitting to Civil Government
- 14 Receiving weaker brethren
- 15 Evangelizing the Nations
- 16 Exemplifying affection for the brethren

THE MESSAGE OF ROMANS INTRODUCED

ROMANS 1:1-17

I. ROMANS' MESSAGE AND GENERAL DEVELOPMENT (reviewed):

- A. Theme: God's righteousness in providing our righteousness by faith alone
- B. Development:

- 1. God's righteousness in providing our righteousness by faith alone is **explained** (1-11).
- 2. God's mercies in providing our righteous by faith alone are **applied** (12-16).

II. PAUL INTRODUCES THE SUBJECT OF THE GOSPEL TO THEM (1:1-7).

- A. His Identity/Qualifications For Communicating It (vv 1-6).

- 1. In personal relation to Christ: bond-slave (v 1).
- 2. In office within Christ's Body: an apostle (v 1).
- 3. In specific commission: separated unto the Gospel (vv 1-4).
- a. Its Relationship to the Old Testament (v 2).

b. Its central subject: concerns Jesus Christ (vv 3-4).

i. His designations (v 3).

Question: But how can one person be all of these?

ii. His Human nature (v 3).

iii. His Divine nature (v 4).

--marked out by a boundary line between Himself and all others by resurrection

--marked out Son of God "with power"

Exp: This seems to refer to a position that is invested with power. But in what sense can the Son of God be said to have been marked out since the resurrection as holding a position of power that He did not already possess previously? John Murray writes with fine discrimination, *We may not forget that already in verse 3 the Son of God is now viewed not simply as the eternal Son but as the eternal Son Incarnate, the eternal Son subject to the historical conditions introduced by his being born of the seed of David. Hence the action with which verse 4 is concerned is one that has respect to the Son of God incarnate, and it is not only proper but altogether reasonable to regard it as another phase of the historical process which provides the subject matter of the gospel. The apostle is dealing with some particular event in the history of the Son of God incarnate by which he was **instated** in a position of sovereignty and invested with power, an event which in respect of investiture with power surpassed everything that could previously be ascribed to him in his incarnate state* (*The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 10). It's imperative to clarify that it was as the incarnate Son of God that He was placed in this new position. The idea of the phrase is probably that He was *appointed Son-of-God-in-power (that is, in contrast with His being Son of God in apparent weakness and poverty in the period of His earthly existence)* (Cranfield). Schreiner agrees, writing, *He was exalted to a level of power and authority that he did not have previously. . . . When he lived on earth, he was the Son of God as the seed of David (v. 3). Upon his resurrection, however, he was enthroned as the messianic king.* Acts 2:36 speaks of this event, as may Philippians 2:9-11 (depending on whether the "name above every name" is "Jesus" or "lord"). Ephesians 1:20-23 is an even fuller revelation of it. Also see I Peter 3:21-22. These NT references all reveal the fulfillment of Psalm 2:7-9 (cf. Acts 13:33 for the apostolic explanation of "today I have begotten you.")

--"according to the Spirit of holiness."

(Exp: Cranfield says this is the most difficult expression in the opening. Does pneuma refer to Christ's own spirit or to the Holy Spirit?

I. The KJV suggests the former, by translating the word with a lower case "s" (spirit). Hodge agrees with this, but capitalizes "spirit" (Spirit) and argues that the reference is to Christ's *higher or divine nature*. It is termed "of holiness" in order to differentiate it from the Holy Spirit but to nevertheless communicate Christ's own attribute of holiness.

The NKJV, NASB, NIV, and ESV all translate with an upper case "S" (Spirit). This doesn't necessarily suggest that we should think of the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, it is actually Christ's Spirit in view, then there is an exact contrast in vv 3 & 4 between what He is in His Spirit and His flesh. As to the flesh—of the seed of David (v 3). As to His Spirit—Son of God (v 4).

II. Most commentators capitalize the word and take it to refer to the Holy Spirit.

A. The Holy Spirit's Part in Jesus' resurrection.

B. The Spirit's testimony about the resurrection and its significance to the Son of God as described here and elsewhere. Cranfield holds to a kind of variation of this latter view, writing that he *understands the phrase to refer to the Holy Spirit, who, as given by the exalted Christ, is the manifestation of His power and majesty, and so the guarantee of His having been appointed Son of God in might*. It should be noted, however, that Cranfield's view of the inspiration of Scripture is defective and this might explain his variation on position B.

C. Both Moo and Schreiner apply the reference to the Holy Spirit but extend it to the period of time characterized by Him that was inaugurated with the resurrection. Schreiner calls it the *new age of the Spirit*. Their explanations are somewhat clumsily expressed, but the gist is that Jesus lived His earthly life in the realm of weak, humble flesh, but that with the resurrection He inaugurated a new age characterized, in His own case and in ours, by the Holy Spirit. In this view, *kata* means something like, "with reference to" or "in the realm of.")

D. Murray believes that the phrase marks the beginning of a new *stage of pneumatic endowment upon which Jesus entered though his resurrection*. He explains this as meaning that *Christ now by reason of the resurrection is so endowed with and in control of the Holy Spirit that, without any confusion of the distinct persons, Christ is identified with the Spirit and is called "the Lord of the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18)*.

In spite of the lengthy arguments offered by these respected commentators, several factors leave me dissatisfied with the view that pneuma is the Holy Spirit. The first is that it is almost impossible to explain away the obvious verbal parallelism between

tou genomenou ek spermatos Daid kata sarka (v 3) and
tou orisqentos uiou qeou kata pneuma agiwsunhs (v. 4).

Another is that if “spirit of holiness” refers to the Holy Spirit, this is the only time in the NT the expression is used of Him. In other words, this way of saying “Holy Spirit” is so unusual as to require some proof that it actually should be taken of Him and not of something else. Then there is the fact that the views held by Moo, Schreiner and Murray require such interpretational gymnastics to arrive at. And lastly, there really is no compelling syntactical, contextual, or theological reason for dismissing what is suggested by the parallelism between the expressions in vv 3 and 4.

I wonder if the reference isn’t to Christ’s own Spirit (capital S), and if what we have here isn’t a reflection of the mystery related to Mary when she asked how she could possibly bear a child. The answer was the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, with the result that *the holy thing begotten shall be called the Son of God* (Lk. 1:35). The eternal Word took flesh, that of Mary, a descendant of David. But what took flesh, was indeed, Spirit (*God is spirit*) the Son of God. As such, it is holy. Jesus Christ, then, was the Son of God, in the realm of His Spirit (characterized by the telltale central attribute of deity—holiness). His identity as the Son of God was disbelieved by those He came to save. But at the resurrection, He was designated to be the incarnate Son of God in the position of power, in keeping with what is actually the case in the realm of His Spirit, a spirit of Divine holiness.

4. International Scope Of His Commission (v 5).

Question: What is meant by “the obedience of faith?”

The expression also concludes the book at 16:26. So the book opens and closes with Paul’s referring to it as his objective for all nations.

Possibilities:

- subjective genitive: Faith's Obedience ?
 --appositional (epexegetical): Obedience which is faith ?

(Exp: Moo and Schreiner agree that it is both. *Paul may have intended both ideas, and this is the most likely solution* (Schreiner, 35).)

- B. Addressees (vv 6-7).
 C. Greeting (v 7).

III. PAUL'S ZEAL TO VISIT & TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THEM (1:8-17):

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS **EXPLAINED (chapters 1-11).**

A. 1:18-3:20: Why It Must Be Obtained By Faith Alone: Condemnation

Explanation Summarized: Our righteousness must be provided by God upon the one condition of faith because all of us are already under God's just condemnation.

I. GOD'S WRATH UPON ALL UNGODLINESS & UNRIGHTEOUSNESS IS Already Apparent (1:18-32). GENTILE CONDEMNATION

A. Its Objects Are Inexcusable (v 20) Because They Habitually Suppress The Truth (vv 18-23).

- a. What they know (v. 19 uses word "known"): revelation about God (vv 19-20).
 - i. From whom? God Himself (v 19)
 - ii. How? By means of the things He has made (v 20)
 - iii. For how long? Since the creation of the world (v 20)
 - iv. How apparent? Clearly seen, being understood (v 20)

- v. What truth? His invisible attributes (v 20)
 - vi. For what Purpose or with what Result ?
- Inexcusable (20)

b. What their response has been to what they knew (v 21 uses word):
a great Exchange (vv 21-23).

- a. It must be conceded that they knew God.
- b. Yet nevertheless. . .
 - i. They did not glorify the creator as God, nor were they thankful
 - ii. Instead, they engaged in empty speculation, lost the light, became fools
(though professing themselves wise), and made a senseless exchange of God's glory for images of corruptible things.

B. Its Manifestations (vv 24-32).

(Exp: Note vv 24, 26, and 28. This “giving up” is a just and Equivalent recompense. They degraded God, so He degrades them. A progression to this—the kind that inevitably happens when you give a wild thing more and more leash—it goes further and further.)

1. God gives people over to impurity (vv 24).
(Exp: Note the Equivalency. As they degraded the invisible God into something made like the bodies of even the lowest creatures, so God gives them over to degrading their bodies. Fornication, adultery, bigamy, polygamy, religious prostitution, etc.)
2. God gives people over to Unnatural impurity (vv 25-27).⁶
(Exp: Again notice the equivalency—*degrading passions*. Doing what is against nature, even as they worship against the revelation of God in nature!)

(App: Advice to such people)

1. Hope: I Cor. 6:9-11
2. Stop blaming anyone else
3. Confess that what God says is right

⁶ See James B. Deyoung, “The Meaning of ‘Nature’ in Romans 1 And Its Implications For Biblical Proscriptions Of Homosexual Behavior,” in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 31:4 (Dec. 1988): 429-441.

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|--|
| 4. Surrender to what God made you |
| 5. Ask God to restore wholesome feelings |
| 6. Act like what you are |
| 7. Avoid temptation |

3. God gives people over to Reprobate minds (vv 28-32).
 (Exp: An adokimos mind. It refers to what is disapproved and fails the test. *The adokimos is a mind so debilitated and corrupted as to be a quite untrustworthy guide in moral decisions* (Cranfield, 128). Again, there is exact equivalency here, as the word “did not like” (v 28) is edokimasan. It did not meet with their approval to retain the true knowledge of God, so gave them up to minds that are unfit for approving right. It’s the kind of mind they wanted, it’s the kind of mind they got!)

(Conclusion: Is this judgment irreversible? John Newton *I have never despaired of any man since God saved me*. The whole point of Romans is that there is righteousness available from God. And this chapter is not here merely to prove beyond refutation that men are under God’s wrath, but to use that very fact to urge upon them that it is this that makes conclusive that their salvation must be by faith alone. Praise God (!), by that means, anyone can obtain an alien righteousness from God.)

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE

I. GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS **EXPLAINED** (chapters 1-11).

A. 1:18-3:20 Why It Must Be Obtained By Faith Alone: Condemnation

1. God’s Wrath Upon All Ungodliness & Unrighteousness Is
Revealed (1:18-32). Gentile Condemnation

II. Dio Hypocritical Judges ARE INEXCUSABLE AS WELL (2:1-3:8): JEWISH CONDEMNATION

A. The Identity of the Inexcusable Man: Any Man Who Is (v 1). . .

1. Enlightened enough to Judge.
2. But Practicing the same sins.
 (Exp: Either Hypocrisy or Externalism (mental attitude sins such as our Lord dealt with in the Sermon on the Mount). Externalism is tokenism.)

B. The Standards By Which God Will Judge The Hypocritical Judge (vv 2-16).

1. Judgment will be according to Truths (vv 2-5).

(Exp: That is, it will be true to the actual facts of a man's case.)

2. Judgment will be according to deeds (vv 6-16).

Note: Taking into account men's possession/non-possession of the law (vv 11-15).⁷

Gentile Conscience:

As to function, conscience is threefold (1) Obligatory. It urges man to do that which he regards as right and restrains him from doing that which he regards as wrong. (2) Judicial. Conscience passes judgment upon man's decisions and acts. (3) Executive. Conscience executes its judgment in the heart of man. It condemns his action when in conflict with his conviction by causing an inward disquietude, distress, shame, or remorse. It commends when man has acted in conformity with his convictions. A. A. Rehwinkel, "Conscience" in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 267.

For examples of conscience at work in ancient Gentile civilizations (Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman), see Rehwinkel's *The Voice of Conscience* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1956), 35-45. He quotes, for instance, from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, in which there is a model confession offered to a man at the approach of his death. In the presence of forty-two assessors, he is advised to plead, *I have not done evil to mankind. I have not oppressed the members of my family. I have not wrought evil in place of right and truth. I have had no knowledge of worthless men. I have not wrought evil. . . I have not ill-treated my servants. I have not thought scorn of God. I have not defrauded the oppressed one of his property. . . I have not caused pain. . . I have made no one to weep. I have done no murder. I have not committed fornication. . . I have not added to the weights of the scales. . . I am pure, I am pure, I am pure.* Or to give another illustration, he quotes from the *Vedas*, the ancient Hindu sacred hymns dated between 1000 and 700 B.C. *Before Thee I am guilty in every nerve and vein; A sinner am I every moment: Master, forgive me. In the wide world I stand trembling and alone, chief of all sinners, the black cloud of my errors is impenetrable and covers the whole horizon of my life. Evils without number, countless vices are within me; Many stains are without: Not a single good deed have I done; No virtue is there in me; no merit is mine; . . . Danger, pride, anger, and falsehood have misled me since my birth; Oh, miserable man that I am.*

The Puritans called conscience, "God's spy in the heart," "God's deputy and vice-regent within," "God's sergeant to arrest the sinner," and "God's court" (see I. D. E. Thomas, *A Puritan Golden Treasury* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977), 59-61, for a variety of good quotations).

C. S. Lewis argued for universal conscience by pointing out that people appeal to one another by saying things like, *How would you like it if someone did that to you? . . . I was here first. . . I gave you a piece of my orange, how about giving me a piece of yours?* When they do, the other person seldom argues with the standard, but resorts to trying to make out as though he's an exception or that there's some extenuating

⁷ Robert Duncan Culver has an excellent treatment of human conscience and its relationship to human guilt in his *Systematic Theology* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 263-267. Highly recommended.

circumstance that prevents him from doing what he otherwise concedes it would be his duty to do. *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1958), 3, 4.

C. The Thinking Of The Hypocritical Jewish Judge Refuted (2:17-3:8)

(Exp: A study in the psychology of hypocrisy.)

1. His presumption addressed (2:17-29):

a. The Jew's presumption because he possesses the Law (vv 17-24):

- i. He knows himself to be uniquely privileged (vv 17-18).
- ii. He's confident that his role is to teach the Gentiles (vv 19-20).
- iii. But does he himself Practice what he teaches (vv 21-23)?

(Exp: Notice the 5 Questions. It's possible that v 23 is a statement (as ESV) rather than a question (as KJV, NASB, NIV, and NKJV), but it makes little difference to the meaning or application. For the most part, Paul is questioning the Jew in order to compel his Conscience to answer rightly or to see if he will lie wrongly, thus perjuring himself and confirming Paul's point!)

iv. Actually, Jewish practice has resulted in God's being blasphemed by the Gentiles (v 24).

(Exp: The background to this is that God intended for the Jews to be His witnesses to the nations (Is. 43:9-10, 12; 44:8. They were to witness specifically to His identity as the only true and living God (see the contexts of these references), but their lawless practices caused the Gentiles to blaspheme the God to whom they were bearing witness (Isaiah 52:5).)

b. The Jew's presumption because he is Circumcised (vv 25-29):

- i. Circumcision (the Ritual) has value if coupled with obedience (the Reality) (v 25).
- ii. But circumcision (the ritual) has no value if divorced from obedience (the reality) (v 25).
- iii. So actually, will not obedience (the reality) be counted for circumcision (the ritual) (v 26)?
- iv. And will not obedience (the reality) condemn the one with only circumcision (the ritual) but no reality (v 27)?

--Because of who in reality is not a Jew and not circumcised (v 28).

--And because of who in reality is truly a Jew and truly circumcised (v 29).

2. His arguments answered (3:1-8):

(Exp: One of the most difficult paragraphs in Romans. *The unwary commentator approaches this paragraph thinking to find rather clear sailing after the exegetical whirlpools of chpt. 2 and before the theological storms of 3:21. He or she quickly realizes (or at least this commentator did) the justice of Godet's claim: the paragraph 3:1-8 is "one of the most difficult, perhaps, in the Epistle"* (Moo, 177-178). *Knotty problems lie under the surface. . . serious difficulties. . . a nest of difficulties. . . the syntax of verse 8 is extraordinarily difficult and complicated* (Schreiner, 147, 151, 153).)

(Exp: But notice all the question marks— 9 in all.)

a. Does Paul's analysis mean the Jew has no advantage (vv 1-2)?

Answer: The Jew possesses the first advantage of all possible advantages, possessing God's oracles.

b. Does Paul's analysis mean God has proven to be unfaithful (vv 3-4)?

(Illus: David's sin didn't nullify God's faithfulness. To the contrary, David confessed his sin in order to make clear that God was justified (righteous) in His condemnation of David's sin.)

c. Does Paul's analysis mean God is unrighteous when He inflicts wrath (vv 5-8)?

Answer: mh genoito! Right premise, but monstrous conclusion!

i. How then could God judge anyone (v 6)?

ii. The same objection restated and taken to its logical end

(v 7-8):

--Why should God judge me when my lie actually brought glory to Him (v 7)?

--Why not just do evil so that this good (of bringing God glory) may take place (v 8)? This is what some slanderously say that we teach.

(App: Correctly handling the Word will sometimes expose one to the charge of teaching impossible, illogical, or unfair things.)

iii. The condemnation of these objectors is entirely

righteous (App: Sometimes the only way to respond to disingenuous people is to finally denounce them and just *move on* with your preaching. If they want to come along with you, great. If not, they'll just have to be left behind. There's nothing more you can do for them.)

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS EXPLAINED (chapters 1-11).

A. 1:18-3:20 Why It Must Be Obtained By Faith Alone: CONDEMNATION

1. God's Wrath Upon All Ungodliness & Unrighteousness Is Already Apparent(1:18-32). Gentile Condemnation
2. Hypocritical Judges Are Inexcusable As Well (2:1-3:8).

Jewish Condemnation

III. CONCLUSION: GOD'S LAW CLOSES EVERY PROTESTING MOUTH (3:9-20). UNIVERSALISM CONDEMNATION

A. All Are Under Sin (vv 9-18).

1. Meaning: "in a realm, under a reign" (6:12, 14, 20).
2. Proof: (6 O.T. passages in 9 vv).

a. Our general character and conduct (vv 10-12)

- i. What we all are not:
 - In our standing: righteous
 - In our thinking: understanding
 - In our interest: seeking God
- ii. What we all are:
 - Gone out of the way (Isaiah 53:6).
 - Unprofitable (like milk gone sour)

iii. Summary: None doeth good

a. Our speech (vv.13-14).

(Exp: The significance of this is found in a combination of Mtt. 12:34 and James 3:2. Note sequence—throat, tongue, lips, and mouth.)

- i. Kills (v. 13)
 - (Ill: Advertising, abortion counseling, religion. All have reinforced damning errors.)
- ii. Curses (14)
- iii. Complains (14)

- b. Our ways (vv. 15-17)
- c. Our attitude (v. 18)

Summary: He has proven that all are under the reign of sin by quoting OT passages that expose our fundamentals—our minds, our ambitions, our throats, tongues, lips, mouths, feet, ways and eyes.

B. All Are Under The Law's Indictment (vv 19-20).

1. This is universally individual (v. 19).

Andrew Fuller's Illustration: *A ship's company rise against their officers, put them in chains, and take the command of the ship upon themselves. They agree to set the officers ashore on some uninhabited island, to sail to some distant port, dispose of the cargo, and divide the amount. After parting with their officers they find it necessary, for the sake of self-preservation, to establish some kind of laws and order.*

To these they adhere with punctuality, act upon honour with respect to each other, and propose to be very impartial in the distribution of their plunder. But while they are on their voyage, one of the company relents and becomes very unhappy. They inquire the reason. He answers, "We are engaged in a wicked cause!"

They plead their justice, honour, and generosity with each other. He denies that there is any virtue in it: "Nay, all our equity, while it is exercised in pursuit of a scheme which violates the great law of justice, is itself a species of iniquity!"

"You talk extravagantly; surely we might be worse than we are if we were to destroy each other as well as our officers."

"Yes, wickedness admits of degrees; but there is no virtue or goodness in all our doings; all has arisen from selfish motives. The same principles which led us to discard our officers would lead us, if it were not for our own sake, to destroy each other."

*"But you speak so very **discouragingly**; you destroy all **motives** to good order in the ship; what would you have us do?"*

"REPENT, RETURN TO OUR INJURED OFFICERS AND OWNERS, AND SUBMIT TO MERCY."

*"O, but this we **cannot** do: advise us to anything which concerns the good order of the ship, and we will hearken to you!"*

*"I **cannot** bear to advise in these matters! RETURN, RETURN, AND SUBMIT TO MERCY!"*

Such would be the language of a true penitent in this case; and such would be the language of a Christian minister to sinners who have cast off the government of God. (The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, revised by Joseph Belcher, 3 vols. (1845; rpt., Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 2:673).

- Not all are Equally bad.
- No one as bad as it's possible to be.
- Some are even in agreement with God (chpt 2).
- But all are guilty

(Exp: upodikos occurs only here. Word refers to being accountable and liable to prosecution.)

(Exp: Becomes apparent when God approaches the specific part of our life or values where we want our own way. Lord demonstrated with rich young ruler.)

2. This rules out entirely a righteousness-by-Law-works (v 20).

- a. Law not given to bring self-righteousness.
- b. Law not given to give self-hope.
- c. Law given to give self-knowledge.

App: Stop talking. Stop working. Acknowledge the truth and listen to the Gospel.

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Jewish Condemnation

- 3. Conclusion: God's Law Closes Every Protesting Mouth (3:9-20).

Universal Condemnation

B. 3:21-4:25 How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone: Justification

I. **NEGATIVELY (3:21).**

(Exp: No article before nomos. It is not by law of any kind.)

- (1) No legal works that are preparatory (antecedently).
- (2) No legal works that are accessory (contemporaneously).
- (3) No legal works that are subsidiary (subsequently).

(Illus: (1) is like a man attempting to prove innocence. (2) is like a man attempting to plea bargain. (3) is like a man performing public service while on probation.)

II. SCRIPTURALLY (3:21).

(Exp: Chpt. 4 will provide examples that this is so.)

III. POSITIVELY (3:22-31).

A. There Is Just One Human Condition: Faith (3:22-23).

1. Its object is Jesus Christ

2. Its subjects are anyone

(Argument: There is no difference between people, all have sinned and come short of God's glory. If you're a Gentile this is encouraging—you're no worse than a Jew. If you're a Jew this is humbling—you're as needy as a Gentile)

B. There Are Multiple Divine Actions (3:24-26).

(Exp: Here is a statement employing nine precise theological terms. These are the vocabulary of salvation. Impression here is fatal. Jesus said, *The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life* (John 6:63).

So Satan attempts to redefine these words.)

THE VOCABULARY OF SOTERIOLOGY

(Romans 3:24-25)

When, by the Spirit of God, I understood the words—when I learned how the justification of the sinner proceeds from the free mercy of our Lord through faith. . . then I felt born again like a new man. . . . In very truth, this language of Saint Paul was to me the true gate of Paradise. —*Martin Luther*

(The Life and Times of Martin Luther, *J. H. Merle D'Aubigne*, pp. 55-56).

1. JUSTIFIED (v. 24)

(Dikaïow occurs 39 times in the NT/ 15 are in Romans.)

A. Definition:

1. Not to make righteous

(Illus: The new official *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed., published in 2000) defines justification as *The gracious action of God which frees us from sin and communicates "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" (Rom. 3:22). Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man*

(from the "Glossary," p. 885).

(Exp: Although verbs ending in *ow* are generally causative, this is not the case with verbs of moral qualities. For instance, *axiow* does not mean to "make worthy," but to "deem worthy." See *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, Leon Morris,

pp. 225-226. Godet maintains,
As to dikaion, there is not an example in the whole of classic literature where it signifies "to make just"
 (Romans, I, p. 157). See also Moo's discussion (pp. 86-87).)

2. But to _____ declare _____ righteous, or to regard as righteous.

(Exp: This position is not only consistent with the uniform secular usage as noted above, but most importantly, with its usage within Romans itself.)

- ▶ It is possible to justify _____ God _____ (3:4).
- ▶ The opposite of justification is condemnation (3:19-20).

(Exp: See Mtt. 12:37 for our Lord's use of the terms as precise opposites. Each is taken from the sphere of Law. Just as "condemnation" does not effectively make a man a sinner, so "justification" does not make him righteous.)

- ▶ God justifies the ungodly (4:5).

B. Acquisition:

- ▶ A position resulting from being a does of God's Law (2:13).
- ▶ A position unobtainable by the deeds of the Law (3:20).
- ▶ A position obtained freely by his grace (3:24).

C. Consequence:

- ▶ A position resulting in peace with God (5:1).
- ▶ A position precluding any just charge or condemnation (8:33-34).

2. FREELY (v. 24)

(Exp: Dwrean is the accusative form of the noun dwrea, "gift." Though a noun, dwrea is frequently used adverbially in the NT. A suggestive usage is John 15:25, where it is translated "_____ without a cause_____".)

3. GRACE (v. 24)

(Exp: Often defined as "unmerited favor." This definition, however, lacks the necessary implication about the state of the sinner to whom God is gracious. Better described (though perhaps not technically "defined") as "unmerited favor to those who deserve the very opposite_____".)

(Quot: It should also be clarified that *Grace is never exercised by Him making up what may be lacking in the life and character of a sinner. In such a case, much sinfulness would call for much grace, and little sinfulness would call for little grace. Instead the sin*

question has to be set aside forever, and equal exercise of grace is extended to all who believe. It never falls short of being the measureless saving grace of God (Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace, p. 5).

4. REDEMPTION (v. 24)

A. What Apolutrwsis Means: To “loose (luw) from (apo),” or to “release.”

(Exp: 10 NT occ. NASB trans. “redemption,” 9 times and “release” once. Used of unbinding armor, unyoking horses, or loosening the bonds of captives.)

B. What Redemption Requires: a lutron (“ransom”).

C. Definition: To Release By The Payment Of A Ransom

1. What we are released from:

- a. The curse of the Law (Gal. 3:13)
- b. All Iniquity (Tit. 2:14)
- c. Our decaying and dying bodies (Rom. 8:23)

2. What the ransom is:

- a. The life of the Son of Man (Mtt. 20:28; Mk. 10:45)
- b. The blood of the Lamb of God
(I Pet. 1:18-19; Eph 1:7).

D. Significance Of Term (Rev. 5:9)

(Exp: Seems to be the single most inclusive term for describing the complete release of all of the effects of the Fall upon our humanity.)

5. PROPITIATION (v. 25)

(Exp: Eng. word occ. 4 times in Bible—all in NT (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; I John 2:20, 4:10). 5 more occurrences of related Gk. terms (Mtt. 16:22; Lk. 18:13; Heb. 2:17; 8:12; 9:5). The word is sometimes translated “expiation,” referring to the cancellation of sin. This is at odds, however, with the uniform secular usage of the term, which meant to “appease wrath.”)

(Quot: *Whatever may be the biblical usage there can be no doubt as to the prevailing use in all non-biblical writings (Leon Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross, p. 126). He quotes George Smeaton, The uniform acceptation of the word in classical Greek, when applied to the Deity, is the means of appeasing God, or of averting His anger; and not a single instance to the contrary occurs in the whole Greek literature (The Apostles’ Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 455).*)

A. TheSetting Of Propitiation Is The Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:5).

B. The Necessity Is The Disfavor A Sinner Senses (Lk. 18:13).

C. The Propitiation Itself Is Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25).

(Note: Within the context of Romans to this point, it is *essential* that there be some antidote to what is so fearfully taught in the opening statement of the letter's body; 1:18—For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. . . .)

6. HIS BLOOD (v. 25)

(Note: The contemporary view, that references to Jesus' blood are merely metonyms for His "violent," or more specifically, His "violent, sacrificial death" does not seem to do justice to (1) the unique property of the blood (Lev. 17:11), (2) the unique person of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28), or (3) the unique emphasis of the Scripture upon this aspect of Jesus' death. See the more than 30 NT references, especially those in Hebrews 9 and 10. It is true that we are saved by His violent, sacrificial death, but the *aspect* of His death to which the Scripture turns our attention insistently is His blood. A helpful article differing with the contemporary view is "Blood of Christ," in *Dictionary of Theological Terms*, by Alan Cairns.)

7. REMISSION (v. 25)

(Exp: This is the only NT occurrences of paresis. It comes from parihmi meaning to "pass by," or "disregard." Best translation here is "passover" (NASB). God intentionally disregarded ("pretermission").)

8. SINS THAT ARE PAST (v. 25)

(Exp: "That are past" is the word proginomai, meaning to "happen before" or to "happen previously." Only NT occ. In light of what will be taught in chapter 4 regarding the justification of OT saints, it is best to refer this expression to their sins that "happened previously" rather than to ours before we are saved. Also see Hebrews 9:15. *He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

9. FORBEARANCE (v. 25)

(Exp: Anoch refers to a "delay." Only other NT usage is Romans 2:4.)

(Note: We now resume the expositional outline of 3:22-31)

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B. 3:21-4:25	How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone:	JUSTIFICATION
1. Negatively (3:21). 2. Scripturally (3:21).		

III. POSITIVELY (3:22-31).

- A. There Is Just One Human Condition: Faith (3:22-23).
- B. There Are Multiple Divine Actions (3:24-26).

- 1. The Vocabulary (“The Vocabulary of Soteriology” above)
- 2. The Purpose They Achieve (v 26).
- 3. The Boasting They Exclude (v 27).
- 4. The Conclusion We Reach (vv 28-31).

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B. 3:21-4:25 How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone: **JUSTIFICATION**

- 1. Negatively (3:21).
- 2. Scripturally (3:21).
- 3. Positively (3:22-31).

IV. ILLUSTRATIVELY (4).

- A. Abraham was justified apart from works (4:1-8).

- 1. Otherwise he could have boasted (4:2).

2. According to the scripture (4:3).

(Illus: A society for the spread of atheism in America put out a leaflet to discredit Christianity. It featured lives of OT characters with lurid descriptions of their misbehavior. One was Abram and the account of sacrificing his wife to save himself. The pamphlet hit upon something true—Abram was a sinner. Yet here he is said to be “righteous”—all of his obligations fulfilled in the sight of God. How can that be?)

a. He believed God.

b. His faith was reckoned to him.

(Exp: “Counted” (v 3), “reckoned” (v 4), and “imputeth” (v 6) are all the same word. Means “to place to the account” of someone or “attribute to” him. Might surprise us that “his belief” was attributed to him. Yet that’s what is clearly stated in several vv in this passage—vv 5, 9)

i. You can put to one’s account what he doesn’t possess or doesn’t do.

(Illus: Someone giving a gift of money, letting a substitute perform your task.)

ii. You can also put to one’s account what he does possess or does do (vv. 4, 8).

iii. In Gen. 15, what Abraham possessed was belief, not works.

(Exp: God took account of this. This faith was attributed to him—placed to his account. He was regarded to be a believer.)

c. The result was that Abraham obtained righteousness (a righteous standing in God’s sight).

(Exp: The little word “for” here suggests that his faith was his righteousness .

It was credited to him as righteousness. NASB translates that way.)

(Illus: Way some Jews interpreted. As if faith is a work that merits salvation. “Our father Abraham became the heir of this and of the coming world simply by the merit of the faith with which he believed in the LORD, as it is written, “He believed in the LORD, and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Cranfield). But Romans 3-4 slam the door on that interpretation. Overthrow it entirely.)

(Illus: Commentators know the teaching of the chapters, but have real trouble with this expression. John Murray, after an extensive discussion concludes, *We are compelled to say that in NT teaching the righteousness contemplated in justification is not faith itself but something that comes into our possession by faith. The question then remains why, in the formula of Gen. 15:6 as quoted by Paul, is faith represented as reckoned for righteousness? It may not be possible to answer this question with any decisiveness* (p. 358).)

i. Abraham’s faith was unto righteousness.

(Exp. That is, the result of God’s reckoning his faith to him was “righteousness” for Abraham.)

(Exp: The eis is a resultant preposition. Romans 10:10 uses the same preposition and noun. Here the NASB reads, “resulting in righteousness.”

That’s it exactly. And what is clear later in the passage is that...)

ii. It is righteousness itself which is imputed to a believer (v 6).

(Illus: David is the illus. now, but Paul is using him because his case is identical to Abraham’s. A sinner, but his sins not imputed to him. Instead, a righteousness which he did not have. This is what Abraham experienced.)

(Exp: And this is the thing that is precedent setting for all time. V 5)

iii. That righteousness is not our own (3:22).

I Cor. 1:30 Of God Christ is made unto us righteousness

II Cor. 5:21

3. Otherwise salvation would not be a gift (4:5-6).

4. This is supported by David’s experience as well (4:6-8).

B. Abraham was justified apart from circumcision (4:9-12).

(Exp: The nature of the argument here is precedent setting for understanding how to harmonize Paul and James on justification. It is an argument based upon the chronological sequence of two events in Abraham’s life.

HARMONIZING ROMANS 4 AND JAMES 2

Problem: Compare the statements of the two passages on. . .

(1) The theology of justification generally: Jam. 2:24/Rom. 3:28

(2) Abraham’s justification in particular: Jam. 2:21/Rom. 4:2

Solution:

(Teaching not contradictory but entirely/necessarily complimentary.)

(1) The Author of both passages is the same.

(Exp: We must resist a subtle tendency to think of these two passages as the writings of two different men who might have stated things a little differently had they compared notes with one another. The Author in both cases is Divine, and the teaching therefore is entirely without error in each passage.)

(2) The teaching of Romans Follows the teaching of James.

(Exp: If someone in the early church were confused by what James taught, then Romans clarified. We would do well to read the two passages in that same order.)

(3) The two books are correcting two Different errors.

(Quot: “Not antagonists facing each other with crossed swords, but standing back to back confronting different foes of the Gospel.”)

(a) Romans is answering the question, “ How is a man justified?”

Answer: 3:28

(b) James is answering the question, “ what kind of faith justifies?” (2:14).

- i. His thesis (vv 17, 20, 26).
- ii. With this thesis other NT writings agree: Mtt. 7:21;
Rom. 6:15-16; 8:13; I Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21;
I John (whole book).

(4) Abraham was declared righteous many years before the incident in Gen. 22.

(a) This is the chronological argument Paul used to refute the notion that circumcision was necessary to be justified (Rom. 4:9-12).

(b) This is a legitimate clue to understanding the harmonization of these passages as well.

(Exp: Gen. 15:6 is many years before Gen. 22. What if Abraham had died before Gen. 22? Would he have been accepted by God?)

(5) James, therefore, is not speaking of his initial point of justification.

James says, “Abraham our father was justified by works” (Gen. 22).
Romans says, “Abraham was already a justified man”
(Gen. 15:6).

It is possible to state these two facts in a complimentary way.

James is speaking about the justification of an Already Justified man.

(Exp: His works justify him to be justified. By his works he was declared to be *experientially* what he already was *forensically* or legally in the sight of the court of Heaven.)

(a) His faith *worked with* his works (vs. 22).

(Exp: This is the verb form of “works,” but with a preposition on the front that means “together with.”)

(b) His faith was *perfected* (brought to maturity) by his works (vs. 22).

(Exp: Not his *justification*, but his *faith* was perfected.)

(c) This complimentary combination fulfilled the statement of Gen. 15:6.

- i. Not referring to the accomplishment of something predicted.
- ii. But to the finding of its ultimate significance and meaning.

(d) Conclusion: When we read James' statement about Abraham we must supply what Genesis 15:6 (Romans 4) said. The Holy Spirit omits it in James, probably in order to keep His point there razor sharp. But in harmonizing the passages we would read. . .

“You see then how that by works an (**already justified**) man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24).

(Illus: As the body without the spirit is dead. . . Here it is works that are the spirit. Without them the faith is lifeless. Dead.)

(Exp: As the works are the vital principle of the faith, James can speak of them as justifying. They are the necessity, apart from which, faith is no faith at all.)

C. Abraham was justified apart from the Law (4:13-15)

D. Abraham was justified by faith (4:16-25).

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS **EXPLAINED** (chapters 1-11).

A. 1:18-3:20 Why It Must Be Obtained By Faith Alone: **CONDEMNATION**

1. God's Wrath Upon All Ungodliness & Unrighteousness Is Already Apparent (1:18-32).

Gentile Condemnation

2. Therefore Hypocritical Judges Are Inexcusable As Well (2:1-3:8).

Jewish Condemnation

3. Conclusion: God's Law Closes Every Protesting Mouth (3:9-20).

Universal Condemnation

B. 3:21-4:25 How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone:**JUSTIFICATION**

1. Negatively (3:21).
2. Scripturally (3:21).
3. Positively (3:22-31).
4. Illustratively (4:1-25).

C. 5:1-8:39 What Follows When Obtained By Faith Alone:

- 5 Reconciliation

INTRODUCTION:**A. Analysis Of Connection To Previous Section:**

1. “Therefore” alerts you that you have a logical consequence coming.
2. “Being justified by faith” summarizes all of the previous section.
3. “We have” introduces something we possess following justification.

B. Analysis Of Chapters 5-8:

1. Each opens with the assumption that justification has taken place.
2. Each concludes with a formula of our relationship to Jesus Christ (5:21; 6:23; 7:24-25; 8:39).
3. Each is explaining a different aspect of a justified man’s new life.

- a. We begin with peace (5:1).

(Exp: This is officially called “reconciliation.” Look at 5:10-11. He actually calls it this.)

- b. We conclude with no separation (8:39).

I. RECONCILIATION (5:1-21).**A. What Is Now Ours In Christ (5:1-11):****1. Peace with God (5:1)****2. Access into Grace (5:2a):**

(Exp: “Grace” here is a favorable standing.. We came into it. We stand in it.)

- a. This is an initial introduction.
(Illus: Meet with a dignitary there are certain formalities to be observed.)
- b. This is a continual access.

Heb. 4:16 The ruling response from the throne is grace.

3. Hope of Glory (5:2b):

(Exp: We once exchanged God's glory for idols (1:21-23). We fell short of it (3:23). Now we are promised a future share in it.)

(Exp: Hope is not uncertain wishing, but confident expectation.)

4. Jubilation in Tribulation (5:3-11):

- a. Tribulation is pressure.
 - i. Results in Endurance (Jam. 1:3-4).
(Exp: Gal. 5:22-23. Every aspect brought to maturity. Ripened. Love is not unfailing until sinned against. Joy is not genuine until apart from circumstances. Peace not abiding until overcomes anxiety and fear.)
 - ii. Results in Experience (approvedness; a tested character).
(Exp: Word used for metal that had been tested for purity and stamped dokimos.)
 - iii. Results in a confident expectations not put to shame.
(Exp: Because the Holy Spirit pours out the love of God into our hearts. This is a subjective genitive. God's loving us. The Holy Spirit conveys the assurance of it to our senses.)

--The evidence of that love (vv. 6-8): the death of Christ for us when we were yet ungodly.

--The expectation we therefore have (vv. 9-11): salvation from the wrath of God.

B. How It Is That These Things Are Ours Imputationally (5:12-21):

1. The nature of the passage:

- a. An explanation of one truth implied in many ways (vv. 1-11).

(Exp: All we are and have before God is due to the nature of the relationship we have with Jesus Christ

(11, 10, 9, 1, 2).

- b. An answer to an implied question:
 - i. Question: How could what One did affect so many?
 - ii. Answer: The comparison between two individuals and how what they did affected all. (Exp: Singles them out: “one” is used 12 times.
 Uses “one” of Adam 8 times. Uses “one” of Christ 4 times. Says Adam is a type of Christ (14), in that what he did affected us all—vs. 18.)
 - c. Contains digressions on two points raised in the main body of the explanation.
 - i. Starts the comparison (12).
 - ii. Explains the past tense of vs. 12 (13-14).
 - iii. Qualifies the comparison (15-17).
 - iv. Completes the comparison (18-19).
 - v. Concludes by (20-21).
2. The teaching of the passage:
- a. Stated: God is dealing with the human race through two representative heads.
 - i. The race is related to the first by physical lineage.
 - ii. Individual persons may be related to the second by spiritual imputation.
 - b. The whole story of the human race is the story of what has happened as the result of what these two men have done.
 - i. World history—the world today
 - ii. Church history—Christians today

1. How Adam affected us all (vv 12-14).

- a. Explained in four statements (12):
 - i. Sin entered world through one man.
 - ii. Death entered world through that one sin.
 - iii. Death spread through to all men.
 - iv. Because all sinned.
- By imitating Adam's example ?
 (Exp: Pelagius (5th century; man born in innocence..)
 (Exp: No corruption. No guilt.)
- By inheriting Adam's nature ?
 (Exp: Arminius (Dutch reformed 16th century.)
 (Exp: Corruption. But no guilt.)

--By participating in Adam's sin?

-- Federally ? He represented us in covenant with God?

-- Actually ? We were physically present in him (Heb. 7:9-10)?

b. Argued (13-14):

(Exp: Adam to the Law. Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) computed creation at 4004/Jewish calendar places at 3760/Luther at 3961.)

i. During these thousands of years sin was present in the world.
(Exp: People doing wrong—Gen. 6:5; 15:15—and knew they were doing wrong (Rom. 2:14-15.)

ii. But sin was not imputed.
(Exp: Without an express prohibition. . .)

--No law—no transgression (4:15).

--No law—no knowledge of sin against God.

--No law—no charge to account as worthy of death.

Clarification:

a. Some individuals knew some specific commands of God for which they became responsible.

b. In general—the world not subject to physical, eternal, spiritual death as a result of personally violating known commands.

c. Yet sin's penalty was exacted (14).
(Illus: Even the godly line of Adam in Genesis 5—all died!)

--Even from those who did not sin as Adam did.

(Illus: Like the iceman from the copper age—5,000 yrs. old. Found on the border between Austria and Italy/10,000 ft. up. Had an axe, dagger, bone needle, rope, antler—no law.)

--Even over Infants.

B. How It Is That These Things Are Ours Imputationally (5:12-21).

1. How Adam affected us all (vv 12-14).

2. The dissimilarities between the effects of Adam's and Christ's acts (5:15-17): (Exp: "But not" (15). "And not" (16).

Difference between "the gift" and the "offense")

a. They are different in their nature (15).

- i. The “offense” was a falling where Adam should have stood upright.
- ii. The “gift” is a present when nothing was due.

(Exp: One had an obligation and did not do it. One had no obligation and did do it.)

b. They are different in the extent of their effects (15).

- i. The offense brought death
- ii. The gift brings abundance
(Exp: In other words, the gift is not equivalent compensation—it goes far beyond. Not innocence, but righteousness; not probation, but security; not life, but glorification; not Eden, but all things.)

c. They are different in the amount of sin that was involved (16).

- i. One sin?
- ii. Many sins?

--another flood?
--fire and brimstone?
--increase in capacity for pain?
--instead, even after the numberless sins of all the generations—grace!

(Exp: Some think that God is severe in His condemnation of the race. Point here is to show the “much more” of His grace.)

d. They are different in the position in which they leave a man (17).

- i. Adam’s sin leaves under the reign of death.
- ii. Christ’s gift places us in the position of reigning.

3. The comparison between the universal effects of two men’s acts (18-19).

a. Each affected all men (18).

- i. Adam’s was actual
- ii. Christ’s was . . .

--Actual?	This is <u>Universalism</u> .
--Potential?	This is <u>Arminianism</u> .
--Effectual?	This is <u>Calvinism</u> .

- b. Each one's response to God's law constitutes our own position before God (19).
 - i. Constituted sinners (placed in the category of/formally placed as).
 - ii. Constituted righteous.
- 4. The clarification about the use of the Law (20-21).
 - a. It entered (20).
 - i. How? ("Came in alongside" the state of affairs in vv. 12-19) (Exp: In other words, it is Complementary and supplementary not primary.) (App: There is no 3d alternative to being "in Adam" or "in Christ," such as being "in Moses" and having a legal piety.)
 - ii. Why? (Exp: To effect an increase of the Adamic offence in humanity.)
 - b. Then grace superabounded over the sin (20-21).
 - i. Where? At the very place where sin abounded (20). (Illus: The might of the Mississippi is shown by the buildings it covers up—by the grain elevators up whose sides it creeps.)
 - ii. The purpose? To enable grace to reign (21)!

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B. 3:21-4:25 How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone:
JUSTIFICATION

C. 5:1-8:39 What Follows When Obtained By Faith Alone:

5
RECONCILIATION

6-7 LIBERATION

INTRODUCTION:

1. Chapter 5 concluded with the assurance that grace superabounds.
2. Chapter 6 opens with the response of the natural mind to such grace.
3. Paul's immediate answer is to say something new—we are dead to sin.
(Exp: He will on to devote an entire chapter to explaining our liberation from the dominion of sin.)

I. C. LIBERATION FROM THE DOMINION OF SIN (6:1-23).

(Illus: Benjamin Franklin tells of attempting to develop 13 virtues, including doing justice, chastity, humility, temperance, industry, etc. He made a little book with a page for each virtue, each page in 7 columns, 1 for each day of the week. Marked every fault with a black dot. "I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined." Soon came to have to mark his faults with a lead pencil so that he could easily wipe out with a sponge.)

(Exp: This is because we are ruled over by sin. It is dealt with throughout chapter 6. Paul portrays it as a power or master exercising unbreakable control over all who are "in Adam.")

A. Begins With knowing Of Our Death To Sin (vv 3, 6, 9).

1. When? At Our Baptism (v 3).
(Exp: We were baptized into Christ's death. Water baptism? Spirit baptism? Which actually performs? Which only pictures? I Cor. 12:13)
2. How? By virtue of our Union with Him.
(Exp: This is non- experiential. Like our sinning in Adam. We have no sense of it. But we know it is true because the Bible says so, and because its results are apparent.)
3. Why? In order to make possible a walk in newness of life (v 4).
 - a. The certainty (v 5).
(Exp: Once the condition of death with Him is met the resurrection with Him is assured.)
 - b. The possibility (vv 6-10).
 - i. Due to a past work (vv 6-7).
(Exp: Two past acts producing 1 present result.)
 - (1) Co-Crucifixion of the old man judicially (6).

 --not the sin nature (the flesh of Gal. 5:24).
 --see Eph. 4:22/Col. 3:9.

 (Exp: The old self. Life is divided into two parts—two halves of life separated by the new birth. Like two volumes—the 1st ending with the judicial death of my old self.)

(2) Destruction of the body of sin (6).

(Exp: “Body of sin” is the body as it is dominated by the sin nature.)

(Exp: “Destroy”—27 occ./many translations. “Abolish,” “cease,” “do away,” “make of none effect,” “make void,” “be done away.” Does not mean “cease to exist” or to “annihilate”; cf. Heb. 2:14. Means “cease to exercise its existence.” Unseat. Render ineffective.)

(Exp: We do not understand how Adam’s sin affected the whole race.

How did this physical act actually touch the moral and spiritual being?

How it polluted the springs of human nature. So, we do not understand the internal, spiritual workings of this co-crucifixion with Christ—what God does on this basis—but we can tell by the results produced.)

(App: We are trying to make this happen. It has already happened! Look at yourself. Look how different you are! Now, as you come to know these things better, to take appropriate response because of, you will know them in your experience more and more.)

--No longer slaving for sin.

--v 7 is a general confirmation.

(Exp: “Freed” is “Justified.” Goes back to the judicial sense.)

ii. Due to a life-giving (vv 8-10).

(Exp: One result for Christians based on two experiences of Christ.)

a. Result: Life with Christ (8).

b. Due to experience 1: resurrection of Christ.

(Exp: He will never die again. Death will never “lord” it over Him again.)

c. Due to experience 2: continual life of Christ unto God.

(Exp: If He could die again, cease to live unto God as He is now doing, we would be insecure. It would be the reversal of the whole process. But this cannot be.)

B. Demands Reckoning On This Truth (v 11).

(Exp: 19 times in Romans. Translated “conclude” in 3:28. Means to “count on.”)

C. Continues With Refusing Sin’s Reign (vv 12-23).

1. It is possible to allow sin to continue to reign (vv 12-13).
2. We are responsible to refuse the reign of sin (v 13).
 - a. The possibility of this: a dogmatic denial (v 14).
 - i. Objection: I feel as though I'm dominated by sin.
 - ii. Assurance: Sin shall not be lord over you.
 - iii. Reason: You are not under law, but under grace.
 - b. The necessity of this:
 - i. Questioned:
(Exp: Possible conclusion—it is inconsequential to sin.
Diff. here from 6:1 is that this is speaking of the occasional lapse into sin.)
 - ii. Answer: The consequences of obedience.
 - Obedience constitutes us slaves (v 16).
 - Slavery has an outcome (v 16).
 - c. The past surveyed (vv 17-18).
 - d. The slaveries compared and contrasted (vv. 19-23).
 - i. The point of comparison is being controlled by a master.
 - ii. The contrasts:
 - To sin (20-21).
 - To God (22).

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6-7
LIBERATION

- (1) From the dominion of sin (6)
- (2) From the Law (7)

I.C. LIBERATION FROM THE LAW (7:1-25).

(Exp: 23 occ. of “law.” in 16 vv. Not always Mosaic Law. Sometimes “law” and “the law” are used interchangeably.)

The Views of Who is Entrapped:

(Exp: “I” 32 times starting with 7:7. 29 of those from v. 14 on.)

(Exp: Charles Hodge has a good overview of the history of these. *The history of the interpretation of the latter part of this chapter is one of the most interesting sections of doctrinal history of the church.*)

(App: Your view of this reveals your view of the Christian life.)

A. View 1: An Unregenerated Sinner.

(Exp: Paul is describing himself before justification. Uses present tense, but only as a storytelling device.)

B. View 2: An Unregenerated But Awakening Sinner.

(Exp: Has come under the preaching of the Law. Trembles at the penalties, desires to obey its precepts, but cannot conform.)

C. View 3: A Regenerated But Carnal Spirit.

(Exp: Living in a weak, carnal, immature way. Doesn’t know the secret of victory over sin.)

D. View 4: A Regenerated, Spiritual Saint.

(Exp: Paul writing of himself as a mature Christian.)

E. View 5: Anyone Who Is Dealing with Sin with the Law.

1. Applies to unbelievers (some more than others).

(Exp: Because of conscience. Because of awakening.)

(Illus: Saul of Tarsus/ Rich Young Ruler.)

2. Applies to a believer (with qualification and clarification)

(Exp: There is much in the Law he does do and experiences consistent victory about. But he experiences some resistance because of remaining sin. Because God confronts him with additional demands, his flesh rebels.)

(Exp: Not just describing the unregenerate man at his Best. Nor the regenerate at his Worst. But proving the powerlessness of the Law to deliver us from the power of sin by saying that this is true of Everyone.)

A. The Principle Presented (vv 1-6).

(Exp: The essence of it will concern the Duration of the law's jurisdiction over a person.)

1. Stated (v 1).

2. Illustrated (vv 2-3).

- a. The laws for Marriage (v 2).

- b. The consequences of these laws (v 3).

- i. She may not remarry during his lifetime.

- ii. She is free to remarry after his death.

(Exp: There are parallels that do not apply. For instance, the Law does not die. The believer (wife) both dies, and lives and remarries. Don't press the details yourself. Wait to see what the Spirit chooses to apply.)

3. Applied (vv 4-6).

- a. Application 1: We were put to death to the Law (v 4).

(Exp: Word is qanataw, to put to death. Not, didaskw, to die.

It is an aorist passive and speaks of a completed act experienced.)

- i. Not with reference to its Righteous Demands.

(Exp: An imbalanced dispensational approach takes a position equivalent to the Law's dying.)

- ii. But with reference to its Lordship (7:1).

b. Application 2: We are married to another (vv 5-6).

- i. Who? Christ.
- ii. Why? For fruitbearing.

--Impossible before (v 5).

--Possible now (v 6).

Trans: Objection: Imagine all this in the ears of a Jewish believer. Romans 3, the Law cannot justify. Romans 7, the Law cannot sanctify. He's gone too far!

B. The Principle Clarified And Defended (vv 7-25).

1. There is nothing wrong with the Law (vv 7-13).

a. It gives a personal knowledge of sin (v 7).

- i. Not that we do not know that what we do is wrong.
- ii. But that we know that this wrongdoing is sin.

(Illus: You say to people. Do you realize you're a sinner? They reply, "Well, nobody is perfect.")

(App: This is a reason to study the law and preach the law.)

b. It revives the sin nature (7:8-11).

(Exp: "Sin" becomes the focus here down through vs. 13. He personifies it. Sin is not an act but an actor. And the problem is the way in which it reacts against the Law.)

i. Sin energizes violation of the commandments of God (vv 8-10).

ii. Sin deceives the one intent on keeping the commands (vv 10-11).

c. But its character is . . . (v 12).

d. Thus it exposes sin's heinous character (v 13).

2. There is something wrong with us (vv 14-25).

(Exp: He will use "I" 29 times now. Remember that the discussion is not about the identity of the "I," but about our release from the law. Why this is necessary.)

a. Our condition described (v 14).

(Exp: "Sold under sin" causes some to deny that he could be speaking of a believer. Lloyd-Jones in particular objects, saying that it contradicts Romans 6. But in context of Romans 6, it is possible to become, in some senses, a slave again (6:16). This needs to be carefully clarified, however.)

b. The contradiction we experience (v 15).

(Exp: We are experiencing a contradiction between our wills and our actions.)

c. The conclusions reached (vv 16-20).

- i. The Law is good/not to blame for my sin.
- ii. There is a strange dichotomy in my being.

--The will is not my problem.

(Exp: Particularly the case with believers
(Philippians 2:13).)

--Something called “sin” is my problem.

--no good in it (v 18).

--slaves for sin (v 25).

--not subject to the law of God, neither indeed
can be (8:7).

iii Restated (reargued; vv 18-20).

--What we know of our condition (v 18).

--What we experience of contradiction (vv 18-19).

--What we conclude—an antagonistic resident
(v 20).

(Illus: John Owen has a section of 165 pp. on indwelling
sin in believers in volume VI of his *Works*.)

d. A law discovered (v 21).

(Exp: Dealing with a control that is nothing less than a law.

An operative principle. A rule of action. It is discovered at the
very time you most will to do good. Like Samson attempting
get up and shake off his enemies.)

to

e. A conflict confessed (vv 22-25).

--The antagonists (the inward man and the other law; 22-23).

--The agony (24).

--The answer (25).

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6-7

LIBERATION

6 From the dominion of sin

7 From the dominion of the Law

8

PRESERVATION UNTO

GLORIFICATION

Introductory Examination Of The Chapter:

1. Begins with no condemnation (vs. 1)
2. Ends with no separation (vv. 38-39)
3. In between?
 - a. Struggle with sin (the flesh): vv. 1-17
(Exp: "Flesh" 12 times. But never again in chapter.
"Sin" 4 times. Never again in chapter.)
 - b. Struggle with suffering: vv. 18-30
(Exp: Vs. 18, 22, 23, 26, 28)
4. So the chapter consists of comforting Denials.
 - a. He denies that you are under any condemnation in spite
of this ongoing struggle with sin. You may Feel that
you are. He denies it.

- b. He denies that anything shall separate you from Him in spite of these sufferings.

5. **Message Of The Chapter:** The security Of The Believer Under the Reign of Grace

Octavius Winslow: *No Condemnation in Christ Jesus* (1860). *It would, perhaps, be impossible to select from the Bible a single chapter in which were crowded so much sublime, evangelical, and sanctifying truth as the 8th chtp. of Romans. It is not only all gospel, but it may be said to contain the whole Gospel. In this brief but luminous space is embraced an epitome of all the privileges and duties, trials and consolations, discouragements and hopes of the Christian.*

No wonder Luther called it *the Masterpiece of the New Testament*.

Godet, *If Holy Scripture is a ring, and the Epistle to the Romans its precious stone, chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel.*

I. SECURITY IN SPITE OF ONGOING STRUGGLE WITH Flesh

(8:1-17).

A. Because They Are No Longer Under Condemnation (vv. 1-8).
(Exp: Condemnation is the “ Death Sentence .”)

1. Stated (1).
2. Explained Subjectively (2).
3. Explained Objectively (3-4).
 - a. The Law’s inability(3).
 - b. God’s accomplishment (3-4).
 - i. The Incarnation (3).
 - ii. The Atonement (3).
 - iii. The Condemnation of sin (3-4).

--The purpose (4).

4. Explanation of why only those who walk according to the Spirit (5-8).

(Exp: He employs Contrasts.)

- a. Contrast between what they set their Minds on (5).
- b. Contrast between the Outcomes of these mindsets (6).
- c. The mindset of the flesh (7-8).

B. Those Who Are In The Spirit Described.
(Exp: 21 occ. of Spirit in 14 vv. Last is v. 27.)

1. They belong to Christ (9).
2. They will be Raised (10-13).
3. They are sons (14-17).
(Exp: 1st mention of sonship.)

II. THERE IS SECURITY IN SPITE OF EXPERIENCING SUFFERING (8:18-30).

A. The Sufferings Weighed Against the Glory (18-22).

1. The present sufferings are inequivalent (18).
(Exp: They are suffering from indwelling sin, being Christ's disciples, living in a decaying world in a dying body.)

II Cor. 4:17 Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight (a baros; load) of glory.

B. Even Creation Is Groaning in Expectation (vv. 19-22).
(Exp: Not angels or humans. Impersonal, subhuman creation.)

1. Awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God (19).
(Exp: Pictured here as hand outstretched, standing on Tiptoe. A vague, undefined longing. A haunting anxiety for something better.)

2. Awaiting because its position will be Reversed (20-21).

- a. Present subjection is Involuntary.
(Exp: Bondage to vanity. Bondage to corruption.
Gen. 3:17-19; Ecc. 3:19-20)

- b. Future liberation is its God-given hope
(Is. 11:6-9; 32:13-17).

3. Awaiting in a solidarity of groaning and birth pangs (22).
(Exp: A symphony of sighing. Moan of the wind, howl of the storm, cry of the loons, searching of the whales, shriek of the prey, the roar of the victor. What must it all sound like in the ear of God? A symphony of sighs and cries.)

C. We Too Groan (vv. 23-25).
(Exp: This groaning he sees as an Evidence that we are not separated from God by suffering and that the suffering is not compared with the glory. How does this follow?) worthy to be

1. It is the groaning of those possessing a Pledge (23).

- a. They possess the Spirit of God (8:9).
 - b. They possess Him as their “firstfruits.”
(Exp: Of firstfruits. Lev. 23:10-11.)
(Exp: Spirit is the “earnest.” II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14)
2. It is the groaning of those awaiting Adoption (23).
- a. English adoption: legally receiving someone into family who is not part of it naturally.
 - b. Roman adoption:
 - i. Had our English custom.
 - ii. But had another custom we do not.
(Exp: An important ceremony in which the son of a leading family was publicly acknowledged as an adult heir and came into possession of his hereditary privileges.)
(Illus: Lloyd C. Douglas’ book, *The Robe*. Lucia, daughter of the Gallio family, is reflecting on the day her brother, Marcellus, was given his adoption at 17.

What a wonderful day that was, with all their good friends assembled in the Forum to see Marcellus step forward to receive his white toga. Cornelius Capito and Father had made speeches, and they had put the white toga on Marcellus. Lucia had been so proud and happy that her heart had pounded and her throat had hurt, though she was only 9 then, and couldn’t know much about the ceremony except that Marcellus was expected to act like a man now—though sometimes he forgot to. Later Marcellus described it to a friend named Paulus. When a Roman of our sort comes of age, Paulus, there is an impressive ceremony by which we are inducted into manhood. . . Well do I remember. . . My father made an address welcoming me into Roman citizenship. It was as if I had never lived until that hour (pp. 881-882).)

- c. Israel’s adoption (Rom. 9:4; Gal. 4:5).
- d. Christian adoption.
 - i. Rom. 8:15 We have received the Spirit of adoption.
(Exp: Gal. 4:6 indicates it is the Holy Spirit.)
 - ii. Rom. 8:23 The Spirit is the First Fruits that it will happen.
 - iii. Eph. 1:4 It is this to which we have been Predestined.
(Exp: This will be the day when we are given possession of our full standing as the adult sons of God—and all creation will burst with happiness!)

3. It is the groaning of the hope that accompanies salvation (24-25).

D. The Spirit Helps Our Weakness (26-27).

1. What He helps with: our Infirmities.
 - a. This is not sins.
 - b. This is the weakness due to our human limitation.
2. How He helps: makes intercession with groanings.
 - a. Are these His unspoken and wordless moanings?
(Exp: Someone says, 'I'm unaware of these.' "Yes, they're not Audible.")
 - b. Are these our groanings? Unspeakable, incapable of articulation, impossible of utterance?
(Exp: And He intercedes with these, exercising an immediate influence within the saint's innermost longings, translating these groans into right expressions?)

(Exp: Either way, the statement speaks of the closest possible relationship between the Spirit and our own human spirit. We think we may be separated from God because of our troubles and cares. We think He is unsympathetic, untouched, unmoved. No! He groans. He enters into our groaning. There is no separation, but the closest possible symphonization of His being with our own.)

E. Our Knowledge (28-30).

1. Of His purpose (28).
2. Of His process (29-30).
 - a. Foreknowledge
 - b. Predestination
 - i. To Conformity to Christ.
 - ii. In order that His Son might be the Preeminent among many like Himself.
 - c. Calling
 - d. Justification
 - e. Glorification

III. THE ONLY CORRECT CONCLUSIONS (31-37).

(Exp: Five Questions designed to lead us to them.)

A. The First Question (31).

1. An undeniable affirmation: God is for us.
2. Question: who can be against?
--There can be no effective Opposition.

B. The Second Question (32)

1. An undeniable fact:
 - a. Negatively put: God did not spare His own Son.

b Positively put: God delivered Him up for us all.

2. Question:

--There can be no Deprivation .

C The Third Question (33).

--There can be no Accusation entertained.

D. The Fourth Question (34).

--There can be no final Separations .

E. The Fifth (35-37).

1. A question of Separation .
2. The possible Separators .

--There can be no Separations .

(Exp: The single question here: is there any conceivable power that can prevent our arriving at ultimate Glorification?)

F. The Christian Persuasion (38-39).

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE

I. GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PROVIDING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH ALONE IS **EXPLAINED** (chapters 1-11).

A. 1:18-3:20 Why It Must Be Obtained By Faith Alone: **CONDEMNATION**

B. 3:21-4:25 How It Is Obtained By Faith Alone: **JUSTIFICATION**

C. 5:1-8:39 What Follows When Obtained By Faith Alone:

5 **RECONCILIATION**

6-7 **LIBERATION**

6 From the dominion of sin

7 From the dominion of the Law

8

PRESERVATION UNTO

GLORIFICATION

D. 9-11 Election**INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEMS ADDRESSED IN THESE CHAPTERS:**

► The **Big** Problem Is Israel's Failure to Obtain Salvation (9:1-5; 10:1-3; 11:1-8).

► The **Bigger** Problem Is Security of People to Whom God Makes Promises.

► The **Biggest** Problem Is Whether God is Righteous (9:6; 9:14; 11:1-2).

These chapters are a Theodicy—a tightly reasoned vindication of God's righteousness in the face of an apparently staggering contradiction. The section is therefore anything but optional to the main argument of Romans. Neither is it parenthetical. Nor is it preoccupied with theological minutia. To the contrary, it is essential to clinching irrefutably the argument of chapters 1-8. What we have here is *a vindication of the righteousness of God in the matter of who has obtained His glorious salvation.*

I. THE ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER 9 IS THAT God is Sovereign.

A. Paul Begins By Expressing Acute Grief Over Israel's Failure to Obtain God's Salvation (vv. 1-5).

1. His feelings could edge him close to the unthinkable (vv. 2-3).
2. Israel's failure is in spite of her unique spiritual privileges (vv. 4-5).

B. Paul Explains That The Word Of God Has Nevertheless Been Fulfilled (vv. 6-13).

1. To see it we must understand the Distinctions God makes between people (6-7).
 - a. Between Physical and Spiritual ethnic Israel (6).
 - b. Between Abraham's Seed and Abraham's Children (7).
2. To see it we must understand what causes the distinctions between people (7-13).
 - a. Look at the case of Abraham's sons (7-9).
 - b. Look at the case of Isaac's son (10-13).

(Exp: The statement of Genesis 25:23 (vs. 12) was not merely a prediction. It was a selection. Paul had already clarified that this was the case (vs. 11). His scriptural confirmation for this was Malachi 1:2-3 (vs. 13).)

Two questions are often raised regarding the nature of the election being contemplated here. **First**, was it to salvation or merely to spiritual privilege? To this it must be answered that the whole issue under discussion is how people who are *already* spiritually privileged (i.e. national Israel) could nevertheless fail to obtain salvation. Paul's illustrations (Isaac and Jacob) would be largely irrelevant to this issue unless they were examples of election to salvation. **The second question** is whether the election was individual or corporate. William W. Klein defends the corporate view in *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election*. Thomas R. Schreiner responds in "Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation?" (pp. 89-106 in *Still Sovereign*, ed. by Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware). The passage itself provides the answer by using *individuals* (Isaac and Jacob) as illustrations of those elected. A third individual, yet to come in the passage, is Pharaoh. God's will for him was not salvation or even spiritual privilege, but something worse. God has "mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth" (vs. 18).

C. Paul Answers the Question as to Whether God's Election is unrighteous (vv. 14-18).

1. He answers by emphatic Denial (v. 14).
2. He answers by drawing conclusions from two scriptures (vv. 15-18).

(Note: Here's a textbook example of how to deal with people's objections to truth. Not with emotion. Not by logic. Not by quoting human authorities. Not through a self-chosen theological system. But with Scripture.)

- a. First quotation and conclusion (vv. 15-16).
 - i. The OT context is God's answer to Moses' intercession after Israel's idolatry at Sinai (Exodus 32-33:19).
 - ii. The conclusion Paul draws is both negative and positive.

--Negatively: human will and human work do not determine the reception of mercy.

--Positively: God alone determines who receives mercy.

(Exp: Jews, of all people, ought to understand this. After all, 3,000 of them died for their part in the idolatry, while Aaron, surely the most culpable of all, did not!)

- b. Second quotation and conclusion (vv. 17-18).
 - i. The OT context is the sixth plague (Exodus 9:8-21).

Question: Why didn't the six plagues subdue Pharaoh?
Answer:

Exodus 4:21 I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go.

Exodus 7:13 And he hardened Pharaoh's heart that he hearkened not unto them as the Lord had said.

Exodus 9:12 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken.

Question: Why did God deal with Pharaoh in this way?
Answer: Romans 9:17

Exodus 9:15-16 (NASB) For *if by* now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth. But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.

- ii. The conclusion is that God is sovereign in the showing of mercy or the hardening of the human heart (v. 18).

Though this initially sounds harsh, consider for a moment that the same Divine sovereignty in hardening or deluding is recorded in several incidents in Scripture to which the average believer seldom objects. Note carefully the following references.

- (1) Deut. 2:30 But Sihon, king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand.
- (2) Josh. 11:20 There was not a city that made peace with Israel, for it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel to battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour.
- (3) I Sam. 2:25 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.
- (4) I Kings 22:23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.
- (5) II Thess. 2:11-12 God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

References like the last illustrate a fact which must always be kept in view. God is not hardening innocent people. There are none. All the hardened are sinners and under His just condemnation. Some sinners God hardens. Others He shows mercy.

D. Paul Anticipates And Answers The Final Objection To Election (vv. 19-24).

1. The objection is that God shouldn't blame us.

(Exp: Not "who can resist His will?" but "who, in fact, has resisted His will?" If His will was to harden, and I am hardened, then I have not resisted His will. Why is He faulting me? Why blame me when I have not resisted His will?)

(Note: You will know that you have taught Romans 9 correctly when it results in this very kind of objection

If this is not the case, you evidently have not said what Paul said. By the point in the argument his readers were protesting. They still are.

William Barclay writes, *One great New Testament commentator has said that this is one of the very few passages which we wish that Paul had not written. There is a difference between a human being and a lump of clay. A human being is a person and a lump of clay is a thing. Maybe you can do what you like with a **thing**, but you cannot do what you like with a **person**. Clay does not desire to answer back; clay does not desire to question. Clay cannot think and feel; clay cannot be anguished and bewildered and tortured. If someone had inexplicably suffered some tremendous, heart-breaking and soul-searing sorrow, it would not help much to tell them that he had no right to complain, because God can do what He likes. That is the mark of a tyrant and not of a loving Father (The Letter to the Romans, p. 140).*

C. H. Dodd reckoned Paul was wrong to say that God had hardened Pharaoh's heart.

Test the accuracy of your teaching. Are your hearers reacting similarly to Paul's readers?)

2. The answer is a series of questions.

- a. About the impropriety of a man's talking back to God (v. 20).
- b. About the impossibility of a creature's questioning the Creator (v. 20).
- c. About the author of the Potter (v. 21).
- d. About the possible of certain Divine Intention (vv. 22-24).

Verse 22 begins a conditional sentence to which there is no stated conclusion. "Paul is inviting his readers to complete the thought from the context" (Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (p. 604). What, then, would you say is the expected conclusion to the possibilities Paul envisions?

But if God,

willing

to show His wrath and
to make known His power

endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared unto destruction

and (did so) in order to make known the wealth of his glory upon vessels
of mercy

which He prepared unto glory

whom also He called us, not only out of Jews, but also out of
Gentiles. . .

Then. . . ? Then He can do as he wills

So, what is the argument of chapter 9?

E. Paul Confirms Scripturally The Identity Of The "Vessels Of Mercy" (vv. 24-29).
(Note: V. 24 is joined syntactically with vv. 19-23. At the same time, however, it opens the next paragraph.)

1. The Identity: Racially He has called both Jews and Gentiles (v. 24).
2. The Scripture:
 - a. Confirming the election of Gentiles (25-26).
 - i. Hosea 2:23: People formerly not possessed nor loved.
 - ii. Hosea 1:10: People in Gentile lands.
 - b. Confirming the small number of Israelites (27-29).

- i. Isaiah 10:22-23: Only a remnant out of the innumerable children of Israel.
- ii. Isaiah 1:9: Only a seed.

F. Paul Concludes Contrary To Our Expectation (vv. 30-33).

II. THE ARGUMENT OF CHAPTER 10 IS THAT Israel's Responsibility.

A. This Argument Begins With The Surprising Conclusion Of Chapter 9 (vv. 30-33).

1. On the one hand, the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness have nevertheless (contrary to expectation) taken hold upon it (v. 30).
2. On the other hand, Israel, who pursued (the) law for righteousness have nevertheless (contrary to expectation) not acquired it (vv. 31-33).

Question: Why?

Answer: Unbelief.

This answer is surprising for **two reasons**. **The first**, of course, is that it turns the tables on Israel's presumptuous spiritual exclusivity. But **the second**, even more surprising within the context, is that it identifies the cause of Israel's failure to obtain a righteous standing as being rooted in her own unbelief rather than in God's election (for which chapter 9 has so dogmatically argued). Is this really what Paul intends us to understand? The answer is in chapter 10.

B. Paul Again (as in 9:1-3) Reveals His Heart's Desire For Israel's Salvation (v. 1).

C. Paul Can Testify To Israel's Zeal (vv. 2-4).

1. But it is Ignorant (v. 2).
2. And in its Igorance it is unsubmissive (v. 3).

Explanation: V. 4 Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness.

Question: What does Paul mean by "end?"

- a. He is the goal of the Law (in keeping with Gal. 5:23-25)?
- b. He is the fulfillment of the Law (in keeping with Mtt. 5:17)?
- c. He is the termination of the Law (as a result of a. and b.)?

D. Paul Calls Witnesses To The Difference Between The Two Types Of Righteousness (vv. 5-13).

1. Moses speaks: that which is of the Law is impossible (v. 5; after Lev. 18:5).
(Exp: The implication of it demanding life-long obedience.)

2. Righteousness by faith speaks: that which is of faith is accessible (vv. 6-13).
(Exp: It is difficult to tell where the “speech” of righteousness by faith concludes. Most certainly it does so at least by verse 14.)
 - a. Don’t think incorrectly about access to the Messiah (vv. 6-7).
 - b. The word of salvation is very near (vv. 8-13).

E. Paul Concludes That Israel’s Rejection Is Inexcusable (vv. 14-21).

1. There are 4 conditions to calling upon the Lord for salvation (vv. 14-15).

One: Commissioning

Two: Preaching

Three: Hearing

Four: Believing

2. The first 2 conditions were completed for Israel (v. 15; after Is. 52:7).
3. But the 4th condition had not been met (v. 16; after Is. 53:1).
4. But the problem was not God’s failure to make possible the 3rd condition (vv. 18-21).
 - a. Had they not heard (v. 18)?
Answer: Psalm 19:4
 - b. Did they not Know (vv. 19-21)?
Answer: Deut. 32:21; Is. 65:1-2

What, then, is the argument of chapter 10?

Israel’s failure to obtain God’s salvation is due to Unbelief?

III. THE COMFORT OF CHAPTER 11 IS THAT God’s Sovereign Election Ensures Israel’s Future Salvation.

(Introduction: Chapter 11 Is An Answer To Two Questions (vv. 1, 11). The chapter, therefore, is the revelation of the future of the nation Israel.)

Question #1: Has God Cast Away The Nation (v. 1)?**Answer to #1:****First:** An emphatic Denial (v. 1)**Second:** A personal Example (v. 1)**Third:** A qualified Denial (vv. 2-6)The qualification is Foreknowledge (v. 2)

An illustration is the remnant of Elijah's day (vv. 2-4)

The parallel is a remnant according to the
Election of Grace (vv. 5-6)

This is no minor point within the chapter. It is *the* point! Earlier it was the explanation of why the nation had not been recipients of God's salvation. Now that same doctrine is the assurance that the nation's status will be reversed. In other words, the very doctrine that seemed so threatening in chapter 9 is the ultimate comfort in chapter 11.

Conclusion: The Elect and the Rest (vv. 7-10)**Israel's rejection is Partial not Total.****Question #2:** Have they stumbled that they should fall (v. 11)?**Answer to #2:****First:** One of God's Purposes for Gentile salvation (v. 11)**Second:** The possibilities in Israel's fullness (v. 12)**Third:** The Conformity of Paul's practice with this principle
(vv. 13-14)**Fourth:** An extended Illustration (vv. 15-24)**Fifth:** The prediction of Israel's Future Salvation (vv. 25-32)**Israel's rejection is temporary not final.****A CONCLUSION OF Giving Glory to God (VV. 33-36):**

CHARLES SIMEON'S (1759-1836) CAUTION AGAINST OVER-SYSTEMATIZING

(Taken from the preface to *Horae Homileticae*)

The author is disposed to think that the Scripture system is of a broader and more comprehensive character than some very dogmatical theologians are inclined to allow, and that, as wheels in a complicated machine may move in opposite directions and yet subserve one common end, so may truths apparently opposite be perfectly reconcilable with each other and equally subserve the purposes of God in the accomplishment of man's salvation.

The author feels it impossible to avow too distinctly that it is an invariable rule with him to endeavour to give to every portion of the Word of God its full and proper force, without considering what scheme it favours, or whose system it is likely to advance. Of this he is sure, that there is not a decided Calvinist or Arminian in the world who equally approves the whole of Scripture. . . who, if he had been in the company of St. Paul whilst he was writing his Epistles, would not have recommended him to alter one or other of his expressions.

But the author would not wish one of them altered; he finds as much satisfaction in one class of passages as in another; and employs the one, he believes, as freely as the other. Where the inspired Writers speak in unqualified terms, he thinks himself at liberty to do the same; judging that they needed no instruction from *him* how to propagate the truth. He is content to sit as a learner at the feet of the holy Apostles, and has no ambition to teach them how they ought to have spoken.

DIVINE SOTERIOLOGICAL ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION TO A DEBATE:

(1) Between Augustine & Pelagius (Nov. 354).

(Exp: The primary issue between the two was the nature of man.)

a. Augustine, leader of church in 1st part of 5th cent. (395-430).

(Exp: Had a prayer, "Give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.")

b. Pelagius (British monk; 354-429).

(Exp: Rejected Augustine's prayer. Believed that every man is born into the world as Adam was except that Adam was an adult and the world now is evil.)

(2) Between Luther & Erasmus.

(Exp: The primary issue between the two was the nature of the will.)

a. Erasmus (1524) *Diatribes Concerning Free Will*.

b. Luther (next year) *The Bondage of the Will*.

(Exp: Luther asked, why, if will free, was there not one example in all of history of someone who did good and sought God? Rom. 3:11 expressly says “there is none that seeketh after God.”)

(3) Between Calvin (1509-1564) and Arminius (Dutch theol. 1560-1609).

(Exp: Arminius made the nature of Grace the issue. He believed that due to man’s being born with a sinful nature, grace is needed in order to believe. He believed that God gives this to each individual sufficiently to enable him to do so, though he may resist it. This is called “Prevenient” (“antecedent” or “previous” to faith) grace.)

(4) But actually, the debate is much older (Romans 9).

(Exp: Paul is forced to deal with two objections to the doctrine.)

a. 9:14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?

Doesn’t election make God unjust?

b. 9:19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doeth he yet find fault?
For who hath resisted his will?

Doesn’t election make judgment unjust?

(5) Yet the debate is even older still (Lk. 4:25-27)

(Exp: Jesus’ teaching that “many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias. . . but unto none of them was Elias sent save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow” and that “many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian” so enraged the gathering in the Nazareth synagogue that they attempted to hurl him over a cliff. Proof positive that the teaching of election has a tendency to anger people.)

(6) The Inevitable Results:

1. Polarization (often because of caricature)

2. Intimidation

3. Disinclination to discuss

(Exp: Often passed off cavalierly as splitting theological hairs. “I’m too busy to think on such small things.” But actually election is one of the big things—

that’s what passages like Ephesians 1:3-6 and Romans 8:28-30 and Romans 9 and 11 are making clear. Election comprehends all that God is doing from eternity to eternity for certain people.)

(7) A Careful Approach:

1. With Reverence.

--“Take the shoes from off our feet—this is holy ground”

(Exp: God had chosen the time and the man, out of His respect to the people whom He chose.)

2. With Humility.

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those which are revealed unto us and to our children forever. . .” (Deut. 29:29).

3. With Accuracy.

(Exp: We must carefully distinguish between words: especially “election,”

“Predestination,” and “foreknowledge.” These are generally used almost synonymously within the discussions. The result is that there is a failure to see the clear, scriptural progression that enables us to determine where the point of (choice ?) lies.)

I. ELECTION:

A. God uses this word frequently (52 times in verb, noun, adjective).

B. Word means “to pick out,” “select,” or “choose.”

(Exp: That’s why of the 52 occurrences, 29 times it is trans. with word “choose,” “make choice,” or “chosen.”)

C. Word used:

1. A few misc. references to people choosing something (Lk. 10:42; 14:7).

2. 4 times of the Lord Jesus Christ as elect (Lk. 9:35 (critical text); 23:35; I Pet. 2:4, 6)

3. 8 times of Jesus Christ choosing the Twelve (Lk. 6:13; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16 (2), 19; Acts 1:2, 24 (successor))

4. Choosing other individuals: deacons (Acts 6:5); Saul (Acts 9:15); Peter to speak to Gentiles (Acts 15:7).

5. 30-32 times of men and women to Salvation.

--called the “elect” or the “election”

--Mtt. 24:22 . . . for the elect’s sake those day’s shall be shortened.

--Rom. 8:33 . . . who shall anything to the charge of God’s elect?

--Rom. 11:5 . . . there is a remnant accord. to elect. of grace.

--God has chosen them

--Mtt. 22:14 Many are called, but few are chosen

--I Cor. 1:27-28 God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are nought to bring to nought the things that are.

D. Why did God elect?

(Exp: If election is “choice,” God choosing us, why did He choose us and not someone else? The fact is, we _____ that He does choose some in ways that He does not choose others.)

- chose out from among idolaters (Josh. 24:2).
- chose to have the preaching of Jonah (Jonah 1:2).

1. Negatively:

a. Not because of our works (Rom. 9:11;11:5-7).

b. Not because of our choices.

(Exp: Never used of our choosing God. Never said that God chooses us because we chose Him. In fact, He explicitly said to the Twelve—“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. . .” (John 15:16). Three verses later He says, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (15:19), indicating that He is referring to His choice of them for salvation.)

2. Positively: There are two answers

a. I Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

b. Eph. 1:4-5 He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world. . . having predestinated us.

(Exp: The main verb, “chosen,” and the participle, “predestinated,” are both

aorists. The two could therefore be temporally simultaneous or the participle could be causal. The KJV opts for the latter. If this is the case, then predestination precedes election just as foreknowledge does.)

Question: What, then is the relative order of these activities?

- Romans 8:29 Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate
- Ephesians 1:4-5 Chosen in Him. . . having been predestinated

(1) Foreknowledge----- (2) Predestination----- (3) Election

E. Right evangelistic response to election.

II Tim. 2:10 I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

II. PREDESTINATION:

A. It's Meaning: To mark off limits beforehand.

(Exp: Has in it the word "horizon" or "boundary." Means marking off the horizon, the boundary or outline of something so that it is confined within those limits. What are the limits to which He predestined us?)

B. It's NT Usages: (6).

1. Acts 4:28 The boundaries of what would be done to Christ.
 - He could not be stoned, for instance
 - His legs could not be broken
 - He must die, on Passover, lifted up, hands and feet pierced, etc.

2. Rom. 8:29-30 Boundaries of our final destiny—conformed to the image of His Son

3. I Cor. 2:7 Wisdom God ordained (predestined) before the world.

4. Eph. 1:5, 11 Unto the adoption of children (5)

Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (11)

So, in conclusion: We are predestined to two things:

- (1) To be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29)
- (2) To the adoption of children (Eph. 1:5)

III. FOREKNOWING:

A. Its Meaning: to know beforehand (prognosis)

B. Its Interpretation:

1. An educated forecast (medical prognosis)?
2. Prescience (prĕsh'-əns)?

(Exp: God knows everyone in this way, but He does not foreknow unbelievers. Romans 8:28-29 is an unbroken string of blessings for only believers—beginning with foreknowing.)

3. Knowledge of intimate, personal relations (Psalm 1:6; Amos 3:2)?

C. The Debate: Why He foreknew certain people.

1. Answer 1: Because he foresaw their faith
(Exp: Foreknowledge is the because of faith.)

(“This decree (election) has its foundation in the foreknowledge of God by which He knew from all eternity those indiv. who would. . . believe” (Arminius, Writings, I, 248)

(Kenneth Taylor’s *Living Bible*, “For from the very beginning, God decided that those who came to him—and all along he knew who would—should become like his Son, so that his Son would be the first, with many brothers” Romans 8:29).

2. Answer 2: Because of something relational to us
(Exp: Foreknowledge is the cause of faith)

(“Nor did God choose men because He foresaw that they would believe and come to Christ. Faith is the consequence of election, and not the cause of it.” Edwards, II, 937)

D. NT Usages Of The Term (5 vb./2 noun)

1. 2 of people’s foreknowledge

- a. Unbelievers—knew Paul’s life from the beginning (Acts 26:5)
- b. Believers—know that false teachers will wrest the scriptures (II Pet. 3:17)

2. 2 of God’s foreknowing the Messiah (Acts 2:23; I Pet. 1:20)

Acts 2:23 Delivered over to the Jews by it. Parallel to determinate counsel

I Pet. 1:20 Foreknown before the foundation of the world

3. 3 of God foreknowing people who would be saved

Rom. 8:29 Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate. . .

Rom. 11:2 God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew

I Pet. 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father

E. Conclusion:

1. Only believing people are foreknown.
2. The NT never says what the basis of foreknowledge is
(“That foreknow. determines the election or choice is clear from I Pet. 1:2. . . but Script. nowhere declares what it is in the divine foreknowledge which determines the divine election and predestination.” Scofield, 1312, note on I Pet. 1:20.)

CONCLUSION:

The debate seems to be joined at the wrong level.

--If someone asks, "Why does God elect?" The answer is "Because He predestinated us"

(Eph. 1:4-5). This is also supported by the fact that I Corinthians 1:24-28 uses the words "called" (and "calling") and "chosen" (elected) synonymously. Romans 8:30 places calling after predestination.)

--If someone then asks, "Why does God predestine?" The answer is "Because He foreknew us" (Romans 8:29 says this).

--But if someone asks, "Why does God foreknow us?" There is no answer given in Scripture. The answer to this final question tends to be based upon people's position regarding the nature of man. Is he able or unable to believe apart from these Divine activities?)

Some scriptures to consider:

John 6:44 **No one can** come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him

John 6:64, 65 But there are some of you who do not believe. . . For this reason I have said to you, that **no one can** come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.

(Note what He had said in 6:37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me.)

John 8:43-45 Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because **you cannot** hear My word. You are of your father the devil. . . But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe Me.

I Cor. 2:14 A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and **he cannot** understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

(Exp: Each of these texts uses the same word, _____, that is used in other texts, like John 3:3, 8:21, and 10:29.)

*The foreordination of God in no way interferes with the responsibility of man. I have often been asked by persons to reconcile the two truths. My only reply is—They need no reconciliation, for they never fell out. Why should I try to reconcile two friends? Prove to me that the two truths do not agree. In that request I have set you a task as difficult as that which you propose to me. These two facts are parallel lines; I cannot make them unite, but you cannot make them cross each other. Permit me also to add that I have long ago given up the idea of making all my beliefs into a system. I believe, but I cannot explain. I fall before the majesty of revelation, and adore the infinite Lord. I do not understand all that God reveals, but I believe it (C. H. Spurgeon, “On The Cross After Death,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, XXXIII, 199).*