

*Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Studies*  
**Romans**

**“Why Do I Believe  
What I Believe?”**



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Bible Studies

Bible Studies  
by Kathleen Dalton  
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# Romans

## Why Do I Believe What I Believe?



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## Introduction to the Book of Romans

Each chapter of this study is divided into 2 sections:

1. Questions to help you think through the passage
2. Answers to those questions.

Some who read these Bible studies use them for their own daily study time and walk with the Lord. If you are using this Bible study in this way, I suggest you study through each passage, using the questions to guide you, and come up with your own answers. After you have done that, then use my answers to the questions to dig in a little bit more.

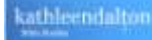
And some use my studies for group Bible studies they are leading or participating in. If you are using this study in this way, I suggest that each participant have a copy of the questions to work on during the week, then come together as a group to go over and discuss answers. Whoever is leading the group can use my set of answers as a preparation tool, or as a jumping off place for discussions.

Because all of my studies have each been taught in some sort of Small Group or Bible study class, you will find suggestions for leading or teaching in each study. Use those suggestions if you need them....ignore them if you don't.

1. If you need light-hearted questions to get your group in a conversation-mood, here are some suggestions:
  - What is your favorite movie food?
  - Favorite fruit?
  - Have you ever grown a garden?
  - What have you eaten that you have grown?
2. Show your group a list you have already compiled of some of the different things you will learn about in the book of Romans:
  - Sin
  - Righteousness
  - Judgment
  - Justification
  - Gentiles
  - Jews
  - New Nature
  - Holy Spirit

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Law  
Gospel  
Old Nature  
Salvation  
Grace  
Love  
Hope  
Joy  
Peace  
Faith

- Read through this list with your group, then choose one item on the list, for example, "Salvation", and ask your group what they believe about salvation. As they respond, simply ask them why they believe that. How do they know for sure their beliefs are true? What scripture do they base that on? Some people will be able to answer that question from scripture, but most will not. The point of this little exercise is not to show that some people are not very smart about what they believe...it is to show that most of us are sure of what we believe, but we really don't know why.
- So...our purpose in studying Romans is that a verse-by-verse study of Romans cannot help but get us closer to our goal of knowing "Why I believe What I Believe." We will come away understanding more, and having specific passages we can remember which teach us these great truths.



### **What is the Gospel?**

#### Romans Chapter 1 – Questions for Personal Study or Discussion

1. Verse 1
  - Who was the author of the book?
  - What two things does verse 1 tell us about him?
2. Verses 2-6
  - What is the "Gospel"? (we'll learn more in verses 16 & 17)
    - :2
    - :3
  - What things does the Gospel tell us about "His Son"
    - :3
    - :4
    - :4
    - :4
    - :5
    - :5&6
3. Verse 7 Who is the letter addressed to?
4. Verses 8-13
  - What is Paul's attitude toward the Roman church?
  - Why does Paul want to come to see them?
    - :11
    - :12
    - :13
5. Verses 14-17
  - What else is true of the Gospel?
    - :14
    - :15
    - :16
    - :16
    - :17
6. Why do we need the Gospel?
7. Verses 18-32
  - What is the beginning, and what is the ending, of the "downward spiral of sin"?
8. What am I doing with the Gospel?



## **What is the Gospel?**

### **Romans Chapter 1 – Answer Key**

#### **1. Verse 1**

- Who was the author of the book?

The Apostle Paul wrote it. A little research tells us when & where:

- Written in 57 or 58 AD, during Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey
- Written while Paul was in Corinth (Rom 16:1)
- Paul is an experienced Pastor of 25 years by the time he writes this
- Paul did not start this church...there is no record of who did...perhaps it was started after the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10) by Jews who became believers in Jesus at that time.
- Paul has wanted to visit the church in Rome, but has not been able to yet (Acts 19:21)
- Paul plans to write this letter, then go to Jerusalem, and then come to Rome to visit them, on his way to Spain. (Romans 15:23-25)
- Paul did go to Jerusalem and then end up in Rome...but not the way he had thought. He was arrested in Jerusalem and taken as a prisoner to Rome.

- What two things does verse 1 tell us about him?

Actually, 3 things.

1. He is a servant of Jesus Christ. (he doesn't think of himself any higher than a servant) What does it mean to be a servant of Jesus Christ? (ask for group input)
2. He is an apostle. (one who was specially chosen to testify of the truth about Jesus Christ, bearing personal testimony to his actual physical presence on the earth.) Are there apostles today? (answer: the term carried a lot of authority...not comparable to what any person today should have. These men were eyewitnesses of Jesus – they brought the unknown message of Jesus into the known world. From that point on, we carry it forward simply because the truth has a weight of its own.)
3. He was set apart for the Gospel. (he has only one purpose in life...to bring the Gospel to people). Does that mean each and every person has been set apart for the Gospel? Or only specific people who are in "full-time" ministry?

#### **2. Verses 2-6**

- What is the "Gospel"? (we'll learn more in verses 16 & 17)

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- :2 It is a message about something that was promised beforehand (in other words, in the Old Testament: For example: Genesis 3:15, Deuteronomy 18:15, or, for a longer list:

Prophecy	Jewish Scripture	New Testament Scripture
He would be a man	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4
He would be a Jew	Genesis 12:3  Genesis 18:18	Luke 3:34  Matt. 1:2  Acts 3:25  Galatians 3:16
He would be of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33  Matthew 1:2
He would be a King (of the seed of David)	Psalms 132:11,12  Jeremiah 23:5,6  Psalms 2:6-9	Matthew 1:6  Romans 1:3  Acts 2:30  John 18:37  John 19:3
He would be a prophet like Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15, 19	Matt. 21:11  John 1:45  John 6:14  Acts 3:22-23
He would be the Son of God	Psalms 2:7  Proverbs 30:4	Luke 1:32  Matthew 3:17
Homage would be given Him by great Kings	Psalms 72:10,11	Matt. 2:1-11
He would be born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25  Luke 1:26-35

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He would perform miracles	Isaiah 35:5,6	John 11:47  Matthew 11:3-6
He would come before the 2 <sup>nd</sup> temple in Jerusalem was destroyed (70 A.D.)	Daniel 9:24-26	Historical fact
He would be betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18,21
He would be rejected	Psalms 118:22,23  Isaiah 8:14, 15  Isaiah 28:16	Matt 21:42,43  Acts 4:11  Romans 9:32,33  Ephesians 2:20  I Peter 2:6-8  John 19:1-3, 7
He would be meek & mild	Isaiah 42:2,3  Isaiah 53:7	Matt. 12:18-20  Matt 26:62,63
He would minister to Gentiles	Isaiah 42:1  Isaiah 49:1,8	Matt. 12:21
He would be smitten, flogged	Isaiah 50:6	Matt. 26:67  Matt 27:26,30  John 19:3  John 19:1
He would suffer & bring salvation	Isaiah 53	The 4 Gospels
He would be pierced	Zechariah 12:10  Psalm 22:16	John 19:34,37
He would be forsaken by His disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31,56  John 19:25-27



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He would be crucified	Psalm 22	Matthew 27:34-50
	Psalm 69:21	John 19:28-30
He would have his garments parted & cast lots for	Psalm 22:18&19	Luke 23:34
		John 19:23-24
He would ascend to heaven	Psalm 68:18	Luke 24:51
		Acts 1:9
He would have victory over death	Isaiah 25:8	John 20:1-10, 19-25
Gentiles shall seek the Messiah of Israel	Isaiah 11:10	Romans 11:25
Died for the sins of the Jewish people and the whole world	Isaiah 53:8	John 3:16
		John 19:28-30
He would be punished/ wounds	Isaiah 53:7	John 19:2
He would be God	Jeremiah 23:5,6	John 10:30
		John 8:58
Not one of His bones would be broken	Exodus 12:46	John 19:33-36
	Numbers 9:12	
	Psalm 34:20	

- :3 It is about Jesus, God's Son. As you read the Old Testament, you get the sense that someone is coming. That you are not just reading about lives of people, but that the stage is being set for an amazing event. That amazing event was the coming of God's Son to the earth. His story (all the things that pointed to Him from the Old Testament, all the things He did on earth, His death and resurrection, His return to heaven, and the promise of His return to earth again) is the Gospel.
- What things does the Gospel tell us about "His Son"
  - :3 Human descendent of David
  - :4 Resurrected from the dead
  - :4 Son of God
  - :4 The Holy Spirit would declare Him to be the Son of God
  - :5 We receive God's grace through Him
  - :5&6 We're called to have faith in Him, and to obey Him

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3. Verse 7 Who is the letter addressed to?

The church in Rome (a group of people who believed in Jesus – that He was God and died for sins, and rose again from the dead, and will return someday)

4. Verses 8-13

- What is Paul's attitude toward the Roman church?
- Why does Paul want to come to see them?
  - :11 He wanted to give them something. A spiritual gift. In other words, he wanted to give them the gift of what God had already done in his life. If I came to visit you in your home and wanted to impart a spiritual gift, I would want to share with you my joy, or my peace, or my understanding, or my hope for the future. Those are things the LORD has given me – and in being with you I would hope you would see those things in me...or hear me talking about those things...and that you would also be able to enjoy the same gift God had given me. That's what Paul wanted to do for these people he had never met. Why desire that for strangers? Because they, too, were also believers in Jesus. They, too, also had the Holy Spirit living in them. And they needed what Paul had to give.
  - :12 He knew that not only would he have the chance to encourage them if he came, but that they in turn would be an encouragement to him. He needed them as much as they needed him.
  - :13 He wanted a "harvest". He wanted the people in the Roman church to do more and more for the LORD...and was trusting that his future visit to them would mature them...give them more to grow on...give them the chance to do those things God had always planned for them to do. (see Ephesians 2:10)

5. Verses 14-17

- What else is true of the Gospel?
  - :14 The Gospel story, once we personally respond to it, obligates us. Paul felt obligated to tell the Gospel story. Not obligated to God, but obligated to people. He had a debt to pay. His debts needed to be paid to people who had never had a chance to have a personal relationship to God. He could tell them the Gospel story, so that they could receive what he had.
  - :15 The Gospel story, is something we can be eager to share with others. He was eager to do this. Not constrained. Not burdened. Eager.
  - :16 The Gospel story is not something to be ashamed of. Not something to feel shy about.
  - :16 The Gospel has amazing power. When a person hears the truth about Jesus and what He did, and then realizes that such an unbelievable truth must be responded to, tremendous power is released. Power to save a person from death. If any of us had the power to save from death,

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wouldn't we use that power? If I could stand at a hospital bed and give a dying person the gift of life, wouldn't I do it? That's the kind of power the Gospel has...not to raise a sick person from a death bed, only to have them eventually die some day anyway...but to raise them to eternal life...never to die.

- :17 Through the Gospel God's righteousness is revealed (He is absolutely perfect). And also the Gospel shows us how men can be righteous (we have all tried in different ways...but that doesn't work). We cannot attain righteousness by the works which we do – no matter how good, no matter how well-intentioned – the only thing that can give us righteousness is simply faith in Jesus. Believing that He lived. Believing that He died. Believing that he didn't deserve to die. Believing that he died because He was taking my place. Believing that He rose Himself from the dead...brought Himself back to life. And believing that He is returning again some day. Men attain righteousness by believing those things. "The righteous will live by faith.". Faith in Jesus alone. Not works.

6. Why do we need the Gospel?

I guess the answer to this became obvious as we talked through the last few verses. We are all without hope of eternity...or even of true happiness in this life...without the Gospel. We desperately need the Gospel. If I had a pot of gold sitting in my living room, I would be cheating you if I gave it to you, instead of giving you the Gospel.

7. Verses 18-32

- What was your reaction when you first heard the gospel? Do you remember?
- Did you dig in your heels at the possibility you might be such a sinner that you needed salvation?
- Can you think of anyone whom you would describe as being "practically impossible" to ever become a believer in Jesus? Who? Why?
- What is the beginning, and what is the ending, of the "downward spiral of sin"? Here's the main reason we need the gospel: we are sinners. In order for the Gospel message to be truly personal, each of us has to first know how we really look. God sees us the way we really are. These verses describe us. They are not describing hardened criminals. They are not describing the scum of the earth. They are describing us. Until we understand that, we really don't see our need for the Gospel. We may see other people's need...but we are blind to our own.
- So...in answer to the question, the **beginning of the "downward spiral of sin"** is in verses 18 – 21. Men see perfectly clear evidence of the existence of God,



and their response is not to bow their knee before Him. They decide not to want to know Him. They decide not to do things in His ways. Their response is to decide their own thoughts are much more important than His. That's the first step downward.

- Then in verses 22 through 27 we see that **the next step downward** is to begin to worship created things, rather than the Creator. To make idols of gold which look like animals, or to worship the animals themselves, or to worship men. When this happens, God begins to "give men over" to their own foolishness. They will not acknowledge and worship Him, so He allows them to be the victims of their own befuddled thinking. One of the first signs this is happening in a person is the decision to engage in immoral sexual relationships. To do things not God's way.
- Then in verses 28 through 32, we see that the downward spiral just gets worse and worse from there. Wickedness, greed, depravity, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossips, slanderers, God-haters,..... until the **very last step of the downward spiral** is not only doing these things, but also approving of other who do them, too.

Many people will read that list and say: "But I don't do all those things." "I'm not a sinner like that!". The point of the list is not that if you can click off all of them you need the Gospel. It's not that if you even click off 50% of them you need the Gospel. The point is: even the very first step on that downward spiral is enough to send you crashing to the bottom. Sin keeps you from knowing God. Any sin. The only way any of us have a chance is to hear the Gospel. And to know that Jesus paid the price for our sin. For every sin. Small and big. And to believe it.

#### 8. What am I doing with the Gospel?

What is the Gospel?

Simply – it is the story of Jesus told to people who know they need Him.

- All the things that pointed to Him from the Old Testament
- All the things He did on earth
- His death and resurrection
- His return to heaven
- And the promise of His return to earth again

That's the Gospel.

It is a very valuable commodity. Not to be hidden. Not to be camouflaged. Not to be doled out in tiny doses to the worst people. It is more valuable than education. More valuable than gold. More valuable than homes or clothes or cars or jobs. It is the most valuable thing on earth. If you know the Gospel story....what are you doing with it?

#### **APPLICATION:**

- What does everyone know about God, according to verses 19&20?
- Did you know that about God before you ever came to know Him personally?
- People often raise the question of how God could condemn those who have never heard of Him. How does this passage address that question?

A story is told of missionaries who brought the gospel to a land where it had never been heard, ever. As the missionary is telling the story of Jesus, a native jumps up and says "That's the One I've been worshipping! I want to hear everything about Him!"

How could that have happened in a place the news of Jesus had never been? How does a heathen tucked away in deepest, darkest anywhere come to know the One, True God without ever having heard of Him?

But of course that could happen. God is everywhere. God is not limited to only being in places where people know about Him. That native could easily have seen the amazing world God created, and thought in his heart: "I know there is Someone bigger than me....bigger than any of the people I know...Someone Who must have created all this. And I want to know Him...I want to worship Him. I know how good this Someone must be, and I realize how not good I am." And then that native could, in simple faith, have prayed to that Someone: "I need you. I am not as good as you. Please help me to be like You. Somehow, please help me be clean in front of You. I can't clean myself up. I need you. I have no other hope." That native has saving faith. And that native, when he or she hears the Gospel, will recognize it. Will recognize the voice of the One he has worshipped.

There might be another native, too, who realized there was a God, but responded in this way: "Maybe there is a God and I can figure out a way to impress Him. I'm going to work hard...show what I can do...make myself good enough for this God. Then when I come to Him with all my accomplishments, He will see the value in having me a part of His world." That native does not have saving faith. He will be easily caught up in the sin and lies of his world, because his ability to understand is darkened. There is no light by which to see.

- How might this passage make you less ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and more likely to talk about it?

Maybe you don't see yourself as "ashamed" of the Gospel. Perhaps you would describe yourself as fearful or uncertain or awkward. Here's what you can do about those things:

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Fearful: Prepare. Learn how to talk about the Gospel message. Learn how to tell your own story of coming to belief in Jesus.

Uncertain: Pray

Awkward: Practice. On a friend. Or a family member. Really. Do it again and again until it begins to feel familiar. That's what you did with the multiplication tables, and it worked. What is 5x5?



**For Those Who Think They are OK With God**  
Romans Chapter 2 – Questions For Personal Study or Discussion

**In Chapter 1, we defined The Gospel:**

**In Chapter 2, Paul begins to talk about Judgment, and The Law.**

1. From Chapter 1, Verses 24-32, make a list of all the shameful things God allows men to do once they decide not to acknowledge Him in their lives:

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2. Verse 2
  - Does the Bible say that people who do these things are worthy of God's Judgment?
3. Verses 1-3
  - Do you do any of these same things? And if so, do you also deserve God's judgment?
  - Let's define "Judgment" - How does God "judge" these things?
    - Right Now (1:18,24,28)
    - Ultimately (Rev. 21:8)
4. Verse 4
  - Why hasn't God's ultimate judgment and wrath happened yet?

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5. Verses 5-10
  - And what will happen when that day of judgment finally does arrive?  
To the evil people?  
To the good people?
6. Verses 9-11
  - Does this apply to both Jews and Non-Jews?
7. Verses 12-16
  - If a person is a non-Jew, and was never taught the 10 commandments, how can he be judged for breaking them? How can he get in trouble with God for doing something he didn't know was wrong?
8. Verses 17-25
  - What were the Jewish people trusting in to make them "good" in God's eyes?
    - :17 \_\_\_\_\_
    - :18 \_\_\_\_\_
    - :19 \_\_\_\_\_
    - :20, 21 \_\_\_\_\_
    - :25 \_\_\_\_\_
  - What do most people trust in to make themselves "good" in God's eyes?
9. So....how would we define "The Law"? Why is it necessary?  
And....since I have broken "The Law", do I deserve the Judgment of God?  
And...what wonderful news is there for me...and for anyone...who deserves the Judgment of God? (How do I make sure I am one of the "good" people, and not one of the "evil" people, especially when I must honestly say I do some of those things on the "evil" list?)
10. Verse 29
  - If I have broken the Law and deserved judgment, but respond to the Gospel with faith in Jesus, how does God feel about me?





**For Those Who Think They are OK With God**  
Romans Chapter 2 – Answer Key

**In Chapter 1, we defined The Gospel:**

**In Chapter 2, Paul begins to talk about Judgment, and The Law.**

1. From Chapter 1, Verses 24-32, make a list of all the shameful things God allows men to do once they decide not to acknowledge Him in their lives:

Do not acknowledge God
Sexual impurity
Worship things
Homosexuality
Greed
Envy
Murder
Lies
Hurting others
Gossip
Insolent, arrogant, boastful
Disobedience to parents
Approve of others' unrighteousness

2. Verse 2

- Does the Bible say that people who do these things are worthy of God's Judgment?

Yes. And it also says that God's judgment is based on truth. Not contrariness, or crankiness, or meanness, but truth.

3. Verses 1-3

- Do you do any of these same things? And if so, do you also deserve God's judgment?

The answer has to be yes.

- Let's define "Judgment" - How does God "judge" these things?
  - Right Now (1:18,24,28) God gives us over to the downward spiral of sin...our appetite for sin gets bigger and bigger

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- Ultimately (Rev. 21:8), Some day God will totally eliminate from the earth all people who have sin within them.

Although being caught in the downward spiral of sin is pretty horrible, it is not anywhere near as bad as the ultimate judgment of God.

4. Verse 4

- Why hasn't God's ultimate judgment and wrath happened yet?

II Peter 3:8-10. If He would have brought His ultimate judgment on the world 50 years ago, you and I would not be here today. We descended from sinful people. He is patiently waiting...giving every future person their chance to be cleansed by sin by responding in faith to Him.

And not only is He waiting patiently. He is waiting kindly and lovingly. His kindness and love can lead to either presumption or repentance.

Have your group explain how or why these two differing reactions could happen.

5. Verses 5-10

- And what will happen when that day of judgment finally does arrive?  
To the evil people? They will receive punishment for sin – according to what they have done. More evil. More punishment. Look at Revelation 20:11-15. The ones standing before this Great White Throne at the end of the Millennium will be judged by God for the things they have done.  
To the good people? Eternal life for the good. Glory. Honor. Peace.

Common sense would tell us, then, that we want to be one of the "good" people, not one of the "evil" people. Paul anticipates our thoughts, and begins to answer our next question: What determines "evil"? (the answer is: the law)

6. Verses 9-11

- Does this apply to both Jews and Non-Jews?

According to this passage, it doesn't matter whether one is Jew or Gentile. There can be "bad" Jews. And "good" Gentiles. Why is Paul making this distinction? Because there were Jews in the Roman church. And he knew they might have some pride in their Judaism. They may be agreeing with everything he is saying about sin and its power and devastation...but still resting comfortably on the fact that they are Jewish...feeling that God had a special tolerance for them...because they were chosen to reveal "the law" to the world.

Even though the Jews were loved and chosen by God to carry his message to the world, they were still sinners. The playing field is level. All people need the gift of salvation made possible by the Jewish Messiah.

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So...now we know that there are no people who get "special treatment" from God. Paul anticipates our next question: Are there people who aren't judged as harshly because they had never heard about the requirements of God....had never heard about the law?

7. Verses 12-16

- If a person is a non-Jew, and was never taught the 10 commandments, how can he be judged for breaking them? How can he get in trouble with God for doing something he didn't know was wrong?

Start answering this question by listing the 10 commandments. See how many you can list from memory before you look at Exodus 20: 3,4,7,8,12,13,14,15,16, 17.

1. No other Gods before me
2. No idols
3. Do not misuse the name of God
4. Keep the Sabbath Day holy
5. Honor father and mother
6. No murder
7. No adultery
8. No stealing
9. No lying
10. No coveting

So...what if a person never heard of the 10 commandments? Even those who have never heard the 10 commandments carry the truth of those laws in their conscience. It is written on their hearts. Everyone knows right from wrong. Everyone will be judged based on what they know and what they have...or have not...obeyed.

Everyone knows there is a God. (Romans 1:18-20)

Everyone knows right from wrong (Romans 2:14-15)

Everyone deserves to stand without excuse before a Holy God.

Many non-Christians have high moral standards. How can you use their own standards to help them see their need for Christ?

8. Verses 17-27

- What were the Jewish people trusting in to make them "good" in God's eyes?
  - :17 we have the law – we were chosen to keep the law safe
  - :18 we have learned at the top of the class – we are superior in knowledge
  - :19 We can show others the way
  - :20, 21 We can teach

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- :25 we are circumcised. (circumcision was the outward sign that they were God's people. How had some of them confused the sign with what it signified?)
- :21-24 – what was the fallacy in all these things they were trusting in?
- What do most people trust in to make themselves "good" in God's eyes?
- :26&27 Why would non-Jews blaspheme God's name because of such thinking?

Paul is building a case here. The law's requirement is: perfection. Not: "Do the best you can"

9. So....how would we define "The Law"? Why is it necessary?  
And....since I have broken "The Law", do I deserve the Judgment of God?  
And...what wonderful news is there for me...and for anyone...who deserves the Judgment of God? (How do I make sure I am one of the "good" people, and not one of the "evil" people, especially when I must honestly say I do some of those things on the "evil" list?)
10. Verse 29 If I have broken the Law and deserved judgment, but respond to the Gospel with faith in Jesus, how does God feel about me?  
He gives me praise. He and I have a relationship – He likes me. I am righteous...but never forget – it's not my own righteousness.

How can this chapter help us more effectively share the Gospel with respectable, religious or moral non-Christians?



**Righteousness – Impossible... But Can't Live Without It**  
Romans 3 – Questions for Personal Study or Discussion

**So far, we have defined:**

**Gospel**

**Judgment**

**Sin**

**Law**

**Jews**

**This week: Righteousness**

We ended up Chapter 2 with this: "A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code."

So...the Jews must have been asking questions. Chapter 3 asks and answers them:

1. (:1-4) What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew?
2. (:5-8) But...if our sin makes God's righteousness more visible, then how can God punish us for making Him look righteous?
3. (:9-20) Are we **any** better, then? And if not, then what is the purpose of the law?
4. (:21-26) God offers us a righteousness apart from the law....how can that be?
5. (:27-30) Where, then, is boasting?
6. (:31) Does faith nullify the law?



## **Righteousness – Impossible... But Can't Live Without It** Romans 3 – Answer Key

**So far, we have defined:**

**Gospel**

**Judgment**

**Sin**

**Law**

**Jews**

### **This week: Righteousness**

- As a review, go over each of the words above and define them in your own words.
- Then, let's start by looking first at chapter 3, verse 20:

"Therefore, no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin." -3:20

- We know what Sin, and the Law are, from previous chapters...now let's define "righteousness":

As an illustration, look at a children's puzzle which is all put together, but has one piece missing. You can probably get the gist of the puzzle without that piece, but is the puzzle complete? Why not?

"Righteousness" is "completeness". When a person is righteous that person is completely right. Nothing missing. Nothing out of place. Nothing to mar them in any way.

So how do we know whether or not we are "complete", or "righteous"? To what do we compare ourselves so that we will know how we measure up? To God. God is righteous. God is complete. (Look at Psalm 145:17 for just one example of scripture telling us God is righteous.)

If we want to know if we are righteous, then, we must compare ourselves to God. If we are the same as God....we are righteous. How do you measure up? Righteousness is more than doing "some" or "most" things right. It's complete. Total. Everything perfect.

Look at James 2:10&11. There we see that even if we are just like the child's puzzle – complete except for one small piece – we are not complete. Even if we have only sinned once in our whole life, we are incomplete. Not righteous.

So...the facts are:

1. God is righteous
2. Man is not
3. Man has to be righteous in order for God to have anything to do with him.
4. Man tries to "keep the rules" in order to be righteous...only to learn it isn't possible.

**Let's jump into Romans 3 now and see what God, through Paul, has to say about righteousness:**

We ended up Chapter 2 with this: "A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code."

So...the Jews must have been asking questions. In Chapter 3 Paul anticipates those questions and answers them. Read each set of verses, then answer the question that goes with them:

1. (:1-4) What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew?

Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God...they have the key to knowing what God wants people to know. They have, sort of, a head-start on the gentiles.

2. (:5-8) But...if our sin makes God's righteousness more visible, then how can God punish us for making Him look righteous?

Because He's God. Period. Of course He can judge our sin.

3. (:9-20) Are we **any** better, then? And if not, then what is the purpose of the law?

No...we (the Jews) are no better. All people in the whole world are accountable to God. All have failed. We have failed.

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Now...look again at chapter 3:20:

"Therefore, no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin." -3:20

So....the facts are....

God is Righteous

Man is not

Man needs to be righteous in order to communicate with God

Man wants to be righteous – he has a deep need to communicate with God

Man tries to be righteous – only to find out that he can't do it!

So....The Question is....

What can Man do??????

Nothing!!!!

But....

One More fact:

God wants man to be righteous, too, because He loves man & wants to communicate w/him

So....The next question is...

What can God do?????

Answer: Become a man & take man's punishment in his stead – out of love

God (Jesus) did this very thing. He solved man's sin problem by dying on the cross.

Now...Every man has two choices:

1. Keep trying to be good enough or smart enough on his own (works).
  2. Fall to his knees & thank God for giving him righteousness as a gift. (faith)
4. (:21-26) God offers us a righteousness apart from the law....what is that all about?
- The Law & the prophets testify of it. This wasn't just a new concept which came about in 33 A.D., at Jesus resurrection. This righteousness by faith had been offered to men from the beginning.
  - Comes through faith. The good news is you can have righteousness. The puzzling part is, you can't earn it. You can only receive it like a gift. Through faith. Through believing God offers it, and therefore taking it.



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- In Jesus Christ The righteousness which is offered to us is all wrapped up in Jesus. He lived a "righteous" life. He offers us what He is.
- There is no difference No difference between people anywhere. Nobody has a special position of righteousness with God on their own.
- All have sinned No exceptions
- Come short of the glory of God. Every person, no matter how "good" in our eyes (this includes me, you, & Mother Theresa), is not as good as God.
- Justified. When we exercise this faith, the books are totally cleared. We have been declared "just", or "righteous" in the courtroom of God.
- Freely. It's a gift. Offered by God to us.
- Grace. We don't deserve it.
- Redemption by Christ. When we put our faith in Christ, He "redeems us", or "buys us back". We are actually purchased back from the horrible future we were heading to...and the purchase price was His own blood.

5. (:27-30) Where, then, is boasting?

We can't boast. Since our righteousness is not from doing good things, we simply have no room to brag on ourselves. Not out loud...and not to ourselves. No room for pride here.

6. (:31) Does faith nullify the law?

Here's the question: So if I can only be righteous by faith...not by works...then I guess I shouldn't try to obey the law any more....right?

Wrong. When you put your faith in Jesus - in what Jesus did - you are totally changed inside – you then have the ability to obey the law...an ability you didn't have before. You have more reason than ever to obey the law. More motivation than ever to obey the law. Not in order to win God's favor (you already have that by exercising faith). But in order to be what God always intended you to be. Because you love Him. You obey from that point on For His sake. Not yours.



## What is Faith?

### Romans Chapter 4 – Questions For Personal Study or Discussion

**So far, we have defined:** (connect the word with the definition)

Gospel	Holiness – Absolute perfectness
Judgment	The people chosen by God to show Himself to the world
Sin	Just as if I had never done it
Law	All the things God wants us to do and be
Jews	Punishment from God for sin
Righteousness	The story of Jesus
Justification	Anything less than what God wants us to do and be

**Today we will talk about “Faith”.**

**First: Many people are confused today about faith. Let’s define it.**

1. *Review:* (3:31) If a person cannot be justified by works, then do we nullify the law by coming to God by faith?
2. (4:1-8) According to these verses, how were Old Testament believers, such as Abraham and David, justified (made righteous)?
3. What are some of the differences between justification by faith and justification by works?

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4. It's easy to feel that God accepts us only when we are good. When we feel this way, how can the examples of Abraham and David give us hope?
5. Can faith in Jesus make you a righteous person *no matter what you have done*? (:5)
6. (4:9-12) Some people in Paul's day taught that unless a person was circumcised he had no hope of being saved (see Acts. 15:1). How does Abraham's experience refute this idea?
7. Some people today teach that unless a person is baptized, or unless a person takes communion, or unless a person attends church he has no hope of being saved. How does Abraham's experience refute that idea?
8. Does that mean that once a person is saved, he doesn't have to get baptized, take communion or attend church?
9. (4:13-17) God promised that Abraham and his offspring would inherit the world (:13). Who are Abraham's offspring?

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10. If you have placed your faith in Jesus, who is in your family tree? (:16)
11. (4:18-22) What was the promise Abraham believed?
12. What was the promise you believed when you became a Christian?
13. (4: 23-25) How does Abraham illustrate our own hopeless predicament as non-Christians, and the solution provided in Jesus Christ?

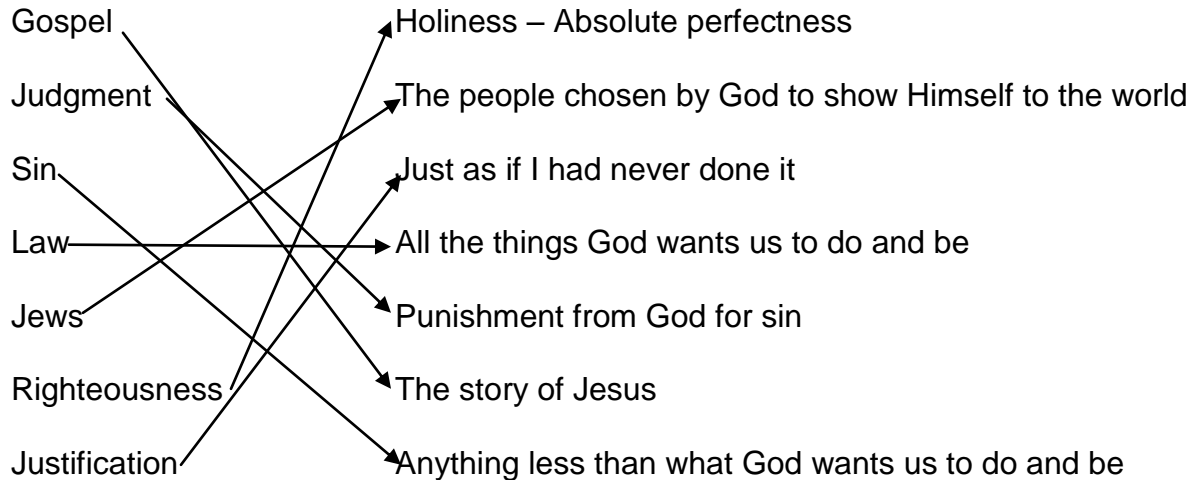
	Hopeless Predicament	Solution
Abraham		
Me (As I was when I was a non-Christian...or maybe as I am now, because I am not a Christian...which is it for you?)		



## What is Faith?

### Romans Chapter 4 - Answer Key

**So far, we have defined: (Connect the word with the definition)**



**Today we will talk about “Faith”.** Many people are confused today about faith. Let’s define it. How do we do that?

Well, first, we could ask ourselves what verses we might know which define faith:

*Hebrews 11:1* comes to mind. “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” So faith is believing something is true even when you can’t see it, touch it, or feel it.

**Faith, then, is not a feeling.**

*James chapter 2, verses 14-26* also define faith. Verse 26 summarizes it: “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” In other words, faith is not just in your head, not just in your heart. If faith doesn’t show...if faith doesn’t manifest itself in some way by your actions, then it isn’t faith.

**Faith, then, is not inactive...it is displayed in actions.**

*John 3:16* says “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”



**So faith is believing.** But not just intellectual belief. Not just saying "Yes, I know these facts about Jesus are true."

**Faith is saying: "I know this is true...therefore I will stake my life on it."**

Romans Chapter 4 is one of the best passages to look at in order to understand faith. In it Paul gives us illustrations of people in the Old Testament who had faith. Those illustrations help us think through what faith is...and ask ourselves....do I have it?

1. *Review:* (3:31) If a person cannot be justified by works, then do we nullify the law by coming to God by faith?

This is where Paul left off. He was discussing in Chapter 3 the fact that our works cannot save us. Only faith can save us. Now he begins to define what faith is.

2. (4:1-8) According to these verses, how were Old Testament believers, such as Abraham and David, justified (made righteous)?

Paul says that if Abraham had been made righteous by good deeds, then he would have something to boast about. But he wasn't.... and he doesn't. Old Testament scripture clearly says "Abraham believed God" and that is what made him righteous. (Genesis 15:6)

When someone works for wages, here's what happens: You show up at work at 8:00 am, clock in, work for 8 hours, then clock out. At your pay period the 8 hours work is credited to you, and you are paid for what you have done. Paul says righteousness works much the same way. Except that there is no amount of work you can do to earn even a tiny bit of righteousness. It is only when you exercise faith that you have a credit to your account, and you receive righteousness as your payment.

Even the Old Testament said this. David knew, when he wrote this Psalm (Psalm 32:1,2), that the truly blessed person is the one who has received the gift of sins forgiven.

3. What are some of the differences between justification by faith and justification by works?

Justification by Works	Justification by Faith
There is no end to the pressure to always be doing the right thing	The pressure to always be doing the right thing is removed
Every sin leaves your life less than perfect before God	Every sin is covered by the payment Jesus already made
The future is frightening. You have no	The future is calm. Your good standing

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idea whether or not you can stay in good standing with God	does not depend on never sinning again.
You can only hope that when the books are balanced at the end, you come out OK	You know for sure that when you stand before God everything will be OK.
You feel superior to weaker people when you are able to do the right thing	You know that you are no better than anyone else, and have nothing to boast about
You begin to hate people who are doing better than you	You have love for all – even those who “show you up”, because you know how they got to where they are...and you know the LORD could bring you there, too.
You never quite reach the goal	You gratefully know you have reached the goal – by the grace of God.

4. It's easy to feel that God accepts us only when we are good. When we feel this way, how can the examples of Abraham and David give us hope?

Abraham and David are both such shining examples of people with whom God was pleased. God called David a “man after his own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14). And God called Abraham his “friend.” (James 2:23). And yet we see in Romans 4 that neither of those men was pleasing God because of their good works. Both of them were making God happy because they had faith in God. Only because they had faith.

5. Can faith in Jesus make you a righteous person *no matter what you have done?* (:5)

Here's the question which will put your definition of faith to the test. Can faith in Jesus make you righteous? Most of us can peacefully answer yes. Can faith in Jesus make you righteous *no matter what you have done?* Ahhh...that's a little harder, isn't it? Harder because most of us have a tiny little place in the bottom of our hearts that does believe faith makes us righteous...but also believes that somehow we deserved the gift of faith. We weren't quite as bad as some others. We didn't do as many horrible things. We didn't do any horrible things...just some not great things. We repented and we are proud of it.

But that can't be, can it? If faith in Jesus – faith in Jesus alone – can make a person righteous, then it is true for everyone...*no matter what they have done*. We can't be proud of our faith. The LORD doesn't exclude anyone, no matter how evil, from the promise of righteousness through faith in Him.

6. (4:9-12) Some people in Paul's day taught that unless a person was circumcised he had no hope of being saved (see Acts. 15:1). How does Abraham's experience refute this idea?

Abraham was credited with righteousness (because of his faith) before he was circumcised. Circumcision did not confer righteousness....or put Abraham in a better position to obtain righteousness. He was already righteous. Circumcision was simply a way for Abraham to say to the world..."I have faith in the LORD – He has made me righteous." It was a drama.

7. Some people today teach that unless a person is baptized, or unless a person takes communion, or unless a person attends church he has no hope of being saved. How does Abraham's experience refute that idea?

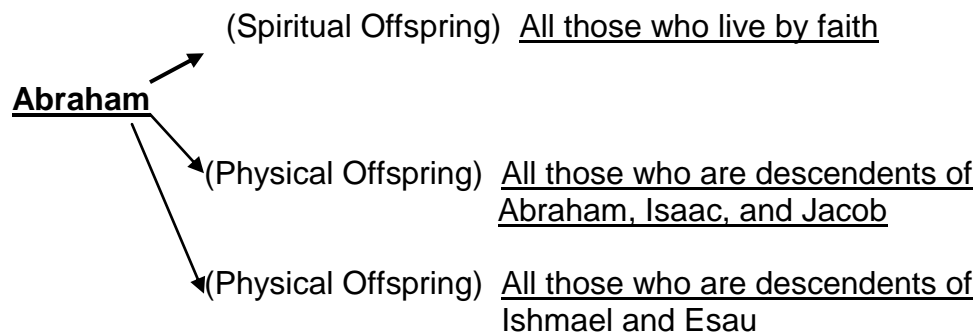
Same reasoning applies. Righteousness is conferred by God at the moment of faith. Baptism, communion, church attendance...these are things you do because you want to after you have become righteous. Righteousness comes first, given by God. Acts of obedience come after. The acts of obedience don't make you righteous...they are things you do because you are righteous.

8. Does that mean that once a person is saved, he doesn't have to get baptized, take communion or attend church?

No, just the opposite. A person does not get baptized, take communion or attend church in order to earn righteousness. But they do want to do those things after they are righteous because they want to totally obey the LORD they have decided to follow. These things are steps of obedience. Why would you be totally in love with Jesus Christ and not want to do the things which please Him?

9. (4:13-17) God promised that Abraham and his offspring would inherit the world (:13). Who are Abraham's offspring?

Abraham has three different branches of offspring.



**Or...another way to look at it:**

- Abraham's Jewish descendents are those who came from Isaac and Jacob. Some, not all, of them had faith in God.





- Abraham's other physical descendents are those who came from Ishmael and Esau. Some, not all, of them had faith in God.
- Abraham's spiritual descendents are any, Jew or Gentile, who have faith in the LORD.

**So...who are the offspring of Abraham who will inherit the world, as verse 13 says?**

Those who live by faith. Only the people of faith in the One, True, God will even be around when the world is inherited. Everyone not of faith will be dead...having been judged by the God in whom they decided not to have faith.

A further word of explanation is in order. The LORD, in Old Testament times, made promises to the Jewish descendents of Abraham. There were things He said He would do to them and for them which He has not yet fulfilled. He will keep those promises to them. We, as people of faith, are not inheritors of all the promises made to the Jews, because some of them were made specifically to those who had Jewish (descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) blood running in their veins. The actual, physical descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will still play their part in the final fulfillment of all of God's promises. And only those Jewish people who take their stand of faith will survive to the end, inheriting, with the rest of us who live by faith, the world.

10. If you have placed your faith in Jesus, who is in your family tree? (:16)

Abraham. He is the father of all of us who have placed our faith in Jesus.

11. (4:18-22) What was the promise Abraham believed?

Abraham believed God could and would give him an heir...a son...even though everything his senses told him screamed the opposite. His own understanding of the situation told him he absolutely could not have a son. But he believed what God said, and that was faith.

12. What was the promise you believed when you became a Christian?

The point here is that faith is believing something God said. Faith is not based on what I want or what I hope or what someone else has told me. It is always based on God's own words. Do I believe them or not? Will I act on them or not? If I have faith in God there is something God has said which I have believed, and I have believed it to the point that I have acted on it.

When any of us begins a walk of faith with God, we begin with the beginning. We begin by believing that the blood of Jesus, Who was God Himself, was shed for us, personally, and that it was enough to pay the price for our sin, and that after He died for

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our sin, He came back to life again, therefore sealing our righteousness for eternity. That righteousness is ours at the moment we believe, and stays ours forever.

*".. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification." (Romans 4:25).*

Do you have faith in that promise? If you do, you are righteous.

13. (4: 23-25) How does Abraham illustrate our own hopeless predicament as non-Christians, and the solution provided in Jesus Christ?

	Hopeless Predicament	Solution
Abraham		
Me (a non-Christian)		



### **Peace, Joy, Hope & Love**

Romans 5:1-5 – Questions for Your Personal Use or Discussion

What kinds of things make you joyful?  
What kinds of things make you peaceful?  
What kind of things make you feel hopeful?  
What kind of things make you feel loved?

*Romans 5: 1,2,5     "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord, Jesus Christ...; and we exult in hope of the glory of God...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts..."*

What do these mean?: Define these words/phrases before you get into today's study

\*Faith

\*Peace

\*Hope

\*Love

1. (:1) How does someone have "peace" with God?
2. (:2) Who made it possible for God's grace to flow through to us?
3. (:2) What is a good reason to rejoice?
4. (:3) Why should we be glad when bad things happen in our lives?  
(even harder...why should we be glad when bad things happen in the lives of those we love?)
5. (:2-5) The "hope" that is talked about in verse 2....how do we get it?
6. (:2-5) What happens when we face our circumstances with faith in Jesus?
7. (:5) Who enables us to experience the love of God?
8. (:5) When God has poured out His love into your heart, what can you do that you couldn't do before? (personal examples)
9. (:1-5) Peace...joy...(joy even in suffering)...hope...love...Do these things characterize your life? They should. If they don't, why not? What to do?



**Peace, Joy, Hope & Love**  
Romans 5:1-5 – Answer Key

What kinds of things make you joyful?  
What kinds of things make you peaceful?  
What kind of things make you feel hopeful?  
What kind of things make you feel loved?

Romans 5: 1,2,5     "Therefore, since we have been justified through *faith*, we have *peace* with God through our Lord, Jesus Christ...; and we exult in *hope* of the glory of God...the *love* of God has been poured out within our hearts..."

What do these mean?: Define these words/phrases before you get into this study

\**Faith*

\**Peace*

\**Hope*

\**Love*

1. (:1) How does someone have "peace" with God?

Peace with God can only come after a person has been "justified". If you remember, back in chapter 3 we learned that a person is "justified" before God (in other words, God views this person "just as if he had never sinned") when that person believes in Jesus Christ.

If you are someone who has believed in Jesus Christ, do you remember that sense of peace that seemed to just float around your life in those first few days after you made that decision? It's a knowledge that everything is OK. It's a sense of guilt being taken from your shoulders.

2. (:2) Who made it possible for God's grace to flow through to us?

The only way anyone ever has the ability to believe in Jesus is that God has a part of His character called "grace". It's the part of God which wants to give to us even though we don't deserve it. Even though we have been awful to Him, His grace desires to give peace to us. Like a river which overflows its bounds, God's grace rises up and passes over our sin, and flows right through to us.

And what makes it possible for that grace to envelope us, surround us, draw us up and away to a relationship with God? Jesus Himself. He died on a cross so that we wouldn't have to die. If He hadn't paid the price for my sin, and then risen Himself from the dead, I wouldn't be able to have God's grace. It couldn't reach me....for I would

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never be clean enough to enter the presence of God...no matter how much He loved me.

3. (:2) What is a good reason to rejoice?

If any of us has placed our faith in Jesus, we will someday see His full glory displayed before our wondering eyes. We have no idea how glorious He is. Just being in the room He walks into will raise us up to a level of life we cannot imagine. That's a good reason to rejoice.

4. (:3) Why should we be glad when bad things happen in our lives? (even harder...why should we be glad when bad things happen in the lives of people we love?)

Here's the answer from this verse: When bad things (tribulations) happen we are blessed by them. They improve us. This is true for anyone...including, of course, those we love the most.

So even though our natural reaction to distress in our lives, or in others', is to protect, run away, solve those problems... if we can't relieve the distress ourselves..or if every door closes for a solution to a painful problem..or if helping might make the situation just last longer...we need to sometimes take a step back, breathe deeply, and remember that God can and will use difficulty in life to pour out His grace on us. Look at the following verses and see what He can do:

5. (:2-5) The "hope" that is talked about in verse 2....how do we get it?

Through hardship. As hardship leads us to recognize our need for God, we stretch our minds and hearts out to know more about Him, and then His grace flows through to us, and then we have the chance to respond with faith in Jesus Christ...then, and only then, we have a hope in the future which is based on something solid.

6. (:2-5) What happens when we face our circumstances with faith in Jesus?

First, we learn to persevere.

Second, that perseverance produces character in us

Third, as we develop character, we search for and find hope

Fourth, hope does not disappoint us, because a knowledge of God's love grows within us

7. (:5) Who enables us to experience the love of God?

The Holy Spirit. The Third Person of the Trinity of God. Can I explain how God can be Three and yet One? No, I can't. But I know it's true, because this truth is taught over and over and over again throughout scripture. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Not three Gods. One God. Three Persons. And the Holy Spirit part of God is the One Who enables us to understand and feel and respond to the love of God.

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Do you have a sense of the love of God in your life? The Holy Spirit gave that to you.

8. (:5) When God has poured out His love into your heart, what can you do that you couldn't do before?

(Give some examples from your own experience)

Just from my own experience:

Love others

Forgive others

Wait more patiently for the future

Trust God more

Get to know God better. (when I trust Him more, I want to know Him more)

9. (:1-5) Peace...joy...(joy even in suffering)...hope...love...Do these things characterize your life? They should. If they don't, why not? What to do?

- ☐ First, ask yourself if you are a committed believer in Jesus Christ. Have you actually ever placed your faith in Him?
- ☐ Then, if you know for sure you are a believer, ask the LORD to point out to you if you have some sin you are holding onto in your life. He will tell you if that is the case. (Psalm 139:23&24)
- ☐ Third, if all is well between you and God, then check your daily walk with Him.
  - Are you reading your Bible every day?
  - Are you praying every day?
  - Are you letting people know you are committed to Jesus Christ?
  - Are you an active part of a Bible-believing church?
  - Are you serving the LORD with the abilities He has given you?

If you are not experiencing Peace, Joy, Hope and Love, the reason is somewhere in that list above. Find it...correct it...and walk forth in Peace, Joy, Hope and Love.



**When I am Unloveable, SomeOne Loves Me**  
Romans 5:6-21 – Questions for Your Personal Use or Discussion

**Review Question:**

**(:5) What (or Who) enables us to experience the love of God?**

1. (:6&7) Who would you die for?
2. Someone on death row...waiting to die for a horrible crime they committed....would you take that person's place and die for them?
3. (:8) What is the proof of God's love for us?
4. (:9) If God loved us so much and was powerful enough to die for us and then rise from the dead, never to die again, what else can we expect Him to be able to do for us?
5. (:10) What "keeps" us saved?
6. (:12-14) What one man brought sin and death into our world?
7. (:15-19) What one man brought forgiveness and life into the world?
8. (:20) What happened to sin when the law was made known?

**Application Questions:**

- Someone has told you that they are not a Christian....and they think God could never forgive them because of the things they have done wrong in their life. What verse from Chapter 5 would you use to help them understand that just the opposite is true?
- You know a Christian who is afraid he has lost his salvation because of a sin which got control of his life. What verse from chapter 5 will help you help him?
- You are not able to have anything to do with a fellow Christian who has hurt you with a sin they willingly committed against you. What verse in Chapter 5 can apply to this hard situation?



## **When I am Unloveable, SomeOne Loves Me**

Romans 5:6-21 – Answer Key

### **Review Question:**

**(:5) What (or Who) enables us to experience the love of God?**

1. (:6&7) Who would you die for?

Most of us will answer that question with a few names – our family, our best friends. Or maybe even with the name of someone who is making a great contribution to their world.

2. Someone on death row...waiting to die for a horrible crime they committed....would you take that person's place and die for them?

And most of us would say "no" to that question....mostly because it is just not logical to die in the place of someone who basically has not much worth in our society....to say nothing of the fact that emotionally we just couldn't do it.

3. (:8) What is the proof of God's love for us?

His great sacrifice for us was not made when we deserved it. If He had waited until then, He would never have done it. If anyone you know has doubts about God's love for them, there is no better verse to bring them to than this one. John 3:16 says that "God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son..." – but this verse goes on to explain that He did that when the recipients of this gift didn't even want it! That's crazy....or it's love.

Now why would the Lord love any of us so much? I have no idea.

My Mother, whom I love very much, is full of hate at this point in her life....because decisions are being made for her which she very much does not want. She is at that point when she can no longer live alone. She has fallen and been found by neighbors way too many times in the last couple of years. Each of siblings has known for awhile now that the next time she falls we will not be able to help her get back home again. Now it has happened, and she is so mad at us the hate just pours out of her mouth.

Would I die for her? Oh, yes. Would I die now so that she could have even a few more months of life? Absolutely. Why? Because I love her, and because she has never realized how much God loves her. If she would die tonight she would not head to heaven.



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Will I have to die for her to get a little longer lease on life? Probably not. Someone already did. He is the One Who can get through to her now, in a nursing home, angry and full of pain. And I have no doubt that He is doing just that....because He loves her far more than I do. I have no idea why. But I believe He does.

4. (:9) If God loved us so much and was powerful enough to die for us and then rise from the dead, never to die again, what else can we expect Him to be able to do for us?

Have you ever wondered if the sins you have committed since you gave your life to Christ could keep you out of heaven? Have you ever feared standing before the throne of God?

If so, this verse should bring great, amazing joy to your life.

The One Who was powerful enough to have victory over death is powerful enough to keep His loved ones from ever having to face the wrath of God!

5. (:10) What "keeps" us saved?

If Jesus had simply died for us, and not raised from the dead....would that have been enough to pay for our sins and make us right with God? Yes. His death...the death of an innocent man, could have been the substitute for the death we deserved.

But He couldn't have "kept" us saved. Only an alive Savior can keep us saved.

If I am willing to run in front of a speeding car in order to knock someone out of its path, thereby saving that person from death, that is wonderful. But if I die in the process I will never be able to do that deed again, will I?

The fact the Jesus came back from death means that death can never touch Him again. He is alive, and thus, He ensures my eternal salvation.

6. (:12-14) What one man brought sin and death into our world?  
Adam. He made the choice.

7. (:15-19) What one man brought forgiveness and life into the world?  
Jesus. He made the choice.

8. (:20) What happened to sin when the law was made known?  
Once we know the rules, all of a sudden we are much more aware of how often we break the rules. In the same way, once the law came through Moses, it was so, so obvious that all men everywhere were breaking the law. Why did ancient peoples hate the Jews so much? Because as they tried to keep the law they were making it all the more obvious just how filthy dirty everyone was.

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No one would have then, or would have now, a flicker of a chance if it had not been for grace. The grace of God spurred Him to offer more and more hope. The darker sin is, the brighter the light of God's grace is.

If you ever think you can't share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with someone because they are just too far gone in sin....think again. They just might be more open to the love of Jesus than you can imagine...because they know how very much they need it.

The InterVarsity Greek Ministry has a conference every year in the Indy area. Quite often Ken and I have been privileged to volunteer at that conference...sometimes in the role of Small Group Leader. As we have gathered in those weekends as leaders with a small group of Fraternity and Sorority students, we have over and over again commented on how incredibly easy it is to talk about the seriousness of sin with those students. Many of them have wasted a couple of college years already with drunkenness, drugs, sexual permissiveness...and they know what sin is....they know the awful affects of sin...and they hungrily reach out for something...anything...which would help them from the mess they are in.

**Application Questions:**

- Someone has told you that they are not a Christian....and they think God could never forgive them because of the things they have done wrong in their life. What verse from Chapter 5 would you use to help them understand that just the opposite is true?
- You know a Christian who is afraid he has lost his salvation because of a sin which got control of his life. What verse from chapter 5 will help you help him?
- You are not able to have anything to do with a fellow Christian who has hurt you with a sin they willingly committed against you. What verse in Chapter 5 can apply to this hard situation?



## Sin

### Romans 6 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

**Paul is setting things straight about 2 false ideas:**

- 1. The more we sin, the more grace...a good thing, right? (:1)**
- 2. Go ahead and sin...grace has us covered. (:15)**

- **If you think either of those 2 things, you don't understand sin.**

- The nature and results of sin:

1.	Romans 1:29-32	Sin _____
2.	John 8:34, Prov. 5:22	Sin _____
3.	Psalms 38:4,5	Sin _____
4.	Numbers 32:23	Sin _____
5.	Hebrews 11:25	Sin _____
6.	Proverbs 14:1	Sin _____
7.	Exodus 34:7	Sin _____
8.	Romans 6:23	Sin _____

- Sin has results...even for the forgiven Christian

In Chapter 6, Paul uses 2 examples to show us how to deal with sin after we become a Christian:

6:1-14      *Death*

If I die tonite, do I have to go to work tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_yes or no

If I die tonite, do I have to pay taxes in April? \_\_\_\_\_yes or no

If I die tonite, do I have to clean the house tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_yes or no

So...if I died to sin when I became a Christian, what does that mean?

---

6:15-23      *Slavery*

Before I became a Christian, who was my master? (:17-18)

After I become a Christian, who is my Master? (:17-18)

If righteousness is my Master after I become Christian, then why do I still sin?



## Sin

### Romans 6 – Answer Key

**Paul is setting things straight about 2 false ideas:**

- 1. The more we sin, the more grace...a good thing, right? (:1)**
- 2. Go ahead and sin...grace has us covered. (:15)**
  - **If you think either of those 2 things, you don't understand sin.**
  - The nature and results of sin: Look up the following verses and indicate what you learn about sin from each:
    1. Romans 1:29-32 Sin gets worse and worse  
One sin does not usually just stop there. Sin leads to other sin...to other sin....to worse and worse sins.
    2. John 8:34, Prov. 5:22 Sin enslaves, ensnares  
Sin is like a trap hidden in the woods. The unsuspecting person steps into the trap, thinking he can keep going forward, only to find that the sin has held him in place. He can't move forward. He can't wriggle free.
    3. Psalms 38:4,5 Sin brings guilt  
Guilt cannot be sidestepped. The heavy burden of it can show up in all kinds of ways in our lives. Guilt which is not acknowledged and dealt with can cause depression, physical sickness, and even death. It can destroy families, and end lives in loneliness and uselessness.
    4. Numbers 32:23 Sin can't be kept secret  
When any of us sins, we want it to be kept quiet. We usually don't want anyone else to know. But it never stays quiet. Sin will always be known to all. Shouted from the housetops, sometimes.
    5. Hebrews 11:25 Sin does give pleasure  
It helps to understand this. There is pleasure in sin. But only for a little while. It doesn't last. Guilt sets in soon and even more sin must be added in order to get back the pleasure. Like an addiction to heroin, sin craves more, and the trap is very powerful.
    6. Proverbs 14:1 Sin tears down  
Whatever you have tried to build up....the good things you have tried to do...they can all be speedily torn down by just one sin.
    7. Exodus 34:7 Sin must be punished  
The LORD has no choice. The nature of sin is that it must be dealt with. Punishment must follow.
    8. Romans 6:23 Sin brings death  
And the very worst punishment for sin is death...and it always comes. The Good News of Jesus Christ is that He has taken our

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punishment. Amazingly, we don't have to be punished if we will accept Jesus' gift.

- Sin has results...even for the forgiven Christian  
Yes, sin has results, even for a Christian who has asked Jesus Christ to apply His death to their lives. Forgiveness of sin and removal of the penalty of death do not mean that the scars of sin will not remain in our lives. We will usually bear them our whole lives, until some day we have new bodies in heaven.

So...addictions will still have a strong pull  
Divorces will still bring pain.  
Disobedience to parents will still destroy families  
Lying will still foster lack of trust  
Sexual sin will still bring disease  
Cheating will stand land us in jail.

Yes, we can be freed from the guilt of these sins. And yes, we will still have a place in God's kingdom. But sometimes we have to live with the scars of sin, humbly acknowledging every day that we do not in any way deserve the grace of God.

In Chapter 6, Paul uses 2 examples to show us how to deal with sin after we become a Christian:

6:1-14      The first example is: *Death*

If I die tonite, do I have to go to work tomorrow?      \_\_\_\_yes or no?  
If I die tonite, do I have to pay taxes in April?      \_\_\_\_yes or no?  
If I die tonite, do I have to clean the house tomorrow?      \_\_\_\_yes or no?

So...if I died to sin when I became a Christian, what does that mean?

Sin doesn't have power over me any more. I do not have to sin.

6:15-23      the second example is: *Slavery*

Before I became a Christian, who was my master? (:17-18) sin

After I become a Christian, who is my Master? (:17-18) righteousness

If righteousness is my Master after I become Christian, then why do I still sin? Because every moment I get to choose: who will be my master today? Sin doesn't have to be, but I can still choose for it to be. Before I was saved, I didn't have a choice. I had to sin. Sin was my master whether I liked it or not. After salvation, I get a choice. What is my choice? Sin? Or Righteousness?



### **Why do I keep on sinning?**

#### **Romans 7 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion**

(In chapter 6 Paul explains our struggle with sin by using the illustration of slavery... what did he say?)

Now Read verses 1-6 of Chapter 7:

1, What is the next illustration Paul uses? \_\_\_\_\_

- Verse 4 is the lesson Paul wants us to learn from the example of marriage:
  - What were we “married” to before we became believers in Jesus?
  - What had to happen to our first “marriage” before we could have a new “marriage”?
  - Who are we “married” to now that we are believers in Jesus?
- (vs 5) What was life like when we were married to sin?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (vs 6) What should life be like now that we are married to Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read verses 7-14

2. So if I am glad I am dead to the law, does that mean the law is sin? Should I just forget there even is a law? Should I make sure I never try to obey the rules anymore?

- Paul says “absolutely not!” to that question...and then tells us three very beneficial things about the law....
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (7b)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (8-12)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (13-14)

Read verses 14-19

3. What are the three facts we must accept about sin?

- We cannot curb our disobedience on our \_\_\_\_\_ (14)

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- We cannot even do the things we \_\_\_\_\_ to do (15b, 18-19)
- We dare not \_\_\_\_\_ our sin nature (17)

Read verses 20-25

4. .So...here we are...having two natures. A righteous nature given to us by God, Our Father, at salvation. And a sinful nature given to us at birth – inherited naturally from our old father, the devil. Why didn't the sinful nature just go away at our salvation?

5. But...my sin nature is going to battle me as I try to do those things...  
"who will rescue me from the body of death?"....

The Black Dog and the White Dog: An illustration will be given in class of the war between the two natures.

.List some things we can do to feed the white dog:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-



## Why do I keep on sinning?

### Romans 7 – Answer Key

Review: In chapter 6 Paul explains our struggle with sin by using the illustration of slavery... what did he say?

He said that before we were saved we were enslaved by sin. In other words, we had no choice but to sin. Sin was our jailer.

But after we were saved we basically traded jailers. We became slaves to righteousness.

So, now, in chapter 7, Paul asks and answers the next obvious question: "If I am now a slave to righteousness...*why do I keep on sinning?*"

Read verses 1-6 of Chapter 7:

1, What is the next illustration Paul uses? Marriage.

- Verse 4 is the lesson Paul wants us to learn from the example of marriage:

Just as death is the only thing which dissolves the bonds of marriage, so also death is the only thing which dissolves the bonds of the law – in other words, - the law proves to us that we are not perfect – and that we are slaves to the desire to sin. The ability of the law to do that is like bondage to us. We are helpless until that ability of the law can somehow die.

When we accept Christ's death on the cross...when we ask Him to pay the penalty we deserve (we deserve death for being sinners) with His own death, Jesus Christ's death on the cross is strong enough to eliminate the power of sin in our lives....

And verse 4 says one more thing, too. It says that God has a purpose for us after we are free from this power of the law. "...in order that we might bear fruit for God" (:4b) There are deeds that He has planned for us to do once righteousness is our jailer. Look at Ephesians 2:10, where the LORD has Paul tell us so clearly "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Wow. Even before the world was created the LORD decided what He wanted me to do for Him once sin was no longer my master...once I received the gift of salvation.



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For me, that time was when I was 17. Over 40 years ago now. For you, perhaps that time was only a few weeks ago. Doesn't matter when. What matters is simply walking with Him so that He can show you what He designed long ago for you to do.

- What were we "married" to before we became believers in Jesus?  
The Law.
- What had to happen to our first "marriage" before we could have a new "marriage"?  
It had to be dissolved. The one we were married to had to die.
- Who are we "married" to now that we are believers in Jesus?  
Jesus.
- (vs 5) What was life like when we were married to sin?  
We were controlled by sin, we were unable to do those things we saw we must do, and we were dying.
- (vs 6) What should life be like now that we are married to Jesus?  
We are free to serve God through the power of the Holy Spirit – not in the old way we used to try to live. We are free to do things by trusting in God – not by trusting in ourselves.

Read verses 7-14

2. So if I am glad I am dead to the law, does that mean the law is sin? Should I just forget there even is a law? Should I make sure I never try to obey the rules anymore?

Unbelievably, there are actually religious groups out there who teach that it is OK to disobey the laws of God after you get saved, because, "after all, Romans 6&7 teach that trying to obey the law is wrong. The law is evil. It leads us to try to do things in our own power, therefore the law is to be avoided."

Paul wastes no words here refuting that disgusting idea. "Is the Law sin? – May it never be!" (:7)

There was nothing wrong with the law. The problem was us. The Law is still good and pure and is still God's statement of what He expects of us.

- Paul says "absolutely not!" to that question...and then tells us three very beneficial things about the law....

- The law shows me just how sinful I am. (7b)

If I am driving down the highway at 70 miles per hour, and I glance over at a sign on the side of the road which says: Speed Limit: 55 mph, then I am aware of the fact that I am breaking the law. "By the law is the knowledge of sin."

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- The more I know the law, the less able I am to obey it, thus pointing me to my undeniable need for a Savior. (8-12)

My increasing sense of struggle with sin will eventually lead me to despairingly cry out to God for help. This offers me a portal for encountering Almighty God.

- The law shows me what sin really is, so that I begin to hate it. (13-14)

For the past few years Ken and I have been privileged to serve as Small Group Leaders for a weekend conference in Indianapolis. The annual InterVarsity Greek conference is a gathering of college students who are involved in the Greek system (fraternities and sororities) somewhere in the United States. Many of these students come to this conference knowing it is Christian, even though they are not Christians themselves. They come searching and asking questions...wondering whether Christianity is for them.

It is a very challenging weekend. Speakers, seminars, panel discussions and small groups give each student a chance to hear and then quietly consider the possibility of a relationship to Jesus Christ.

In other opportunities Ken and I have to present the claims of Christ one of the hardest things to communicate is the fact that each person is a sinner, and needs a Savior.

But at the InterVarsity Greek conference, that is not the case. These students come to this conference knowing they are sinners. They have been living their "college-aged freedom" to the max, and they know the results. They have been drinking too much, engaging in sex outside of marriage, using drugs, etc., and they know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the very thing Romans 7:13&14 is teaching – sin is utterly sinful. "I am of the flesh, sold into bondage to sin." And many of them have begun to hate the sin which controls them. It is so easy, then, to give them the hope they long for...Jesus Christ is the answer to your sin problem.

Read verses 14-19

3. What are the three facts we must accept about sin?

- We cannot curb our disobedience on our own ability (14)
- We cannot even do the things we would like to do (15b, 18-19)
- We dare not trust our sin nature (17)

If we trust in our own ability to curb our sinful desires, we will fail every time.

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Read verses 20-25

4. So...here we are...having two natures. A righteous nature given to us by God, Our Father, at salvation. And a sinful nature given to us at birth – inherited naturally from our old father, the devil. Why didn't the sinful nature just go away at our salvation?

Because the sinful nature doesn't go away. It is permanently attached to our physical body. It is actually a part of our DNA. We inherited it when we were born, and it will be there until we die.

So Paul describes the point each of us, as believers, eventually come to once we have been given the gift of salvation...once we have been given the Holy Spirit to live within us...once we are no longer slaves to sin....once we are slaves to righteousness. We begin to ask...."Why am I still sinning?"

We find that we have two natures. Our old nature loves to sin and must sin. Our new nature hates sin and has the ability to do righteousness.

So...

5. But...my sin nature is going to battle me as I try to do those things...  
"who will rescue me from the body of death?"....

What will I do? I have the power to do the right thing now....but I still want to do the wrong thing. Help!!!!

Here's the answer to our dilemma: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our LORD!..." (7:25)

**Hmmm...OK – I have believed in Jesus. I love Him. How does that help me with this battle that rages within me?** (hang on to this question for a minute...)

Let's compare this dilemma to a black dog and a white dog. Let's say the white dog is our new nature, and the black dog is our old nature. Let's say these two dogs are both the same size and weight. Both the same age. Both the same strength. How do you make sure the white dog wins when the two dogs decide to confront each other?

Easy. Feed the one, and starve the other.

If you want your new nature to be the one which controls your life, the good news is: it's possible! Just feed the new nature and starve the old nature. How do you feed the new nature and starve the old nature?

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- Faithfully attend a Bible-teaching church, and refuse to make excuses for skipping a week
- Intentionally read the Bible every day, and turn your back on the other things which fight for your time.
- Use your gifts to serve God by spreading the Gospel, and decline opportunities to simply feel good by doing the occasional good deed.
- Talk to God about everything and say "no!" to worrying about everything
- Develop friendships with other people who are serving Jesus, and back off of friendships which draw you into a pointless life.
- "Raise Your Flag" by making it perfectly clear to everyone that you have asked Jesus Christ to be your Savior from your old self...and stop being in the "secret service". Stop leading a "private" Christian life...and start living OUT LOUD!

Now – remember that question you were hanging on to? **OK – I have believed in Jesus. I love Him. How does that help me with this battle that rages within me?** Here's the reason you are still asking this question: Even though you now know what to do to feed the white dog, you are *still* going to have a battle to *do* those things...so that the white dog, your new nature will win! Again....Help!!!

The answer? Just look to Jesus. Say to Him: "Lord, I know what I should do, but I just can't seem to do it. Please help me. Please give me the desire to be faithful to a good church, to be reading my Bible every day, to tell others the Gospel, to pray, and to stand up and tell others You are the most important Person in my life. Please help me do these things....so that I can be a slave to righteousness, and no longer be a slave to sin. Help me...I can't do it myself."

You pray that, and He will do it.

"Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our LORD.!" (7:25)

## **The Difference the Spirit Makes In My Life**

### **Romans 8 - Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion**

The Holy Spirit brings life to every Christian at the moment of conversion.

- ✓ What were some of the early signs of life when you became a Christian?

As we live the Christian life, it helps if we:

1. *Understand what we have in Christ (:1-4)*

- ✓ What has God done to free us from the law of sin and death?

2. *Understand the difference between our two natures (:5-11)*

- ✓ From these verses, list some of the characteristics of our two natures:

Old Nature (Flesh)	New Nature (Spirit)

3. *Understanding the choice we have to make. (:12-13)*

- ✓ What is the choice I have to make?

*And then we need to ask ourselves a couple of hard questions:*

- ✓ Am I absolutely sure that I am a Christian?
- ✓ Is my mind set on the flesh or on the Spirit?

5. *Understanding that I am now a child of God. (:14-16)*

- ✓ What difference does it make that I am now a child of God?
- ✓ If I will someday share in His glory, what must I also share in now?

6. *Understanding what will happen in the future. (:18-27)*

- ✓ What happened to the creation when sin entered the world?
- ✓ What will happen someday to put all that right?
- ✓ How does that help us when we feel weak today?
- ✓ What part does the Spirit play when we are weak?

7. *Understanding what the LORD has planned for us to do in this life. (:28-39)*

- ✓ All things work for "our \_\_\_\_\_"
- ✓ Is our idea of "our good" always right?

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- ✓ What is God's idea of "our good"?
- ✓ Is there anything which can separate us from God and His love?

Why is it important that I understand these things? Once I understand these things, what difference will the Holy Spirit be able to make in my Christian walk?



## **The Difference the Spirit Makes In My Life**

### **Romans 8 - Answer Key**

As we think our way through this chapter of Romans, we'll get a clear picture of how totally different we are once we put our faith in Jesus Christ. And we'll understand so much more about God, Who dwells within us from that point on.

Let's begin Romans 8 with a truth and a question:

- ✓ Truth: The Holy Spirit brings life to every Christian at the moment of conversion.
- ✓ Question: What were some of the early signs of life when you became a Christian?

Each person is going to want to answer this question for themselves...here's my answer:

One of the things which actually brought me to faith in Christ was the fact that I wasn't at all sure what to do with my life. I was 17 years old, a senior in high school, a "religious" girl, and I was making decisions about my future, but wondering if they were right. I had a small scholarship to Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, and was planning to attend there, perhaps in teacher education.

It dawned on me, one Sunday morning, while I was listening to a sermon on God's plan for the prophet, Nehemiah, that I had no clue what God might want me to do with my life. I slowly realized that the reason I had no clue was I had no relationship with God. I knew about Him. I knew other people who seemed to know Him pretty well. But I knew I didn't. I didn't know Him at all. The truth about Jesus had never gotten personal with me.

Suddenly I wanted that to be different. I wanted to know Jesus very much. And just as suddenly I remembered all the sin in my life. The things I had done which I hoped no one would ever find out about. And the little things I had done which everyone knew about. I was ashamed to look into God's eyes and tell Him I wanted to know what to do with the rest of my life when I was so full of sins.

And just as suddenly, too, it hit me that that was why Jesus died. He paid the price for my sins so that I could know Him.

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All of those thoughts hit me fast as I was sitting in a pew listening to this sermon about Nehemiah. I didn't even think about it very much, to tell you the truth. I thought those thoughts, and then I bowed my head before God and thanked Him for dying for me. I thanked Him for loving me. And I offered my life in exchange. I remember praying "O, Lord, thank you for dying for me. I don't have much to give you in order to thank you properly, but, here's my life if you would like it. It's all I have. I gladly place it in your hands. Do with me whatever you want. "

That was the first sign of life in me. I knew God had a plan, and I knew He would show me what it was. I realized I wasn't alone any more in deciding my future. Right away I wondered if it would be possible for the LORD to help me go to a Bible college, a place where I could learn to serve Him, instead of Arizona State. He did.

Every person probably has a different story about the first signs of life in them. Maybe immediately they had a desire to be baptized. Maybe they began to tell others about Jesus. Perhaps they began to understand the Bible for the first time....or realized their prayers felt like they were really getting through for a change. Maybe they knew they had to change the friends they were hanging with. Even though each experience may be slightly different, every new believer in Jesus has this in common: The Holy Spirit has brought life into them – they are different – and in one way or another, it shows.

As we live the Christian life, it helps if we understand a few things. If my parents had started me out in life by depositing a big chunk of money in a savings account for me (they didn't), it would be really important for me to know what was there and how I could use it, right?

Well, my heavenly Father actually did deposit a big chunk of valuable things for me – and Romans 8 is going to help me understand what my inheritance is, and how much of it I can use now, and how much of it will wait until heaven.

First, in Romans 8:1-4 I can:

*1. Understand what I have in Christ (:1-4)*

- ✓ Truth: I am no longer a condemned person. Stop a minute and think about that. Before I became a believer in Jesus Christ I was a prisoner of sin and death...and when I asked Jesus Christ to be my Savior, I was set free from sin and death. I was pardoned. Free to walk out of my prison.
- ✓ Question: What has God done to free us from the law of sin and death? This is basic to everything you will ever learn from the Bible. Jesus Christ became a person and lived a perfect life and then died and rose from the dead so that I could be set free from my prison. If this has never become personal to you, now is the time to stop everything and consider it. Respond to it.



"Why Do I Believe What I Believe?"  
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Then, in Romans 8:5-11 I can:

2. *Understand the difference between my two natures (:5-11)*

- ✓ Truth: After salvation, I have two natures...an old nature, and a new nature
- ✓ Question: From these verses, list some of the characteristics of our two natures:

Old Nature (Flesh)	New Nature (Spirit)
Think about things of the flesh	Think about things of the Spirit
Full of death	Full of life
Hostile toward God	I have proof that Jesus Christ is in me
Cannot please God	I am alive to righteousness
	I sense that God lives in me
	I know that I have Eternal life for my soul and my body someday

In Romans 8:12-13 I begin to:

3. *Understand the choice I have to make. (:12-13)*

- ✓ Truth: After I become a Christian, there is a minute-by-minute choice I have to make
- ✓ Question: What is the choice I have to make?

I have to choose, again and again, to put to death the old me. The old me, who thought only of herself, who tried to get away with things, who hid the truth from herself and from others, who was attracted to sin... That old me. I have to choose every day to say no to that person. And to say yes to being different.

If you honestly have no desire to be different....if you know you have an old nature, and quite frankly you like being that way...*then you need to ask yourself a couple of hard questions:*

- ✓ Am I absolutely sure that I am a Christian?

It's possible the truth about Jesus Christ has never become a personal thing for you. If you think that might be the case, for goodness sake, don't do anything else before you get on your knees and give your life to Jesus Christ.

Or...maybe you know you have definitely committed your life to Christ at some point in the past...then ask yourself:

- ✓ Is my mind set on the flesh or on the Spirit?

If your mind is constantly dwelling on the things of the flesh (what will I wear, what will I eat, what will I buy, how can I stay healthy, etc.), then it's time for you to make a choice. Choose to seek after the things of the Spirit, not the things of the flesh.

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If you have no desire to be different from your old nature, one of these 2 things is true of you: Either you are not a Christian, or you are a Christian, but have set your mind on the wrong things.

Both of those things are fixable.

And in Romans 8:14-16 I can:

4. *Understand that I am now a child of God. (:14-17)*

- ✓ Truth: It doesn't matter who my earthly parents are...when I commit my life to Jesus Christ I become a child of God.
- ✓ Two Questions:
  - ✓ 1. What difference does it make that I am now a child of God?  
My new Father will always be with me. He will lead me step by step into the things He wants me to do. I have the right to cry out to Him any time I want to. I don't have to be afraid. The Holy Spirit within me will remind me that I am His, and will comfort me with that knowledge. And I know I have a future waiting for me with my new Father and my new family.

Goodness! How great is that?

- ✓ If I will someday share in His glory, what must I also share in now?

His sufferings. Unfortunately. What were His sufferings? Rejection. Loving those who would never love back. Hatred. Discomfort. Leaving family behind. Seeing the worst side of people.

5. *Understanding what will happen in the future. (:18-27)*

- ✓ Truth: Someday all the sufferings of this world will be over.
- ✓ Four Questions:
  - ✓ What happened to the creation when sin entered the world?  
It wasn't only man who began to die when he chose sin. The whole creation also began to die. Suffering became a part of life for men, animals, plants, etc.
  - ✓ What will happen someday to put all that right?  
When all of God's children finally come in faith to Him, and He (Jesus) returns to earth to reign, the earth, too, will be set free from the curse it has been under.
  - ✓ How does that help us when we feel weak today?

- We know that our weakness will not last forever. We have hope for a future time of no suffering, no sin, no sickness, no weakness, no lack of faith.,
- ✓ What part does the Spirit play when we are weak?  
He helps us know how to pray. Whether we are in the middle of a crisis, or are just walking calmly through our day, we have the Spirit to remind us that He is within us, and to teach us how to talk to God. He also talks to God for us, uttering sweet and compassionate things into the ear of the Father during the times when we have no idea what is going on. The Father knows what to do for us because the Spirit is telling Him what is going on within us.

6. *Understanding what the LORD has planned for us to do in this life. (:28-39)*

- ✓ Truth: God is not just idly sitting by, waiting for the time He will return. He is constantly working His will in us.
- ✓ Four Questions:
  - ✓ All things work for "our good "  
If it doesn't seem that way sometimes, it's because we can't see what God is trying to accomplish.
  - ✓ Is our idea of "our good" always right?  
We can't see it God's way because "our thoughts are not always His thoughts..."
  - ✓ What is God's idea of "our good"?  
To become more and more like Jesus, our Savior.
  - ✓ Is there anything which can separate us from God and His love?  
Absolutely nothing.

Why is it important that I understand these things?

Because I probably have a ways to go. I have things to learn. Things to give. Things to change. Things to contribute. I need to know that the Spirit of God is within me, and that He will never leave me. He knows exactly what He wants me to do with my life, and has the power for me to do it all.

Once I understand these things, what difference will the Holy Spirit be able to make in my Christian walk?

Just understanding these truths means that I can react in faith to whatever situations arise. When life doesn't turn out at all like I expected it to, I can say "It doesn't matter...God has known all along what He wants me to do, and I can walk through this holding onto His hand and expecting His guidance – from without and within.

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I started out this chapter telling of my own personal encounter with God 40 years ago. When I bowed my head before God and prayed "O, Lord, thank you for dying for me. I don't have much to give you in order to thank you properly, but, here's my life if you would like it. It's all I have. I gladly place it in your hands. Do with me whatever you want." I had no idea where God would take me.

He had been faithful to do what He says in Romans 8.

- ✓ He came to live within me,
- ✓ He took away my condemnation
- ✓ He gave me a new nature
- ✓ He is helping me to choose life in the Spirit
- ✓ He reminds me daily that I am His child
- ✓ He comforts me when I suffer
- ✓ He has changed me so much

I have no idea how long I will live, or how many more chances I will get to serve the LORD...and there is no doubt in my mind that nothing will ever separate me from Him...absolutely nothing.



## Is God Fair?

### Romans 9 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

Read chapter 8, verses 37-39...then the first 2 verses of chapter 9.

Chapter 9:1-3

1. From the heights of Chapter 8 to the low of 9:1,2 – what about the wonder of knowing Christ could possibly have given Paul such sorrow?

*How would you complete this?* "If I could only have \_\_\_\_\_  
I would be willing to give up my own salvation?"

9:4-6

2. What are the huge benefits of being a Jew?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

*For instance:* What promises did the Jews have?

9:6-8

3. So...God chose Israel, formed her, gave her so much, and then most Jews rejected Him...DID GOD FAIL?

9:9-15

4. What is Paul's answer to the question: IS GOD UNFAIR, THEN? ?

9:16-18

5. What does it mean...."He hardens whom He wants to harden"?  
Exodus 7:3, 9:12, 14:4, 17

9:19-21

6. Then why does God blame us for unbelief?

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9:22-29

7. God had a greater purpose in His overall plan than just the salvation of the Jews....what was it?

Hosea 2:23

Hosea 1:10

Isaiah 10:22,23

Isaiah 1:9

9:30-33

8. Conclusion: Why did most of the Jews not believe?

Jesus Christ is the "rock" we cling to for salvation...  
He is also the "rock" some people stumble over, never obtaining salvation....

SAME ROCK....

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE?



## **Is God Fair?**

### Romans 9 – Discussion Notes

Read chapter 8, verses 37-39...then the first 2 verses of chapter 9.

#### Chapter 9:1-3

1. From the heights of Chapter 8 to the low of 9:1,2 – *what* about the wonder of knowing Christ could possibly have given Paul such sorrow?

My husband, Ken, loves to shop. It brings him nothing but pleasure. He loves looking at things even if he isn't buying. He loves watching people. The whole shopping experience is something he loves to share with me...because he wants me to enjoy it as much as he does.

On the other hand, I hate to shop. It takes too long. The stores are stuffy. The salespeople are either rude or way too helpful. Things seldom fit. The size I want to be is not the size I am trying on. Yes, I'm a whiner when it comes to shopping.

I tell you that so you will understand my husband's response when I reluctantly go shopping and end up with a smile on my face. When I come back home having found something I really like – he always says: "Why didn't you buy two?" Or... "Did they have that in any other colors?" I'm so glad the shopping trip is over...he's thinking of how great it might have been if I'd stayed a little longer...looked a little harder....bought a little more.

Ken's love for shopping is a good illustration for me to understand why Paul is in such despair in the first 3 verses of Romans, chapter 9. Look back up to chapter 8, verses 38-39 to see what I mean:

*"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created things, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

(Romans 8:38-39, NASB)

Those two verses tell us Paul has found something extremely valuable, pleasurable, exciting and comforting. He has found out that a love-relationship with Almighty God, Jesus Christ, is flat-out unbelievably wonderful...and....once begun, can never end.

Then, puzzlingly, right away Paul seems to sink to the depths of despair as he says: *"I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish*



*that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."* (Romans 9:1-3 NASB)

Why such despair?

Because the amazing truth he has discovered about the love of Jesus Christ has made him want more. Paul wants more than just his own salvation. He wants the salvation of his fellow Jews, who, for the most part, have not heard, or not believed, about Jesus Christ.

"Why didn't you buy two?" Or... "Did they have that in any other colors?" When Ken discovers something of great value, he wants a little more. He wants the people he loves to discover it, too.

How much did Paul want what he wanted? He wants the salvation of his fellow Jews so much that He would be willing to give up his own salvation! (the "shopping" illustration fades to nothingness here...)

*Fill in the blanks:* "If I could only have \_\_\_\_\_ I would be willing to give up my own salvation"

Is there **anything** I would put in that blank?

9:4-6

Most of us know a little bit about the history of the Jews. We know they are somehow tied to the land of Israel, in the Middle East. And we probably know they have endured some puzzling events of persecution, like the Holocaust during WWII.

If even those two things are all we know about Jewish history, I would say most people see the Jews as a little "downtrodden". A people group with a few strikes against them.

But Paul, himself a Jew, sees Jewish people altogether differently. He lists, in Romans 9:4-5 some things given to the Jews, by God, which all the rest of us Gentiles understandably might envy:

2. What are the huge benefits of being a Jew?

- :4. **They are a people group who were adopted by God.** There is only one God...and He chose, through promises made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), Isaac (Genesis 17:19), and Jacob (Genesis 28:10-15), to make the Jewish people His adopted sons and daughters. (Deuteronomy 7:6&7)
- :4 **Some of them actually got to see the glory of God.** (Exodus 40:34-38)  
When the Lord adopted them, He didn't just stand back and observe. He actually



got personally involved in their every-day lives. He let them see a little bit of how glorious He is as He traveled with them from place to place. And then when they finally settled down in Israel, He settled with them, in Jerusalem. (I Kings 8:10&11)

- **:4 They were recipients of promises (covenants) from God Himself.** (Genesis 17:2) And those promises were not only for the ones who stood there, receiving them, in the past, but they were for all Jews (Deuteronomy 29:14&15)
- **:4 They were the first to receive the laws of God.** (Deuteronomy 4:13) The boundaries for all human action were laid out by God and entrusted to the Jewish people. Their job was to pass it on.
- **:4 God gave them the precious knowledge of how to get right with Him when sin inevitably blocked their relationship to Him.** He gave them priests, and told them how to offer animal sacrifices so that they, and all the world, would understand someday when the perfect sacrifice was offered. (Hebrews 9) The Jewish people could be forgiven of sin through faith in God. They could live as sons of God through faith in God. They could be cleansed of daily sin through faith in God.
- **:4 The Jews had the promise of a future Messiah...not just for themselves, but also for the world.** (Acts 13:32-39) A relationship with God was wonderful, but what about their children? And their children's children? Would the world always struggle against sin? Could God rescue them and future generations from the inward pull all of them felt to rebellion? Yes! (Isaiah 53). God Himself would be their Savior from sin...He would suffer...He would be the victor...He would offer salvation to all....Jews and Gentiles alike.
- **:5 The Jews have strong, believing ancestors who led them in faith to God.** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Joshua, David, Hezekiah... Their heritage is rich.
- **:5 The Messiah, Jesus Christ, is a Jew. Was born of Jewish parents. The Jewish people gave the world the Savior.** (Matthew 1:1-16)

A most fortunate, blessed group of people. Loved by God. Adopted by God. Given great things to do for God. Rich with ancestors of great faith. Singularly chosen to be the earthly family of the Savior of the world. Entrusted with the message of God.

It is a huge benefit to be a Jew!

9:6-8

3. So...God chose Israel, formed her, gave her so much, and then most Jews rejected Him...DID GOD FAIL?

These people so loved by Paul....so loved by God. Most of them met Jesus, listened to Him teach, saw His miracles, knew Him as a gentle man of love....and yet they didn't

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want to believe that he was God. They did not accept Him for what He was – their Messiah. They would not turn away from their sin to accept the gift of forgiveness. They chose, instead, to cling to their Jewish traditions to save them....many of those traditions given to them by God Himself as a way to show them their need of a Messiah!

Did God fail? Did He choose a people only to have them give Him the “hand in the face”?

No. He didn’t fail. To be a Jew was and is a huge benefit....but it didn’t make anyone right with God. Being a Jew just gave the Jews a head start in understanding God. A “foot-up” in realizing how much they needed a Savior. An awesome job to do once they were right with God. But each individual Jewish person still needed then, and still needs now, to come to God in faith, just like Abraham and Sarah did, bowing (admitting need for the Savior, Jesus Christ) and believing (committing to live for Him, in His ways, guided by His words).

“For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel.” (Romans 9:6) Paul is going to make a distinction here. Being a Jew physically does not make you a True Jew. Only being a Jew of faith (in Jesus Christ) makes you a True Jew. “...the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.” (Romans 9:8) The Jewish people who believe the promise of the Messiah given in the Tanach, and then believe that Jesus is the One Who gave that promise, and fulfilled that promise...those are the True Jews.

Did God fail? Not a chance. True Jews did respond in faith to Him. True Jews still do respond in faith to Him. Jews who believe in Jesus Christ don’t become “non-Jews”....they become True Jews.

9:9-18

4. What is Paul’s answer to the question: IS GOD UNFAIR, THEN?

Was God unfair that He said Isaac, not Ishmael, would be the son who would inherit His promises? (:8&9)

Was God unfair when He decided, before the twin boys had ever done a thing, that Jacob, not Esau, would rule as prince of Israel? (:10-14)

Was God unfair when He decided Pharaoh’s heart would be hardened? (:17-18)

Well, if you look at verse 15 – “What shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all!” – you know Paul’s answer is “no!”. And I know Paul is right. I just wonder....Did Paul ever struggle with this? Did he ever say “Yeah...but...”... or... “what about....” ....

Because I know I have.

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When my parents divorced, I, as a new Christian and a teenager, was blown away with this:

God was not unfair.  
But I was suffering.  
I hadn't done anything to deserve it.  
And I could do nothing about it.  
God could have stopped it.  
But He didn't.  
And yet God was not unfair.

Many, many tears were shed before I stopped hurting and began accepting. Because God is fair...therefore, in God's greater view of things...there was something good about this awful thing. And there I had to rest. Not knowing the good. Not knowing God's greater view. But knowing God. And knowing He was not unfair.

I just started trusting Him, realizing that God was thinking outside the box. Outside my small box.

9:16-18

5. What does it mean...."He hardens whom He wants to harden"?

God will do what God will do. OK, I'm going to warn you. Wars have been fought over this. Not World Wars, of course, but wars, none the less. People have argued, disagreed, shown anger and frustration, and been just plain miserable over the seemingly irreconcilable truths found in Romans 9.

"...He has mercy on whom He desires, and he hardens whom He desires." (:18) Does God choose some people to be shown mercy? And choose others to be sent to eternal punishment? Yes.

Arbitrarily? No. Look ahead a few verses in chapter 9, at verses 30 – 32. Here it is clear that God declares the Jewish people guilty based on their unbelief. Their unbelief.

So how is God's decision made? Does He love some and not love others? No – John 3:16 tells us that God loves the whole world.

So how is God's decision made?

Here's an illustration which helps me understand, I think, what God does:

When the sun shines on butter, it melts. When the sun shines on clay, it hardens. The sun is the same in both cases. The reaction is determined by the nature of the substance the sun is shining on.

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I know...the illustration doesn't answer all the possible questions here. Like, for instance, did God decide who would be butter, and who would be clay? Is the butter responsible for being butter...

But God is God. He says here in Romans that He decides who gets His mercy, and whom He hardens. He also says (II Peter 3:9) He doesn't want anyone to perish.

Irreconcilable truths? There's only one conclusion. They're both true.

Exodus 7:3, 9:12, 14:4, 17

9:19-21

6. Then why does God blame us for unbelief?

Paul is posing the question which he knows some of his readers may ask: "If God decides whom He will harden, then how can it be their fault when they say decide not to have faith in God?"...in other words – "How can anyone resist what God wants?"

Paul's answer is this: "Who are you to question God?"

That reminds me of something most of us parents eventually learn to do with our kids when they are little.

All five of our children loved to ask questions. I encouraged it when they did, because I am a firm believer in asking questions in order to learn. In my mind, there are no bad questions when you are trying to learn something.

But you know how it goes. Why is the flower yellow? Because God made it yellow. Why? Because He liked yellow flowers. Why? Because He likes lots of stuff. Why? Because that's the way God is. Why? ...after awhile you realize the child has left the "I am exploring my world"-stage and entered the "I'm not interested in the answer, I just like asking 'why?'" -stage, and you have to end the question and answer session. Usually it ended with "Because I said so." – and a look which meant "time to stop being self-centered."

I think that is what Paul is doing here. He anticipates the question some of his readers will ask – knowing that this is the "why" question which shouldn't be asked. The reader who will ask this question has stopped wanting to learn about and worship God...and started to think of God in terms of how He could be used.

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So the answer, of course, has to be: "Because God said so." Now quit being so self-centered and start focusing on God again.

9:21-29

7. God had a greater purpose in His overall plan than just the salvation of the Jews....what was it?

The salvation of all Jews and Gentiles who would bow their knee to Him.

These are the Old testament verses which are quoted by Paul in this passage:

Hosea 2:23

Hosea 1:10

Isaiah 10:22,23

Isaiah 1:9

What is he saying here? God softens whom He will. God hardens whom He will. God has decided to wait to give the hard ones the wrath they deserve because there are still some soft ones to be reached.

To make that personal, all you have to do is put yourself in this thought: God did not pour out His anger on Hitler before WWII ever began because someone He loved very much had not yet even been born...had not yet placed her faith in Him. Who was that someone? Me. You. God withholds His anger because there are those who would not make it all the way to faith if He did.

When the last name in the Book of Life (which was written before the foundation of the world – Rev. 17:8) is checked off:

☐ Kathleen Dalton has come to faith in Jesus Christ  
then the wrath of God will be unleashed upon all the vessels of wrath.

If God gave evil people what they deserve when they deserve it, future believers would never get their chance to live and believe.

Why do bad things happen to good people? Because God is waiting to totally wipe out the bad. Waiting for someone to believe.

*"Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, we would have become as Sodom and Gomorrah." (9:29)*

9:30-33

8. Conclusion: Why did most of the Jews not believe?

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They wanted to be saved by their own good works. They didn't want to admit they needed a Savior. They didn't want to be saved by faith in that Savior.

Jew or Gentile, doesn't matter. Faith in Jesus Christ is all that matters.

Jesus Christ is the "rock" we cling to for salvation...  
He is also the "rock" some people stumble over, never obtaining salvation....  
SAME ROCK....  
WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE?

Apply this simply by asking yourself: Am I clinging to Jesus, or stumbling over Him?



## Did the Jews Hear the Message of Faith in the Old Testament?

Romans 10 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

### Here's the lesson of Romans 10:

Messiah Jesus is the only way of Salvation for the Jews....  
He has always been the only way of Salvation for the Jews...  
Obeying the Law was never the way of Salvation for the Jews...

*And this is not exactly a surprise...the Old Testament was chock-full of this truth:*

Find the Old Testament Scriptures used in Ch. 10:

Old Testament	Romans 10
Joel 2:32	
Psalms 19:4	
Deuteronomy 32:21	
Leviticus 18:5	
Deuteronomy 30:12,13,14	
Isaiah 65:2	
Isaiah 28:16	
Isaiah 65:1	
Isaiah 53:1	
Isaiah 52:7	

1. (:1-4) What does Paul want for his people, the Jews? Why have they missed this?
2. (:5) If someone decides to be righteous by obeying the law, what must happen in order for him to be righteous?
3. (:6-9) Paul is saying here that it isn't that difficult to understand the righteousness that comes by faith...you don't have to search for it high and low... What do you have to do?
4. (:10) What part of you begins the faith process? What part of you finishes the faith process?
5. (:11-13) Is salvation by faith for the Gentiles only?
6. (:14-15) If salvation is of faith for everyone, then what should be the most important thing in our lives?
7. (:16-21) Did the Jews hear this message in the Old Testament?

In Chapter 11 we'll answer the next logical question...If the Jews heard this message, why didn't they respond to it?



## Did the Jews Hear the Message of Faith in the Old Testament?

### Romans 10 – Answer Key

#### Here's the lesson of Romans 10:

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*And this is not exactly a surprise...the Old Testament was chock-full of this truth:*

Find the Old Testament Scriptures used in Ch. 10:

Old Testament	Romans 10
Joel 2:32	:13
Psalms 19:4	:18
Deuteronomy 32:21	:19
Leviticus 18:5	:5
Deuteronomy 30:12,13,14	:6,7,8
Isaiah 65:2	:21
Isaiah 28:16	:11
Isaiah 65:1	:20
Isaiah 53:1	:16
Isaiah 52:7	:15

It's pretty obvious what Paul is doing in chapter 10, isn't it? He assembles Old Testament verses, which would have been familiar to his Jewish readers, and with them paints the picture of Jesus – a picture which had been clearly visible in Old Testament times. The promise of a Jewish Messiah – a Messiah who would offer the gift of the righteousness of God...

1. (:1-4) What does Paul want for his people, the Jews? Why have they missed this? Picture a maze in your mind. A puzzle with pathways – and finding the right pathway would bring the player to the end of the maze – and to the prize. The maze has its challenges because when it comes time to make a decision to turn this way or that, the wrong choice is very tempting. All of a person's natural instincts keep pointing to the wrong choice. But...the right choices are clearly marked. If anyone is really wanting to find the end of the maze, they can.

The Jews of Old Testament times lived with such a maze in their desire for righteousness. They knew they needed to be righteous in order to enter the presence of God. And they sought that righteousness. They made choices again and again about how to be righteous – and originally the final desire was to reach the end of the





maze and attain righteousness....thereby having the ability to enter the presence of God.

But, over and over again, they made the wrong choices. The right choices were clearly marked...but they kept turning the wrong direction because it made the most sense...or it felt the best....or it made them appear better in the eyes of others. Their pride and natural desire to be patted on the back led them down dead-end paths. Eventually, the quest for righteousness was totally muddled...and the end goal of being able to know God was forgotten.

A new goal was born – just as long as everyone else thinks I'm righteous, I have won. It doesn't matter whether or not I really am righteous.

In these first 4 verses Paul is groaning inwardly about how much he wants his own people to come to a place of having God's righteousness. They are zealous – yes – but not for the right thing. They started out wanting righteousness, but ended up choosing to try to make themselves righteous, instead of calling on God to provide their righteousness.

If they had chosen to humble themselves before God and cry for Him to take care of their righteousness problem, as their own Scriptures said they should do, they would have taken right turn after right turn, and found that the end of the maze was Jesus Christ. They would have arrived at the end of the maze and fallen on their faces before Him, gladly receiving the gift of righteousness He offered.

2. (:5) If someone decides to be righteous by obeying the law, what must happen in order for him to be righteous?

Paul quotes from Leviticus 18:5 to make a point here. If obeying the law is your way of being righteous, then obey the law. Totally. You don't get the prize if you try to obey the law. You are only righteous if you obey the whole law...all the time....never a mistake. Because the law is a package. It is a bundle of righteous standards which must all be followed all the time.

Anyone who has ever tried to keep all the rules knows the end of this pathway....it's a dead end. It can't be done. Perfection by obeying the law is not possible. Our sin nature is way too strong.

3. (:6-9) Paul is saying here that it isn't that difficult to understand the righteousness that comes by faith...you don't have to search for it high and low... What do you have to do?

If righteousness cannot possibly come by keeping all the rules, then how does it come? By faith. Hmmm. Really? By just believing? How does that work?



What's Paul saying here? You don't have to search high and low for it. Finding righteousness is no mystical journey...like a search for the Holy Grail.

It's as simple as realizing Jesus died when He didn't have to. He died on the cross because He was paying the price for your sin, not for His. He didn't have any sin. There was no reason for Him to die. But there is a reason for you to die – you deserve it. So He died in your place. And He didn't stay dead. He couldn't stay dead. He's God.

And once you realize that, open your mouth and say it. "Jesus, I know You are God because You rose from the dead. Thank You for dying when You didn't have to. Thank You for dying for my sin. Thank You for making it possible for me to have my sin fully washed away. Thank You for righteousness. Now I can know You and be in Your presence."

4. (:10) What part of you begins the faith process? What part of you finishes the faith process?

Your heart begins it. As you hear and understand the truth – that Jesus Christ died and rose again – for you – your heart must begin to melt. Your very being must cry out for mercy. You must admit your sinfulness and your need of God Himself to free you from the maze of wrong turns in your life.

Your mouth finishes it. Once your heart is broken, your mouth must cry out to God. You cannot just mentally accept that Jesus Christ is a fact. You must face Him and speak to Him.

I remember what I said. "God, thank you for doing this for me. I have nothing to give you in return...but...here's my life. Do anything you want with it."

Was there a time in your life when you came to realize Jesus was the only way to righteousness? What did you say to Him? Your cry to God was your first breath in eternity.

5. (:11-13) Is salvation by faith for the Gentiles only?

Salvation by faith was taught clearly in the Old Testament. Salvation by works was never a possibility....ever. Salvation by faith is for Gentiles. And it is for Jews. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses....all of them came to righteousness and salvation by faith, not by works. For them it was faith in a Messiah Who was to come someday. But since Jesus it has been faith in a Messiah Who has already come. Either way, it's faith, not works, which changes a sinful human being into a righteous child of God.

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6. (:14-15) If salvation is of faith for everyone, then what should be the most important thing in our lives?

Making sure everyone knows about Jesus. Period. There is no more important or urgent job anywhere. If you have received the righteousness of God from Jesus Christ, and telling others about Him is not uppermost on your priority list – what is wrong with you?

7. (:16-21) Did the Jews hear this message in the Old Testament?

Yes. Clearly. It was there and they heard it.

In Chapter 11 we'll answer the next logical question...If the Jews heard this message, why didn't they respond to it?

## Has God Rejected Them?

### Romans 11 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

#### Review:

Chapter 9 – God Chooses Whom He Chooses

Chapter 10 – The Jewish nation knew they needed a Savior....knew a Savior  
was coming...but rejected Him.

Chapter 11 - So...Has God rejected them?

1. :1 – Here's the answer to the question \_\_\_\_\_  
Here's the proof:  
:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
:2-5 \_\_\_\_\_  
:6 \_\_\_\_\_
2. :7-10 So...if God did not reject them, what did happen to them?  
Some \_\_\_\_\_  
Most \_\_\_\_\_
3. :11 Well, then, the ones who were "hardened" because they rejected Christ...is there no hope for them?...is it over for the Jewish nation?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
4. :11-16 How is Paul's ministry to the Gentiles a way to reach his beloved people, the Jews?
5. :17-21 What illustration does Paul use to show where the Jews fit in to God's plan?
6. :22-24 What should the attitude of Gentiles be towards the Jews?
7. :25 When will the "hardening" of the Jews be over?
8. :26 And then what will happen?
9. :28-36 Who owes what to who?



## Has God Rejected Them?

### Romans 11 – Answer Key

#### Review:

Chapter 9 – God Chooses Whom He Chooses

Chapter 10 – The Jewish nation knew they needed a Savior....knew a Savior was coming...but rejected Him.

Chapter 11 - So...Has God rejected them?

1. :1 – Here's the answer to the question "By no means!"  
Here's the proof:  
:1 Paul himself is a Jew – and he has not been rejected.  
:2-5 Just like in Elijah's time, there is a remnant (a small group) of Jews who have believed. God has not rejected them. In fact, He has chosen them...extended His grace to them.  
:6 Grace from God is undeserved. If it was deserved, then it wouldn't be grace....so....although the Jewish nation is undeserving, still God's grace flows to them.
2. :7-10 So...if God did not reject them, what did happen to them?  
Some Chose to believe....and so are proof of God's grace  
Most Chose not to believe...and hardened their hearts...and will be a stumbling block to future generations of Jews.
3. :11 Well, then, the ones who were "hardened" because they rejected Christ...is there no hope for them?...is it over for the Jewish nation?  
Answer: No, it's not over. Because the Jewish nation rejected Christ, the Gentiles received the chance to fully appreciate the grace of God, too. And the grace of God falling on the Gentiles will, amazingly, some day bring the Jewish nation to once again be face-to-face with an opportunity to reach for righteousness through faith in their Messiah, Jesus. The blessings of God upon the Gentiles will actually bring the Jewish nation to a place of jealousy! And they will reach out to the God who all along would have loved to have blessed them.
4. :11-16 How is Paul's ministry to the Gentiles a way to reach his beloved people, the Jews?

What a powerful picture of great love.



Paul loved his own people so much he was willing to leave...to minister to the Gentiles...so that eventually his people would be envious and return to their God. He was sacrificing his own natural desire to grab them and save them from sure destruction...and following God's plan no matter how much it must have gone against his own instincts.

He was trusting. Walking by faith, not by sight. He never saw the results of that trust. We haven't see it yet, either.

But Paul's faith will some day be greatly rewarded.

*"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son....On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity." (Zechariah 12:10 – 13:1)*

Paul knew these verses well. And he knew that at Jesus' first coming they had not been fulfilled....so he could conclude that that fulfillment was yet to come. His faith in what would happen was based on what God had said. He had every reason for faith. Every reason for hope. Every reason to go forward with his mission to the Gentiles. He would trust God for the future of the Jews.

In verse 16, Paul says that he knows Jesus is Holy. Jesus is trustworthy. Those who become part of Jesus will be Holy, too. He knew that a future generation of Jews would become part of Jesus Christ, promised in Zechariah 12, so he knew there was a righteous, Holy end for the Jewish nation. The firstfruits (first offering to God from a potential crop in the field) (Jesus) is Holy. The whole rest of the harvest will be, too.

5. :17-21 What illustration does Paul use to show where the Jews fit into God's plan?

The cultivation of trees.

It is possible, when growing trees, to make a small slice in the stem of one tree, and "graft" in (insert into that slice) a stem from another tree. The resulting "wound" will heal and the original tree will support and give life to both branches – the ones from the original tree, and then ones from the grafted in tree. The root is the same. But the fruit of the tree, the health of the tree, and the hardness of the tree, will be affected by the addition of the grafted in branch.

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And so it was with the Gentiles and the Jews. God chose the Jewish nation to be His messenger to the world. He loved them and cared for them. He promised them a Savior who would come some day and pay the price for the sin so deep in their hearts.

When that Savior came, the Jewish nation rejected Him (even though some individual Jews believed in Him).

In His infinite love God set the Jewish nation aside for a time and grafted in new branches onto the root of Jesus Christ. The Gentiles.

Like the tree in Paul's illustration, the resulting healthy tree, supporting both Jews and Gentiles, has born much fruit and withstood many storms.

But someday He will graft back in the entire Jewish nation, as they come to knee-buckling faith in Him.

And the tree which emerges from that will be amazing. (Revelation 19-22)

6. :22-24 What should the attitude of Gentiles be towards the Jews?

I'm a Gentile, so here's my best shot: "Thank you, Jewish nation, for believing in God and looking forward to a Messiah for 2,000 years in the Old Testament times. I know I got my chance to come to Christ in part because of your faithfulness. I would like to return the favor. I will, with Christ's help, be faithful, too, so that someday you will get your chance to come back to the Savior Who has never stopped loving you."

7. :25 When will the "hardening" of the Jews be over?

When all the Gentiles who were written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world have had the chance to have their moment of faith.

8. :26 And then what will happen?

All living Jews at that time will come to faith in their Messiah, Jesus.

9. :28-36 Who owes what to who?

Gentiles owe a debt of gratitude to the Jews.

The Jews owe a debt of gratitude to the Gentiles.

Every person alive owes their life to God.

*"...for from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." (Romans 11:36)*

### **Who's the Fairest of Them All?**

(or...How do I determine who's important in the world today?)

Romans 12 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

1. (:1) What is the "therefore" there for?
2. (:1) What response does God want from us?
3. (:2) What should we not do?  
What should we do?  
What will that accomplish?
4. (:3-5) How important am I?
5. (:6-8) What are "gifts"?  
Ephesians 4:7-13
6. (:6-8) What are some "gifts" mentioned here?
7. Do we all have "gifts"? What should we be doing with them?  
Ephesians 4:14-16
8. (:9-21) Some practical do's & don'ts for the Romans:  
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### Who's the Fairest of Them All?

(or...How do I determine who's important in the world today?)

#### Romans 12 – Answer Key

1. (:1) What is the "therefore" there for?

Someone told me once: "Whenever you see a "therefore", always ask yourself: "What is the 'therefore' there for?"

So we are asking. The "therefore" refers back to what has just been said in this lengthy letter Paul has written to the Romans. Paul has just uttered a sweeping praise to The Almighty God – *"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever!" (11:33-36)*

"Therefore.....

*I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God..."*

2. (:1) What response does God want from us?

Because God is Who He is, my only possible response has to be: offer myself back to Him.

Then Paul explains what that would look like:

3. (:2) What should we not do? Don't be like the world  
What should we do? Start thinking differently by exposing  
yourself to God's thoughts.  
What will that accomplish? Your actions, as a result of your new thinking,  
will "prove" or "show" to the world what God is all about.

4. (:3-5) How important am I?

I am very important,

- So important that the best man who ever lived was willing to die for me.
- So important that the LORD of all has given me work to do which will affect His eternity.
- So important that an immensely valuable gift was given to me – Faith.



But... I'm not so important that I can pat myself on the back. For all my importance is wrapped up in the amount of faith I exercise....and that faith is a gift from God. Faith is not something I work up within myself. Faith is not something I receive because I'm better than anyone else. It's a gift. From God. For a purpose...to bring glory and pleasure to God.

If I am important because I exercise a great deal of faith, only one Person can be patted on the back. God.

So I shouldn't think of myself more highly than I ought.

5. (:6-8) What are "gifts"?

Ephesians 4:7-13 tells us that Christ died on the cross and completely paid the price for our salvation, and then rose from the dead. When He went back to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father He left behind "gifts" for the men who were also left behind. Those "gifts" were abilities and talents which each person who had them could use to help the other people in his/her church. All of them together would be able to use their "gifts" for each other, so that they could as one body of believers in Jesus get the job done of spreading the Gospel message to the world.

It was going to be an incredibly hard job done by inherently weak and sinful people who were going to stumble, disagree, and misunderstand one another.

The "gifts" Christ left behind, empowered by the Holy Spirit, would make an impossible task possible.

Each believer in Jesus receives his or her own set of "gifts" from God at the moment they place their faith in their Savior. Throughout the last 2,000+ years the "gifts" of God, used by simple believers in Jesus, have healed and fueled the church. Each generation meets its own set of challenges. But the gifts of God are always up to the task, when used by people of faith.

6. (:6-8) What are some "gifts" mentioned here?

Here in *Romans 12*:

- Prophesying (telling forth the Word of God)
- Serving
- Teaching
- Encouraging
- Contributing to the needs of others
- Leadership
- Showing mercy

Other scriptures where gifts are listed:

*Ephesians 4:11*

- Apostles

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- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors
- Teachers

*1 Corinthians 12:8-11*

- Word of wisdom
- Word of knowledge
- Faith
- Gifts of Healing
- Effecting of Miracles
- Prophecy
- Distinguishing of spirits
- Various kinds of tongues

*1 Corinthians 12:28-31*

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Miracles
- Gifts of Healings
- Helps
- Administrations,
- Various kinds of tongues

None of these lists seem to exhaustive – in other words – there may be gifts not mentioned, or gifts used in some places in history but not needed in others.

7. Do we all have “gifts”? What should we be doing with them?

Ephesians 4:14-16 is a great passage to get practical about spiritual gifts. We are to be using them, that’s for sure. There’s to be no “false humility” about what each person’s gifts are. But we are not to use them for our own profit. They are always for supporting or encouraging other believers in individual local churches. They are always for the furtherance of the spreading of the good news about Jesus Christ. They are always to be used by faith, meaning the person using their spiritual gift does it relying on the power of God to take obedience and turn it into valuable souls coming to know God. We obey by using our gifts. God brings in the harvest.

8. (:9-21) Some practical do’s & don’ts for the Romans:

- :9 Be sincere
- :9 Hate evil things
- :9 Cling to good things
- :10 Be devoted to each other
- :10 Honor each other more than you honor yourselves
- :11 Stay zealous

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- :11 Serve the Lord
- :12 Let your hope make you joyful
- :12 Let your affliction make you patient
- :12 Be faithful to pray
- :13 Share what you have with others in need in the church
- :13 Be hospitable (invite people over...give them a Pepsi)
- :14 Do good back to people who persecute you
- :14 Never curse someone when they persecute you
- :15 When someone is rejoicing, join them
- :15 When someone is crying, cry with them
- :16 Create harmony within your group
- :16 No pride allowed
- :16 Make friends with those "lower" than you (whatever that means)
- :16 No conceit – you are great when you are great in faith...a gift, remember?
- :17 No repaying evil for evil. (don't even think about it)
- :17 Keep your reputation in good shape
- :18 As much as you can, let peace rule your relationships
- :19 Don't take revenge. God will.
- :20 Do good things, wonderful things, for your enemy
- :21 Don't let evil win....let good win

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who's the Fairest of Them All? - Answer: Look for someone with the characteristics listed above. That person is operating their life by faith. The Faith-person is the most important person in the world today.

When your checking account is frozen and your car won't start and a hurricane has just swept through your town, the name you want to drop will be the name of the person who knows how to live by faith.



**Finishing Paul's Practical Stuff**  
Romans 13 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

The Lord, through Paul, has a few more practical things to pass on to the church at Rome...

1. summarize what you think he is saying in each of these passages,
  2. then mention specific things you can do to carry each out in your life:
1. 13:1-6
2. 13:7-10
3. 13:11-14



## Romans 13 – Answer Key **Finishing Paul's Practical Stuff**

The Lord, through Paul, has a few more practical things to pass on to the church at Rome...

3. summarize what you think he is saying in each of these passages,
4. then mention specific things you can do to carry each out in your life:

### 1. 13:1-6

- Summary: Government is put in place by God to keep society from destroying itself. Whatever government you are under, respect it for controlling crime and submit to it by not committing crimes.
- Practical application:

Ray Stedman, in his commentary on the book of Romans, Reason to Rejoice, says: "We Americans generally consider our representative democracy to be the most God-honored form of government. It might surprise you to find that there is no support for such a view anywhere in scripture. In fact, if you ask what is the ideal form of government – monarchy, oligarchy, dictatorship, republic, democracy, communism – the answer of scripture is this: *The best government for you is the government you live under.*" (italics are mine)

Romans 13:1-6 doesn't give us much wiggle-room, does it?

If the speed sign says 55, and you traditionally push that to 62, you are flying in the face of God's will.

If are disrespectful of governmental officials in your every day conversation, you are shoving your Bible, with Romans 13, under the bed to collect dust.

If you break the laws of the country in which you live – you need to get that right with God – and you need to change.

Does that mean God approves of all governments....smiles on their actions?

No, it doesn't. But it has nothing to do with any government's morality or perfection....it has to do with what is best for the people under that government who already have put their faith in Jesus Christ...and the people who someday will.



And what's best for believers in Jesus Christ is to live by faith in the midst of whatever nation God has placed them in, according to Romans 13:1.

Worship God and do your best to share your faith and honor the Word of God with your obedience...all the time knowing your Savior suffered, too, at the hands of corrupt government – and He kept His eyes on the goal – salvation for those He loved. That's where our eyes should be, too.

This passage in Romans also weighs in pretty heavily on the current illegal immigration debate in America. It takes some thinking through, but there's no doubt but that somehow, in the Word of God, there is a way to approach difficult situations and find God's way of dealing with them. For my own thoughts on illegal immigration, you can go to my blog, [Vegetable Soup](#), to [this post: "I Have Sent Him Back to You...Sending My Very Heart."](#)

2. 13:7-10

- Summary: If we owe anything to another person, let it be love.
- Practical Application: This comes, again, from Ray Stedman, in his book, Reason to Rejoice. I just couldn't begin to come up with a better example of owing love to one another:

"Martin Niemoller was a leading pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany during World War II. A leading opponent of Hitler's militarism and hatred of the Jews, Niemoller courageously opposed the Nazis until his arrest by the Gestapo in 1937. For eight years, he was imprisoned in concentration camps, first at Sachsenhausen and later at Dachau. As the war was ending, the Nazis slaughtered hundreds of inmates in the concentration camps, trying to leave no witnesses of their atrocities. Niemoller was one of the few who escaped execution."

"Niemoller died in 1984 at the age of ninety-two. Shortly before his death, he told some of his friends of a disturbing, recurring dream he had. In this dream, it was the day of God's judgment of humanity, and Niemoller saw Adolf Hitler standing before the Lord Jesus. Jesus came down from his throne, put his arm around Hitler, and said, "Adolf, why? Why did you do so much evil? Why were you so cruel?"

"In the dream, Hitler hung his head sadly and said, "Because nobody ever told me how much You love me."

"Niemoller said that at this point in the dream, he would awaken in a cold sweat, shaking with guilt and grief. Why did he feel guilty? Because he remembered

that in the years before the war began, he had numerous meetings with Adolf Hitler. In his role as a leader of the Lutheran church, Niemoller had sat across a table from Hitler and had spoken with him face to face – not once, but many times. And in all of those meetings, Niemoller recalled, he had never once said, "Jesus loves you, Herr Hitler. He loves you so much that He came and died for you."

3. 13:11-14

- Summary: We are very close to living with Jesus forever. Put away the sins and weaknesses which keep you immature and unmotivated.
- Practical Application: The best practical application of this is obvious: each person has different weaknesses and secret sins which no one else may even know about. Just, in your own mind...between you and God...ask Him to show you what yours are.

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thought. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23&24)*

Then put them away. Walk away from them. Put up boundaries that make it harder for you to get to them. Ask for prayer from trusted friends. If necessary, forsake comfort and rights and enjoyments in order to get to a place where you can focus on the most important things in life.

The key verse in Romans 13? I would say it is verse 12: *"The day is over, the night is almost here..."* If Paul could say that, wow, are we ever close!

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1)*





### **I was a "90-Pound Weakling"**

#### **Romans 14 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion**

Legalism. That's a dirty word. And don't we just hate it?

I mean, when someone thinks they have to obey this rule, and that rule, and the other rule...just to make sure they are making God happy....just to make sure they look perfect to the people who see their lives...doesn't that just make you feel penned in, controlled, judged? Isn't legalism awful?

Is that what Paul says in Romans 14? Does he support us in our dislike of people who are caught in the immaturity of legalism?

Nope.

1. (:1) What are we supposed to do with the one who is weak in faith?
2. (:2) How does Paul define the one who is weak in faith?
3. (:3) What does Paul mean here when he says "judge"?
4. (:4-6) Even if a person is weak, and has way too many rules, what is probably true of him/her?
5. (:7-9) Why are any of us alive, anyway?
6. (:10-12) Even if I am making a whole bunch of mistakes in my Christian walk, who am I answerable to?
7. (:13) So, instead of judging one another, what should we be doing?
8. (:14-19) If I am strong in faith, and not weak in legalism, what should I be trying to do for other believers?
9. (:20-23) But...do I have to be bound by a weak person's legalism? Is that fair?



**I was a "90-Pound  
Weakling"**  
Romans 14 – Answer Key

Legalism. That's a dirty word. And don't we just hate it?

I mean, when someone thinks they have to obey this rule, and that rule, and the other rule...just to make sure they are making God happy....just to make sure they look perfect to the people who see their lives...doesn't that just make you feel penned in, controlled, judged? Isn't legalism awful?

Is that what Paul says in Romans 14? Does he support us in our dislike of people who are caught in the immaturity of legalism?

Nope.

1. (:1) What are we supposed to do with the one who is weak in faith?  
Accept him. Don't start arguing about your differences...or trying to change him. Just accept him.

This simple advice draws a line in the sand for all of us who have at one time or another decided that another's legalistic views need to be changed. The line in the sand? Don't try to talk anyone into giving up their narrow little rules. Just don't do it.

*Does that mean I am to watch another believer in Christ stumble along with unnecessary rules and regulations and not try to do anything for him or her?*

Not exactly. Keep reading.

2. (:2) How does Paul define the one who is weak in faith?  
I think this is the key to understanding this chapter. The person who is weak in the faith is the one who hasn't grown enough yet spiritually to realize how free they are in Christ. The word "weak" could also be understood as "immature"...and that helps us see what Paul is saying.

Someone who is weak in the faith just has a ways to go still, that's all. In John 8:31&32 Jesus tells his followers: "...If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." If someone is truly a disciple of Jesus, and is spending time hearing and learning the Word of God, that



person will eventually grow to the point where they see the freedom they have in Christ. The rules will fall to the wayside as they are after time seen for what they are: a way to keep myself in line....not necessary when, really, I can depend on the Holy Spirit to do a much better job of it.

3. (:3) What does Paul mean here when he says "judge"?

The NIV doesn't use the word judge...it says "condemn" – a better word, in my opinion, because our contemporary usage of the word "judge" has kind of muddled up the meaning. Yes, we are to "judge" if what we mean is to see clearly, or understand. But no, we are not to "judge" if we are actually condemning another. We are supposed to be discerning...to see things as they really are. We are not supposed to serve as judge & jury and decide to punish or hurt those who are messing up. See the difference?

In other words, if I have a Christian friend who has surrounded himself with way too many rules for living, I am right in understanding that what he is doing is weak. But I would be wrong to be angry at him for it. Or to remove my friendship from him for it. Or to speak negatively about him to others. Or to in any way hurt him because of it.

He is answerable to the Lord Jesus, as I am. And Jesus certainly knows how to grow each of His own...at the rate which is best for them, and best for His plan for them. I need to be gentle, tolerant, and kind to that friend in Christ as Christ Himself is growing him.

4. (:4-6) Even if a person is weak, and has way too many rules, what is probably true of him/her?

Even a Christian caught up in legalism belongs to Jesus and could be having a sweet, day-to-day walk with Jesus. Just because they have some growing to do doesn't mean they aren't growing at all. Just because they are not growing in the areas visible to us....or the areas we want them to grow in...doesn't mean they aren't growing.

5. (:7-9) Why are any of us alive, anyway?

Whether it's you...or me....or a believer in Jesus in a far-away country, we are alive for one purpose, and one purpose only: to bring pleasure to our Savior, Jesus. Who are you to say your Christian brother is not bringing pleasure to Jesus just because he is not bringing pleasure to you?

6. (:10-12) Even if I am making a whole bunch of mistakes in my Christian walk, who am I answerable to?

And believe me, I am. I know that when I am standing in front of Jesus Christ some day, gazing into His eyes, I will see His unequaled love, and I will surely know how wrong I have been over the years. I will know His praise for the steps I have falteringly tried to make by faith. And I will be 100% aware of how little I did compared to what I

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could have done. Together He and I will make an accounting of my life. And together we will deal with the sadness I will feel over my sins and my weaknesses. And then He will wipe every tear from my eyes. (Revelation 21:4) And I will never think of it again.

The same will be true for every other believer I have ever known. Even the ones who frustrated me so with their rules and regulations.

7. (:13) So, instead of judging one another, what should we be doing? Turn the finger the other direction. Instead of pointing at one another, let's point at ourselves. What am I doing with my "freedom" which may be an obstacle to the immature believer who is watching me?

8. (:14-19) If I am strong in faith, and not weak in legalism, what should I be trying to do for other believers? Watching out for them. The strong one is the one who takes care of the others. Not: "the strong one is the one who gets everyone else to make life easier for him/her".

We asked a question at the beginning of this study which I'd like to answer now. The question was: *Does that mean I am to watch another believer in Christ stumble along with unnecessary rules and regulations and not try to do anything for him or her?*

The answer is: Of course I should help. Pray for him/her. Love him/her with kindness and gentleness and acceptance. And teach him/her the Bible – trusting Jesus Himself to apply those truths in His time and in His way to their growth...and to bring them to an understanding of His truth so that they can be set free.

Ray Stedman says: "Think of Christian liberty as a swinging bridge suspended by ropes over a mountain stream. The bridge is perfectly safe, and there are some people who can run across a swinging bridge without hesitation, even though it has no handrails. Others cannot cross it so easily. They look down at the river below, their hearts race, their breathing comes in gasps, they shake and tremble. You might think that they would never cross the bridge – but if you give them time, if you are patient and encouraging and let them go at their own speed, they will inch across on hands and knees. Eventually they'll make it to the other side. After a few more crossings, their confidence will increase and they, too, will be running across." (Reason to Rejoice, p. 295)

9. (:20-23) But...do I have to be bound by a weak person's legalism? Is that fair?

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Goodness, no. It's not fair. Do we want fair? Fair is you and me burning in Hell. We don't want fair. We want love. And grace. And mercy. And time to understand and change.

If I am grateful that Jesus is doing that for me....how can I not do that for others? Will it cramp my lifestyle? Maybe. Will I have to say "no" to myself when I really have the freedom to say "yes"? Sometimes.

If I have a friend who is immature...a 90-pound weakling...then I am blessed. It will keep me remembering where I have come from and Who has brought me thus far.



### **Together in Unity**

#### **Romans 15 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion**

1. (:1-4) These 4 verses give a great review of Chapter 14 – summarize them in your own words.
2. (:5-6) What is a “spirit of unity”? And what is the purpose of it?
3. (:7) Does “accept one another” mean I am to not care about your faults?
4. (:8) What did Christ do in a “spirit of unity”?
5. (:9) What was the purpose of what Christ did for the Jews?
6. (:10-12) If you were to look at all of these verses...alone...not in the middle of Romans 15...what would you conclude?
7. (:13) Why do people need hope?
8. (:14) What does Paul assume his readers can do for one another?
9. (:15-16) Why does Paul feel it is OK for him to be so bold with the Romans?
10. (:17) When Paul serves God, Who gets the glory?
11. (:18-21) What is Paul main goal in his ministry?
12. (:22) Why has Paul often been hindered from coming to Rome?
13. (:23-29) What are Paul’s travel plans?
14. (:24-33) How can the Romans best help Paul?

#### **APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

1. Is there a spirit of unity in your group of Christian friends?
2. What are you doing to serve God?
3. How are you helping someone else serve God?



**Together in Unity**  
Romans 15 – Answer Key

1. (:1-4) These 4 verses give a great review of Chapter 14 – summarize them in your own words.

Chapter 14 glides smoothly into Chapter 15, where Paul is going to address the subject of Christian unity. What makes Christian unity work? The very thing Paul was speaking of in Chapter 14 – loving, accepting each other's differences. The strong supporting the weak. Pleasing others, not ourselves. Taking the insults aimed at others and deflecting them to ourselves. That's what Christ did for us, isn't it?

Weren't we about as different as could be from Christ? Don't we bring him shame with our actions sometimes, even as Christians? But what was/is His reaction? Love us. Die for us. Take our shame on Himself.

Again, Paul is pressing the point...if Jesus is doing that for you, why would you do less for anyone else?

Our only hope for Christian unity is the priceless example of true Godly living given to us from the past – Jesus' life and ministry while on earth, in a human body.

2. (:5-6) What is a "spirit of unity"? And what is the purpose of it?  
Now this is important. On our own we might define "unity" as agreement on everything. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

"Unity" is not sameness or agreement on everything. It's sameness or agreement on something.

Look at verses 5 and 6. What does Paul say we are the same on, or agree on, no matter what our differences may be?

1. We are following Jesus
2. We are "one" in glorifying Jesus with our hearts and mouths.

When differences arise between us...and they will....we need only to center our thoughts on these 2 areas of sameness and agreement, and rejoice in them....and we will know unity.

3. (:7) Does "accept one another" mean I am to not care about your faults?  
I notice your faults. I notice your weaknesses. I notice your difference from me. And you notice the same thing about me. But I notice even more our commonality...our shared purpose of loving Jesus Christ.

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4. (:8) What did Christ do in a "spirit of unity"?

He not only was born a Jew....He was born a servant. Servant to the Jews.  
And servant to the whole world.

5. (:9) What was the purpose of what Christ did for the Jews?

He became a Jew in order to save Jews and Gentiles.

6. (:10-12) If you were to look at all of these verses...alone...not in the middle of Romans 15...what would you conclude?

That the Old Testament taught that the Lord wanted the Gentiles to worship Him.

It was no secret, then, was it? The Old Testament Jewish believers were taught these scriptures. They knew from these passages that God's heart was bigger than just the Jewish nation. It was for all peoples. All along it was for Jews and Gentiles.

7. (:13) Why do people need hope?

Because the reality of life in this world is too hard to live with. Hope is a look at the future. The stress-free, problem-free, relationship-healthy future of heaven. And that hope gives us joy.

8. (:14) What does Paul assume his readers can do for one another?

Be good to each other. Teach one another.

Paul wants the church at Rome to come to a place of unity based on the highest purpose known to man – the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their differences would only strengthen them if they would grasp their unity and cling tenaciously to it.

Each local church was chosen by God to be united and then touch the lives around them with the Gospel.

I've had an interest in church history over the last few months, and I've been puzzled to notice that there were sometimes long stretches of time when it seemed there was no solid Gospel witness anywhere in the world.

For instance, when Constantine declared Christianity the state religion and therefore persecution of Christians became a thing of the past, I'm sure it was a welcome relief for weary believers. But it didn't take long before the truth of the Gospel was so easy to proclaim that people just didn't fight that hard to proclaim it any more. Going to church became the law of the land...and was regulated more and more by authorities who cared little for the Bible...and church got farther and farther away from proclaiming the truth. In fact, after many years, the message of the church was exactly the opposite of





the true Gospel – the church's message became: "here are the things you have to do to be saved...Jesus' death on the cross was not enough."

So I've been asking myself – "Why did this happen? Where was the 'true' church? Where were the real believers? They didn't just die out, did they? Weren't there any true believers anywhere who were still courageous enough to proclaim the Gospel?"

And I've wondered if the explanation for this dark, dark time of hardly any Gospel witness was that churches simply stopped acting like churches. They stopped being united in their love for Christ and their desire to glorify Him, and started being united in their common government or their common lifestyles or their common comforts. And they slowly, slowly decayed and died.

So...you might say...our differences, which frustrate us so...keep us focused on Jesus....which means health and future for the church.

But....even in the darkest of times, the Lord never left Himself without a group of people who were determined to live for Him and be united for the right reasons. I'm not sure where all of those "true" churches were, but I did read the other day that the Gospel made it all the way to the capital of China in the year 800 a.d., and that there is evidence that several high-ranking politicians counted themselves amongst the believers in Jesus.

That was encouraging to me. I can imagine there being a few true believers in Jesus in China....and a few in what is present-day Iran....and a few in even dark, dark Europe....and that God preserved them and gave them unity within their local congregations and empowered them to keep passing on the Gospel...until He again was able to miraculously multiply the truth to huge numbers of people.

9. (:15-16) Why does Paul feel it is OK for him to be so bold with the Romans? Because the Gentiles especially were his "assignment" from God. He had been given the responsibility and authority to tell them the Gospel, and help them grow in the truth after their decisions for salvation.

10. (:17) When Paul serves God, Who gets the glory?  
Jesus Christ.

11. (:18-21) What is Paul main goal in his ministry?  
To preach Christ. Especially in places where His story has never been heard. He did not want to "maintain" someone else's ministry. He wanted to be a starter. It was the gift God had given him.

12. (:22) Why has Paul often been hindered from coming to Rome?



Because he kept searching for uncharted territory.

13. (:23-29) What are Paul's travel plans?

- First, to Jerusalem with a gift for the Christians there from churches in Macedonia and Achaia.
- Then on to Spain, stopping first in Rome to see the church there.

Did Paul make it to Rome? Yes – but not as he had imagined. He went to Jerusalem and from there all his plans fell apart. He was imprisoned by the Romans, pursued by the Jews, and ultimately taken, as a prisoner, to Rome...where he had wanted to go. (Acts 28:14-15) But He got there.

He said in verse 29: *"I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ."* And he did. The blessings of God don't always end up looking like we thought they would.

14. (:24-33) How can the Romans best help Paul?

Praying. Praying. Praying.

In the real estate business it is said that the three most important things about a piece of real estate are: location, location, location.

I'm learning, as I grow in the Lord, that the three most important things about ministering for the Lord are: prayer, prayer, prayer.

#### **APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

3. Is there a spirit of unity in your group of Christian friends?
4. What are you doing to serve God?
5. How are you helping someone else serve God?



### Paul's Fond Goodbyes

#### Romans 16 – Questions For Your Personal Use or Discussion

Read through Chapter 16:1-16, and fill out the following chart.

Name	Info about them	Man?	Woman?
Phoebe			
Priscilla & Aquilla			
Epenetus			
Mary			
Andronicus and Junias			
Ampliatius			
Urbanus			
Stachys			
Apelles			
Those in the household of Aristobulus			
Herodian			
Those in household of Narcissus			
Tryphena & Tryphosa			
Persis			
Rufus			
Rufus' mother			
Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas			
Philologos			
Julia			
Nereus and his sister			

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Olympas			
All the rest of the saints at the church of Philologos			
Phoebe			
Priscilla & Aquilla			
Epenetus			
Mary			
Andronicus and Junias			
Ampliatius			
Urbanus			
Stachys			

1. (:1-16) What conclusions can we draw from this list of people?

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2. (:17-20) What further instructions and encouragements does Paul give the Romans as he concludes his letter?

Instructions

Encouragements

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3. Which of those instructions and encouragements can be applied to us?

4. (:21-23) What conclusion do you draw from this list of people who, along with Paul, send their greetings to the church at Rome?

5. (:25-27) Paul ends his letter with a voice of praise to God – and a voice of wonder at the “Gospel”. He says:

The Gospel can \_\_\_\_\_ you

The Gospel is the proclamation of \_\_\_\_\_

The Gospel is the \_\_\_\_\_ which was hidden in long ages past

The Gospel has been revealed to us through \_\_\_\_\_

The Gospel has been revealed because God \_\_\_\_\_ it to be

The purpose of the Gospel is that all nations might \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ him














As we end up the book of Romans, I wonder if you have understood better why you believe what you believe? Here are a few **Application Questions**:

- a) What changes have you made in your life during this study of Romans?
- b) Paul’s main theme of the book was “The Gospel” – understanding what it means, and deciding what it means to me. Has your understanding of the Gospel changed?
- c) Has your reaction to the Gospel changed?
- d) Has your understanding of the local church changed?
- e) Has your commitment to your local church changed?

### Paul's Fond Goodbyes

#### Romans 16 – Answer Key

Read through Chapter 16:1-16, and fill out the following chart.

Name	Info about them	Man	Woman
Phoebe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served in the church at Cenchrea</li> <li>She was a helper</li> <li>Especially to Paul</li> <li>She was carrying this letter to Rome for Paul</li> </ul>		
Priscilla & Aquilla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Husband/wife team</li> <li>Worked closely w/Paul</li> <li>Risked their lives for Paul</li> <li>Key in getting the Gospel to the Gentiles</li> <li>A church meets at their house in Rome</li> </ul>		
Epenetus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First convert to Christ in Asia</li> </ul>		
Mary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked very hard for church at Rome</li> </ul>		
Andronicus and Junias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relatives of Paul</li> <li>Had been in prison with Paul</li> <li>Leaders in early church</li> <li>Saved before Paul (possibly prayed for him before salvation)</li> </ul>		
Ampliatius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loved by Paul</li> </ul>		
Urbanus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Served with Paul in ministry</li> </ul>		
Stachys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul's dear friend</li> </ul>		
Apelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had been tested somehow and passed the test – was approved by God</li> </ul>		
Those in the household of Aristobulus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Servants, probably. Lived within the ruling circles in Rome</li> </ul>		

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Herodian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul's relative, possibly within the household of Aristobulus, or Narcissus</li> </ul>		
Those in household of Narcissus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibly a household of servants who were inherited by Nero upon Narcissus' death.</li> <li>Not all of those in the household were believers...just some</li> </ul>		
Tryphena & Tryphosa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women who work hard in the Lord</li> </ul>		 
Persis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dear friend of Paul</li> <li>Works hard in the Lord</li> </ul>		
Rufus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Called "chosen in the Lord"</li> </ul>		
Rufus' mother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was like a mother to Paul</li> </ul>		
Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greek Christians, probably businessmen who lived and worshipped in Rome</li> </ul>		
Philologos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>His name means: "Lover of the Word"/ perhaps a Pastor of a house church.</li> </ul>		
Julia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the church of Philologos</li> </ul>		
Nereus and his sister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the church of Philologos</li> </ul>		
Olympas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the church of Philologos</li> </ul>		
All the rest of the saints at the church of Philologos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the church of Philologos</li> </ul>		

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1. (:1-16) What conclusions can we draw from this list of people?

If you are leading a study on this chapter, allow time for your group to look at the filled-in chart above and then come to conclusions...without your help.

After they get a chance to do that, you may want to add a few more things – here are some of the conclusions I came to:

- Women had just as big a part in the ministry of the Lord as men.
- Paul had close friends who were women
- Paul had at least 3 relatives at Rome who shared a commitment to Jesus. At least 2 of those relatives were Christians before Paul. Perhaps it was their prayers that brought him to the Damascus Road.
- It was a woman who carried this most important letter through the dangerous Roman roads to deliver it to the Roman church.
- Although he loved them all, there was special mention of a few he loved. Why? Because that's the way friendship is. That's the way ministry is. You love them all. Some you love deeply.
- There seemed to have been different "groups" of Christians...sometimes households...in other words, probably, different "house churches".
- One woman had a tender, loving, "mother"-type of relationship to Paul.
- These are an assortment of people from different walks of life. Different ranks. Different lifestyles. But the one-ness (unity) amongst them comes across clearly.
- Many, many of those in this list are described as "hard workers". What a commentary on the work of God. Not easy. Not a life of comfort. Not a life of relaxation. But their hard work cemented their relationships to each other.
- Paul had such genuine relationship with these people. And yet he spent very little long-term time with any of them. It was their unity in the work they had to do which united them, not quantity of time.

2. (:17-20) What further instructions and encouragements does Paul give the Romans as he concludes his letter?

<i>Instructions</i>	<i>Encouragements</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep your eyes on trouble makers</li><li>• Stay away from trouble makers</li><li>• Be wise in what is good</li><li>• Be innocent in what is evil</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your reputation of obedience to God is widespread</li><li>• I rejoice when I think of you</li><li>• God will soon crush Satan under your feet</li></ul>





3. Which of those instructions and encouragements can be applied to us?

All of these instructions and encouragements are specifically for a church which has a reputation of being committed to and obedient to God. If you are part of such a church, all of these can apply to you, too. If you are not...then find such a church....or begin praying that you will be instrumental to change the one you are in.

4. (:21-23) What conclusion do you draw from this list of people who, along with Paul, send their greetings to the church at Rome?  
Timothy, Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, Quartus – all of them served alongside Paul in Corinth (from where he wrote this letter).  
Paul's friends were always fellow-servants. Paul's goal was to preach the Gospel to all...Jews, and especially Gentiles. But his friends were fellow-laborers in that goal. No "friendship-evangelism" here.

5. (:25-27) Paul ends his letter with a voice of praise to God – and a voice of wonder at the "Gospel". He says:

The Gospel can establish you

The Gospel is the proclamation of Jesus Christ

The Gospel is the mystery which was hidden in long ages past

The Gospel has been revealed to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New.

The Gospel has been revealed because God commanded it to be

The purpose of the Gospel is that all nations might obey and have faith in Him

As we end up the book of Romans, I wonder if you have understood better why you believe what you believe? Here are a few **Application Questions**:

- a) What changes have you made in your life during this study of Romans?
- b) Paul's main theme of the book was "The Gospel" – understanding what it means, and deciding what it means to me. Has your understanding of the Gospel changed?
- c) Has your reaction to the Gospel changed?
- d) Has your understanding of the local church changed?
- e) Has your commitment to your local church changed?