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**Salvation
in
Romans**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Bible
at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Salvation in Romans.

INTRODUCTION: since the primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in most chapters of the book of Romans) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and God's grace in Christ.

ROMANS 1:1-3

Jesus Christ, the Offspring of David.

- **Romans 1:1-3:** ¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

Here is the beauty, the splendour and wonder of the Bible; thousands of years ago God swore to David with an oath that he would set one of his descendants on his throne (Acts 2:30) and many Bible prophecies proclaimed that Israel's Messiah the Christ would come from the loins of David meaning his bloodline (i.e. a descendent). This came about through Jesus foster father Joseph and Mary. Joseph was from the bloodline of David's son Solomon and many scholars suspect that Mary was from the bloodline of David's son Nathan so in this manner both God's promise to David and the prophecies proclaiming Jesus Christ would be the offspring of David were fulfilled. Matthew and Luke are the only references to the actual genealogy and birth of Jesus in the New Testament. Matthew says Jacob is the father of Joseph (Matt. 1:16) while Luke says Heli is the father of Joseph (Luke 3:23) which means that Jacob and Heli are both referred to as being the father of Joseph, obviously Jacob and Heli cannot both be the father of Joseph, but this seemingly apparent contradiction can be easily explained in the following manner. Matthew traces the line of Christ through David's son Solomon because Joseph came through the line of Solomon (the Bible is clear that Jacob was the father of Joseph) while Luke (most scholars suspect) traces the line of Christ through David's son Nathan because Mary came through the line of Nathan so Heli was Mary's father and therefore was the father in law of Joseph

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NOTE: the virgin birth is plain in both Matthews and Luke's genealogies.

Paul said to Timothy:

- Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David as preached in my gospel (2 Timothy 2:8).

The words the offspring of David, as preached in my Gospel does not mean, only Paul's Gospel, but refers to the Gospel that he proclaims and that all the apostles proclaimed concerning the offspring of David as recorded in the following writings of Matthew and Luke.

- In the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David (Matt. 1:1, 21).
- All the crowds that went before Jesus and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! (Matt. 21:9).
- The angel (Gabriel) said "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God, behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his Father David and of his Kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:30-33).

The Good News of the Gospel: promised by God and spoken of by the prophets refers to the majestic good news which states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father, but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift. But, this is not the end of the Gospel since God's promises also state that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life. Can there be any better news than this? This is one of the reasons it is called the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 1:4-6

The Resurrection Declared Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

- **Romans 1:4-6:** and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

The majestic words Jesus was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of Holiness by his resurrection from the dead means that Christ's resurrection manifested that he was the Son of God and because he was without sin it was not possible for death to hold him (Acts 2:24) this is because death is a result of the law of sin and death which states:

- The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23)

Since Christ was without sin (Heb. 4:15) death had no legal right to hold him in the grave. The Good News of the Gospel for all who trust in Christ is that they have been granted the free gift of God which is:

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:23).

This is because:

- The law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).

The law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him they like Christ will be raised to eternal glory this is the Good News of the Gospel.

Faith has come to all nations: the ministry of the apostles was to bring about the obedience of faith to all nations meaning they were to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles alike. It matters not whether a person is born a direct descendant of Abraham, a Hebrew, Jew or a Gentile all must come to God through the same faith and the one Lord Jesus Christ there is no longer a division between Jews and Gentiles since God is building a new nation in Christ made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

The only entry to God's Kingdom and His family is through the eternal and royal door the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 1:13

The Gospel has the Power to Save.

- **Romans 1:16:** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

This verse is majestic, "Why you might wonder?" Simply this: amongst some religious churches today congregations are lead to believe that they must hold fast to a certain set of doctrines (these will vary depending what church they are in) to be saved to eternal life and that should they move away from believing this fixed set of doctrines they will lose their salvation. Now this is why these words of Paul are so glorious they shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that all anyone needs to know to be saved to eternal life and reconciled to God is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since everyone is saved by grace which not only covers the limitations of the flesh, but also the limitations of our intellectual knowledge no one has to know the Bible from cover to cover to be saved, but they do need to understand the message of the cross and the Gospel because it is the Gospel that has the power to save not a list of doctrines or knowing the Bible from beginning to end.

ROMANS 1:16-17

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith.

Romans 1:17: For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

The righteous shall live by faith means that though we are aware that we have sinful aberrations and dysfunctions dwelling within our fallen corrupted nature we believe we are saved in spite of them because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It means we are confident that our salvation is not dependent on our own self-effort or religious acts but upon our faith and God's grace. The majestic Good News of the Gospel, states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father, but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift. But this is not the end of the Good News since God's promises also state that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life. Can there be any better news than this? This is another reason it is called the Good News.

ROMANS 2:25-29

A Jew is One Inwardly by the Spirit and Not by the Letter.

- **Romans 2:25-29:** For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ²⁶ So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷ Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. ²⁸ For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹ But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Circumcision in the Jewish mind was without doubt deemed to be one of the highest standards of righteousness since they believed that an uncircumcised person was separated from God and therefore unclean. Because of this mindset no religious Jew (especially those in high position of leadership) would willingly put themselves in the company of an uncircumcised person since they considered them to be unclean. The reason the Jewish nation held circumcision in such high regard was because God made the following covenant with Abraham and his offspring saying:

- Every male among you shall be circumcised and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised it shall be an everlasting covenant and any male who is not circumcised shall be cut off from Israel because he has broken my covenant" (Gen 17:10-14) (Gen 17:23-27).

Even though circumcision was a sign they were God's people and not a guarantee of salvation many in the Jewish faith had turned it into the means of salvation (i.e., as long as they were circumcised they were right with God), this is one of the reasons for the lack of the fruits of the Spirit amongst many of the religious rulers of Jesus and Paul's generations. Paul is telling the Roman brothers And sisters that even though circumcision was considered of great value to the Jew it was not worth anything if they disobeyed the law whereas if an uncircumcised believer kept the law they would not only be counted as righteous, but would also condemn the Jewish believers even though they were circumcised and had the written laws of God. Paul is showing that a true spiritual Jew before God's eyes is not one who is outwardly adhering to ceremonial religious acts and has the written code of Moses Law, but a person who has the Spirit of God (i.e., God's love) in their hearts and looks for God's praise and not the exaltation of man.

Today: Paul's words could be stated in the following way:

- Believers in Christ who don't go to church every Sunday or attend all the Bible meetings etc., but live a Christian life (of love and doing what is right) will condemn those who do all the outward religious rituals, but don't live the life of a Christian.

It should be noted living a Christian life is not about being perfect in every circumstance or every situation of life, if we could do this and live a life free of sin Christ would not have needed to lay down his life, rather living a Christian life is about having a heart that earnestly desires to honour God, is sorrowful when one fails and about showing mercy, grace and love to others contrasted to pretending to be righteous and lacking compassion and mercy. Paul is basically saying outward religious rituals will not get one saved since salvation is a matter of the heart and mind that results in a change in direction of one's life and a change of the passions from the things of this world to the things of God's Kingdom. These verses are teaching that it is our faith that God counts as righteousness and not our self-effort in adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions.

ROMANS 4:20-25

God Counted Abraham's Faith as Righteousness.

- **Romans 4:20-25:** No unbelief made him (Abraham) waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.²² That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness."²³ But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Justification: in this context means being declared innocent, acquitted and set free because of faith in Christ. Abraham believed God and God counted that faith as his righteous. The words Abraham was fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised is sometimes used to support the theory if we have enough faith whatever we desire in this world will come into being, but Abraham's faith was in what God had clearly promised he was going to do and from this promise came the Christ. Paul in this chapter is using the faith of Abraham to shine a spotlight on the truth that righteous that leads to eternal life does not come by self-effort or adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or by keeping religious customs and traditions, but by faith alone. Paul is highlighting the truth that it is by faith and not works that God counts a person righteous. This is why faithful Christians say they are saved by grace and not by works and why not one of us can boast that by our own self-effort we have earned righteousness. It was because of Abraham's great faith that God counted him righteous. He believed God and God counted that faith as his righteousness. Acceptable righteousness before God does not come by self-effort and adhering to religious practices but by faith.

The practical application of this for us today: despite the oldness of Abrahams body and the barrenness of Sarah's womb he believed God would keep His promise, today our righteousness comes by believing God's promise that in Christ we will be counted righteous despite the sinful aberrations and dysfunctions we know we have dwelling within our fallen corrupt body and our human nature. Paul warns us not to be ill-informed of this righteousness that comes from God and begin to go about trying to establish our own righteousness (by self-effort and religious works etc.) rather than submitting to God's righteousness which comes through faith in Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. 10:3-10). Righteousness that leads to salvation and eternal life has nothing to do with the law, self-effort, good works or the practice of ceremonial rites, rather our faith is our righteousness it is like a royal robe that God has clothed us in, not because we are deserving of it or done anything to earn it, but because of our faith in His Son.

Why not do away with the law: some may ask as the Jews did (at the end of Romans chapter three), "If salvation is a free gift and has nothing to do with the law, why not do away with the law and do as we please? (Rom. 3:31). Paul brilliantly and skilfully answers this question in Romans chapter six when he asks his listeners the following question: "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" To see Paul's answer to this question, see:

- Romans 6, in Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

ROMANS 5:1-2

Those in Christ Are Justified by Faith.

- **Romans 5:1-2:** Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Justified: in this context means to regard a person as just and innocent and set them free for Christ's sake.

Grace: in this context means to favour and make a person acceptable to God its divine influence is reflected upon the heart in gratitude.

Hope: means to anticipate and have a confident expectation (usually with pleasure).

Glory: in this context refers to a good reputation that is truthful and worthy of honour, praise and worship.

These verses highlight the truth that all who trust in Christ are justified by their faith, not by the law, self-effort or good works, our righteousness is totally apart from the law and not dependent on anything we can do because it is our faith that God counts as our righteousness. This is the reason we have peace with God, but our faith is even more glorious because it gives us access into God's grace and it is in this grace that we live and rejoice in the promise and holy and awesome character of God.

NOTE: when salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie. The apostle Paul wrote; "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2). The Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now.

While we were Still Weak, Christ Died for the Ungodly.

- **Romans 5:6-7:** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die.

While we were weak means while we were without God and full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within us which limit us from attaining to the God's perfect standard of Holiness and acceptable standard of righteousness that leads to eternal life. The reason those who belong to Christ are no longer weak is because they are counted righteous because of their faith in Christ who willingly surrendered his life up to his enemies to a brutal, bloody and cruel death so that everyone who receives him by faith could be saved to eternal life. Those in Christ are strong because it is the blood of Christ the cleanses and saves them and not their own self-effort in striving to attain to the perfect demands of the law or the perfect Holiness of God or striving to live a sin-free life (all things that are impossible for us to achieve) Christ didn't die so that we could attain to a sin-free life, but because we couldn't, if we were able to live a life free of sin, Christ died for no purpose.

ROMANS 5:8-11

While we were Still Sinners, Christ Died for Us.

- **Romans 5:8-11:** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

These are two of my favourite Scriptures and two of the most splendid and most humbling of all verses since they clearly show how much Christ loves us. The Lord Jesus Christ laid down his life down so that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works and in spite of our sinful aberrations and dysfunctions God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift.

NOTICE: Paul points out that some of us might die for a friend or loved one, but Christ died for us while we were ungodly, indifferent and in many cases enemies to God. Not only are these verses breath-taking and awe-inspiring, but should also be an overwhelming comfort to every brother and sister of Christ since they carry an astounding and perfect example of love and are some of the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since they clearly show how much Christ loves us. Paul in the same letter also wrote the following:

- While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

This means that even though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our corrupted earthly bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, envy, jealousies, anger and such like things) Christ died for us he laid down his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our corrupted fallen nature God that we have inherited from our earthly father Adam God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift. These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God loved us long before we loved Him. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly and indifferent to God and His ways and in many cases enemies. Sadly, some in the Christian faith,

because of a lack of perceiving this great love God has toward us that these verses (and others like them) shine a spotlight on tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances. They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes, they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions.

ROMANS 5:15-19

Righteousness is a Free Gift that comes by Grace.

- **Romans 5:15-19:** But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

These verses shine a floodlight on the glorious truth that the free gift is righteousness. Paul is contrasting death which reigned through one man Adam and came into the world through his single act of disobedience which led to all mankind being sinners (i.e., indwelling selfishness, ego, pride, greed, jealousies, envy, lustful thoughts, anger and such like things etc.) and the condemnation of the world, to justification which reigns through the single act of one man's obedience (an act of unselfishness) coming into the world bringing the abundance of God's grace and the free gift of righteousness which makes many righteous and declares them justified.

The free gift is not like the trespass: (v15) this statement refers to the fact that the free gift of grace and righteousness has to cover a multitude of transgressions contrasted to many being condemned because of one transgression. The following is an example of this statement: a judge condemns a man for a single act of murder, it is pointless for this man to stand up and use all his past good deeds as his defence since the one act of murder overrides any good acts he may have done, whereas God's free gift of grace and righteousness overrides the many sins of a criminal who comes to God through Christ in honest heartfelt repentance even though they may have committed many crimes and never done the right thing.

ROMANS 5:20-21

Where Sin Increased, Grace Abounded.

- **Romans 5:20-21:** Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sin increased when the Ten Commandments were introduced in the sense that they brought to everyone's mind an absolute clear knowledge of what sin was and thereby made everyone was fully aware of it. An example of

this would be a child who pulls everything out of Mums kitchen cupboards, plays on Dads computer and jumps on his sisters' bed, he's just having fun, though he may be doing wrong he is totally ignorant of it until his Mum, Dad and sister pull him aside. Mum tells him not to go in the cupboards, his Dad tells him, don't touch my computer and his sister tells him not to jump on her bed, all of a sudden, the poor lad is aware of wrongdoing all around him it has increased threefold in a matter of a few moments. The more people are aware of their wrongdoing the more grace abounds since they understand that they have done wrong and are not deserving of forgiveness or of mercy whereas a person who is unaware of their wrongdoing or are indifferent to it does not appreciate the beauty and glory of God's gift of righteousness and grace.

You shall not covet: some may be tempted to think that they are not sinners because they have not murdered anyone, stolen from anyone or committed adultery etc., but consider the following:

The law of God states:

- You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's (Exod. 20:17).

And the law of Christ states:

- You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Rom. 13:9).

Jesus said, all God's commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-40) (Mark 12:28-31) this commandment of Jesus is called the royal law in the New Testament (James 2:8) this is because the spirit underpinning this royal law, desires the best for others' contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving and seeking the best for self.

COVET: (covetousness) means; to set the heart upon, to desire, long for or lust after (rightfully or otherwise) it carries the idea of holding onto or desiring more than one has or needs (the practice of greediness) and embraces those who live a lifestyle of unlawful sex, orgies adulteries and sexual immorality to fulfil their own lust and to anyone whose heart is craving after and worshipping and exalting another person as a god (an idolater).

By implication covet: can refer to those who are not honest and true and who use pressure or coercion to force or entice others to fulfil their own selfish need or ambition and to anyone who intentionally deprives somebody of money or property by dishonest means because they are greedy and eager for gain. The commandment, "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, ego, lust, and greed etc. It reveals the dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy law. It exposes our self-centeredness in our desires for more than we need, our excessive avariciousness toward materialism, our overeating of tasty foods the craving to be important or esteemed, our sensual and lustful thoughts, the desire to be rich and have abundantly more than we need etc. The commandments, "You shall not covet" and "Love your neighbour as yourself," shines a spotlight on our self-interest, they highlight our lack of willingness to give to those less fortunate and those in need, they expose our degrading, resentful, bitter and jealous thoughts of others and the list goes on. In summary the command, "You shall not covet" embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that dwell within our members that are contrary to the law of love and the Holiness of God which means the entire human race is held guilty before the law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to death which it does without hesitation, compassion or mercy the law shows no mercy or compassion its demand on those that are under it is strictly official, formal and legal and enforced without compassion or any sense of sorrow toward its condemned victims. The universal demand of

the law states; "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) meaning if anyone fails to keep the law in any aspect, they are guilty of breaking the law. It then without mercy rightfully and legally judges and sentences its guilty victims (all mankind) to death. The law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, but as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure, but God always knew it would be, not because of a fault in the law but because a flaw in us. The royal majesty, the wonder and the glory of the Good News of the Gospel not only proclaims that, "God through Christ has cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands" (the debt being all our trespasses and sins) (Col. 2:13-14), but also tells us that God set aside the laws legal demands, nailing it to the cross, this of course refers to the fact that Christ fulfilled all the legal demands of the law throughout his life on earth and to his brutal, bloody and cruel death on the cross.

Jesus, before the eyes of men went to the cross as a common criminal, but before the eyes of God he was innocent and without sin and therefore through his life and his death all the legal demands of the law were fulfilled. Christ took all the legal demands of the law to the grave with him and because he was without sin the law had no power to hold him in the grave and therefore God had full and legal right not only to raise him from the grave, but to raise him to eternal life and everlasting glory. Jesus through his death and resurrection has become the royal robe of grace and the majestic crown of righteousness that God clothes all who by faith trust in the Lord for their righteousness and eternal salvation and in this manner, "The legal demands of the law have been nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14)) since Christ through his death broke the power of the universal law that states, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) and superseded and overruled it with a far higher law that proclaims, "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23). This is the humbling, awe-inspiring Good News of the Gospel.

Grace also might reign through righteousness: (v21) it should be mentioned that the word righteousness in the context of this this verse does not apply to our self-effort and good works, because it is not our own virtue that saves us, but God's gift of righteousness imputed as a pure and free gift to all that is freely given to all who have faith in his Son. It is this righteousness that is in focus and not our attempts to earn it by keeping the law, attending to religious duties or good works. God's righteousness is apart from all these things since it is placed upon us as a royal crown and majestic robe not because we are deserving of it, but because of our faith. It is because of the abundant and majestic grace of God that we are saved to eternal life and not our endless attempts to overcome every sinful aberration and dysfunction that dwells within us or by attempting to make ourselves holy and worthy to God through our own self-effort or by adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

Why not do away with the law: some may ask as the Jews did at the end of chapter three, "If righteousness and salvation are a free gift and has nothing to with the law, why not do away with the law and do as we please? (Rom. 3:31). Paul answers this question in the next chapter where he asks a similar question, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?"

ROMANS 6:20-23

The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Free Gift of God is Eternal Life.

- **Romans 6:20-23:** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sanctification: means purification it refers to the state of purity or to one who purifies it carries the idea of being made holy ceremonially or by one who purifies and can refer to behaviour or the mental state of the mind. Prior to conversion we were indifferent to God and therefore living to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was not even a consideration so we of course lived to please ourselves without giving God any thought, but since the wages of sin is death the end result for those who live in this manner is condemnation and death. In contrast to this is those who are united with God through faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ since they now have a sense of shame toward how they lived their lives prior to their conversion because now that they are united with God the earnest desire of their heart and mind is to honour God with their life. It is in this sense that they have become slaves to righteousness and to God, but the reward of this lifestyle is God's approval, the free gift of righteousness and eternal life in Christ Jesus the Lord.

ROMANS 7:14-23

The Law is Spiritual, but I am of the Flesh, Sold under Sin.

- **Romans 7:14-23:** For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

The law is spiritual means that it is righteous, holy, perfect and good, whereas our corrupted fallen human nature (called the flesh in the Bible) that we all inherited from our earthly father Adam has imbedded within it all sorts of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that infect our minds, our thoughts, our attitudes etc., of which some are selfishness, pride, ego, greed, sensual thoughts, envy, jealousy, bitterness, resentment etc. These are all contrary to the law of righteousness, the law of love and of God's Holy character. Sadly, these sinful dysfunctions and aberrations limit us from attaining to the perfect standard of the law. Paul in these verses is saying that he sees within his own nature the following two laws:

1. One law that would love to perfectly keep the law of God
2. Another law that limits him from attaining to the first law, since he finds as much as he wishes to be perfect before the law and by extension before God that there is an opposing law (or power) that works within him and prevents him from achieving the perfection he desires because he finds that in some of his actions he does those things that he would prefer not to.

It is no-longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me: (v20) Paul is saying that when he does actions that are contrary to the law and he does not want to do them, then he is agreeing with the law that the law is good, righteous and correct so he concludes the problem is not in the law therefore it must be some flaw in him which of course is sin this is the reason for his words, "It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me." It means that it is not the true and authentic-self (the spirit) of Paul doing those things but sin that is imbedded in his fallen and corrupted human nature. Paul is very aware that within his own body there are the following two natures:

1. The flesh which is our fallen and corrupted human nature with all its sinful dysfunctions and aberrations imbedded into it (i.e., selfishness, pride, ego, coyness, greed, sensual thoughts, jealousies, anger and such like things).

2. The Spirit which is that nature of God which desires to attain to the perfection of the law and God's Holiness.

Paul recognizes that these two natures are at total odds to each other, the flesh has nothing good in it, since it does not want to be accountable to anyone and left free to go its own way whereas the Spirit desires to follow Christ and honour God. Paul desires in his mind to attain to the perfect standard of the law, but realizes that there is another law or force working within his corrupted fallen human nature that works against his mind and prevents him from attaining to the righteousness that the law demands; it is this power or force that Paul calls sin (sometimes the Bible calls it the devil) (i.e., that nature within that is contrary to the Spirit of God).

A law that wages war against the law of the mind: Paul sees that within his own body there is a corrupted and infected nature imbedded in his members that not only opposes the good that he desires in his mind to do, but also imprisons him to the universal law of sin and death that is imprinted into his members because it is impossible for anyone to keep the entire law perfectly and since the law of sin and death states:

- The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).

He is doomed to condemnation and death as we all are (without Christ). This is the reason we all die this universal law of sin and death has been encoded into our fallen corrupted human nature. Now the Good News is that there is a much higher law that overrides the law of sin and death, this divine law (called the, law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus) states that death has no legal right or power to hold in the grave those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This glorious law supersedes the, law of sin and death. This is one of the reasons the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News. Paul states all who trust in Christ have been granted the free gift of God which is:

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23), because, the law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2).

This means that the law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him. This promise is guaranteed because it is not dependent on our self-effort, but on our faith, this is why the Scriptures state:

- Faith is counted to whoever believes in God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead who was delivered up to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4:22-25).

NOTE: the law, entity, power or force that works within our corrupted fallen human nature and that limits us from keeping the entire law of God perfectly in every detail is what the Bible calls sin in our members (sometimes personified as the devil). For further information on the Devil see the title:

- Devil.

In, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

ROMANS 7:24-25

Who will Deliver Me from this Body of Death?

- **Romans 7:24-25:** Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

It is interesting to notice five of the Ten Commandments regarding mankind are about outward behaviour:

1. Honour your father and your mother.

2. You shall not murder.
3. You shall not commit adultery.
4. You shall not steal.
5. You shall not bear false witness.

Whereas the last one "You shall not covet," refers to inward thoughts and inward attitudes (Exod. 20:12-17). Some may think that because they love their parents, have not murdered anyone, stolen, lied or committed adultery they have no sin dwelling within them, but consider the following two laws that state:

1. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's (Exod. 20:17).
2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Rom 13:9) (this is called the Royal Law).

Jesus said all the Ten Commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words of this royal law (James 2:8) because the spirit underpinning this royal law, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" desires the best for others contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving and seeking the best for self. The universal demand of the law states; "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) meaning if anyone fails to keep the law in any aspect, they are guilty of breaking the law. It then without mercy rightfully and legally judges and sentences its guilty victims (all mankind) to death. The law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, but as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure, but God always knew it would be, not because of a fault in the law but because a flaw in us, but praise be to God for the royal majesty, the wonder and the glory of the Good News of the Gospel which states:

- God through Christ has cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands" (the debt being all our trespasses and sins) (Col. 2:13-14).

Wretched man that I am! Paul realizes his hopelessness as he stands before the law since the power of sin that is imbedded in his fallen corrupted human body sentences him to death by the law, "You shall not covet." This law shines a mega spotlight on the inward sinful dysfunctions and aberrations infecting our thoughts and our attitudes. Nevertheless, he accepts this reality and concludes that he will serve the Lord with his mind (his authentic and true self) (the spirit) while his inherited inward sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that infect his thoughts and attitudes continue to serve the law of sin and thereby condemn him to death. Paul answers the question "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" in the next chapter. For a greater insight into the depth of the sin of coveting see the notes following the titles: "Where Sin Increased, Grace Abounded" and The Law, "You shall not Covet," following (Romans 5:20-21) (above).

ROMANS 8:5-11

The Mind of the Flesh and the Mind of the Spirit.

- **Romans 8:5-11:** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

In these verses Paul is speaking to Jewish Christians in Rome, who have been indoctrinated with keeping Moses law, its religious customs and the Jewish traditions. One of Paul's greatest battles was with Jewish brothers that though they believed in Christ they also believed they had to maintain Moses law, keep the covenant of circumcision and holy days etc., to be saved and counted righteous. In this manner they were setting their minds on the flesh meaning they were trusting in religious works to be made righteous rather than setting their minds on the Spirit meaning trusting in their faith in Christ and God's grace to be counted righteous since it is our faith in Christ that God counts as our righteousness and not any self-effort we might in vain attempt to do.

Setting the mind on the flesh is death, but setting it on the Spirit is life: the words, "To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (v6) means whoever thinks they can become righteous in themselves through self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days or by keeping religious customs and traditions or by good works, regularly attending church meeting and Bible classes etc., will be horribly disappointed since God counts none of these things as making us righteous. Thus the words, "The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law" in this context refers to those who are trusting in their own righteousness to save them rather than submitting to God's law of righteousness that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those in the flesh refer to those who deny Christ and trust in their own self-efforts, but no-matter what they do they cannot please God since His entire plan of salvation for mankind is through His Son therefore setting the mind on the Spirit is about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for our righteousness, because it is faith that God counts as our righteousness not our own self-effort.

You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit: the words, "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you" (v9) means that those who are trusting in Christ for their righteousness are not in the flesh meaning walking according to their own natural thinking, but are in the Spirit because of their faith and it is by this faith that the Spirit of God and Christ's righteousness dwells in them therefore the words, "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (v9) refers to those who instead of trusting in Christ for their righteousness are trusting in their own self-efforts. The moment a Christian begins to trust in their-own good works is the moment they nullify everything Christ achieved for them on the cross.

Through sin the body is dead through righteousness the Spirit is life: the words, "If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (v10) means that those who are trusting in Christ for their righteousness even though their body is decaying and doomed to mortal death, they will be raised to eternal life because of the righteousness God freely imputes to them because of their faith in His Son.

NOTICE: Paul often uses the word (*if*) in this letter; this no-doubt is because he is writing to Jewish brothers and obviously would not know who amongst them is trusting in Moses law and circumcision etc., for their righteousness and who is fully submitted in faith to the law of righteousness that comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ this is the reason Paul uses the word (*if*) so often when he is speaking to a crowd or a congregation.

The words:

- If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you" (v11).

Mean whoever is trusting in Christ for their righteousness has God's Spirit dwelling in them and therefore just as God raised Christ from the dead to everlasting life and eternal glory God will also raise those who are by faith in Christ. This is the glory, the splendour and royal majesty of the Good

News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's simple and magnificent plan of salvation puts every man and woman on a level playing field, since eternal life is not dependent on our birthright, whether we are rich or poor, noble or lowly whether we live in beautiful homes or are a beggar on the street, we all have to come to God in the same way, which is through humble and honest repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ there is no other path to attain to righteousness that leads to eternal life in everlasting glory. The answer to Paul's question, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24) that he asked in the previous chapter is the Lord Jesus Christ it is Christ who delivers us from the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that dwell in our flesh and the body of death that we live in.

ROMANS 8:18-23

The Creation waits for the Revealing of the Sons of God.

- **Romans 8:18-23:** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

How marvellous and awe-inspiring is this, not only will we receive immortality and eternal life, but all of creation which at the moment is like our mortal bodies on a path of decay, will itself be restored to its former glory. Based on (Isaiah 65:25) I expect it will again be populated with all kinds of harmless animals and an abundance of brilliantly coloured flowers, trees and birds wherever one looks with fresh flowing streams running where there once were desert places. Eternal glory will be a feast for the eyes, an ongoing delight to the taste buds and a place where weapons of war will be replaced by farming equipment and sorrow and pain replaced with joy and laughter.

The revealing of the Sons of God: (v19) Paul personifies God's entire creation (from the fall of Adam) as a pregnant woman groaning in pain waiting to give birth to the sons and daughters of God and those who are the sons and daughters of God also groaning within themselves with excitement as they wait for the adoption and redemption of their bodies (v22-23) which will with awe-inspiring power take place at the resurrection when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God.

Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

NOTE: the closet I can come too mentally and emotionally comprehending the reality of Paul's statement:

- I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us (v18).

Is when I think of the enormous labour pain a woman suffers just prior to giving birth and that miraculous moment when a new life appears and she is holding that new born child in her arms. In that miraculous moment her facial expressions of agony and pain suddenly change and her eyes and her smile instantaneously radiate tears of overflowing joy and love, such will be that miraculous day when God reveals to us all the wonder and majestic splendour of everlasting life and eternal glory.

ROMANS 8:31-34

If God is for Us Who can be Against Us?

- **Romans 8:31-34:** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

The words if God is for us, who can be against us?) Should overwhelm everyone who trusts in Christ and comfort and excite them almost beyond what human emotions can cope with, since this means that if you are in Christ God's eternal favour is toward you. Ponder for a moment; the words, "If the most holy and awe-inspiring God of all creation did not spare His only beloved Son to save you while you were a sinner will He not give you all things concerning salvation now that you are devoted to His Son and love him.

All things: in this context refer to all things regarding eternal life (i.e., grace, mercy, justification and forgiveness etc.). Paul is saying God will give those in Christ all that they need to enter into eternal life and everlasting glory. Ponder for a moment the majestic beauty of the following Scriptures:

- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).
- While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Romans 5:10).

These are breath-taking statements and should be an overwhelming comfort to every brother and sister of Christ since they carry an astoundingly and perfect example of love and are some of the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since they clearly show how much Christ loves us. Paul in the same letter also wrote the following:

- While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

This means that even though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our corrupted earthly bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, envy, jealousies, anger and such like things) Christ died for us he laid down his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our corrupted fallen nature God that we have inherited from our earthly father Adam God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift. These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God loved us long before we loved Him. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly and indifferent to God and His ways and in many cases blasphemers. Sadly, some in the Christian faith, because of a lack of perceiving this great love God has toward us that these verses (and others like them) shine a spotlight on tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances. They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes, they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. It is for all these breathtaking and humbling truths' that Paul states, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies: no one can bring any accusation against any faithful brother or sister in Christ concerning their salvation because it is God who justifies and not man. This truth should be enormously powerful and comforting since it means that no human no matter how religious or how big a church, they may have the power to condemn anyone who is trusting in Christ. There are at least two obvious reasons for this:

1. Not one of us can stand before God free of sin since we are all infected with sinful dysfunctions and aberrations in our human nature that prevent us from attaining to the perfect standard of the law and therefore all fall short of God's glory.
2. Not one of us know the heart of another (i.e. their past indoctrinations, their family condition, their health or financial struggles, the lack of love they may have experienced, the rejection of family or friends, verbal, sexual, or physical abuses or the hurt that they keep hidden in the heart), only God knows all these things and therefore only He is able to judge the sincerity and honesty of those who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A typical example of this maybe a young mother who loves Christ and has two children, but happens to be living in a third world country, she has no hope of a job, no social security and no-one with money to help her, so to provide food for her children she against everything that is in her sells her body, this woman is suffering beyond what most of us can imagine,

but most religious people would look to her outward behaviour and condemn her as a gross sinner, but God sees the brokenness of the heart, the motivation to lay her own dignity aside to save the life of her children this is one of the reasons we cannot condemn anyone who is faithfully trusting in Christ, and even more so if we are not prepared to step in and do whatever is necessary to rescue them from what we might be condemning them for.

God has not called brothers and sisters in Christ to judge the salvation of those who are struggling to overcome behaviours or habits that they are trapped in for reasons we may not understand rather those in Christ are called to encourage and show grace and mercy and when able help those in troubling circumstances and leave the judging to the Lord Jesus Christ.

A natural example: only God can know what the true motivation of the heart. Consider a pastor of a major church who has tremendous success, a congregation of thousands and many being saved and the cleaning ladies who faithfully clean the church after every meeting. The Pastor because of his great gifts receives fame, money, power, self-importance and is highly esteemed whereas the cleaning ladies receive none of these things in fact in some cases no-one even notices them.

Now if we were to judge by outward appearance most of us would exalt the Pastor above the ladies, but we cannot know if the Pastor is in the ministry to serves self, (i.e., for the fame, money, power and importance) or to serve God, depending on the inward motivation of the heart he and the cleaning ladies will be rewarded accordingly and it is certain that in some cases the ladies will be exalted above their pastor, minister or priest. This is why no brother or sister in Christ should judge the salvation of another but leave that judgement to the Lord of Glory who we will all stand before to give an account of ourselves and not of others.

NOTE: the beauty and power of the Good News of the Gospel, is that the Spirit of God is able to save to eternal life in spite of the heart motivation of another, it matters not what the motivation of a preacher/minister or priest is if he is proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel and there happens to be honest and humble hearts in the assembly seeking God they will find Him even though the preacher/minister or priest maybe ministering for his own selfish gain (i.e., for the fame, money, power and importance). This is because God will respond to a heart that has the right attitude and save that person since the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not bound or limited by another person's wrong heart attitudes and motivations.

ROMANS 8:35-39

Who shall Separate Us from the Love of Christ?

- **Romans 8:35-39:** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul in these verses is saying that no matter what the apostles (and by extension all who belong to Christ), suffer whether it be troubles of life, rejection of friendships, a failing business, a broken marriage, living on the breadline, living in danger or facing persecution or a terminal disease none of it will separate them from the love of God that they experience through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This means that the only thing that has any power to cause God the Father and His Son to withdraw their favour and eternal saving grace from us is our own deliberate and conscious rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Providing we do not throw

away our faith in Christ we are more than conquerors in spite of our sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that dwell within and regardless of whatever may come against us. The only thing that can separate those in Christ from the love of God is their own unbelief.

ROMANS 9:1-5

From Israel came the Christ.

- **Romans 9:1-5:** I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—² that I (Paul) have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen (the Jews) according to the flesh (birthright).. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Israel has always been God's special and unique people.

God said:

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation:

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power.
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules.
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises.
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory.
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted.
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith.
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world.

The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges.

My conscience bears witness in the Holy Spirit: Paul's statement that he is not lying and that his conscience bears him witness in the Holy Spirit means that Paul has a clear conscience before God in saying that he has great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart for the people of his nation Israel. It means that before God he knows he is telling the truth. Paul had great love for Israel, so much so that if it was possible for the nation of Israel to be saved by him laying aside his salvation, he would gladly do it. Some scholars think Paul was boldly saying this because he knew it was impossible to do since everyone has to make their own individual decision, but Paul had previously stated that before God he has

a clear conscience in expressing his deep sorrow and declaring his love for Israel. Perhaps to help understand the sincerity of Paul's words one only has to look at the enormous persecution, beatings, imprisonments etc., he suffered at the hand of the Jews in his continued attempts to proclaim to them the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The beauty, majestic and stunning wonder of God: Israel was God's chosen people, so much so that from them came the Christ we all love with overwhelming devotion and glory. Yet the nation that was chosen to be exalted above all nations rejected their promised Messiah and King which resulted in God (through the apostles, especially Paul) turning His eternal favour toward the Gentiles (everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) and is now building a new nation in Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles in Christ. This new nation is also called, a new creation in Christ; the Body of Christ; the Kingdom of God and the church.

ROMANS 9:30-33

A Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense.

- **Romans 9:30-33:** What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,³³ as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." (cited from Isaiah 8:14).

Moses law was only given to the Hebrew and Jewish people and not the nations outside of Israel, this is the reason the Gentiles did not pursue the law. The law has the potential to lead to righteousness, but the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations which we have all inherited in our fallen corrupted human nature from our earthly father Adam limits any human from being able to attain to the perfect standard the law demands since the command, "Thou shalt not covet," embraces all our sinful thoughts and attitudes which mean it is futile to attempt to attain to the standard of righteousness God's Holiness demands and therefore the only righteousness that God recognizes is that righteousness that comes by faith. Abraham the father of faith and an example of a righteous man achieved righteousness by faith and not by works this is evidenced by the fact he was circumcised after he was declared a righteous man (circumcision was a sign of righteousness) and the fact that the law came long after God declared him righteous. Paul is saying Israel's denial of their Messiah the Christ and their futile attempt to attain to righteousness by strictly and legalistically adhering to Moses Law and all its customs failed miserably fulfilling the following words of Isaiah that Paul cites; -

- He (Jesus) will become a sanctuary and a stone of offence and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Isaiah 8:14).

But the Gentile who never attempted to keep the law achieved righteousness by God's abundant grace because of their faith in Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 10:5-10

With the Heart One Believes and by Confession One is Saved.

- **Romans 10:5-10:** For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.⁶ But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down)⁷ "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth

that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

The law does not have mercy or compassion its demand on those that are under it is strictly official, formal and legal and enforced without compassion or any sense of sorrow toward its condemned victims. The demand of the law states, "If anyone fails to keep it in any aspect, they are guilty of breaking it. It then rightfully and legally judges and sentences its victims to death. It is futile to attempt to attain to righteousness by keeping the law since the law also states:

- You shall not covet your neighbour's house, his wife, his very successful business, his new car, beautiful boat or anything that belongs to him (Exod. 20:17).

Added to this the royal law states:

- You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Rom. 13:9).

Jesus says all the commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words of the royal law. The spirit underpinning the royal law is, desiring the best for others contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving and seeking the best for self. The commandment, "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, lust, and greed etc., it reveals the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy Law and embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that are contrary to the law of love and the Holiness of God. This means that the entire human race is held guilty before the law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to death which it does without hesitation, compassion or mercy. This is why the grace that God lavishes upon us every day should fill our hearts with overflowing gratitude that we are saved by the righteousness that comes by faith and not by our own works or self-effort. For a greater insight into the sinful depth of coveting see the notes following the titles: "Where Sin Increased, Grace Abounded" and The Law, "You shall not Covet" following (Romans 5:20-21) (above).

Ascending into heaven and descending into the abyss: Paul, in saying, "Who will go up to heaven and bring Christ down to earth to establish righteousness and who will go down to the grave and bring Christ up from the dead to establish righteousness (v7-8) is alluding to the following words of Moses as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy:

- When all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you (Deut. 30:1).

No go to verse eleven:

- Know that this commandment is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. "I have set before you today life and good, death and evil (Deut. 30:11-14).

Moses told Israel if they:

- Love the LORD their God, by walking in his ways they will live and God will bless them, but if in their heart they turn away to worship other gods they will surely perish (Deut. 30:16-18).

God through Moses is offering to the nation of Israel life or death. When Moses and Paul said to the people of Israel:

- Do not say in your heart who will ascend to heaven or who will go over the sea and bring it to us etc.?

They were basically saying the path to righteousness and salvation is not so far away that it is difficult to find. Moses and Paul's words carry the idea of accessibility meaning that righteousness that leads to eternal salvation is not so high that it is inaccessible for ordinary folk. Moses was telling the children of Israel that the way to life was not hard all they had to do was remain faithful and obedient to the Lord and Paul is making a similar statement (i.e., no-one has to do great things to obtain the righteousness of God in Christ because it does not come by self-effort, but by faith and God's grace).

With the mouth one confesses and is saved: (v9) confession in this context does not refer to a one-time confession, but to an ongoing testimony. It does not mean responding to a motivational speaker while mood music is being played and confessing the name of Christ, (though some may be saved this way) for many it is a response from emotion and not from a belief in the heart. Brothers and sisters in the early church were saved in their home churches, on the street at the riverside and on the seashore or wherever they happened to be when they heard the Gospel. Confession in this context means declaring what is secret in the heart and carries the idea of saying something so that it won't be a secret anymore which means that salvation comes through belief in the heart and an outward confession that declares that inward belief to our family, friends and those we come in contact with.

But this does not mean that we impose or force our faith upon those who are not interested, but that we are not ashamed to be known as believers in Christ.

With the heart one believes: (v10) the words with the heart one believes refers to the vital principal or sum total of what a person believes. Confession is important because it witnesses what is in the heart. In Jesus era and the age of the apostles' no-one came to Christ in an atmosphere of music, but simply by hearing the Good News of the Gospel. This does not mean that it is wrong to invite people to Christ in a church service, but it should always be remembered that confessing in this context is about sharing what is already in the heart with family, friends and those we come in contact with when it is safe to do so (Christ does not expect or demand his children to deliberately put their life in danger or harm's way physically or verbally) thus biblical confession that leads to eternal salvation is not a one-time confession, but speaking openly about our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone who believes in Christ will not be put to shame: (v11) this means that no one who trusts in Christ will not be humiliated or let down, but will be vindicated when Christ returns in glory because their eternal salvation is guaranteed since it is based on the promise of God and He cannot lie. All those in the Old Testament who throughout history were faithful to God and believed in the coming promised Messiah the Christ and those who throughout the generations of the New Testament until Christ returns in glory who have had faith in the Lord will be vindicated when the Jesus returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth and the sons and daughters of God are manifested in righteousness and glory for all creation to see.

The same Lord is Lord of all: (v12) some in the Christian faith believe the Jews are more favoured by God than all others, but the words the same Lord is Lord of all shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that it matters not if a person is male or female; a descendant of Abraham; born a Hebrew or Jew or born of any other language or nation, nor does it matter if a person is rich or poor, noble or lowly; a leader of a global church or the church cleaner all who have faith in Christ are equal no one is superior to another in God's Kingdom no matter what their origin of birth maybe or how gifted they might be. Paul with the words, "There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him, because everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (v13) is brilliantly highlighting this truth.

Faith comes from Hearing, and Hearing through the Word of Christ.

- **Romans 10:17:** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

The same principal that applies to hearing also applies to reading the words of Christ. Obviously during the early church, the Scriptures were not as available as they are today, so the most common form of God's word reaching the world was through brothers and sisters sharing the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the words of Christ carry sufficient information in them for a person to receive ample faith to be saved to eternal life.

This is enormously good news, "Why some might wonder." Simply this: amongst some religious churches today congregations are lead to believe that they must hold fast to a certain set of doctrines (these will vary depending on what church they are in) to be saved to eternal life and that should they move away from believing this fixed set of doctrines they will lose their salvation. Now this is why these words of Paul are so glorious they shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that all anyone needs to know to be saved to eternal life and reconciled to God is the words of the of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Jesus asked Peter if he desired to leave him, Peter responded by saying:

- Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life (John 6:68).

This means that a person could buy a Bible with the words of Christ written in red print and by reading the words written in red they would have enough information to be saved to eternal life. Since everyone is saved by grace which not only covers the limitations of the flesh, but also the limitations of our intellectual knowledge no one has to know the Bible from cover to cover to be saved to eternal life, but they do need to understand the words of Christ because it is the words of Christ" that have the power to save not a list of doctrines or having a head full of Scriptural knowledge from Genesis to Revelation (even though this is a wonderful blessing when it is clothed with love, grace and mercy).

ROMANS 11:22-24

The Kindness and the Severity of God.

- **Romans 11:22-24:** Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. ²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

The kindness and severity of God refers to the following two things:

1. Severity toward the Jews who have denied Christ and thereby fallen away from God and therefore will be cast out of God's Kingdom and kindness toward the Gentiles who have accepted Christ since they by faith and grace are brought into God's Kingdom.
2. The kindness of God of God toward all peoples of the world who are saved in Christ because they are saved to eternal life by faith and grace and not by works and self-effort while the severity of God refers to all peoples of the world who are corrupt and deny God being judged to eternal death.

Natural branches and a wild olive tree: in this verse Paul symbolizes the nation of Israel as a cultivated olive tree and the Gentile nations as a wild olive tree and branches being cut from the wild tree and by faith grafted into the cultivated tree. Jews and Gentiles who do believe are united together in Christ they are the true offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the true descendants of David and the true brothers and sisters of Christ and the children of God.

NOTE: these verses clearly show that the expression, "Once saved always saved" is simply not true. If a Christian deliberately and consciously chooses to deny Christ and turn away from their faith they would obviously be grafted out of God's Kingdom, but the Good News is that nothing else other than our own decision can separate us from the love of God as Paul so beautifully states with the following words:

- Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:35-39).

ROMANS 14:17-23

The Kingdom of God is Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Spirit.

- **Romans 14:17-23:** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ So then let us pursue (follow after in KJV) what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding (edify in KJV). ²⁰ Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. ²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. ²² The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. ²³ But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

NOTE: the context of these verses is not upon salvation to eternal life, but serving Christ and being approved of God. The Kingdom of God is about living a good lifestyle before God and others it is about keeping peace as much as it is in our power to do so and having joy in good and wholesome things in this world. Paul is saying the way to serve Christ is to live a good lifestyle, maintain peace as much as it is possible and have joy in good and wholesome things and by serving Christ in this way a brother and sister in Christ is not only acceptable to God, but also acceptable to the unsaved and therefore bring a good testimony to God, to Christ and to the Christian faith.

Upbuilding: (Edify in KJV) in this context means confirmation and acceptance it is initially about Jews and Gentiles encouraging each other, but by extension it extends to all those who belong to the family of Christ mutually encouraging everyone in the faith. Paul is saying don't focus on judgement, but pursue what makes for peace and encouragement.

Blessed is the one who does not pass judgment on themselves: Paul is saying if a brother or sister in Christ has faith that what they allow is OK before God even though it may cause others to stumble then it is better to keep it to themselves. It should be mentioned that the focus of these verses is not about sinful actions, but eating foods, drinking wine, etc., it is about wholesome acts of conscience. A good example of this is drinking alcohol, one man may feel is OK to have a couple of cold beers after a hard day's work in the sun, another may feel it is OK to have a bottle of wine when he takes his wife out for a romantic dinner, while others believe it is totally sinful to drink any alcohol at all. Paul is saying to those whose conscience is clear before the Lord in regards to drinking

alcohol that they should leave the bottle of wine at home if they are going out with those who believe it is sinful to drink. The principal is that it is better for us to lay aside what we want for the sake our brother or sister while we are with them rather than cause tension.

NOTE: The Bible does not teach that drinking alcohol is sinful, but it does clearly warn against drinking and excessive amount of it.

Conscience and doubt: if a brother or sister in Christ has doubt in their conscience about what they are doing they will feel a certain amount of guilt and condemnation in their conscience because they are not sure that what they are doing is right before the Lord and therefore they are not doing it in faith toward God. Paul is saying, if those in Christ do anything (i.e., have a glass of wine) that is not in faith, meaning with a clear conscience before God they will feel condemned by doing it. This condemnation is not about eternal salvation, but about bringing condemnation on ourselves by our actions because we are doing something, we are unsure of. God is not going to reject those in Christ because of what they eat or drink or because of any other non-sinful action they do, but are not sure of it since in this context it is not the action itself (drinking a glass of wine etc.) that is sinful, but the doubt that is involved in the conscience while drinking it that makes it sin.

The idea behind all Paul's teaching in this chapter is that God and the Lord Jesus Christ want us to live true to ourselves and to our own conscience in contrast to living in pretence and being hypocrites or living according to another person's conscience. The underlying thought in this chapter is living with our conscience before Christ and not before man, God wants us to be free from the influence of other people's conscience and walk with our own conscience before the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 15:20-21

Building on Another Man's Foundation.

- **Romans 15:20-21:** and thus I (Paul) make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation,²¹ but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

Verse twenty-one alludes to the following prophetic words of Isaiah: -

- Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted and as many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—so shall he sprinkle many nations kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand (Isa. 52:13-15).

Much of Old Testament Scripture has Christ inter-woven into it in many different ways often the prophets spoke the words of God, but did not always fully understand them, but the beauty and wonder of these hidden things are now revealed in the New Testament. Many of the New Testament Scriptures shine a brilliant floodlight on those things that were once hidden or interwoven into much of what the prophets spoke and like a book being opened the New Testament brings many revelations of Christ and of God's eternal plan of salvation out into the open for all to see. Here Paul no-doubt is using the words of Isaiah to clearly show the Jews that many people from Gentile nations who have never been told or even heard of the wonders of God as the Jewish people had over thousands of years will nevertheless understand the Good News of the Gospel of Christ and his death and resurrection when they see the goodness of his life and hear of his willingness to give his live over to his enemies and suffer a bloody brutal and cruel death on the cross and hear of the Lord's non-judgmental words of forgiveness being spoken toward those who cruelly nailed him as a common criminal to it.

NOTICE: Paul had no desire to take the Gospel into an area where others were proclaiming it, his desire and ambition was to take the message of eternal life to those who had never heard it rather than to those who already knew it.

ROMANS 16:25-27

The Mystery that was Kept Secret for Long Ages.

- **Romans 16:25-27:** Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

The mystery kept secret for long ages, but is now revealed refers to the Good News of the Gospel of Christ' which states that Israel's Messiah, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ would die and be raised to eternal life and by God's grace through faith in Christ the Gentiles would become heirs with Israel to the promises God made to Abraham. The mystery that was hidden to the Old Testament fathers was that Jews and Gentiles would be united by faith in Jesus and become one new nation in Christ (also called a new creation, the body of Christ, the family of God and the church) and be raised as one people to rule and reign with the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace. For further information see the notes following:

- Romans 8:18-23 (above) under the title, "The revealing of the Sons of God"

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
