

THE TEST OF THE SCRIPTURES  
or  
"WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?"  
Romans 4:1-15

Intro: Paul introduced the most fundamental principle in all Christian teaching by his question in verse 3, "For what saith the scripture?" All teaching in our churches must stand the test of the Scriptures. Any teaching which cannot pass such a test must be rejected -- immediately and totally! If the Church had remained true to this principle we would have been spared a lot of false doctrine, and a lot of false practices which have found their way into the Church.

The principle is given even greater support by the fact that the Apostle Paul himself submitted to it!

The Church has one final court of appeal -- and it is the Word of God! Cf. 1:2; 3:21b.

Now let us notice what the situation is at this point in Paul's letter to the church at Rome.

In Rom. 3:21-31 Paul has given us his statement of the doctrine of justification by faith. He has said that:

- 1) It is by faith, not by works.
  - 2) It is by grace.
  - 3) It is "without the law," i.e., apart from the Law.
  - 4) It is only through Christ.
  - 5) Circumcision has no part in it. (See also ch. 2.)
- He said other things, but these are the points that we need to be concerned with now.

Paul was writing under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and so it would be enough if all we had of doctrine in Romans relating to justification were those 11 verses at the end of chapter 3. But to confirm his teaching, to place it beyond any doubt whatsoever, Paul now proceeded to prove it by showing that the OT taught exactly what he was teaching.

The first thing that he needs to establish from the OT is the justification is indeed by faith, and not by works.

I. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, NOT BY WORKS (Rom. 4:1-3).

How can this be proved? By going back to Abraham. What do the Scriptures teach about Abraham? (Go through the text verse by verse -- in verses 1 through 3.)

The question in verse 1 actually means, If we were to consider Abraham merely as a man, what did he have? The answer: NOTHING!

Verse 2: If he had done anything to merit salvation, then he could boast about it, but it would not mean giving glory to God.

In verse 27 of chapter 3 Paul had said that "boasting . . . is excluded." So we are about to see that it was excluded from Abraham.

How do we know?

Verse 3: "For what saith the scripture?" And then Paul quoted Genesis 15:6 where we read, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." It does not say that he did any work. It does not say that he had some special personal merit. It does not say that he was circumcised. IT ONLY SAYS THAT HE "BELIEVED GOD . . ."

The verb, "counted" is found 11 times in this one chapter. It is also translated "reckoned" and "imputed." See vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, and 24. It means that God graciously put righteousness to Abraham's account whereas before he was charged with guilt deserving of death!

This is what Moses wrote about Abraham -- by the Holy Spirit! And it was Abraham's by faith, not by works.

Verses 4 and 5 could actually go with what Paul wrote about Abraham, or what he wrote about David in verse 6 through 8, but I am going to consider it with the reference to David. And so the second point in the chapter is,

## II. JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE, NOT BY WORKS (Rom. 4:4-8).

See what Paul had taught in Rom. 3:24 -- " . . . freely by his grace . . ."

Here in v. 4 Paul pointed out that you cannot have grace with works. If a person works for something, then that something cannot be a gift; it is a matter of paying a debt.

On the other hand (v. 5), if a person does not work, but believes, then his faith becomes the instrument by which he is "counted" righteous.

And the quotation from David in the 32nd Psalm proves this.

David actually stated that which is removed in justification, not that which is acquired. He wrote of forgiveness. And he said nothing at all about works!

So Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel, and David, Israel's first God-given king, were both justified by faith, and their works had nothing to do with it!

But we still have two major points, or questions:

- 1) What about circumcision?
- 2) What about the Law?

Surely Paul is going to lose a point here because we know that Abraham was circumcised, circumcised after he was an adult and living in the land. How will Paul answer this one (the Jews had probably asked many times)?

Let us look at the text.

### III. JUSTIFICATION WITHOUT CIRCUMCISION (Rom. 4:9-12).

Now, since Abraham was circumcised, and we know that David also must have been circumcised as an Israelite, does this not prove the very thing that Paul had been denying -- that salvation was for "the circumcision only"?

See verse 9.

But then look at verse 10!

This calls for a return to the book of Genesis to note chapters 15 and 17.

Since Ishmael was 13 years old at this time (see Gen. 17:25), this means that it was over 13 years previously that Abraham had been declared righteous because Ishmael's birth took place in chapter 16!

We could even add to this the fact that Heb. 11:8 tells us that Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees "by faith" when he was younger than 75 (the first age of Abraham given to us in Gen. 12), so this would mean that Abraham, according to his age in Gen. 17:1, had been saved over 25 years -- without circumcision!

Thus this proves two things:

- 1) Circumcision was not required for Abraham's justification.
- 2) Justification is not limited to the Jews. In fact, it would mean that Jews have to come to Christ as Gentiles do, if not uncircumcised, at least not depending on their circumcision.

Circumcision was added later as a "sign" and as a "seal," but not as a condition. In both instances it was a confirmation of salvation. Perhaps we could say that MAN OBSERVED IT AS A SIGN, AND GOD RECOGNIZED IT AS A SEAL. As a "sign" it pointed to the special nature of salvation; as a "seal" it authenticated, confirmed, the faith of the believer.

But there is one more point. What about the Law?

## IV. JUSTIFICATION WITHOUT THE LAW (Rom. 4:13-15).

The Law is eliminated as a condition for salvation on more than one count:

- 1) If circumcision is eliminated because it was given several years after Abraham was declared righteous by faith, what place could the Law have when it was never given to Abraham, but followed the promise by some 430 years?
- 2) Law is completely in contrast with a promise. The Law is to be obeyed; a promise is to be believed. The Law is dependent upon the one who receives it; the promise is dependent upon the one who gave it.
- 3) The Law does not justify; it "worketh wrath" (v. 15).
- 4) The Law does not remove sin; it makes sin more obvious than ever (v. 15).

So Abraham's justification could in no way have been dependent upon the Law, and so it is eliminated.

How wise God was in giving circumcision when He did, and in giving the Law when He did. Even Bible history helps us to understand that salvation is by faith alone.

And the same would apply to baptism, to church membership, and to anything else that men might try to add to faith, or to substitute for faith!

Concl: As I close, I want to show you one point not included in our text, but taken up by Paul in his letter to the churches of Galatia.

Please turn to Gal. 3, verses 15-18.

Paul shows beyond any doubt that IF the Law could be added to the promise, coming 430 years later, it would nullify the promise, and there would be no salvation at all!

And the same would be true if circumcision had been added, or baptism, or church membership, or any work of any kind! Salvation is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ is the One who is completely responsible for salvation, without any help from man. All of these things are important and have their place, but not as a condition of our salvation.

Illus: One of our men who contracted to buy a car, and, when he went to accept delivery of the car, the dealer wanted to add \$1,200 to the price. That ended the deal.

God has never changed the original promise, and He never will!  
Cf. John 3:16.

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM  
Romans 4:16-25

Intro: The whole fourth chapter of Romans deals with the faith of Abraham, but there is this difference between the section we had last week in the first 15 verses, and the text that we have today, beginning with verse 16 and going to the end of the chapter:

- 1) The first 15 verses show that Abraham himself was actually justified before God, and by God, through faith.
- 2) The verses which we will consider now, beginning with verse 16, show what Abraham's faith means to us now!

Our text begins with that emphasis in verse 16, and it concludes with that emphasis in the last 3 verses of the chapter.

Briefly the point that Paul was making in the verses of our text for this service is that since Abraham was justified by faith, that is the only way anybody is ever going to be justified because God made him "the father of us all," that is, the father of all of us who believe!

For Abraham to be "the father" of all who are to be justified means that all who are his spiritual children must be justified, and can be justified, only as he was justified!  
This is the main point of verses 16 through 25!

We saw last week that the last 11 verses of chapter 3 give us Paul's statement, his teaching, concerning justification by faith.

Then, in the first 15 verses of chapter 4 where he discussed Abraham's faith it was his purpose to show that this was the only teaching about salvation that could pass the test of Old Testament Scripture.

Do you remember the points that Paul made?

They are:

- 1) The declaration made in Gen. 15:6.
- 2) The confirmation of faith which was made by David in Psa. 32:1, 2.
- 3) The fact that the declaration of Abraham's justification was made 14 or 15 years before he was circumcised.
- 4) Finally, the fact that Abraham was declared justified over 400 years before the Law was given to Moses.

So it had to be by faith alone, not because of the fact that Abraham was a special person, nor because he believed and was circumcised, nor because he believed and kept the Law, but solely because of his faith!

Now, for the Apostle Paul to have written like he did must have meant that nothing ever happened to change the fact that Abraham was justified! This means that his justification was a lasting

justification; it was permanent, eternal!

If Abraham's justification had been dependent upon him alone, or even dependent upon God up to a certain point--and then upon Abraham, there would have been no way that it could have been guaranteed and sure! But it was sure and certain and eternal for Abraham because it was dependent upon God alone; it was by faith!

And that is exactly the point that Paul was making in our text for today: If justification could only be "sure" for Abraham if it were by faith, then that is the only way it can be "sure" for those who are his spiritual children.

See the word "sure" in verse 16. This means that it was not only God's purpose to make salvation available, but it was His purpose to make it permanent. And the only way He could make it permanent was to make it dependent upon Himself, and so it had to be by faith!

And so we come in our text, in verse 16 and the first part of verse 17, to what we can call,

#### I. THE ADDED MEANING OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH (Rom. 4:16, 17a).

He was justified by faith, that is, out of faith, according to grace,

before he was circumcised,  
and before the Law was given,

"to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed," because Abraham, as "the father of us all" who believe, was justified in the only way that we can be justified. His justification was the pattern for our justification. God declared in Genesis 15 and again in Genesis 17 that he would have a "seed."

And so when Paul wrote, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace," he meant that it was "of faith," not by circumcision, or the Law, or any other addition (as he had just pointed out in the preceding verses) "to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

Who are "the seed"?

Turn to Rom. 9:6-13. "The seed" are, according to Romans 9, "the children of the promise." And, as we continue to read down through Romans 9, we learn that "the children of the promise" are the elect!

So God made salvation by faith that salvation might be "sure" for a certain group of people who are also going to be saved --the elect. And the elect are people eternally chosen by

God to be justified by faith.

And if you want to know if you are one of the elect, I am going to tell you how you can know before I finish this service.

But now let me go on to my second point.

## II. THE DESCRIPTION OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH (Rom. 4:17b-22).

Why did Paul go into such a lengthy description of Abraham's faith?

It was so you and I could judge whether or not our faith is like his faith. He was "the father" of all believers, and so the faith of those who believe must have the same ingredients that Abraham's faith had or it cannot be saving faith!

Note, then, what is said here about Abraham's faith.

### A. It was faith in God.

Abraham did not believe in himself; he believed in God!

And notice the description that is given of God in this seventeenth verse: "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."

The trouble with most people in connection with faith is that they have too meagre ~~of~~ an understanding of God in His great power and majesty!

But notice also that

### B. It was faith before God.

Paul wrote, " . . . before him whom he believed, even God."

You see, this is the reason that it is not primarily important that you tell me or someone else that you believe, but that you believe in the presence of God; that is, that He knows that you believe.

We are saved in accordance with what takes place in our hearts "before" GOD!

### C. It was faith in the Word of God.

See verse 18, especially the latter part.

Abraham believed God when reason and circumstances told

him that the situation was hopeless! " . . . against hope he believed in hope," not just for himself, but "that he might become the father of many nations"!

But why was it hopeless? Verse 19 tells us, and that brings us to the fourth point in Abraham's faith:

- D. It was faith which did not "stagger," or doubt, or waver, over his own inability, or Sarah's (v. 19).

God waited until it was hopeless before he gave Abraham and Sarah their own son. But this was to show the certainty of God's promise!

And then Paul concludes this section (from v. 17b down to v. 22) by a summation of what he had pointed out in the preceding verses.

He was not discouraged by his own dead body. He took all of that into consideration. Instead he was "fully persuaded." This means that he was fully convinced, absolutely certain, positively assured -- a very strong statement of his faith.

He knew about himself, and about Sarah. He understood that. He had taken all of that into account. And then believed God.

This is the kind of faith that Abraham had!

Now for our last point:

### III. THE IMPORTANCE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH TO US (Rom. 4:23-25).

All that has been written in Genesis about Abraham's faith was not written just to teach us that Abraham was justified by faith, but it was "for us also, if we believe . . ." The KJV says, "if," but the Greek could be translated simply in this way: " . . . for us also who believe . . ."

This is the only way anyone can be saved.

How do you know if you you are Abraham's seed, if you are elect? You can only be sure if you believe.

Christ did not die to save everyone. He could have saved everyone by His death, but that was not His purpose. He died to save Abraham's seed. He died to save the elect. We cannot tell who the elect are until they believe. "If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," then we can know that Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

But, you may say, Why is it important for us to understand



that Christ died to save Abraham and his seed? It is so we will not minimize either the power of God or the work of Christ.

Let me ask you a question.

If Christ were actually handed over by God to death "for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, that is, that full provision was made for our justification, then would God be righteous to demand that sinners who do not believe pay for their sins a second time? Can any sinner go to hell if Christ died to remove his "offences," our sins, our transgressions?

The people who believe that Christ died to save all men, but that He is only able to save a few, are guilty of:

- 1) Minimizing the power of God.
- 2) Saying that Jesus Christ did not really accomplish anything for certain when He died.
- 3) Making a work out of faith, since Christ's work is not sufficient for our sins until we believe.

What does the Word teach?

It teaches that Christ did accomplish a work which was sufficient for the salvation of those for whom He died, and that they will without doubt come to Christ by faith which God gives through the ministry of the Word to their hearts.

Concl: Is all of this for you? It is if you have believed.  
Your faith from God confirms your election by God.

If you had not believed in Christ before you came to this service, perhaps you have believed as you have been listening to the Word of God just now. Or perhaps you are conscious even now that something new has been going on in your heart as the Word has been read and preached today. Remember Rom. 10:17. Believe in God and in Christ, and you will be saved. Turn from yourself and all of your efforts. Put your trust in Christ alone, in His death, and you will find that the death of Christ was for you.

JUSTIFICATION BY SUBSTITUTION  
or  
THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH  
Romans 4:23-25

— Intro: Although I hurriedly covered the last three verses of chapter 4 last Sunday, I want to return to them again today because of their great importance both in the book of Romans, and in the doctrine of salvation. Martin Luther said that we have all of the Gospel included in these three verses! Before we look at them in detail, let me point out the important words of the Gospel that are here. It is important that we understand them.

Here they are:

1) The Scriptures -- in v. 23.

2) Imputation -- in vv. 23, 24.

Remember that this word is used throughout the chapter in vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 22, in addition to vv. 23 and 24.

It means to charge someone with a fault, or to credit someone with something good. We learned in Rom. 3:19 that all of the world has been charged with guilt because of sin. From Rom. 3:21 on we have been learning that God has made provision to credit the account of those who believe with the righteousness that is God's. The object of these verses is to show how that is possible since it is completely undeserved by any man.

3) Faith -- in v. 24.

We have been hearing about this word since chapter 1.

See 1:8, 12, 16, 17.

See 3:3, 22 (2x), 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 (2x), 31.

See 4:3, 5 (2x), 9, 11 (2x), 12, 13, 14, 16 (2x), 17, 18, 19, 20, 24.

In Rom. 3:22 we are introduced to the object of our faith, and that is what Paul returned to in the verses we are considering today.

4) God -- in v. 24, " . . . him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

5) The Deity of Jesus in v. 24 -- "Jesus our Lord."

6) The fact of the resurrection of Jesus -- in v. 24.

7) The meaning of the Cross -- in v. 25.

8) The meaning of the resurrection -- in v. 25.

9) Finally, the theme of this section of Romans: justification -- in v. 25. But it is also implied by the use of the word "imputed" in vv. 23, 24.

— Any person who really understands these three verses, will never be confused as to the nature of the Gospel, or, to state it another way, will never be confused as to the way of salvation! In fact, even the faith of Abraham becomes clearer when we understand Paul's words in this passage.

May the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, make every part of these three verses clear to each of us today.

# I. THE AUTHORITY BEHIND PAUL'S WRITINGS (Rom. 4:23, 24a)

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed . . ."

Paul was an Apostle. And so Paul had authority from God equal to that of Moses. But here Paul indicates that his authority as an Apostle does not contradict the authority of Moses, or of the Old Testament, but is in perfect harmony with it.

Moses wrote for Abraham's sake, but not for his sake alone; he also wrote "for us . . . to whom" this same righteousness of God "shall be imputed . . ."

Notice Rom. 15:4.

What does this mean?

It means that we must never take seriously any teaching about salvation which cannot be supported by Scripture -- by the Bible! It has been written, and it stands written at this very moment -- so there will be no doubt as to how sinful men can be cleared from their guilt and declared righteous before God!

A second thing in our text:

# II. THE CONDITION UPON WHICH SINNERS ARE JUSTIFIED (Rom. 4:24b, 25).

Very simply, it is faith -- "if we believe . . ." This is what Paul has been saying from the beginning of Romans, as I have showed you.

It can never be on the basis of a person's good character, nor because of his family heritage. Nor is it by works (because no man can do enough to merit salvation by overcoming all of the guilt of the past). It is by faith.

But faith, or believing, is so often misunderstood because we do not go to the Scriptures to find out what is involved in believing. Many take it as meaning that we agree to the historical facts alone. Others believe in nothing in particular -- they just believe, they hope that somehow everything will finally turn out to their advantage when they stand before God. But they have no certainty that it will because they have never understood the nature of saving faith.

I want you to see that Paul has taught us in this passage

### III. THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH.

Make sure that you understand and believe the following points which Paul made in this passage.

- A. Saving faith is faith in God -- "if we believe on HIM that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." See v. 24.

It also includes Christ (as we will see), but you cannot eliminate God. God and Christ are inseparable in the work of salvation. And any work that includes Christ but excludes God cannot be saving faith!

Cf. John 5:24; 1 Pet. 1:21; Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 John 5:9-12.

Some people only talk about Christ. Others only talk about God. Either one by itself is wrong. Saving faith includes faith in God and faith in Christ.

- B. Saving faith is faith in an historical event -- the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

God actually, literally, in a physical way, "raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Any person who does not believe this cannot be a Christian!

If you need further proof, read 1 Cor. 15:12-19.

And yet we have a lot of people today who claim to be Christians, some who are even in the ministry, who deny the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ. They cannot possibly be saved.

- C. Saving faith is faith in the Deity of Jesus.

Whom did God raise from the dead? "Jesus our Lord."

Paul has mentioned this before in Romans, too. Among all of the reasons for the resurrection of Christ, this one stands pre-eminent. See Rom. 1:3, 4. This is one thing that the resurrection of Christ meant -- that He was, and is, and always will be, the "Lord."

If you do not believe this, you cannot be a Christian.

In addition,

- D. Saving faith is faith in the death of Christ.

Here we come to the main emphasis in the passage.

In v. 25 Paul explains for us at least three things involved in the death of Christ which carried over into His resurrection.

He has answered three questions for us:

- 1) If Jesus Christ were the "Lord," the absolutely perfect, sinless "Lord," then why did He die?
- 2) If Jesus Christ were the "Lord," then how was it possible for mere men to kill Him?
- 3) What was the meaning of His resurrection when we relate it to His death, and the purpose of His death?

First,

1. Why did the Lord Jesus die?

He "was delivered for our offences," for our sins, for our transgressions!

Cf. Isa. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:3.

Our justification was obtained at the price of His substitution. He died in our place, for us, not because He had any need Himself.

You cannot be a Christian if you do not believe this.

2. How could men put Him to death if He were the "Lord"?

He "was delivered for our offences . . ." He was handed over. By whom? Let Peter answer that for us even though it is clear even in our text. See Acts 2:23 where Peter was speaking of Christ:

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

See also  
Acts 4:23-28.

Robert Haldane has said in commenting on this passage (p. 183),

God decreed this even<sup>t</sup>; He willed that it should come to pass, and ordered circumstances, in His providence, in such a way as gave men an opportunity to carry into effect their wicked intention.

And in the sentence before this one, he wrote,  
The crucifixion of Christ being the greatest of all crimes, was hateful and highly provoking in

the sight of God; yet it was the will of God that it should take place, in order to bring to pass the greatest good (pp. 182, 183).

You must believe this to be a Christian.

But we have one more question.

3. What connection did the resurrection of Christ have with His death?

Listen to what Paul said: "and was raised again for our justification."

Does this contradict Rom. 5:9? No. In Rom. 4:25 Paul is teaching us that God raised Christ from the dead as evidence that He, God, was completely satisfied with the work of His Son -- that full provision had been made by our Lord in His death for the justification of sinners.

And so God has declared that all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will be forgiven, and justified before God!

Saving faith is faith in the sufficiency of the death of Christ, and faith that God has declared His satisfaction by raising His Son from the dead.

You must believe this to be a Christian!

But I want to make one more point:

#### IV. THE BENEFICIARIES OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

Who is to receive the gift of salvation as a result of Christ's death?

Did you notice that Paul kept on saying "for us also . . . for our offences . . . for our justification"?

To whom is he referring?

Primarily he was writing to the believers in Rome. But he expanded it to all who believe when he said, ". . . if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Let me ask you this question: If Jesus Christ died for a certain sinner, could that sinner possibly be lost? Could Jesus Christ offer Himself in vain? Would God be just to accept the payment for a sinner's sins, and then require it from the sinner again?

I am not speaking now about the value of the death of Christ. Anything that the Lord would do had to be of infinite value. But I am speaking of the intention of His death, the reason He died, His purpose in going to the cross.

It was this: CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS TO SAVE THOSE WHO WOULD BELIEVE -- and no one else! Therefore, by my faith I am not including myself in what Christ did; if so, I would have a part in my salvation. My faith instead, being itself a gift from God, is proof that God included me in the death of His Son -- and that it has been His intention from all eternity that I come to Christ to be saved!

Therefore we must see that those who were included in the death of Christ are those who eventually, in time, will receive the benefits of that death. He died "for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

Concl: Do you believe? Are you trusting in the saving grace of God and in the saving work of Jesus Christ? Do you believe in Christ because you know He is the "Lord" and do you believe He was raised because He had accomplished all that was necessary for God to declare you righteous in His sight? Are you trusting in all of this, and not at all in yourself or anything that you have or could do?

If so, this is saving faith, and you need to thank God that He has cleared you from your guilt and that you have complete acceptance with Him.

If not, then you must believe or you will not, and cannot, be saved. It still stands as the truth: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." May God in His grace draw you to Himself and enable you to turn from your sins and to trust Christ.

JUSTIFIED, AND MORE!  
Romans 5:1-5

Intro: The usual way of dividing the first 8 chapters of Romans is to point out that:

- 1) In 1:18-3:20 Paul wrote about condemnation.
- 2) In 3:21-5:21 he wrote about justification.
- 3) In 6:1-8:17, sanctification.
- 4) In 8:18-39, glorification.

These are accurate divisions.

But sometimes it is helpful to see that there are other ways to outline a section of Scripture like this.

William G. T. Shedd, who lived in the last century (1820-1894), used another division. He said that:

- 1) In 1:18-3:20 Paul showed the necessity for justification.
- 2) In 3:21-4:25, the nature of justification.
- 3) In 5:1-8:29, the effects of justification.

Thus, he would have said, and rightly so, that, in beginning chapter 5 we have set before us the effects of justification! He would have us see that justification carries with it more than a right standing with God (although that is amazing beyond words to express). It includes a host of other blessings which are not only doctrinal, but practical.

Anyone who teaches Romans would be perfectly right in saying that, in Romans 1-11 we have the doctrinal section of the book, while in Romans 12-16 we have the practical section. But you will see as we consider our text today that Paul gets into some practical aspects of salvation -- both things which we experience as a result of salvation as well as things which we are to do! For example, we have "peace," and we "glory"!

So let us be sure to notice that.

These 5 verses at the beginning of chapter 5 are important for other reasons:

- 1) Did you notice that we have all three **Members** of the Godhead mentioned?
  - "God" is mentioned three times -- vv. 1, 2, 5.
  - "Our Lord Jesus Christ" is mentioned with His full Name for the first time since Rom. 1:3, 7. So this should not escape our notice.
  - "The Holy Ghost," or the Holy Spirit, is mentioned in v. 5.
- 2) Did you notice that the three tenses of salvation are mentioned here -- the past, the present, and the future?
  - The past -- v. 1.
  - The present -- vv. 2-5a.
  - The future -- in Paul's reference to our "hope."



In fact,

- 3) Did you notice that the believer's "hope" is mentioned 3x? In vv. 2, 4, and 5.
- 4) Did you notice that Paul spoke of rejoicing, or glorying, or exulting, 2x?

It is not apparent in the KJV, but the words "rejoice" in v. 2, and "glory" in v. 3 are the same word in the Greek.

I am sure that there must be other unique features about our text, but let me mention one more.

- 5) Did you notice that we have faith, hope, and love in these verses?

"Faith" in v. 1, and again in v. 2.

"Hope" (as I have pointed out) in vv. 2, 4, 5.

"Love" in v. 5.

So this is a rich text.

Instead of taking as my subject, JUSTIFIED, AND MORE!, I could have used that expression in Heb. 6:9, " . . . things that accompany salvation . . ."

What are they?

I want to point them out under four headings. Since we are talking about being JUSTIFIED, AND MORE!

- 1) Justification is the first point -- from v. 1.
- 2) The second point is peace -- also in v. 1.
- 3) The third point is access -- in v. 2.
- 4) The last point is rejoicing, or glorying, which is introduced in the last part of v. 2 and carries us through to the end of v. 5.

First then,

#### I. "JUSTIFIED" (Rom. 5:1).

You might say that Paul had been discussing justification since chapter 3, verse 21; what more can he say?

Well, he could say a lot more, but he evidently had one main purpose in mentioning it here -- to show that justification is permanent, as compared with something that we can lose.

This is seen in the verb "justified," or "being justified" -- an aorist passive.

But it is also implied by the fact that Paul speaks here using an ellipsis. Do you know what that is? It is a grammatical form in which you do not say all that you could say, but you say part and the rest is understood. This is true of "being justified by faith." That which is implied is that we are justified by faith in the shed blood, or the

atoning death, of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not saved by our faith as such, but by Christ. We are not saved by anything that we have done, but by what He has done! And so this is a settled, permanent, eternal work that He has done for us!

God has made this declaration concerning all who believe in Christ -- and it is an irrevocable declaration!

See vv. 8, 9.

What a wonderful fact of Scripture this is! What could never be said of us otherwise, God has declared because of Christ's death for us. Let us pray that we will never get over the wonder of it!

Illus: Charles Svenson, pastor in Hilo, Hawaii, with tears in his eyes, as I drove him back to Salem yesterday and we were talking about being saved -- particular redemption.

## II. PEACE (Rom. 5:1).

If we have peace now, "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, then Paul was implying that there was a time when we did not have peace. And, if we did not have peace, then we were at enmity with Him.

See vv. 10, 11.

To "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" is the doctrine of reconciliation.

The believer is no longer under divine wrath and under divine judgment because included in his justification is reconciliation! There could be no justification without reconciliation.

Paul wrote in Col. 1:20-22,

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace . . ."

## III. ACCESS (Rom. 5:2).

"Access" is a word in the Greek which means that one person

is brought to another person knowing that he is acceptable to the person to whom he is brought because the person to whom he is brought is favorably disposed toward him.

This noun, "access," is used in only two other places in the NT, Eph. 2:18; 3:12, but the verb is used in 1 Pet. 3:18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. Being brought to God is what "access" is.

And it is in "this grace" of salvation where "we stand."

Charles Hodge says that "stand" means that "we are firmly and immovably established" (p. 133) in our salvation!

So again we have an emphasis upon the permanence of our salvation. This is the doctrine which we need to have clearly in mind.

But let us move on to the last word:

#### IV. REJOICE (Rom. 5:2b-5).

This verb, as I have said, is used twice -- translated once "rejoice," and the second time, "glory" -- "we glory in tribulations also."

Both of these usages have to do with the present, but both of them also have to do with the future. And both are related to what Paul had just written. Because our salvation is permanent, is secure,

##### A. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

"Hope" is a future certainty. "Hope of the glory of God" is not only "hope" of seeing that glory, but the "hope" of sharing that glory -- as we will learn later in Romans, chapter 8!

And I should mention that this verb "rejoice" carries with it the idea of rejoicing victoriously, triumphantly, because of the certainty of the "hope."

It is based upon the work of Christ so it cannot fail!

But notice the second part of this rejoicing.

##### B. "We glory in tribulations also."

Now this can sound very strange to a person if he does not understand that we do not "glory in tribulations"

because we like to suffer, but because of what is being accomplished through those sufferings.

Cf. Rom. 8:18.

What are "tribulations"? Basically they are pressures, pressures which try our faith. See James 1:2-4. And thus they produce "patience." This, in turn, proves that we really belong to the Lord. (This is what is meant by the word "experience.") And this intensifies the reality and expectation of our "hope."

And that "hope maketh not ashamed"! Why? "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."

We would never have known about "the love of God," i.e., God's love for us (not our love for Him), as v. 8 shows, if it had not been for the Holy Spirit. And He has "shed abroad" that love in our hearts with such a fulness and such an abundance that a true believer **never** loses his realization of that love.

So it is His love for us that holds us, not our love for Him -- although our love should become greater and greater, too!

"Tribulations" are God's will for us, and "patience" under those "tribulations" when our faith is tried means that we are learning submission to the will of God because we know that they are God's will, and because we know that He has a purpose in them that has to do with our "hope."

See Rom. 8:24, 25.

Concl: Are you "justified"? You are if your faith is in Christ.

Do you know that you "stand" permanently in this place of acceptance with God -- in other words, that you have "access"? This is what Paul wanted all believers to understand.

But, what is even harder and more rare -- do you "rejoice" as Paul did, and in what he rejoiced, and for the same reason? Do you rejoice in the troubles of the present because you know what God is preparing you for? Are you looking forward to being in heaven with the Lord, to seeing His glory, and to sharing that glory? If you rejoice more in earthly things it can mean that you are in spiritual need. If you rejoice only in earthly things, it probably means that you do not know the Lord.

May God grant that all of us will know the reality of these truths so that we will be looking for Christ to come.

## WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CROSS?

Romans 5:6-11

Intro: We are in that section of Romans where Paul was dealing with justification. In particular, he was dealing with the effects of justification in chapter 5. We have peace. We have access . . . We rejoice in hope . . . And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also . . . And then in verse 5 Paul made the statement that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."

Thus, the presence of the Holy Spirit in every believer's life is proof of the love of God. However, the Holy Spirit, Who has been given to all believers, is confirmation of a love which existed long before He came, a love which was proved in an even greater way. This is the main emphasis in our text for today: the greatest proof that we have that God loves us! It is stated in verse 8. (Read.)

Paul showed that the love of God for us is proved:

- 1) Because of the One through Whom He expressed His love.
- 2) By the manner in which that love was expressed.
- 3) Through what was accomplished by what that One did.

What happened at the Cross? God was expressing His great love for us. Let us look at the details of our text.

Notice, first of all, that

### I. IT HAS TO DO WITH CHRIST, THE INCOMPARABLE.

Think of all of the ways God expresses His goodness to men, and yet none of those ways would have been adequate to save us. Instead, He expressed His saving, His distinguishing, love for His people by the death of His Son for them, to meet their need of salvation.

Four times in our text the death of Christ is referred to: in verses 6, 8, 9, and 10. (Read.)

So very clearly Paul attributes our salvation, not to the teachings of Christ, nor to the example of Christ, but to the death of Christ! There can be no doubt about that.

This truth cannot help but move the heart of anyone whom God has marked out for salvation.

However, there is something else that we need to notice here.

If anyone were to die for us for any reason, we would never be able to get over it. But notice what our text tells us. It was not just anyone who died for us; it was "Christ." It

was God's "Son." It was "our Lord Jesus Christ." See these in verses 6, 8, 9, 10 -- with His full name given in v. 11.

It is not unusual that a father would give himself for his son, that he would die for his son. Remember the case of David's lamentation over Absalom in 2 Samuel 18:33. But for a father to give his son in death for others is truly the most amazing of all things that could take place. And yet the One who died for us was God's Son. He was appointed and anointed for this very purpose. And He died even though He was and is "our Lord Jesus Christ" -- so it was something that He had the power to avoid. But He died! He died a horrible death, indescribably horrible -- and He died for us!

Think much about the death of Christ -- and think about it, not as you try to imagine it, but as it is portrayed in the Word of God. Read the record over and over in the Gospels. Read it in chapters like Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. See how it was proclaimed by the Apostles, and others, in the book of Acts. And search out those passages, like Romans 5, where it is discussed in the Epistles. See also the place that it has in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book of the Bible.

But all of this brings me to my second point.

## II. "CHRIST DIED FOR US" -- HE DID THE UNTHINKABLE.

Notice the point that Paul made in verse 7. He singled out two kinds of outstanding men who would, in a special way, deserve such a death. "A righteous man" is a person who abides by the law; he does what you would expect a law-abiding person to do. He can be depended upon to do the right thing at all times. "A good man" is kind and gracious and humble, one who is characterized by love. We approve of and admire the righteous man, but we love the good man. Rarely, very rarely would you find one who would be willing to die for either of them, but it is more thinkable that "some would even dare to die" for the good man.

But notice what is so unthinkable about the death of Christ. He did not die for righteous men, nor for good men, but, as our text brings out, He died for us who can only be described as:

- 1) "Without strength" (v. 6).
- 2) "The ungodly" (v. 6).
- 3) "Sinners" (v. 8).
- 4) Under divine wrath (v. 9).
- 5) "Enemies" (v. 10).

Such truth as this baffles the mind. It is further proof of Isa. 55:8, 9. Let me define these terms for you.

- A. "Without strength." This means without the strength to please Him, and without the strength to help ourselves. It means total inability. It even means without the strength to turn to Him. There is no "free will" to even choose Him. Christ died for those who were completely "without strength," any strength that would either contribute to their salvation or even provide a single reason as to why Christ should die for them.
- B. "The ungodly." This is the person who does not want to have anything to do with God. He is unwilling to please God. He is content to live without God because he feels completely sufficient for himself. It never enters his mind to give God the worship and homage and service which God so richly deserves.

This applies to all of us.

- C. "Sinners." This is the person who is not only capable of sin, but who is devoted to sin! He is actually and continually and deliberately sinning. He is headed in the wrong direction, but he refuses to change. He may hate the results of his sin, but he will go right back to it.
- D. Under divine wrath. This has to be the case since God is a righteous and holy God! This explains the reason for the use of the words salvation and justification. Christ died for those who themselves were under the sentence of death. Their doom was sealed because of their sin, and because they belonged to a sinful race of people. Instead of deserving Christ's death, they deserved His wrath!
- E. "Enemies." Notice: "We were enemies." I just spoke about God's wrath toward us; now I speak of our wrath toward Him. We did not love Him; we hated Him. We did not seek Him; we rebelled against Him. We did not want God as a Friend; we were content to go to our graves as His enemies.

Can you really understand why such a Person as Christ should die for people like we are? It is unthinkable, but He did!

And, in doing so, there is a third thing (already mentioned) that we must not miss.

### III. HE EXPRESSED THE UNBELIEVABLE.

Read it in verse 8 again.

After all that Paul said about us, you can see that there is

not an iota of a reason as to why God should love us! And yet our verse indicates that He loved us before we were saved. He even loved us before Christ died for us! There was no condition in us which would cause God to love us and to choose us and to send Christ to die for us so that He could save us -- and that is why our salvation is based upon unconditional election. The reason for our salvation is in God's unbelievable love for us, not because of anything that He saw in us that made Him love us!

God demonstrated, God proved, lit., His own love, for us, in that, before there was any change in us, even before there was any desire for a change, "Christ died for us."

You can look all through human history, from start to finish, and you will never find anything like this!

But let me mention one more thing:

#### IV. CHRIST ACCOMPLISHED THE IMPOSSIBLE -- by His death.

There are four things that Paul mentioned which Christ accomplished by His death.

##### A. "Being now justified by his blood" (v. 9).

God has declared us righteous because of what His Son has done for us. We are cleared of our judgment before God. The penalty of our sins has been removed. We are forgiven, and stand before God in His own righteousness.

And all of this is true "now."

##### B. "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."

See v. 10. Notice the two ways in which the word "reconciled" is used in this verse. The provision for our reconciliation was made at the Cross. Could it be possible, then, that one for whom Christ died would not eventually be reconciled in actual experience?

Christ removed the cause of God's wrath against us, and of our enmity against Him. We are now friends! There is peace between us. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

##### C. Two statements give us the third accomplishment: "We shall be saved from wrath through him" (v. 9), and "we shall be saved by his life" (v. 10).

These statements mean that all that Christ accomplished for us on the Cross was permanent!



Be sure to notice the three tenses of salvation in verse 10.

Justification, and reconciliation, and deliverance from God's wrath are not conditional, but they are guaranteed by Christ's death.

And so is my last point -- which in some respects is the most impossible and unbelievable of all!

- D. "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement," the reconciliation.

To "joy in God" is the opposite of being "ungodly." It expresses what it means to be godly. This also describes the true nature of the Christian life. Any person who does not "joy in God" cannot possibly be a Christian. Obviously we may rejoice in Him to different degrees, but such joy will be there.

// "Joy" is the same verb that is used in verses 2 and 3,  
// translated "rejoice" and "glory." And the three uses  
// give us a picture of Christian experience.

Notice, too, that these three expressions are linked together with the words, "And not only so" (in v. 3, and again in v. 11).

Listen to what Spurgeon said about this:

The apostle had been mentioning very great and amazing privileges; he had gone from great benefits to yet greater; he had advanced, I might say, from silver to gold, and from gold to the priceless crystal; and when he had reached the highest point that we could have thought to be conceivable, he adds, "And not only so." There is always in Christian privilege a yet beyond. . . . we may have concluded in the early days of our Christian experience that we never could be happier, that we never could enjoy greater privileges, that there could not be greater treasures that we had discovered; but even at this present we have pushed far beyond our young attainments, and are preparing for yet more far-reaching endeavours. We have not yet attained. Far be it from us to imagine that we are or have all that the Lord intends. Let us not sit down contented with the notion that the gospel contains no more, for rest assured, to him who is able to follow after it there are whole worlds of privilege yet to be discovered. We are only at the foot of the mountain as yet. We

may take for our motto the words, "Higher, higher, higher," and may soar aloft again and again on eagles' wings, for heaven is higher than our loftiest flight. At the end of all we have known and experienced there may be written, "And not only so." A nobler future allures us, a higher line of spiritual things invites us; let us by faith and patience press forward to it. The borders of Immanuel's land have yielded us choice fruit, but the inner valleys are rich with eshcol clusters, and the books in the heart of the country overflow with milk and honey.

The present passage indicates a high attainment in spiritual life, when the soul learns not only to rejoice in salvation--which is an early experience, or to rejoice in tribulation--which is a far riper fruit, but advances even beyond that, and learns to make her joy, her glory, and her boast in God, in God alone. "And not only so, but we joy in God." There is the point of elevated experience of which the apostle speaks with such confident familiarity. It certainly touches the confines of heaven, if it be not altogether heaven. This is the joy of angels and of spirits purified from all stain; they joy in God. Yet this is an attainment possible to us here. (Vol. 18, pp. 205, 206)

A true understanding of our salvation teaches us that we can never rejoice in ourselves, nor in our merits (because we have none), nor can we rejoice in others. We can only rejoice in the Lord.

Concl: Christian, is this where you are living -- in God's "not only so"? Has your heart grown cold? Is life nothing but a burden? Is even the service of the Lord a great weight upon you? Then what do you need, but to "joy in God," to boast in Him, to exult in Him, not in yourself, not in your possessions, not in your family, not in your work, not in your friends, but in God -- in Who He is, and in His love for you, and in all that He has accomplished for you because of His great love for you.

When you and I "joy in God," the burdens will be lifted, and the blessing will return to our lives. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

(See Spurgeon's words in Vol. 18, pp. 216, 217.)

(Read Isa. 12.)

FROM ADAM TO MOSES TO CHRIST  
Romans 5:12-21

Intro: I want you to see where we are going today before we get there. Look at Romans 5:21. Notice that there Paul spoke of sin reigning, and of grace reigning. In other words, he was speaking of sovereign sin, and of sovereign grace. Sin reigns unto death; grace reigns unto eternal life. And verses 20 and 21 make it clear that, of these two sovereigns, grace is the mightier: " . . . But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." So quite evidently grace is the victor! This is why we speak of sovereign grace!

In interpreting any passage of Scripture it is important for us to notice the context, which includes:

- 1) The book in which the passage is found.
- 2) The verses which immediately precede the text.
- 3) The verses which follow.

Such observations are especially important in considering our text for this service.

With this passage Paul concluded the section on justification. Chapter 6 will begin his teaching on sanctification.

The one thing that he has made perfectly clear in chapter 5 with respect to justification is that it comes through one Person, through one man. That one Person is Jesus Christ. (Read Rom. 5:1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 -- and notice that justification is through Christ, and only through Christ.)

In the passage before us in verses 12-21 Paul shows us that that same fact is true with regard to sin -- it has been the result of what one man did. That man was Adam.

We will come back to this in a moment.

I have already mentioned that this passage concludes with a statement of the sovereignty of sin and the sovereignty of grace. Both reign as kings! But verses 20 and 21 also teach us the superiority of sovereign grace. Nevertheless, when we get into chapter 6 where Paul was dealing with sanctification, we come upon that word "reign" again. See verse 12. And we also have the idea of "dominion" in verses 9 and 14. In verse 6 Paul spoke of serving sin.

So what does all of this mean?

It means that we cannot understand sanctification if we do not understand justification, and that the very essence of justification has to do with what Christ has done for us in bringing His people under the reign of sovereign grace.

But it also follows that we will not understand justification unless we understand both the similarity between Adam and Christ, as well as the contrast.

So let us look first as

# I. THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN ADAM AND CHRIST (Rom. 5:12-14).

Paul has spent a great deal of time showing us that we are sinners, but he is just now getting around to showing us why we are sinners.

Our sinning is ultimately traceable to Adam's sin, just as Paul has shown in verses 1 through 11 that our justification is traceable to Christ.

Verse 12 gives us the doctrine of original sin. Adam's sin not only brought death to him, but it brought both sin and death to the whole human family.

And here we are told also why God waited some 2,500 years before giving the Law. It was to show that men are not condemned just because they have disobeyed the Law of God, but they are condemned because of their relationship to Adam. Adam brought sin, and with sin came death, and this twofold penalty has been passed on to all men. This is the heritage of the whole human race.

And so our sinning is not what has made us sinners; we are sinners by birth. And our sinning proves that we have a sinful nature.

It doesn't make any difference whether we like this or not, or even whether we believe it. It is true regardless of our attitude toward it.

We see this even in the physical aspects of our make-up. We are inclined to look like our parents, and are inclined to have the physical problems that our parents had.

And all of this is true (v. 14) even though we were never given the same kind of a test that was given to Adam. The reign of death proved man's connection with Adam, and the reign of death proved the universality of the reign of sin, even in the case of children who died.

But Paul's point here is that sin and death came to us through one man just as salvation and eternal life come to us through one man, another Man, Jesus Christ.

That shows the similarity between Adam and Christ.

But then Paul went on to speak about another point.

## II. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN ADAM AND CHRIST (Rom. 5:15-19).

This is apparent by what he had already written in the first 14 verses of the chapter, but he wanted to make sure that we understand the contrast and so he spelled it out in detail.

Adam was a type of Christ, but by contrast. (See v. 14.)

Paul stated the contrast for us 5 times in the five verses from verse 15 to verse 19.

The contrast has to do with:

- 1) The men who were involved -- Adam on the one hand, Christ on the other.
- 2) What they did -- one fell; the other obeyed.
- 3) The effect of what they did -- condemnation from Adam, justification from Christ.
- 4) How the two results come to men -- one by nature, the other as a gift of God's grace.
- 5) The people who are involved -- in the first instance, all men; in the second (at this point), it has to do with those who receive it.
- 6) The judgment which was the result of one man's offence, and the justification which has to do with many offences.

From these verses (15-19) it is easy to see that even in stating the contrasts, we cannot get away from the similarities -- and that is finally stated very clearly in v. 19. The effect of Adam's sin was definite, and particular, and so was the effect of the obedience of Christ!

And this fact is brought out even more strongly in the last two verses of the chapter. Since the grace of God is stronger than sin, and since the effect of Christ's obedience is greater than the effect of Adam's sin, it must follow that God is saving those whom He intended to save, and that the limited number of those who are being saved is of God's design, not by the refusal of men!

Thus, Paul here is teaching limited atonement--the limitation being set by God Himself. This fact becomes clearer the farther we go in Romans. But you even see it in the emphasis that Paul made in the first 11 verses on "we" and "us" and "our."

But let me go on to the last point.

## III. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER ADAM (Rom. 5:20, 21).

Or we could say, THE SUPERIORITY OF GRACE OVER SIN!

Paul mentioned "the law" in vv. 13 and 14, and now we come to it again. Why did God give the Law, to make man a sinner? NO! But to show that he was a sinner!

Remember Rom. 3:20b, " . . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

So the sovereign power of God's grace was magnified by the giving of the Law, and it made sin abound, that is, it showed the awfulness of sin as it had never been seen before.

"But . . . That . . . (vv. 20b, 21).

SOVEREIGN GRACE reigns:

- 1) Over sin and death -- setting the sinner free.
- 2) "Through righteousness" -- the provision.
- 3) "Unto eternal life" -- the guarantee.
- 4) "By Jesus Christ our Lord" -- the One and Only Mediator.

Is it any wonder that Paul wrote to the Ephesians that we who believe should be "to the praise of the glory of his grace"?

Concl: Throughout the history of the Church there have been men and women, gifted by God, who have been able to express in poetic form, and in music, the great doctrines of Scripture -- people like Charles Wesley, John Newton, Augustus Toplady, Philip Doddridge, and many others.

One theme that seems to have captivated the hearts of all of them who have known the truth of God is the subject of grace, God's grace. You and I know and have sung many of these hymns which praise God for His grace, the only basis on which we could ever be saved.

As I close this monring, let me read one of these great hymns, written by Philip Doddridge (1702-1751). He spoke of the marvel of God's grace, its conquering power, its discriminating nature, its eternal quality, and he did it in these words:

Grace! 'tis a charming sound,  
Harmonious to the ear;  
Heaven with the echo shall resound,  
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace first contrived the way  
To save rebellious man;  
And all the steps that grace display  
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace first inscribed my name  
In God's eternal book;  
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,  
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray,  
And pardoning love to know,  
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,  
And will not let me go. (Cont'd)

Grace all the work shall crown  
Through everlasting days;  
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,  
And well deserves the praise.

Are you under the reign of sovereign death, or of sovereign grace? Just as Adam brought you into death, only Christ can bring you into life? Only grace, the grace of God, is stronger than the death that you are now under. That grace has been manifested in God's Son, Jesus Christ, Who died to save those whom the Father has given to Him. You may be one of those. It is not an accident that you are here this morning, and it is not an accident that you have heard about the grace of God. God's command to all men is to believe in His Son. His promise is that He will not turn you away if you come. If you find a desire in your heart for Christ, it is because God has put it there. And so believe in Christ, forsake all that you have been clinging to apart from Christ; it is worthless. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

NO LONGER SLAVES  
or  
DOES GRACE ENCOURAGE SINNING?  
Romans 6:1-7

Intro: So often when you ask a person what a Christian is, they will respond by telling you what a Christian does! People do not understand that you cannot do unless you are! The book of Romans teaches this very clearly when it puts justification before sanctification. In Romans 6 we begin the section on sanctification, and it is based upon, it grows out of justification. There can be no sanctification unless there is justification. Or, to state it in another way, you cannot be right in your life unless you are right with God!

But we need to recognize another fact as we come to Romans 6. It is this: If there is justification, true justification, then there will be sanctification. It is impossible to have the first without having the second. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:24, That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

(I have actually read verses 22-24.) "Righteousness" is justification; "true holiness" is sanctification. The two go together. The first shows a changed relationship to God; the latter, a changed relationship to sin.

And, if we want to have the picture completed, the book of Romans teaches us that sanctification ends in glorification. Glorification is sanctification completed, but it will not take place until Christ comes. Justification, sanctification, and glorification are inseparably bound up together, and together make up salvation.

Sanctification teaches us that a person who is right with God (justified) will be changed in his life. The change will not be complete in this life (glorification), but there will be progressive changes taking place in a Christian's life -- and these changes begin to take place immediately. A Christian is not perfect, but he is moving in that direction.

Peter was dealing with these three great truths in 1 Peter 1. After speaking of salvation generally, he wrote this:

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

That is glorification. And then he continued,

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of



conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Pet. 1:13-16).

To be holy is to be sanctified. "So be ye holy" literally means to become holy, to become something which we have not been, and it is a quality of character and life which is only possible after a person has been justified by faith in Christ, and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

It is very important for us to understand justification, sanctification, and glorification, and to know their relationship to each other.

Now let us consider our text -- the first 7 verses of Romans 6. Actually the first part of this chapter goes down through verse 14, but I am only taking half of it because the fourteen verses are too much for the time we have in this service.

What was Paul doing here? How was he approaching the subject of sanctification?

Well, he did three things:

- 1) He referred to an accusation which had been brought against his teaching. This is in verse 1.
- 2) Secondly, he answered that accusation by labeling it as ridiculous and absurd. This is in verse 2.
- 3) Thirdly, he explains why the accusation was absurd. He was teaching in verses 3 through 7.

And there are really two parts to this third section.

In verses 3 and 4 Paul stated the wonderful doctrine of our union with Christ.

Then in verses 5, 6, and 7 he went on to tell what this union with Christ means in terms of our daily living.

First, then, let us look at

#### I. THE ACCUSATION (Rom. 6:1).

The teaching of the truth usually raises opposition. Paul faced this continually. The accusation was this -- that the teaching of salvation by sovereign grace encourages people to continue on in sin.

The reasoning stems from what Paul had written in Rom. 5:20b, and he could imagine how some people would react because he had seen that reaction so often before. (Explain.)

We have already had one reference to this earlier in this Epistle. See Rom. 3:5-8.

To Paul, this was no minor issue. And he will show that, instead of the teaching of sovereign grace leading to more sinning, it is the only teaching that leads to deliverance from sin.

How did Paul answer this accusation?

## II. THE ANSWER (Rom. 6:2).

He used an expression that appears 10 times in Romans: "God forbid." Actually the name of God was not used. It would be better translated, Let it not be! It showed Paul's repugnance at the idea. He was saying something like this: Away with the thought! While "God forbid" is not a real translation, it does express the idea. It made Paul sick to realize that people would think like this.

See the three previous times he used this expression: in Rom. 3:4, 6, 31.

And then he asked a question of his own: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

This is what he was going on to explain. "That are dead to sin" is literally, who died to sin. At this point he does not say what this means, or even when it happened, but simply that this was a fact which rendered a continuation in sin after salvation in the same manner in which a person had lived before salvation!

However, the explanation follows.

## III. THE TEACHING (Rom. 6:3-7).

Note: Problems related to the lives of the Lord's people are solved by teaching.

And Paul brought the Roman believers to the truth of

### A. The believer's union with Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4).

He did it by referring it to a baptism.

This is not water baptism. Water baptism pictures this, but it cannot be water baptism

- 1) because what Paul was talking about does not take place when a person is baptized.

And it cannot refer to water baptism, in the second place

- 2) because then you would have baptismal regeneration for sure!

Paul was talking about that which happened at the Cross, and that which happened when our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead! And he was showing in this passage that this is the very reason that a saved person cannot go on sinning in the same way. The whole purpose of the death and resurrection of Christ was to bring into

CF. MARK 10:  
38, 39; LUKE  
12:50.

being a group of people who would "walk in newness of life." "Newness" means, according to Charles Hodge, "a life that is new, compared with what is natural and original" (p. 195). And he also wrote on the same page that "the idea of purity is associated with that of newness in the word of God--a new heart, a new creature, the new man."

Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

And all of this was brought about by "the glory of the Father," which is a reference to the Father's personal and powerful involvement in all that was taking place when Christ died, and when He arose from the dead. It was not only Christ who died and rose again, but we died and rose again in Him.

Please note that Paul here is teaching limited atonement. Not everybody was "baptized into Jesus Christ," but, to quote from the NIV, "all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death."

Any and all who were joined with Christ in His death in in His resurrection eventually have to be saved. In no way could a person be so joined to Christ, and not be saved. Therefore, you could never say that Judas was joined to Christ in His death and resurrection.

Thus a person who makes the kind of an accusation that Paul spoke of in verse 1 is either a person who is not regenerated, or a child of God who has never been taught.

But this is not the end of the explanation. Paul went on to write about

B. The believer's death with Christ (Rom. 6:5-7).

(Next week, the Lord willing, we will be talking about the believer's resurrection with Christ from verses 8-10.)

In verse 5 Paul stated the doctrine of our union with Christ in His death and in His resurrection, which were our death and our resurrection.

What happened when Christ died?

Lit., our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

There are many terms here that we need to understand -- in verse 5 as well as in verse 6.

"Planted" in verse 5 means to grow together, or to be united. And the "if" is the kind of a condition which assumes something to be true, and so we can translate it with the word since.

What is "our old man"? It is all that we are, or were, without Christ -- including the way we lived because of what we were. This is what, according to Ephesians 4:22, we must put off. There has to be a changed life.

But how can that be?

Because when Christ died, He not only died to deliver us from the penalty of our sin, but He died to deliver us also from the power that sin held over us, the power that literally enslaved us! This is the reason he added at the end of verse 6, "that henceforth we should not serve sin." This means that Christians are NO LONGER SLAVES!

But the key to the doctrine is in the expression, "that the body of sin might be destroyed."

What is "the body of sin"? It is the sin nature which makes a sinner sin, which makes a sinner live like he does. If Christ had not died to deliver us from our sin nature as well as from our sins, we would have remained in bondage to our sinning.

And note very carefully that all through this passage Paul has spoke of "sin" (singular), not sins (plural). See verses 1, 2, 6 (2x), 7.

But what does it mean that "the body of sin" has been "destroyed"? Does this mean that, if a person is truly saved, he will stop sinning altogether? No. That is coming. That is glorification. But right now "the body of sin" has been "destroyed" because it has been rendered powerless (NIV) by Christ's death and resurrection and our continuing union with Him.

Now we can thank God that we do not have to understand all of the intricacies of this truth; but we need to know it, and we need to believe it, and we need to act on it. Our believing does not make it true, but we believe it because it is true. And when we act on it, we learn in our daily living that it is true.

Paul concluded this part by saying that "he that is dead is freed from sin," or, lit., he that died has been justified from sin! So what he meant was that for a person to have died with Christ means that he has been justified before God with all that that includes.

Note how verses 4, 5, and 6 all end on the same theme, although the synonymous expressions are different.

Concl: In conclusion, let me clarify what I have been saying by pointing out three things:

- 1) Although the believer's salvation was guaranteed at the Cross and in the resurrection of Christ, yet it does not actually become his until he receives Christ.
- 2) A believer can still sin, but he does not have to sin.
- 3) Our victory over sin is possible because of our union with Christ in His work (past) and in our continuing union with Him in our daily living (present).

Cf. Gal. 2:20.

Hallelujah, what a Saviour, and what a salvation!

All of the doctrines of grace are either expressed or strongly implied in this passage. (Enumerate.)

Griffith Thomas points out the evidence of depravity even in the question at the beginning of the chapter. Man has such an evil heart that he even will turn the truth of God's grace into an occasion for more sinning. (See pp. 165, 166.)

ALIVE WITH CHRIST FOREVER  
Romans 6:8-10

Scripture Reading: Romans 6:1-14.

Intro: In Romans 6, 7, and the first 17 verses of chapter 8 we have Paul's teaching on sanctification.

Sanctification has to do with the progress, the growth, that the true people of God will be making in living holy lives. Sanctification will always follow justification, just as day follows the night.

However, there were always those who tried to say just the opposite -- that justification by grace meant that we could go on in a life of sin. See the question in Romans 6:1. Paul's answer to that question gives us our starting point in verse 8 because he taught that we died to sin in the death of Christ. And, as the chapter goes on to show, not only was sin overthrown for the believer, but death also. That is where John Owen gets his subject on the atonement, THE DEATH OF DEATH IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

Christ's death benefits the people of God because Christ died as our substitute, in our place -- so that we have the Biblical teaching of our union with Christ in His death. We were united with Him when He died, and we were united with Him in His resurrection.

Thus, there is really a lot more here than mere substitution; we have identification and union. Christ not only went to the Cross for us who believe, but we went to the Cross with Him, and in Him.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make this clear to you.

Now, in considering Romans 6, be sure to notice that  
-- in verses 1- 4 Paul was stating the truth;  
-- in verses 5-7 he stated the truth of our oneness with Christ in His death and His resurrection, but then he spoke of what it meant that we were joined to Christ in His death;  
-- then in our text for today he went on to speak of our union with Christ in His resurrection.

And all of this is to show why a believer cannot go on living in sin, continuing in sin!

Therefore, Paul gave in verse 8 what we might call, A STATEMENT OF FAITH. And he followed that STATEMENT with A TWOFOLD PROOF of that statement -- the proof given in verses 9 and 10, one in verse 9, and the other in verse 10.

This is all doctrine, and some would probably say, heavy doctrine.

But it is important for us to understand the doctrine of the Cross or we will be greatly confused as to the effect of that work.

Thomas Manton, one of the Puritans, said concerning this passage that "the due consideration of Christ's being raised from the dead doth mightily promite spiritual life in us" (Vol. 11, p. 221).

Now let us begin our examination of our text by noting

# I. PAUL'S STATEMENT OF FAITH (Rom. 6:8).

What he said is that: That since we died with Christ, because Christ rose from the death, we also must believe that we were raised with Christ -- "that we shall also live with him."

Be sure to notice the words "with Christ" and "with him."  
We have nothing apart from Christ.

There are three things that I want you to see in this verse.

- A. Paul was teaching that there were those who were united to Christ in His death.

The first part of the eighth verse should be translated,  
For SINCE we died with Christ, . . .

This is not a possibility; it is a fact.

Who are the "we"? Obviously it has to do with believers only. Nowhere does the Bible teach that all men died with Christ. Only those who believe died with Christ.

HODGE IN  
2 COR., p. 278:  
"Christ died  
for all who  
died when  
He died."

And they did not die with Christ because they believe, but they believe because they died with Christ.

If we died with Christ, we had to do it at the Cross, and so consequently this was something which God did. It certainly could not be our doing because you and I were not even alive at the time.

You see, Paul is getting us ready for the doctrine of election. This is also the basis upon which we teach particular redemption -- that when Christ died on the Cross there was a great number of God's own choosing who died with Him. He not only died for them, but they died with Him.

This is the NT teaching concerning the death of Christ, and this is the foundation for holy living.

But let us go on to the second thing that is evident here in Paul's statement of faith.

- B. Paul was teaching that those who died with Christ will eventually live: "we believe that we shall also live with him."

Now what I ~~am~~ about to say is definitely the secondary meaning of the passage, but it is here nevertheless.

Paul was teaching here that those who died with Christ will eventually, and without fail, be saved.

In other words, the death of Christ guaranteed the salvation of those who died with Christ.

Let us look at two passages in John which give further proof of this: John 6:35-38 and John 17:6-9.

This is what we call EFFICACIOUS or IRRESISTIBLE GRACE. It means that those who died with Christ will without doubt be saved.

But Paul's statement of faith went even beyond this.

- C. Paul's statement of faith declared that those who died with Christ would live forever: "we believe that we shall also live with him."

Christ died to provide life that was eternal for all who died with Him. They would most certainly be saved, but they would also continue to be saved because of their union with Christ.

This is what Christ was saying in John 14:19, " . . . because I live, ye shall live also."

And this is Paul's teaching of THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS. And not only that, but he is preparing us for the teaching that he will give us in chapter 8 of the resurrection even of our bodies!

Note how the eternal character of our salvation is brought out in these other Scriptures: John 6:39, 40; 17:24; 10:27-30; 1 Pet. 1:3-9; Jude 24, 25.

These are wonderful truths which Paul has given us here, really too good to be true. But how do we know that they are true -- that those who died with Christ will certainly live with Him, and live with Him forever?

By the way -- before I deal with THE PROOF, let me point out one



other thing, or really two other things, from the fact of our union with Christ in His resurrection. This truth means that

- 1) we cannot live the life of a Christian except because of our oneness with Christ, and
  - 2) our oneness with Christ is going to mean a Christ-like life.
- The first point is usually ignored in present-day teaching concerning the Christian life and explains why there is such a lack of Christ-like people in the world today.

But not let us look at

## II. THE TWOFOLD PROOF OF PAUL'S STATEMENT OF FAITH (Rom. 6:9, 10).

How can Paul make such grand statements?

For two reasons:

### A. Proof #1 (Rom. 6:9). (Read.)

This is the connection between verses 8 and 9 and 10:

We can believe verse 8  
because verse 9 is true,  
and we can believe verse 9  
because verse 10 is true!

Hodge says that "knowing" in verse 9 means since we know.

Right at the opening of this Epistle Paul told us that the resurrection of Christ proved the Deity of Christ. See Rom. 1:3, 4. Now he tells us in this passage that Christ's resurrection shows that He had conquered death.

Death no longer exercises any lordship over Him! He can never die again.

This is one of the major points in the book of Hebrews and is expressed in verses like Heb. 7:25.

See also Acts 13:34-37.

But now notice the connection between Proof #1 in verse 9 and Proof #2 in verse 10.

Romans 5:12 taught us that death came by sin. And so it must follow that our Lord could not have conquered death unless He had also conquered sin. Did He? Look at verse 10:

### B. Proof #2 (Rom. 6:10).

Now we see the satisfactory work of Christ. It was only necessary that He die once (once-for-all) because He

settled the problem for sin forever for all who died with Him and who were raised with Him.

His one sacrifice was forever sufficient for those for whom He died, for those who died with Him. Cf. Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10, 12, 14.

His death was "unto sin" (a dative of reference), which we could translate, with reference to sin. And it was because He satisfactorily dealt with the sin of those who died with Him, that He has also conquered death, and because He has conquered death, we know, we believe, too, that nothing can possibly stand in the way of our living together with Him!

And so "he liveth unto God."

I will deal with this, the Lord willing, next week, as we come to verses 11-14. Notice this expression in verse 11 where it has to do with us just as verse 10 has to do with Christ.

This is what it means to be sanctified: living unto God. But more of that later.

Concl: But let me deal with another important matter as I close.

I have been saying, because Paul has written, that Christ died only for those who died with Him, and for those who were raised with Him. And that these are the people for whom an atonement has been made. It was for those whom the Father gave to the Son. It was for those who were chosen in Christ before the world was.

You have every right to ask, "How do I know that Christ's death was for me? How do I know that I died with Him?"

There is only one answer to that question: You know when you believe; you know because you believe.

You see, our faith does not originate with us; it is a gift from God. It comes through the Word. Cf. Rom. 10:17. We do not come to Christ on our own; the Lord draws us. We do not call on Him for salvation until He calls us. The reason we choose Him is because He has chosen us. Salvation is of the Lord, not of man!

And so the question for you and for me today is, Do we believe in Christ? God's promise is that, if we believe, we will be saved. And when we believe, we know that the Lord has saved us because we were joined with Christ when He died and when He rose again 2,000 years ago!

Finis.

LIVING UNTO GOD  
Romans 6:11-14

Intro: In the first 10 verses of Romans 6 Paul has given us the doctrinal basis of our sanctification. We have considered this. It has to do with our union with Christ in His death, and our union with Christ in His resurrection. When He died, we died with Him; when He arose, we arose with Him. He not only died for us, but we died in Him and with Him.

Now, in verses 11-14, we are ready for the practical side of our sanctification.

There are three things which Paul tells us to do, or not to do, in the first three verses of our text: vv. 11, 12, and 13. Then he gave a word of explanation in verse 14.

All of this is still a part of his answer to the question he raised in verse 1: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" To "continue in sin" is more than to continue sinning; it is to continue in bondage to sin! Paul's answer is an unhesitating, "No!"

Remember, too, that Paul wrote about "sin" in the singular -- speaking of "the body of sin," or our sin nature, which causes us to sin. In Romans 7:23 Paul called it, "the law of sin which is in my members." It is still in the believer.

And so be sure to notice that in the four verses of our text Paul has used the word "sin" in each of the four verses -- all in the singular! (Read.)

Taken all together, these verses describe what it means to live unto God; verse 14 shows us how it is possible. This is the way of holiness and the way to holiness!

I. THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS (Rom. 6:11-13).

These are not optional for the child of God; they are commands to be obeyed. These are practical things that we can expect to see in the life of anyone who is truly saved!

A. "Reckon . . ." (Rom. 6:11).

Notice the word, "Likewise." This points us back to the preceding verses, and to Christ. There will always be a difference between us and Christ, but Paul was indicating that, because of our union with Him, we can "reckon," or conclude, or regard as true, that the same facts apply to us.

Be sure to notice that he was referring to two things:

1. "Dead unto sin" -- which does not mean that we cannot sin, but that the bondage of sin has been broken, and broken forever!

The second is this:

2. "Alive unto God" -- which means that a new relationship to God exists. We have access to Him, and all that He is is ours, and available to us. Paul would have us know that the sufficiency of God is for us!

The point Paul was making is that there has been a severance from sin, and a uniting with the Almighty God!

This is one of the first evidences that we live by faith. Our counting on this does not make it true, but we count on it because it is true, and then we begin to experience the practical benefits of this truth.

This is simply a continuation of the faith we exercised for salvation.

It is the truth that our Lord expressed to Martha at the tomb of Lazarus: John 11:40, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe . . . ?"

It is not a "wishing will make it so," but faith taking hold of the truth of God, just as we believe the promises of God.

Act on this because you believe that it is the truth of God, and you will experience the benefits of it.

So you "reckon" that on the one hand something is no longer true, and on the other hand that something new has taken place.

- B. "Let not sin . . ." (Rom. 6:12).

Note the word, "therefore." It links verse 12 with verse 11, and shows the connection between these exhortations.

It means that you could not possibly do this (in verse 12) if that (in verse 11) were not true.

This is Paul's answer to the question in verse 1.

His words mean that you are not to let "sin" with its "lusts" continue to demand your obedience. You are to stop what formerly was the pattern of your life. Sin remains. And it will try to do what it has always done. It formerly reigned, that is, in the words of Charles

Hodge, it exercised uncontrolled authority (p. 203). But now, because of your union with Christ, and because you are alive unto God, that no longer can be the case!

These "lusts" which come from "sin" within us seek to control what Paul calls, "your mortal body." By this term he was referring to every part of our being. It includes our minds, our wills, our emotions, our appetites, as well as our eyes, our ears, our mouths, our hands, our feet -- actually, every part of us. "Lusts" are strong desires, cravings, longings -- all that a person "under sin" wants to have and is eager to get!

"Lusts" are mentioned in Romans in 1:24; 7:7, 8 (where it is translated, "concupiscence"); 13:14.

See also Eph. 2:3; 4:22; 2 Pet. 1:4, " . . . the corruption that is in the world through lust," 1 Pet. 2:11, "Abstain from fleshly lusts . . ." Jas. 1:12-14.

What it means for the flesh to lust is described in Gal. 5:19-21.

Cf. 1 John 2:15-17.

Gal. 5:1 is very similar to Rom. 6:12.

By faith we can refuse to let sin be the king any longer. And verse 13 gives us even more help.

C. "Neither yield . . . , but yield . . . (Rom. 6:13).

This same word is used in vv. 16, 19, and 12:1.

The first time it is used in v. 13 it is a present imperative; the second time, an aorist imperative. The difference is that Paul was teaching that we are not to continuously make our members available to sin, but to do something different. It does not have reference to when we have done it, nor to how successfully or completely we have done it, but just to the fact that we have. There may be failures, but we have done it. A new course of living has been taken on! (See Dana and Mantey.)

And be sure to note that it has to do with us before our members.

And our yieldedness is not to certain habits, nor to a way of life, but "unto God." This is so important, and it explains one reason for the many failures some believers have; their yieldedness is not "unto God"!

But what do we "yield"?

"Our members."

What are they? They are those very parts of our mortal bodies which once were used exclusively for sin:

- our minds
- our wills
- our affections, or emotions
- our appetites
- our eyes
- our ears
- our mouths
- our hands
- our feet
- and everything else!

Have you ever taken the time to look into the Word of God to see what it has to say about "your members"?

You see, we are not really down to business about being holy until we begin to get concerned about how to and to what we are yielding the various parts of our body. Yielding is offering ourselves, making ourselves available, providing ourselves for certain purposes.

How do you use your members? You can be defeated by doing things that are worthless as well as those things which are more obviously harmful. The wrong use of our members can only be corrected by the right use of them.

And notice that Paul also calls them "instruments."

Every place else where this word is used in the NT it has to do with weapons of warfare. Cf. John 18:3; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4. It is translated "armour" in Rom. 13:12.

So this indicates that your "members" are weapons. They can be used against you for sin, or for you, "as instruments of righteousness unto God."

How are you using them?

It would be very profitable to take up each member and spend a whole service on it.

See Col. 3:1-17 as an example of what needs to be done by every child of God, and it will be done in the lives of those who truly know the Lord.

But let me go on to the last verse in our text, verse 14, where we have:

## II. THE POWER OF HOLINESS (Rom. 6:14).

When Lloyd-Jones taught Romans to his Friday night class he spend four weeks on this one verse. That will give you an idea of how important he thought it was, and how much truth he saw in it.

Let me spend at least 4 minutes with it -- hoping to touch upon it many times more before we finish Romans!

What does it mean to be "under" anything?

In Romans 3:9 we learned that Paul had "before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin."

Now Paul has spoken about being "not under the law, but under grace." Lit. it would be better translated, not under law (instead of "the law"), but under grace.

To be "under" anything, according to Thayer, p. 642, is to be subject to that thing. To be "under sin" is to be hopelessly in bondage to sin and its consequences. To be "under . . . law" means to be under a system where the results are dependent upon what we do. The results are dependent upon our ability to do what needs to be done. But to be "under grace" means that we are not left to our own resources, but that we have God, we have Christ, we have the Holy Spirit, we have the Word of God. We have Their power, Their sufficiency, Their enablement. This is the certainty of our hope that we can be what we should be, and what we must be, if we are to show ourselves to be the children of God, and if we are to lay claim to a place in heaven!

If it were dependent upon us, we would never ~~make~~ it! We are no longer "under sin," not because we are "under law," but because we are "under grace" -- under God's authority, under His dominion, under His Lordship!

Concl: Let me ask you a question. How do you feel about sin?

Do you know what sin is? Are you concerned about it? Do you hate it? Do you long to be holy? If you are not, then there is a very strong possibility that you are not saved! And I would urge you to turn to Christ. He alone can deliver you.

If you are concerned about sin, then offer your thanks to God. He has given you this concern, and He has provided for your deliverance. The way is here. If you have failed, let it turn you more to the Lord. Live unto Him! He will not fail you. But be sure that you notice how you are using your "members," not as weapons against you, but as weapons for you against the sins that once held you in bondage. Present your members to God, and He will give you the victory!

THE WAY OF HOLINESS  
Romans 6:15-23

Intro: One charge that is often brought against the teaching of the grace of God is that it encourages sin! Thus, while Paul was teaching sanctification, or holiness, he did so in a way which would enable him to answer this false charge. Romans 6 was written so as to answer two questions: the first in verse 1; the second in verse 15. We come now to deal with the second. (Read them both.)

The whole point of this chapter is that salvation is such a transforming work that one who has truly been saved cannot continue on in a life of sin. The person who teaches otherwise is manifesting that he does not know what salvation really is.

Paul taught that salvation was by grace, not by law. That is, we receive salvation as a gift from God, not as something that we earn or that we deserve. Salvation is for those who were united with Christ in His death and in His resurrection. Or, to state it in other words, it is for those who died when He died, and who were raised when He was raised. And once such people are brought to Christ by the work of divine grace, it is impossible for them to continue on in their former life of sin. Salvation is not joining something, or a decision on man's part to follow God and to change his way of living. But salvation is an inner transformation brought about by God so that the sinner is changed forever into a saint, into a child of God. Nothing else can qualify as salvation. This is what Paul brought out in the first part of Romans 6, and he restated that teaching in the verses which we want to consider just now.

In both the first part of Romans 6 and in the latter part Paul stressed two things: (1) the things that we need to know; (2) the things that we need to do. Doctrine always precedes practice in the Christian life. If we do not know the doctrine then we will not be doing what we ought to be doing. Thus, I want to point out five, simple, basic doctrines, or truths, which Paul has mentioned in our text, and then go from there to speak of our practical responsibility in the light of these truths. Let me give you the truths so you will know where we are going in our consideration of this passage.

Here they are:

- I. The Object of Salvation, or, what purpose did God have in saving us?
  - II. The Two Categories of Men -- and there are only two!
  - III. The Bondage of the Servants of Sin.
  - IV. The Freedom of the Servants of God.
  - V. The Intervention of God.
- And then all of this is concluded with a sixth point:
- VI. Our Practical Responsibility. What are we to do as those who are the servants of God?



## I. THE OBJECT OF SALVATION.

What is God's purpose for those who are saved?

The answer can be given in one word: "holiness." See it in verses 19 and 22.

This is sanctification.

This means that the true child of God is one who will be progressively separated from his former sinning and who instead is separated unto God and to a life that is pleasing to Him.

But holiness does have to do just with action; it has to do with character. The child of God lives a holy life because he is a holy person. But the way we know that he is a holy person is because he lives a holy life!

Notice some passages where this is taught:

- 1) Heb. 12:5-10, 11-14 (cf. esp. vv. 10, 14).
- 2) 1 Pet. 1:14-16.
- 3) 1 John 3:1-3 -- where the word used in verse 3 is "purification," which mean to be holy.

And sanctification perfected is glorification. See Rom. 8:28-30.

Every child of God needs to know this about his salvation. This is God's purpose in saving us -- the justification which produces sanctification and leads ultimately to glorification.

Secondly,

## II. THE TWO CATEGORIES OF MEN.

And there are only two, no more and no less!

A. "The servants of sin."

B. "The servants of righteousness."

Note the first in verse 17; the second, in verse 18. But they are both mentioned in verse 16.

Notice both also in verse 19.

"Servants of sin" are mentioned again in verse 20.

In verse 22 the servants of righteousness are called "servants to God."

So let us be clear on this: There are only two categories of men (regardless of other distinctions we may make): the servants of sin, and the servants of righteousness, or of God.

— But now let us look for a moment at each of these. First,

### III. THE SERVANTS OF SIN.

There is one verse that I would especially call to your attention: Verse 20.

This is where every person begins, as a servant of sin. And as long as anyone remains in this condition, he is "free from righteousness." That is, he is unable to be righteous because sin is his master. And, if he is unable to be righteous (which means to do those things that please God), then he is unable to be holy!

Our Lord taught this when He said,  
 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.  
 (This is John 8:34.) "Servant" is bondsman, as in our text in Rom. 6.

— So we need to see that Paul and our Lord were teaching that the servants of sin are in bondage to their sin, and are utterly unable to set themselves free.

But now let us look at what Paul wrote about

### IV. THE SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, or OF GOD.

See verse 22.

This is another category altogether. The servants of righteousness are "free from sin"! They have their "fruit unto holiness"! They no longer are under bondage to sin, but have been delivered so as to be able to please God, and to become holy.

Again let me refer to our Lord's words in John 8 -- this time in verse 36:

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

— But notice carefully the words which Paul has used. The servant of God is not free to sin. He, too, is a bondsman, but a bondsman who is free from sin so that he must now please God. It is not an option; it is a necessity by virtue of the change that has taken place in his heart. In the case of the servant of sin, he is in bondage to his sin. In the

case of the servant of righteousness, he is a bondservant of righteousness and of God, not free to sin, but free so that he will without any doubt please God by being holy. Just as the one will inevitably continue in sin, the other will be under the same kind of restraint in the opposite direction, and will be holy!

But now the question remains: How does a servant of sin become a servant of God and of righteousness?

This brings me to my last point in this group of doctrines.

#### V. THE INTERVENTION OF GOD.

Salvation is by grace; it is "the gift of God" (v. 23). It is not something which man does for himself. And that is the reason that you have Paul thanking God in verse 17. (Read.)

Now let me draw together the teaching of Paul in the first fourteen verses, and compare them with his teaching here.

In the first fourteen verses Paul was concerned with what God did for us at the Cross. In the latter part of Romans 6 he was concerned with what He, God, does during the lifetime of all of those who were joined with Christ in His death and resurrection. What does God do? He delivers those whom He intends to save over to the truth. They are brought under the power of the doctrines of the Word of God. And they are brought under the Word in such a way that they are enabled (note the word) to obey it from the heart.

Note Rom. 1:5. Also see Rom. 16:26.

Obedying the faith means to believe. Through the preaching of the true Gospel of the grace of God, God enables those who had been the servants of sin to believe, and thus He brings about their deliverance from sin and makes them the servants of righteousness -- and they can never go back to that old bondage again. They, from that moment on, are the servants of God, bound to do His will.

What is the result? How can you tell that a person has really been saved, that this permanent change has taken place in their hearts. Note:

#### VI. OUR PRACTICAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Here I want to call you attention to two verses: 16 and 19.

##### A. Verse 16.

Have you really noticed what this verse says? It does

not say that you can be the servant of either sin or God as you may choose, but he is saying that the direction of your yieldedness shows who your master is!

If you yield to sin, it is because sin is your master. If you yield to God, it is because God is your master. If you yield to sin, you are headed for death -- eternal death. If you yield to God, they your life will be characterized by "obedience unto righteousness."

The Apostle John said,  
Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;  
for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin,  
because he is born of God.

(This is 1 John 3:9.)

The Lord Jesus said (in John 8:31, 31),  
If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples  
indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth  
shall make you free.

Can a child of God sin? Will there be times when he will turn away from the Lord? Yes. But he will not stay that way. The Lord will bring him back.

Note the experience of Jeremiah in Jer. 20:9,  
Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor  
speak any more in his name. But his word was in  
mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones,  
and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not  
stay.

Jeremiah could not do what he thought he could do because God would not let him go.

This was the difference between Peter and Judas when each of them failed the Lord!

Cf. John 10:27-30.

But not let us look at our responsibility in

B. Verse 19.

We had this same teaching in verse 13.

We will have it again in Romans 12:1, 2.

When we were the servants of sin, what did we do? We "yielded" our "members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity."

Everything we did defiled us. Everything we did was in violation of God's law. Every act of sin led to more sin. Why? For two reasons: (1) because we were slaves

to sin, and (2) because we were yielding the members of our bodies for that purpose.

So, what are we to do now as the servants of God and of righteousness? We are to do (and now we can do) just the opposite: "even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

But will you notice one way in which verse 19 differs from verse 13. It has to do with the words "for as" and "even so."

Do you and I live for the Lord with the same zeal that we have so often lived for sin? Do we as the Lord's servants show the same determination to live for God that unbelievers show in their determination to live for sin? This is one way we can learn from our past, and from the world, so that we will live for God as we should.

Concl: Let me close by speaking to those of you who are still "the servants of sin."

Look at verses 21 and 23.

Do you really find sinning profitable? Does it give you what you always hope that it will? Do you know that "the end of those things is death"?

Verse 23 teaches us in the words of one Bible teacher, "Hell is always earned; heaven, never" (Hodge, quoted by Godet, p. 262).

Perhaps you are here today because God intends to save you. He has brought you here to listen to the truth because He is going to set you free from your sin through faith in Christ and faith in God's Word. God wants you to know that you cannot save yourself, that salvation is a gift from God, and only "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Turn to Christ now. Believe in Him. He will set you free, and he is the only One Who can set you free. He will change your life and become your new Master, delivering you from sin, and making you holy.

May God grant you the faith to trust Christ in your heart!

This passage gives us three of the great doctrines of God's sovereign grace:

- 1) Total depravity.
- 2) Irresistible, or efficacious, grace.
- 3) The perseverance of the saints.

DEAD AND MARRIED  
Romans 7:1-6

Intro: In Romans 7 we are still in that section of Romans in which Paul is discussing sanctification, or holiness. We have seen that holiness is not only a responsibility of the true child of God, but it is an inevitable result of justification. In other words, one who is truly saved will manifest the change that has taken place in his heart by a change in his character and in his life which can only be described as a holy life. By holiness we do not mean perfection, but we do mean that a Christian is headed in that direction -- perfection awaiting that time when we are with the Lord! There is going to be a progressive manifestation of holiness in his life, a separation from sin, and a separation unto God.

The big question is: How does a person grow in holiness?

The answer that the Jews were inclined to give was, "It is through obedience to the Law."

But Paul had written in Romans 6:14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

So by this he meant that even as justification was not by the Law, neither is sanctification by the Law!

However, the time and space which Paul devoted to this subject indicates that it was not quickly nor easily accepted by the early believers. In fact, this question--the place of the Law in salvation would have to be classed as the major problem which faced the early Church.

James Stifler, in his commentary on Romans, had this to say:

This question of the law was the meeting-point of the enemies and friends of the Gospel. More than once his attitude toward it came well-nigh costing Paul his life (Acts 21:28, 31). It is not strange, then, that we meet it here and in almost every one of his epistles (p. 119).

This is the problem we are concerned with at the beginning of Romans 7.

Paul does four things in these six verses:

- 1) He begins with an illustration of the truth he is teaching. (v.1-3)
- 2) He states the truth. (v.4)
- 3) He reminds them of their condition before they were saved to show the need for this truth. (v.5)
- 4) And then he concludes this section by showing the consequences of the truth in the present. (v.6)

## I. THE ILLUSTRATION (Rom. 7:1-3).

Note that Paul was directing his remarks to those who knew the Law. See v. 1a. This has to be a reference to the Jews who were in the church at Rome. They may have been a sizable group, but not necessarily. The Jews were so strong on this point of the Law that just a few could upset a whole church!

But he cites an example which none would be able to deny:  
THE LAW HAS CONTROL OVER A MAN AS LONG AS HE LIVES, AND NO LONGER!

And then Paul took one particular aspect of the Law -- that which relates to marriage. See verses 2 and 3.

This is not true of American law, and it does not seem that it was true of Roman law, but it was true of God's Law. The Law bound a husband and wife together as long as they lived. But when the husband died, the wife was free to marry another man without being charged with adultery!

In 1 Corinthians 7:39 Paul wrote the same thing:

The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

Cf. also the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 19:3-9. The intent of the Law was, without doubt, that only death was to separate a man and his wife.

Now we are ready for

## II. THE TRUTH (Rom. 7:4).

Remember that Paul has said in Romans 6:14, " . . . for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Let me review what we have been learning in Romans regarding sin:

- 1) Rom. 5:12 teaches us that we are sinners by nature.
- 2) Romans 1:18-32 teaches us that we are also sinners by choice.
- 3) In Rom. 3:19, 20 we learn about the giving of the Law, to whom it was given, and why. See also Rom. 5:20a.

The Law was not given to make saints, but it was given to expose sinners -- to show that all men are sinners.

Now, since "the wages of sin is death," the only way in which sinners can be delivered from the penalty of the Law is by death -- either their own, or through a substitute

who is not under the same penalty, or by both of these!

Now it is this which Paul had been teaching in Romans 6 -- that those who are being saved died with Christ when He died.

It is as Charles Hodge has said in his commentary on Romans: "Christ died for all who died when He died."

When Christ died, He satisfied the demands of the Law for all who died in Him. So that those who died in Him, died to the demands of the Law. This is what Paul means by the statement, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ," that is, by His death! So, while the Law is still God's standard of righteousness, we are not bound under its penalty. We are free from it.

But why?

For two reasons:

- 1) " . . . that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead . . ." Obviously Paul was speaking of Christ -- that we should be married to Him.

So the believer is not bound to the Law, but bound to Christ.

But the other reason is this:

- 2) " . . . that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

What kind of "fruit"? See Rom. 6:21, 22.

The fruit that Paul was speaking of here is holiness.

In other words, holiness is not the result of my being joined to God's Law, but the result of being joined to God's Son -- an inseparable union!

And this is the only means by which I can become holy!

The last two verses given us additional explanation that we need -- one having to do with the past, and the other having to do with the present.

### III. THE NEED FOR THE TRUTH OF MY UNION WITH CHRIST (Rom. 7:5).

"In the flesh" is a Biblical term for a person who is not a Christian. See Rom. 8:8, 9. So Paul is speaking here about a person who is not saved.

By "the motions of sins" he means the emotions of sin, or the sinful passions "which were by the law," that is, which were stirred up by the Law, "did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."

So what did the Law do? Did it ever make anyone holy? No, Paul says; it did just the opposite. It stirred up the sinful nature of my heart so that I sinned even more. Tell



a person that he cannot do something, and that will make him all the more determined to do it!

Illustrations: Boys waiting to go swimming.  
Shimei -- in 1 Kings 2:36-46.

The Law did not keep Israel from sinning; it only made sin to abound. I say again, it does not produce saints; it only identifies sinners.

This brings us to our last point:

#### IV. THE PURPOSE, OR THE CONSEQUENCE, OF THE TRUTH OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST (Rom. 7:6).

Paul has already said that it was so we could be married to Another, Who is Christ. And that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

But now he says, "That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

This means that we discard that which is older in terms of time for that which is new and completely different in quality.

What is this "newness of spirit"?

There is no way that we can from the Greek manuscripts if a word should be capitalized, or not. We go on the meaning of the passage which is brought out in the context of the book in which it appears. "Spirit" can mean a human spirit, OR it can be a reference to the Holy Spirit. Which is it?

The context helps us. See Rom. 8:1-4.

Thus, there seems little doubt but that this is a reference to the Holy Spirit! By being united to Christ we have been united also <sup>to</sup> the Holy Spirit, and it is through the work of the Holy Spirit that we are made holy, as Rom. 8:1-4 very clearly teaches.

The Law tells us what to do, but it does not help us; instead, our situation is aggravated. But it is all different with the Holy Spirit. The standards are the same, but the power is there with the Spirit of God.

Concl: Do you know that there are professing Christians today who treat the teachings of Scripture like it were nothing more than the old system which Israel of old lived under? They take the teachings of Scripture like a lot of rules which we must obey. But that is to handle the Word of God in a humanistic way. We do not realize how much humanism has found its way into

our churches. But it is evident from the fact that we hear so little about the Holy Spirit, and so much about what we need to be doing for ourselves. Only the Holy Spirit can make us holy, and until we learn what that means we are not going to be making much progress in living holy lives!

Paul stated the matter clearly when he wrote to the Galatians,  
This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil  
the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

And so we are DEAD AND MARRIED -- dead to the law through the death of Christ, and married to Christ in a relationship that will never be dissolved because He cannot die and neither will we because we are in Him.

I have been speaking to Christians, but perhaps you are not a Christian -- and yet you have come to hate your sin. Let me tell you that you did not come to such a place on your own; God has brought you there. And He will bring you farther. But He does not save from just this sin or that sin, but from ALL sin! Your first need to is trust Christ. Then, as a child of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you will be enabled by the Holy Spirit to be and to do that which is pleasing to God. May God grant you His grace to believe in Christ and so to be saved!

IS THE LAW TO BLAME?  
Romans 7:7-12

Intro: The Apostle Paul has said a number of things about the Law in the book of Romans up to this point -- and the consequences in each case have been bad! Let me review them for you:

- 1) " . . . and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (Rom. 2:12b).
- 2) Rom. 2:25, " . . . but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."
- 3) Rom. 3:19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."
- 4) Rom. 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."
- 5) Rom. 4:15, "For the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression."
- 6) Rom. 5:13, "(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."
- 7) Rom. 5:20a, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. . . ."

And then in Rom. 7:5 we have Paul's statement which evidently prompted the question at the beginning of our text:

For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

This means that the Law did not justify. It did not make us right before God. It only added to our troubles. And in verse 4 Paul wrote that it was not until we became "dead to the law by the body of Christ . . . that we" could "bring forth fruit unto God."

Therefore it seems that man would have been much better off if he had never been given the Law. The Law must be bad. The Law must be sinful to produce such bad results. "Is the law sin?" Isn't it true that the Law is to blame for our sinfulness and for our sinning?

And so the first thing we have is

I. THE QUESTION: "Is the Law sin?" (Rom. 7:7a).

Must not that which arouses sin and leads to death be sinful in itself?

II. THE ANSWER: "God forbid" (Rom. 7:7a).

This is the sixth time that Paul has used this expression. Cf. 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15. It is not only a denial, but it

is an expression of amazement that anyone would even think such a thing. Paul shuddered at even the thought. It is the equivalent of saying, "Never let such a thought enter your mind!"

Paul's frequent use of this term shows how prone man is to think blasphemous thoughts and say blasphemous things about God and His works. Man will justify himself even if it means condemning God!

### III. THE ANSWER EXPLAINED (Rom. 7:7b-11).

Paul actually goes back here to what he had stated in Rom. 3:20b, " . . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

It was the Law which made him aware of his sin -- and he cites, by way of illustration, the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." He probably singled out the tenth commandment because, coming last, it was the capstone of the Law and the root of all sin. It is the sin of lust, or desire. It is even broader than adultery, or there would not have been the need for #7 and #10. Also, Ex. 20:17 indicates other things that can be coveted, or lusted after, in addition to "thy neighbor's wife."

Verse 8: It is not the Law that is the problem, but sin!

The word "occasion" means a start, or a beginning; that which initiates some kind of activity.

Sin in the human heart responded negatively to the Law, and brought out all kinds of lust ("concupiscence").

"Without the law sin was dead" means simply that it was like it was non-existent!

Verse 9: Before Paul was faced with the Law he sinned without remorse. But when "the commandment came," that is, when he was brought face-to-face with Commandment #10, "sin revived," conviction came to life, "and I died," or stood condemned.

The 10th commandment was especially condemning because it has to do with the inner desire as compared with the outward act. And its all-inclusive character is seen by the fact that in Col. 3:5 Paul called "covetousness," "idolatry."

Verses 10 and 11 say practically the same thing as verse 9.

The Law did not create sin; the Law uncovered sin. But the problem is sin, not the Law.

All of this brought Paul to

## IV. THE CONCLUSION (Rom. 7:12).

Whatever exposes sin must be good, not bad. The discovery of sin can lead to repentance and to faith, and thus to salvation. And so Paul declares that the Law, instead of being sinful, is "holy, and just, and good."

## A. The Law is "holy."

The whole Law is holy, but so is each specific commandment, including #10!

ITS FUNDAMENTAL  
IDEA IS THAT OF  
SEPARATION. IT IS  
DISTINCT FROM  
WHAT THE WORLD  
APPROVES OF, AND  
DISTINCTLY OF GOD.

"Holy" means sacred, that which is from a holy God! It is the very Word of God, and therefore could not possibly sinful. It is the expression of God's will as to what it means to be "holy." It is pure.

Note the impression that it made upon the people when it was given. Cf. Ex. 20:18-21.

The Law was not all of God's revelation, but was the first, major expression of His holy will.

## B. The Law is "just."

It describes man as he ought to be. It is right, not wrong! If you violate it you will be wrong -- always! That is what it means to be a sinner -- one who misses the mark!

The Law was "ordained to life." See Rom. 7:10.

## C. The Law is "good."

Thayer (p. 2) suggests the word, profitable. It promises great dividends in peace of heart, success (in its Biblical meaning).

It is like Paul wrote in 1 Tim. 4:8,  
" . . . but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

It leads to no regrets; it never leads to sin.

Concl: What are the primary lessons of this passage? Let me mention five:

1) The reason for the happy state of the unregenerate.

Paul seems to be describing an unsaved person here who has not been exposed to the Law, nor to the rest of the Word of God, and so he thinks that all is well.

But he is deceived. All is not well. He is a sinner and under divine judgment. Things seem to be right, but all is wrong. He is like a person who is sure that he is well while, unknown to him, he has a fatal disease.

So this is a false happiness -- and there are many illustrations of it in Scripture. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

## 2) The importance of the ministry of the Word of God.

The Word of God is not just a solution for man's need; it is the solution, the only solution.

This is one of the greatest reasons as to why God gave His Law to Israel: to show them their sin. It was to reveal their true condition to them.

Cf. Psa. 119:130, "The entrance of thy word . . ." Also Psa. 36:9, " . . . in thy light shall we see light."

This is why our Lord preached the Gospel, and this is why we preach the Gospel. Cf. Luke 4:16-22a. In part it reads:

And he came to Nazareth . . . and . . . he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

This is why the Lord Jesus called Himself "the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Cf. also John 15:22,

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke (excuse) for their sin.

Cf. Ezek. 3:15-19.

Our text for today certainly helps us to understand why Paul told Timothy to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2).

## 3) The sinfulness of wanting things.

You do not need to have a lot in order to want a lot. But it is usually the case that the more you have, the more you

want.

Our society encourages this. TV could not exist without this. The unhappiness of a lot of people is due to the fact that they do not have the things they want. Professional football players are getting ready to strike because they want more than they have.

This is sin, great sin, in God's sight. It is a sin which uniquely has its origin in the heart.

The Lord Jesus said on one occasion,

Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

And then he followed His statement with the parable found in Luke 12:16-21 about the rich man and his barns.

Cf. Paul's words to Timothy in 1 Tim. 6:6-10.

Cf. Matt. 6:33 and 1 John 2:15-17.

Covetousness blinds our eyes to that which we really need, and it keeps us from seeking and serving God. Cf. Matt. 6:24,

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

#### 4) The hopelessness of being saved by any law.

If the best Law cannot save us, then neither can any other law -- church law, social law, civil law, or a self-imposed law!

Usually the first response of an awakened sinner is that expressed by the ruler who ran to Jesus with the question, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17). The Lord first pointed him to the Mosaic Law, and then told him to get rid of all that he had. He "went away grieved: for he had great possessions" (Mk. 10:22). He felt his money could buy anything, even salvation -- but it could not!

Law cannot justify; law cannot sanctify. And the reason that it cannot is because we cannot obey it. Remember Rom. 3:20. Remember also the answer Paul and Silas gave to the Philippian jailor in Acts 16:30, 31.

#### 5) The exalted character of the Word of God.

The Law is not to blame. It is not sin. (Next page.)

It is "holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7:12). It is pure and true. It is right and righteous. It is profitable.

There is no other word like it. Shakespeare cannot compare with it. Neither can Plato or Socrates. No king ever spoke with such power or truth. The statement of Romans 7:12 cannot be made about any other words which were ever written or spoken.

Cf. Psa. 19:7-11.

Cf. Psa. 12:6,

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

See also Heb. 4:12 and Psa. 119:89.

All of this leads us to see that there is something in this passage for each one of us, and may God enable us to see and to accept that which He has for us here in Romans 7.



THE RESIDENCE OF SIN  
Romans 7:13-25

Intro: The Apostle Paul has been teaching us that holiness must follow justification. It is one of the marks of a true Christian, and it is an essential mark.

The Apostle John teaches the same. Cf. 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin . . ." By this he meant that one who is born of God does not go on living in sin. He may sin, but he does not live that way. His life is changed. He is no longer the kind of a person that he used to be.

Paul has been discussing the Law in connection with holiness. That is his subject in Romans 7. He does this because it is a natural tendency for most believers to look to rules, and obedience to those rules, as the means of sanctification. But instead, as we saw last Sunday, the Law stirs up more sin. Does this mean that the Law, therefore, is sinful? No; absolutely not! It has come from God. It is "holy, and just, and good." What, then, was God's purpose in giving the Law? Is it responsible for our condemnation before God? Again -- no; absolutely not!

This is where our text begins for today.

I. THE BASIC PROBLEM (Rom. 7:13).

The problem is not the Law; the problem is sin.

God gave the Law that sin might be made to "appear sin" -- which means that it would be revealed for what it is, that it might be uncovered, made visible, known. All of these are included in the word, "appear."

II. THE <sup>Root</sup>~~LOCATION~~ OF SIN (Rom. 7:14-20)

If sin is the hindrance to holiness, where does sin dwell?

Paul tells us twice in this passage: in vv. 17 and 20. It is a nature within us.

Sin is not only in us, but sin is there to stay. It dwells in us. No human measures can remove it.

Our problem is not the family into which we were born. It is not the background we have. It is not due to the things which we were denied in our childhood, nor is it due to any abundance which may have spoiled us. All of these may have aggravated the problem we have, but we would still have the problem if these things had been reversed. Our problem is the sin that dwells within us.

What is the evidence that this is the case?

The evidence is threefold:

A. In v. 14: "I am carnal, sold under sin."

This shows how sin is our master. We are slaves to sin. We are entirely under its control.

And the expression, "sold under sin," means that there is an attractiveness to sin for us. We are devoted to it. We are inclined to love it. It is not something that we can leave alone. We may prefer it in different forms, but we are irresistibly drawn to it.

This is all in contrast with the Law which is "spiritual" because it has come from God and, as Paul said in v. 12, "is . . . holy, and just, and good."

B. In vv. 15-17, 19, 20: It creates a conflict with my new life as a child of God.

We want to do what we somehow cannot do, and we do what we do not want to do and that which we know we should not do.

Any person who does not experience this conflict is not a Christian. The battle is severe and discouraging.

C. In v. 18: It leads to an awful realization.

No one but a true believer could have the desires described in the verses above with respect to desiring the will of God. But what an overwhelming thing it is when the child of God comes to the realization that all of his efforts, all of his resources, are not only ineffective, but that in his "flesh," all that he is without the Lord, there is nothing good, only evil!

In the providence of God this leads to

III. A TWOFOLD DISCOVERY (Rom. 7:21-23).

A. Regarding "the law of sin which is in my members."

B. Regarding the delight that he has "in the law of God after the inward man."

Not only does this mean that which is stated in v. 21, but it means that sin has the power to enslave, as in v. 23.

There can be no greater depression than this. And so it is not surprising that we have the statement which follows in v. 24.

## IV. A WRETCHED CHRISTIAN (Rom. 7:24).

This word is only used 2x in the NT -- here, and in Rev. 3:17. It means miserable, hopeless, in despair.

This describes the child of God who has discovered that he will always have indwelling sin, and that that sin is more powerful than all of the efforts, all of the determination, that he can possibly put forth from himself! There seems to be no deliverance, rescue, means of escape.

There seems to be no answer.

But there is!

## V. THE WAY OF VICTORY (Rom. 7:25).

The deliverance does not come through us, but through Christ. He is our Sanctifier as well as our Justifier.

And God is to be thanked because He has made the provision. Neither is the Holy Spirit excluded, as will will learn in chapter 8.

Note that Paul used our Lord's full name here: "Jesus Christ our Lord."

Concl: What, then, has our text taught us as of vital importance in understanding the doctrine of sanctification?

- 1) That sin will always be a problem for us in this life because it dwells.
- 2) That we must expect conflict.
- 3) That we are utterly depraved and incapable of sanctifying ourselves. To try to do so only leads to wretchedness.
- 4) That Christ is sufficient for our deliverance and victory over sin -- in short, for our sanctification.