

## Lesson 16 - The Book of Romans

Just a reminder, when we speak of walking in the “flesh” it is not necessarily sin. Flesh is scripture means weakness. It is weak because it has no power to perform spiritual things even though it thinks it can. Flesh is a term used for ourselves, and it will always fail.

The contrast to flesh is spirit. Walking in the flesh is our endeavor to do spiritual things that have its origin in me rather than God.

When scripture speaks of Jesus who was born in the likeness of sinful flesh, it is speaking of his humanity rather than his deity. He was truly human, yet without sin. A perfect man if you will.

Now for the believer, he is under a new law – life governing principle. Where he used to be under the law of sin and death, we have a new governing principle at work in our lives. That is: “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus and is now the one in charge. We have a choice here beloved about which we will live under.

Another way to say the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is to say the law of the life-giving Spirit. This is a continual process.

**Romans 8:4 says:** That the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us (not by us) who chose not to walk by their own power (flesh) but by the power of God Himself (Spirit). Not by our own efforts, but by His power.

An example of this might be, my witnessing to someone who has no desire to hear what I am saying. Compare this to the fellow who asks to hear why you have such peace in the middle of such trial – type of thing.

Verses **2-27 of Chapter 8** deal with the impossibility of living by any system of resources other than the Holy Spirit. Such things a “positive thinking” or “positive confessions” they do not work....

Ok, now we are about to embark in one of the most controversial issues that face the church today. Denominations have been established on these two principles.

The question is: Can a Christian lose his salvation? Now please understand that at the meat of this question is can a Christian actually lose his/her **Justified** position before the Lord? I choose to use this word rather than **salvation**, because the word salvation encompasses so much more than just going to heaven.

Ie. we are asking the question – once saved, always saved?

Now, before we address this, I want to remind us that **chapter 6** of Romans teaches us that we no longer are in bondage to sin. Sin no longer needs to reign in your life. I am not saying that you can be sinless, but now you have a choice as to whether it will reign in your life. You now have the power in your life to overcome this thing if you choose to do so. Before being “saved” you were in bondage to sin, but this is not the case once you are in Christ Jesus.

That led us to **chapter 7** by explaining the purpose of the law and it was to show us our need for help.

And then **chapter 8** where we now talk about the ministry of the Holy Spirit and how our relationship with Him takes us out from under the dominion of sin because of His presence within each of us. We have a choice now, because of the different law – “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the old law of sin and death.

Now last time we discussed why believers suffer, and I will not go over that again except to say that while we are in “boot camp” here on earth, we are learning to rule and reign with Him forever. This training ground is for our benefit. Do not waste it by being worldly related.

We are now looking at the issue of **predestination free will** and **eternal security** and what part does God play in all of this in our lives.

**Romans 8:28** is a very important verse in scripture. “We know that *all things work together for good* to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

We know it – not that we hope for it, or suspect or surmise, we know it. We know that all things not some things, but all things are working together for our benefit, for our good. Really? When trouble comes, when serious things happen to us – we know it is for our benefit. We may not see it now, but deep down inside, **we know** it is for our good.

Now is this true for everybody? Nope, only for those who are THE called according to His purpose. Notice that the word says that “all things” i.e. a continuing activity. God Himself is the conductor, the leader of the entire arrangement in our lives continually working everything for our benefit. Think of it in terms of a football team. Every member of the team (all things) are necessary for the team to function, but – there must be a quarterback to bring it together.

Jesus is the quarterback arranging everything happening in our lives for our benefit.

Now there are two groups of folks that deal with this issue of **“eternal security”**. Both have arguments that tend to benefit their belief. The Armenian theory is that we can lose our position before the Lord based upon our behavior. The Calvinistic belief is that we can be sure of our position before the Lord, based upon our belief system.

Herein lies the problem with the term “saved”. As you are aware, salvation is an ongoing thing in our lives. Have been, am being and will be saved.

Much better if you substitute the understanding of Justification. To the believer, this is settled, to the Armenian, this can change based upon your lifestyle, belief, behavior etc.

A much more important topic for me is not who you belong to, although that is very important, but what you do with who you belong to. Apprehending that for which we have been apprehended – Paul said in **Philippians 3:12** – I want to get ahold of who is it that has ahold of me.

There are going to be many believers that are going to be disappointed when they get to heaven. Not with heaven, but in seeing opportunities that were available to them while on this earth, that they failed to appropriate. The whole program for this "boot camp" experience is that we gain a "full measure of reward" that is available to us. This can only be gained while walking here on earth. What we know of Him, what we are able to do for Him in expanding His kingdom, what gifts and talents He has given each one of us and how we have invested them in his world today.

Ok, now as we look to our security before Him, it depends upon three people and none of the three are you.

We will first look at **God the Father**.

**God the Father** – His sovereign purpose as outlined best in **Ephesians chapter 1 vs 4** & following, He chose us in Him before the foundations of the World, That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us to adoption of sons by Christ Jesus ,according to the good pleasure of His will, to the pleasure of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved, all of which is based upon His promise, and nothing to do with our faithfulness.+

**Our eternal security is not dependent upon us.** God has designed it so that we cannot mess it up. It is not up to us. It is totally dependent upon Him. He started it, and has promised to complete it. Our eternal security is not dependent upon our moral worthiness.

**John 6:37** Jesus said: "all that the Father gives to me, **shall come to me.**" And the one who comes to me, **I will in no way cast out.**"

**John 10:27** "Jesus said – "my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. Or **verse 28 – My Fathers hand.** *If you could lose your salvation – justification – then you have slipped out of Fathers hand...*

I see the term "anyone" as including even me... I can't get away if I even wanted to.

God justified us, despite ourselves. Outside of any agenda we may have. He did it of His own choice and nothing can stay His hand.

In **John 17**, God the Son asks the Father - **7 times** - I pray for "those whom thou hast given me" A very intimate gift given to Jesus by the Father, Suppose Father answers the Son's prayer? I think so. This beloved is truly the Lord's prayer. Read the entire chapter it will really bless you.

Jesus actually passes the responsibility for keeping us to His Father – **verse 11.**

God the Father, knowing the end from the beginning, if we could lose our position with Him because of a sin we haven't gotten to as yet, then it would nullify the position we have already learned from **Romans 5 – vs 8** " But God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

He goes on: "much more then, having now been justified by His blood (Christ's) we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

Further vs **10** “for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

God knew when He saved us, that were totally depraved. Consequently, there could not be any new motivation that would come to our lives that would make Him change His mind.

It is hard for us to understand, but God saved us for reasons that are outside of us. In other words, his motivation had nothing to do with what we are, were or were to become. He did this for only one reason. He loved us – period.

We may ask ourselves “why would He bother doing this? It will take eternity for us to ever grasp this understanding. The answer is in **Ephesians 2:7** “THAT IN THE AGES TO COME HE MIGHT SHOW THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE IN HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US IN CHRIST JESUS.

That's the reason beloved

God also answered the prayers of His Son Jesus in **John 17:21** ‘that they may be one as we are one”

**Vs 24** “Father I desire that they also whom you gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which you have given Me: for you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

Jesus mentions in His prayer to His Father 7 times in **John 17** in the endearing terminology of “those whom you have given me.” That's how He looks at us beloved. You are one that has been given to the Son Jesus by the Father.

Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful.

If you really want to feel ingratiated beloved and wrapped into who you belong to, rather than concentrate on what we call the “Lord’s prayer” (which should actually be called the disciples prayer) this **chapter 17** of the book of John should be referred to as the “Lord’s prayer, to His heavenly Father.”

We will stop here even though we are not finished with this subject but because of the importance of the last paragraph. Selah

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