

October 18, 2025

The Way

The West Valley End-Time Ministries Newsletter

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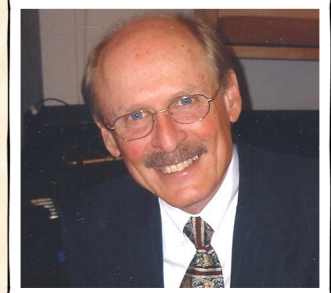
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Romans Chapter 4



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Acts of the Apostles

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recognize the
signs of His
approaching
return and be
prepared for
that Great Day

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"We are living in the season of Christ's return."



Bible Study

Acts 27

Paul Sails for Rome

1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. **2** We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. **3** The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs. **4** From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. **5** When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. **6** There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board. **7** We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. **8** We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

Paul's Warning Ignored

9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement. So Paul warned them, **10** "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." **11** But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. **12** Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

The Storm

13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they saw their opportunity; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. **14** Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the Northeaster, swept down from the island. **15** The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. **16** As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure, **17** so the men hoisted it aboard. Then they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Because they were afraid they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. **18** We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. **19** On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. **20** When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. **21** After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from



Bible Study

Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. **22** But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. **23** Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me **24** and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' **25** So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. **26** Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

The Shipwreck

27 On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. **28** They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. **29** Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. **30** In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. **31** Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." **32** So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it drift away. **33** Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food--you haven't eaten anything. **34** Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." **35** After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. **36** They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. **37** Altogether there were 276 of us on board. **38** When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.

On the Island of Malta

39 When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. **40** Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. **41** But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf. **42** The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. **43** But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. **44** The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely.

Honest Questions

Honest Question #1: Who wrote the Bible – Old Testament and New Testament?

Bible Answer:

“You must understand this, that no prophecy [Grk. *prophēteia*: discourse emanating from divine inspiration] of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” 2 Peter 1:20-21 RSV.

Comments: Below is a pretty accurate list of the authors of the books of the Bible:

Authors of the Bible			
No.	Book/Books	Author	Date Written
1	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Job	Moses	1400 B.C.
2	Joshua	Joshua	1350 B.C.
3	Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel	Samuel/Nathan/Gad	1000 - 900 B.C.
4	1 Kings, 2 Kings	Jeremiah	600 B.C.
5	1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah	Ezra	450 B.C.
6	Esther	Mordecai	400 B.C.
7	Psalms	several different authors, mostly David	1000- 400 B.C.
8	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	Solomon	900 B.C.
9	Isaiah	Isaiah	700 B.C.
10	Jeremiah, Lamentations	Jeremiah	600 B.C.
11	Ezekiel	Ezekiel	550 B.C.
12	Daniel	Daniel	550 B.C.
13	Hosea	Hosea	750 B.C.
14	Joel	Joel	850 B.C.
15	Amos	Amos	750 B.C.
16	Obadiah	Obadiah	600 B.C.
17	Jonah	Jonah	700 B.C.
18	Micah	Micah	700 B.C.
19	Nahum	Nahum	650 B.C.
20	Habakkuk	Habakkuk	600 B.C.
21	Zephaniah	Zephaniah	650 B.C.
22	Haggai	Haggai	520 B.C.
23	Zechariah	Zechariah	500 B.C.
24	Malachi	Malachi	430 B.C.
25	Matthew	Matthew	A.D. 55
26	Mark	John Mark	A.D. 50
27	Luke	Luke	A.D. 60
28	John, Revelation	John	A.D. 90
29	Acts	Luke	A.D. 65
30	Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians	Paul	A.D. 50 - A.D. 70
31	Hebrews	unknown, mostly likely Paul, Luke, Barnabas,	A.D. 65
32	James	James	A.D. 45
33	1 Peter, 2 Peter	Peter	A.D. 60
34	1 John, 2 John, 3 John	John	A.D. 90
35	Jude	Jude	A.D. 60



Honest Questions

Honest Question #2: What attributes are a part of a “healthy” Christian life?

Bible Answer:

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”
Galatians 5:22, 23 RSV.

Comments: Jesus told us before His crucifixion and subsequent ascension that He would send the Holy Spirit to be His Representative to His followers in His absence. He also told us that His Spirit would live in our hearts and bring spiritual life to the very essence of who we are. Paul, the “apostle of the Gospel”, talks much about the influence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian, and he defines for us how that comes about in Ephesians 1:13, 14:

“In [Christ] you trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it [the inheritance of heaven and eternal life].” NKJV/RSV.

Thus, the very attributes of “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” within the life of the Christian would seem to be most descriptive of a “healthy Christian life.” And while these attributes will be present in the life of a healthy Christian, we must not be discouraged when we fail to fully exhibit these qualities in our lives as we would like. The work of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts is a continuing process by which these Christlike characteristics become more and more evident in our lives. Until we see Jesus come in the clouds of heaven to receive us into His presence, we will be completely dependent upon His amazing grace alone, all the while our lives are increasingly being changed into His likeness.

Honest Question #3: What is meant by “strength” found in weakness?

Bible Reference:

“He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9 RSV.

Comments: This question is a great question to follow the one above! After Paul’s conversion, Paul described his struggle to be everything God wanted him to be – everything Paul, in his desire to be the best he could be as a follower of Christ, wanted to be! He says in Romans – the only place in the Bible where we find a complete discourse on the Gospel:



Honest Questions

“What I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. ... O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God--through Jesus Christ our Lord! [Paul's victory is in the merits of Christ alone!] So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:15-25.

But this cry of Paul – one which every true Christian will experience during the course of his life and growth in Christ – is answered in the text above! And I will repeat it for the strength it will hopefully give to each of my readers!

“He [Christ] said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9 RSV.

It is in our weakness that Christ can do His greatest work in our hearts and lives, for we cannot fail to realize how dependent we are on Him for His grace and His strength, all the while He covers us with His blood! He says to us in the dilemmas of our life – “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” When you are at your lowest point in life, and all that you seek to be and do as a follower of Christ seems elusive, take heart! Jesus is closest to you in those moments and you are safe in His grace through your greatest moments of discouragement if your faith in Him endures the trial!

Studies In Romans

October Celebration of the Reformation!

(Reprint)

October 31, 2025 is the 508th Anniversary of the “beginning” of the Protestant Reformation — the day Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to door of the Wittenberg Chapel, sparking a blazing challenge to Roman Catholic authority and igniting the fires of persecution in response! As a result of the Reformation, the Bible was once again exalted to its original place of authority; the Gospel, so clearly stated by Paul the Apostle, was unearthed from its grave of paganism and superstition; and Jesus was exalted as the Savior of all who place their faith in Him. There could be no better time than now to go to the writings of Paul and clarify our understanding of the most important message of the Bible — the saving work of Jesus Christ on behalf of all who place their faith in Him.

From cover to cover, the Bible is the story of Jesus and the human family He created for His pleasure and their eternal happiness. It is a story of a perfect creation lost to the curse of sin and the story of a Savior and complete redemption.

The Old Testament is about Jesus, in type and promise, pointing to the first Advent of Christ — Bethlehem to Calvary, the incarnation of Jesus to the salvation of mankind.

The first four Books of the New Testament tell the story of Jesus as He lived out His life on earth among us. The rest of the New Testament, half of which was written by Paul the Apostle of the Gospel, tells how the life and death of Jesus secured eternal life for the sinner and promises the full restoration of all that was lost by sin in the beginning.

West Valley Ministries Presents a study on the story of a perfect creation lost to the curse of sin... and of a Savior who brings complete redemption.

**Join us for a virtual series on
Romans!**



Send an email to pastor@wvetm.com to receive the meeting invite!

Day: Wednesdays in October

Time: 5:30 MST (AZ time)

Location: Virtual

Contact: pastor@wvetm.com

Romans reveals the heart of it all!

In the first eight chapters of the Book of Romans, we find the only complete and concise treatise of the Gospel found in the Bible — the systematic play by play account of how the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus brings complete reconciliation of the sinner to a holy God. It is the Gospel in a capsule — the greatest theme of Scripture in only eight chapters! It is the most wonderful news a sinner can ever hear! And this passage is the subject of a short series of studies which is offered to you on **Wednesday evenings during the month of October, each session beginning at 5:30 p.m. MST/PDT.**

[Click to Join Romans Study Group Wednesdays @ 5:30 p.m. MST](#)

Studies In Romans

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL – A STUDY IN ROMANS

Text and Notes from Our Study of Romans 4

October 15, 2025

Introductory Remarks – The Gospel in just three simple points

- 1) We are all desperately lost without Christ
- 2) Jesus did all that was necessary to reconcile us to God
- 3) Faith claims what He did for us and makes us right with God

Review

- ◆ The first 2 ½ chapters of Romans are summed up in Romans 3:19-20:
 - ◇ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law [that's everyone! (Cf. Romans 3:10, 12)], **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.** (Cf. Romans 7:7).
- ◆ The Gospel is God's solution to our lostness and is summed up in Romans 3:21-22:
 - ◇ **But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from [the works of] the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.** RSV.
- ◆ Our **works** of the Law condemn us – our **faith** in Christ redeems us! (Romans 1-3)
- ◆ Romans 4 is all about the development of the Romans 1:17 theme below, illustrated in the story of Abraham:
 - ◇ "In the Gospel the **righteousness of God** is revealed – **a righteousness that is [ours] by faith** from first to last...." Romans 1:17. (Cf. Romans 3:21, 22).

Romans 4

- ◆ So, the Gospel is about how **faith** in Jesus saves sinners from their lostness. And the **faith** of Abraham is the subject of this chapter as Paul uses Abraham's story to show us that **faith alone, in Christ alone, is the only means by which we will ever see heaven!**

Abraham An Example of Saving Faith

1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited [marg.] to him for righteousness.**" 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on

Studies In Romans

Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works.

- ♦ If our salvation is not entirely of grace – if there is any part of our salvation that is because of something we can be credited for, then God owes us something – it would be partly what He does and partly what I have done. In that case, it is not solely of grace and our works demand God's payment for them! Think of how that might work. It gives birth to the question, "How much do I have to do to earn heaven? And unfortunately, this is what most Christians believe and most churches teach – not openly, but by inference!

Quick Side Note:

- ♦ Do these quotes from verses 5 and 6 above ("**But to him who does not work/apart from works**") suggest that even good works born of the work of the Spirit on our hearts are not important? NO – it only means that ALL human works, regardless of the Source of their inspiration, are **without merit** and have **no part** in our right to eternal life! Anything that comes the human heart in this life is infected with our sinful nature, and its motives, and fails the test of perfection required by God's holy Law!

Understanding the Meaning of **Faith** – This is important to understanding the Gospel!

Hebrews 11 defines "faith" for us – "Faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1.

- ♦ **Faith is not some fuzzy feeling about a "spiritual" experience**, i.e., "I believe, I believe, I believe!" **Faith is not a feeling – faith is a confident belief/certainty in an unseen reality – in something which you may not be able to see but know to be absolutely true, or in Someone whom you may not be able to see yet know to be absolutely trustworthy!** "Faith is the certainty ... of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1.
- ♦ **Think of some examples of things you cannot see but that you know absolutely to be true – the presence of air around us – the law of gravity – emotions like love – the existence of God!** (Cf. Romans 1:18)
- ♦ **Faith always has an object – something, or Someone in Whom it believes.**
 - ◇ In the Greek, "**faith**" – *pistis* (*pis'-tis*) is the root word for "**believe**" – *pisteuo* (*pist-yoo'-o*), and both words are always used with Christ as their object. "**Trust**" – *peitho* (*pi'-tho*) is the root word for "faith". **All three words have similar meanings and they always have an object!**
 - ◇ Thus, "Abraham believed (verb) God (object), and it was credited [*marg.*] to him for righteousness." Romans 4:3. And, "...Whoever believes (verb) in Him (object) should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

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- ♦ And so it is in Hebrews 11 where half of the 40 verses of that chapter begin with the words, "By faith..." [because of his/her/their faith in God], and then they tell the stories of numerous people of faith who did the unthinkable because of their faith in God. Abraham is one of those people as seen in the following verses:
 - ◇ [Because of his faith in God], Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ...
 - ◇ [Because of her faith in God], Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude – innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.
 - ◇ [Because of his faith in God] Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up **his only begotten son**, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19.

Quick Side Note:

- ♦ And because Abraham, the father of the Jews, is the example Paul uses to show that his faith was credited to him as righteousness, does that suggest that this Gift is only for the Jews – "the circumcised"? Again, NO – and Paul tells us why in the verses which follow!

7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; **8** Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin." **9** Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that **faith [in God] was credited to Abraham for righteousness.** **10** How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. **11** And **he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. 13** For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. **14** For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, **15** because **the law brings about wrath;** for where there is no law there is no transgression. **16** Therefore **it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17** (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed – **God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed,** so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So



Studies In Romans

shall your descendants be." **19** And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. **20** **He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief**, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, **21** and **being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.** **22** And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." **23** Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, **24** but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, **25** who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

This is the Gospel! And while there's more to come, it's appropriate that we look at the following verse and consider our response!

"In Him [Christ] you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." Ephesians 1:13, 14.

Next Week: Romans 5 – Our **solidarity** with Christ; the two Adams; **how** God can be just and still justify sinners; and what it means to be "in Christ"! (Also 1 Cor. 15; Heb. 7).