

October 11, 2025

The Way

The West Valley End-Time Ministries Newsletter

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Darrell Chilson, Pastor



Jessica Lindsey, Bible Instructor

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



Bible Study

Acts 26

Paul's Early Life

1 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: **2** "King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, **3** and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently. **4** "The Jewish people all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. **5** They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that I conformed to the strictest sect of our religion, living as a Pharisee. **6** And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today. **7** This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. King Agrippa, it is because of this hope that these Jews are accusing me. **8** Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? **9** "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. **10** And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. **11** Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.

Paul Recounts His Conversion

12 "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. **13** About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. **14** We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' **15** "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' " 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. **16** 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. **17** I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them **18** to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Paul's Post-Conversion Life

19 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. **20** First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. **21** That is why some Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. **22** But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and



Bible Study

testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen-- **23** that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles."

Agrippa Evades Paul's Challenge

24 At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane." **25** "I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. **26** The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. **27** King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do." **28** Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" **29** Paul replied, "Short time or long--I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains." **30** The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. **31** After they left the room, they began saying to one another, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment." **32** Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."



Honest Questions

Honest Question #1: Does Luke 16:16 prove that Christians don't need to try to live by the Law of God?

Bible Passage In Question:

"The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone enters it violently." Luke 16:16 RSV.

Bible Answer:

"But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one dot of the law to become void." Luke 16:17 RSV.

Comments: The phrase, "the Law and the Prophets", is a term which occurs ten times in the New Testament and always describes the writings of the Old Testament – Moses' writings being the first five books of the Bible, called "the Law", and the remainder of the Old Testament, called the "Prophets". The Old Testament was the only Scriptures which were available to the Church until the writing of the Apostles became available too. So we could rightfully paraphrase the verse in question to say, "The testimony of the Old Testament pointed forward to the coming of the Kingdom of God, announced by John the Baptist. Since that time, the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it."

John the Baptist announced the coming of a new era for the people of God which he called the Kingdom of God, or Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus also often spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven as well in His ministry – a kingdom transcending all the kingdoms of earth in which its citizens are followers of Christ. The first advent of Christ brought the birth of the Christian Church, composed of those who have placed their faith in Christ, in contrast to the 1,500-year era of the Old Covenant made with Israel and spoken of by Paul. The Kingdom of God brought the benefits of the New Covenant, which Jesus ratified with His own blood, and Luke says that "since John's ministry, people were pressing into the Kingdom of God."

But the very next verse, Luke 16:17 (shown above), makes it clear that the Law of God has not been made void – "not one stroke of the Law." What's changed, as we've been studying in Romans, is the role of the Law in light of the Gospel. The Law which once condemned us now, because of the "doing and dying" of Jesus, justifies those who place their faith in Christ and becomes a guide for the life of the Christian. Good question!

Honest Question #2: How can one apply God's strength in difficult times? Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Bible Answer:



Honest Questions

“But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, ... and He who formed you, ... : ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.”
Isaiah 43:1-3.

Comments: This earthly life is fraught with hardship, disappointment and troubles of many kinds – some devastating! The curse of sin on our race has made life on this earth difficult. Jesus said, “In this world **you will have trouble**,” and the majority of humanity would agree. “But,” Jesus said, “I have overcome the world.”

We serve a Savior who has defeated the forces of darkness and now offers us peace in the midst of every storm of life! The context of Paul’s statement, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” is that of hardship and trouble.

“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things, I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:11-13.

Paul’s strength came from a realization that Christ would not abandon him when all seemed lost – that Christ was “in the boat” with him and would not allow the storm to overcome him. Paul lived in the awareness of Christ’s continual presence and thus faced every challenge of life fearlessly and with the strength, knowing Christ was at his side. That’s how we too can apply a strength that is already ours in Christ. God is faithful, and He will not leave us to fend for ourselves, but will “make a way of escape” from every dilemma, and in the end “working everything for our good.” We can count on Him, and **that confidence is what gives us the strength we need every day!**

Honest Question #3: Paul says in Romans that no one is righteous and that the whole world is desperately lost. Yet he implies that people who have never had the Bible, never heard the name of Christ, never known of their need for a Savior, will be saved. If this is true, why is it so important for these people to hear the Gospel?

Bible Reference:

“Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. Romans 2:14, 15 NLT.



Honest Questions

Observations: There are many people who will be in heaven who have never read a Bible or heard of the saving grace of Christ. They will be there solely because Jesus shed His blood for them, solely because of His mercy and His grace. They will not deserve to be there any more than those who have had the advantage of knowing who God is, what He requires of us, how desperately lost we are, or how sufficient our Savior is to save! But for every person who enters heaven, there will be some demonstration in their life of their hunger for God and a desire to do what's right. And because God is not only a just God, but a God of mercy who longs to redeem everyone responsive to His Spirit, He will judge every person through the eyes of grace, considering the advantages and disadvantages this life has afforded them.

So if there are going to be people in heaven who never heard the Gospel, never placed their faith in Christ in the way the Bible calls sinners to do, why is it important that the Gospel be on the lips of every follower of Christ?

- 1) It is for our own blessing that we must confess to others what Jesus has done for us! For a Christian to know what Jesus has done "to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him" (Hebrews 7:25) and not want to share it with others so they too can know is unimaginable!
- 2) A knowledge of the Gospel (literally, "good news") is not solely so **we** can "believe" and be saved. A knowledge of how Christ has completely saved us, in spite of our unworthiness, births within our soul (and those who hear it from our lips) an indescribable peace, an inexpressible adoration for Christ, a certain hope of heaven in spite of our failings, an incredible desire to be more than we are, an allegiance to Christ that is greater than our love for life itself, a fearless anticipation of seeing Him come in the clouds of heaven to take us to a place of eternal happiness, and so much more! A knowledge of the **biblical** Gospel will change our entire perspective on and direction of life. We will live more confidently, more deliberately, more passionately! Why wouldn't we want to share the Gospel with others?!
- 3) The confession of our faith in Christ is a function of our salvation, just like baptism, neither of which are a cause of salvation, but an inseparable consequence. Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" Mark 16:16. And Paul says, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ... For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:9, 10, 13-15.
- 4) When we are bound with Christ in faith, we become His voice in promoting His saving grace to those who have never heard what is theirs!



Honest Questions

- 4) There are people – non-Christians and weak Christians who will never experience God’s saving grace unless they hear it from our lips. There are people who Satan will sweep into his net of destruction who are deceived and trapped in sin and who have never had a reason to accept Christ and experience His power in their lives. They need to know the saving power of Christ and the freedom the Gospel brings to the life of the believer.
 - 5) And finally, the time is approaching when Satan’s deceptions within the “Christian” community will be so convincing that no one on earth will be immune to his power except those who are clear on the Gospel and the allegiance to Christ it engenders. Revelation 14 is all about how this will play out – soon!
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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 3

October 8, 2025

Review of Last Week's Critical Themes

- ♦ Chapters 1 and 2 of Romans create the necessary backdrop for the most important theme of the Bible – the story of God's amazing solution to the lostness of humanity as a result of sin – the Gospel!
- ♦ But before Paul lays out in great detail the utter lostness of humanity, he introduces "in a capsule" the solution to the human dilemma – a solution in which there is not a thread of human merit – the Gospel!

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God for the salvation of every-one who believes.... For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is [ours] by faith from first to last!" Romans 1:16, 17.

Paul Now Introduces the Role of the Law of God

- ♦ The **condemnation** of the two groups Paul first addresses in Chapters 1 and 2 – the **secular** world and the **religious** world – is a legal matter. **Law is the basis of their condemnation, and Law is the basis of their offer for reconciliation with God. God's justice is not arbitrary!**

12 For all who have **sinned without the Law** will also **perish** without the Law, and all who have **sinned under the Law** will be **judged** by the Law; **13** for it is **not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified**. (NASB).

- ♦ "Under the Law" = under the authority of and obligation to keep the Law. The Jews are certainly represented here, but Jesus was also born "under the Law" (Galatians 4:4), and all of humanity is "under the Law" until its demands are satisfied. Further, the one who fails to keep the Law is under the condemnation of the Law and destined to bear its penalty. This is the backdrop for the Gospel Paul is about to share with us in the next chapter!
- ♦ We will deal in the next chapter with the Law in greater detail – the part it plays in not only **condemning** "the ungodly" but in **"justifying the ungodly"!** But for now, the **Law of God is the instrument which both condemns the sinner and, because of what Jesus did, demands the salvation of the sinner!**
- ♦ But what about those who have never had opportunity to know what God requires, nor have they had the opportunity to hear about Christ's saving life and death on their behalf?!
- ♦ **14** For **when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) 16** in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Studies In Romans

- ♦ The question is often rightly asked, “If faith in Christ is the means of salvation for the sinner, how does God judge those who never hear the name of Jesus or know of the Gospel which tells the story of salvation?”
- ♦ The above verses answer that question. For those who have never had opportunity to hear what we are studying right now, yet are responsive to the voice of their conscience and the appeal of the Holy Spirit upon them – for those individuals, God sees their hearts, knows their hearts, accepts their quiet response to Him and, in the end, applies the merits of Christ to their account **in the same way** we receive the merits of Christ in response to our response to the Gospel and to Christ in faith. Jesus paid for their sins too!
- ♦ On the other hand, for those who have had the privilege of hearing the Gospel, Paul says, “When you **heard** the word of truth, **the gospel** of your salvation, **and believed** in Christ, [you] were **sealed** with the promised Holy Spirit, who is **the guarantee** of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13, 14 (ESV).

The Jews (Chapter 2) as Guilty as the Gentiles (Chapter 1)

17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, **18** and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, **19** and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, **20** an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. **21** You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? **22** You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? **23** **You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? [The answer is obviously, “Yes”!] 24** For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written. (Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22).

- ♦ Paul concludes this chapter attacking the very essence of Judaism, which teaches that circumcision, given to Abraham as a sign of God’s covenant with him, is essential to salvation. The Jewish leaders claimed to be “children of Abraham”, and circumcision was the evidence of their righteous standing with God. To the Jews, **their heritage** was their guarantee of their acceptance with God. But Paul makes it clear that not circumcision, but **perfect compliance with the Law of God alone is the basis of salvation**, something that the Jews boasted of doing but didn’t! Thus, their hypocrisy defamed the name of God among the Gentiles.

Is Circumcision “the Evidence of Saving Righteousness”? NOT!

25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep **the law**; but if you are a breaker of **the law**, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. **26** Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of **the law**, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? **27** And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills **the law**, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?

Studies In Romans

- ♦ The Law is the central focus of Paul's premise of the lostness of Jew and Gentile – and the whole world, as we will see in the next chapter. It is the Law the **condemns**, and it is the Law that **justifies**!
- ♦ In the last two verses of Chapter 2, Paul hints at a theme he picks up again in Chapters 9 – 11 in regard to the Jewish claim to be the chosen of God, yet **mistakenly so** because of their rejection of Christ. While we will not be studying these chapters in this series of studies, they have great relevance today in view of the common Christian view that the Jews, **as a nation**, are still the chosen of God.

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Romans 3

1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. 3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? 4 Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged." 5 But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? **That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? ESV. 8 And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"? – as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just. **9** What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged **both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.****

- ♦ Have the Jews had an advantage over the rest of the world in the past? Absolutely! And we owe much to them! It was to the Jews that God entrusted the entire Old Testament Scriptures! What a gift to the world and to the Christian in particular! And it was through the Jewish nation that our Savior became a part of the human family! God literally gave us His only Son through the nation of Israel. Both the Savior and the Scriptures were entrusted to the Jews as Gifts to humanity! Jesus told the woman of Samaria, "Salvation is of the Jews."
- ♦ But did the rejection of the Savior by the Jews nullify His promises of salvation to the rest of the world? Paul says, "No!" Paul tells the Christians in Galatia, and the Christian of today,

"If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29.

- ♦ Last of all in verses 5—7 above, Paul asks similar questions as the ones which have been asked by many, "Is God unjust who inflicts wrath?" ... "Why am I also still judged as a sinner?" In the chapters which follow, these questions are answered by Paul as he lays out the Gospel in all its glory!

Studies In Romans

The Whole World Is Lost!

10 As it is written: "There is **none righteous**, [in nature] **no, not one**; **11** There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. **12** They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; **There is none who does good** [in deed], **no, not one**. **13** Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; **14** whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. **15** Their feet are swift to shed blood; **16** destruction and misery are in their ways; **17** and the way of peace they have not known. **18** There is no fear of God before their eyes."

- ◆ NO ONE – JEW, GREEK, GENTILE (the non-Jew), MALE, FEMALE, SLAVE NOR FREE! (Cf. Galatians 3:26-29)
- ◆ It is very important to note that righteousness is not just about what we do or don't do, but also about who we are! This will become very important when we study Romans 5!
- ◆ The Law requires not only perfect obedience to its precepts, but perfection of heart and soul! Our very nature condemns us, even if we never committed an act of sin!

19 Now we know that **whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.** **20** Therefore by the deeds of the law **no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

- ◆ Who is "under the Law" – under its authority, its demands, under its judgment, under its condemnation – but the entire world?! – **UNTIL THE LAW IS SATISFIED WITH PERFECT COMPLIANCE IN BOTH NATURE AND DEED! Compliance to the Law is what the Gospel offers us, and in so doing, the Law becomes the instrument that demands "justification"** – a word used a great deal in the discourse of the Gospel! In Chapter 8, Paul says, "There is therefore **no condemnation** to those who are in Christ Jesus!"
- ◆ The Law of God holds every person on earth captive to its judgment (Galatians 3:23). Every person on earth is condemned at the moment of conception, because of their inherent sin infected nature!
- ◆ While this may seem unfair, it is the very truth that ultimately makes our salvation entirely dependent upon a righteousness outside of ourselves– a righteousness that satisfies **every claim of the Law** upon us, **apart from anything we can ever have to offer it!** This Paul explains in the next 11 verses – **the very core of the entire plan of redemption!**

BUT NOW.....!!! – THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL!!! **21** But now the righteousness of God apart from the [observance of the] law is revealed [cf. Romans 1:16, 17!], being witnessed [and satisfied] by the Law and the Prophets, **22** even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God [and are thus hopelessly lost!],

- ◆ But "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is [ours] by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." Romans 1:17 (NIV).

Studies In Romans

- ♦ Faith claims what God offers the sinner – the doing and dying of His Son. As the sinner hears and believes this Gospel and places all of his hope of heaven upon the satisfactory work of Christ alone, it is sufficient to give him a right standing with God – very much apart from anything the believer can ever add to what Christ has already done!

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God set forth as a **propitiation [satisfaction]** by His blood, **through faith**, to **demonstrate His righteousness**, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, **26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness [Paul says this twice!]**, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- ♦ How are God's just demands for the sinless perfection of every person who shares eternity with Him satisfied? How can God be both just and the justifier of everyone who places their faith in Jesus? How can a person be "justified by faith apart from the deeds of the Law"? How does our faith in Christ alone allow God to look at us as He views His Son?
- ♦ Because Jesus did for us what we cannot do – what no one can do! As our human representative before God and His broken Law, Jesus was perfectly righteous, perfectly obedient to the perfect Law of God; and in exchange for our faith in Him, He credits His perfect righteousness and His perfect obedience to the Law of God to our account so that the Law, which once condemned us, now demands that God, who is just, accept us in His Son, because all the demands of the Law have been fully satisfied by Christ for us/as us! God saw us when Jesus hung on the cross. He saw our sin, condemned our sin just as if Jesus had been us, and in so doing, His justice was satisfied! Now, for the sinner who claims his place in this story, claims in faith the perfect obedience of Jesus and the perfect righteousness of Jesus as his very own, the Law has nothing more to require of him and now considers the sinner as perfect in his Savior and worthy of eternal life in a perfect land!

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

- ♦ **The Gospel of the Bible removes every opportunity for us to boast**, no matter how much we grow in Christ and manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit living in our hearts! The best of us will absolutely never have anything to boast about before God in the judgment, for everything we offer God that we consider of merit is tainted with sin and comes from the sinful nature with which we are born. **Only Jesus** will ever be worthy of any honor for our salvation – only He is worthy! Therefore, the Law can be said to demand the perfection of the sinner and the Gospel to grant that perfection only through the covering of the righteousness of Christ – only the imputed righteousness of Christ, faith alone being the means of claiming it as our own!

28 Therefore **we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.** **29** Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, **30** since

Studies In Romans

there is one **God** who **will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith**. **31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.**

- ◆ Does this faith in Christ which satisfies every demand of the Law of God now make the Law void and obsolete? This is the question Paul now asks – a question which must be answered! He says, “Certainly not! Instead, it actually establishes the authority of the Law!” The Law of God is still a valid transcript of His demands upon us, but now, with its demands satisfied in the life and death of Christ for us, it becomes for the believer a guide for life and, as Paul says in Romans 7, a definer of sin rather than a tool of condemnation.

The Bottom Line!

- ◆ “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.... For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is [ours] by faith from first to last!” Romans 1:16, 17.
- ◆ When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He literally became a part of our human family — my family — literally “flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone.” He became one with me, in the very same way in which I am one with Adam, reaping the consequences of his (Adam’s) sin in which I had no part. Jesus’ incarnation became the basis upon which His life, death, and resurrection would become my very own. Jesus became for us the “second Adam” — offering to us the credit for ALL He was and did!

For 33 years, Jesus lived a perfect life of obedience to all that God requires of humanity. He not only lived a perfect life, He was perfectly righteous in nature, without sin. Then, at the end of His life on earth as my Savior, Jesus endured Gethsemane and Calvary for MY sin/sins. Jesus’ solidarity with me enabled Him to bear my sin/sins, in which He had no part, on the cross AS ME, dying my eternal death, a death He didn’t deserve. He became me at Calvary, bearing my sin, dying my death.

And what follows is what is so amazing! My solidarity with Jesus, through faith alone, now enables me to claim AS MY OWN a righteousness that is not mine, and a perfect life AS MINE that is not mine but which meets every demand of the just Law of God — bringing for me a right standing with God, quite apart from my own efforts, which will withstand the scrutiny of the final judgment! When I, by faith alone, claimed all that Jesus was and did for me, I “passed from death to life”! Nothing can change that for me — not my fallen nature, not my faltering ways, not anything in me can ever separate me from the love and redemption that is in Christ Jesus alone!

All of this is yours too by simply claiming in faith that which Jesus did for you, as you! He lived **your life AS YOU**, died **your death AS YOU**, and came forth from the grave in victory **AS YOU**. When you claim it all in faith, it becomes yours as certainly as if you had done it! This is Paul’s “expanded eight-chapter-version” of the Gospel which he puts in just the “two-verse capsule” shown above from chapter 1!