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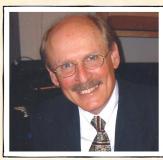
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# Bible Study

#### Acts 25

#### **Paul Appeals to Caesar**

1 Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem, 2 where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul. 3 They requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way. 4 Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon. 5 Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there." 6 After spending eight or ten days with them, Festus went down to Caesarea. The next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him. 7 When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them. 8 Then Paul made his defense: "I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar." 9 Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?" 10 Paul answered: "I am now standing before Caesar's court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well. 11 If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!" 12 After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

#### **Paul Before Agrippa**

13 A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. 14 Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said: "There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner. 15 When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned. 16 "I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over anyone before they have faced their accusers and have had an opportunity to defend themselves against the charges. 17 When they came here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in. 18 When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. 19 Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. 20 I was at a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges. 21 But when Paul made his appeal to be held over for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar." 22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself." He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him." 23 The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high -ranking military officers and the prominent men of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. 24 Festus said: "King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. 25 I found he had done nothing deserving of death, but because he made his appeal to the Emperor I decided to send him to Rome. 26 But I have nothing definite to write to His Majesty about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that as a result of this investigation I may have something to write. 27 For I think it is unreasonable to send a prisoner on to Rome without specifying the charges against him."

## Honest Questions

Honest Question #1: How does the Bible define a Christian?

**Bible Answer**: The Bible doesn't give us a "definition" of the word, "Christian". But the first time the Bible uses the word "Christian" to describe the followers of Christ is in the verse below:

"The disciples [followers of Christ] were first called Christians in Antioch." Acts 11:26.

**Comments**: A Christian is a follower of Christ – a disciple, which is the word the Bible uses most often to identify Christians. The actual word "Christian" is used only three times in the Bible (only in the New Testament), and is always used in reference to people who have placed their faith in Christ and have become His followers/disciples. Luke tells us in the verse above that "the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" – an early hub of Christianity and missionary efforts for the Christian faith.

However, my guess is that this question posed above carries with it the deeper meaning of, "How does the Bible describe the character and life of a Christian?" And in this sense, I defer to the words of Christ Himself:

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you **abide in My word**, you are **My disciples** indeed. John 8:31.

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35.

"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples." John 15:8.

The **root** of being a Christian is a life of faith in Christ and His Word. The **fruit** of being a Christian is seen in a life consistent with our faith union with Christ, the greatest fruit of which is the love we manifest toward one another.

**Honest Question #2**: Why are there multiple English language Bibles available today? Isn't the King James Version the only Bible needed?

**Bible Answer**: There is no Bible answer to this question, but let's start with these texts from Paul and from Peter:

"All Scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete**, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

"No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

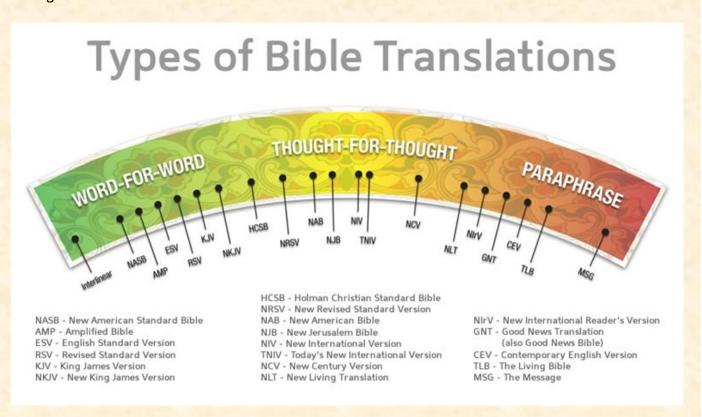
## Honest Questions

**Comments**: Whatever the hands of man touch is always subject to imperfection and faulty judgment, regardless of how sincere the intent and meticulous the method. But whatever God inspires, He protects from the inadequacies of those who have given us the Bible.

Many have set out to make the Bible available to their world in a format they can read and understand. The two languages used most in the original text of the Bible are Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament). They are the languages from which William Tyndale first translated the Bible into English, Martin Luther to German, and others into 776 different languages, all for the purpose of making the Scriptures available to every person in the world!

The many English versions of the Bible available today include "word-for-word" translations from the original languages; "thought-for-thought" translations; and "paraphrases", each with its benefits to the student of the Bible. However, when we seek in our study of the Scriptures the greatest accuracy of doctrinal and prophetic themes, we must always study from the most accurate translations, comparing the version we prefer to other "word-for-word" translations from the original languages.

The King James Version is a good translation to use, but it's written in the Old English of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. There are other good translations like the NKJV, RSV, NASB, AMP, ESV, and to a lesser degree the NIV. See the image below:



## Honest Questions

Following are some tips on coming to a proper understanding of the Bible:

- 1) Use a Hebrew/Greek interlinear translation to find the correct meaning of various words used and the way in which they are used in other places in the rest of the Bible.
- 2) Cross-reference the verse or phrase with the marginal reference in your Bible usually in the center column of the page or at the bottom of the page of the Bible.
- 3) Use an exhaustive concordance to find every time a particular word is used in the entire Bible. A concordance will also usually give a definition of the word.
- 4) Consider the context of the verse in the surrounding verses to discover its Biblical setting.
- 5) When you are studying the Bible, it's very important that the One who inspired the Bible writers to write what they did to be present to help you understand what you're reading. Invite the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher, and you will be much more likely to come away from your study with a clearer understanding of the Bible

The first three "tips" above can all be found in a free resource called "The Blue Letter Bible" – something you can download on your phone and computer. I have found it indispensable to my personal study and research in the Bible!

**Honest Question #3**: How should a person pray to God – is it important to kneel, stand, or be in some other position while praying?

**Bible Answer**: Jesus was **standing** when He asked His Father's blessing on the loaves and fishes before they were passed out to the 5,000, He fell **on the ground** in Gethsemane as He prayed for deliverance from that moment, and He was **hanging on a cross** when He prayed to His Father before His death.

**Comments**: Jesus gives us several instructions on how to pray, but none of them tell us we should be in any specific position or posture when we pray. While churches have traditions and sometimes invite those present to stand or kneel for congregational prayer, each tradition may have its rationale but it all has more to do with culture than with compliance with any Biblical precedent or command – even from the apostles.

Prayer is about our personal praise and petitions to God – the expressions of our hearts to the God we love, serve, and depend on for our every need. Prayer should be spontaneous – something we do when we're driving a car, laying in bed, and engaged in life at every level and at any moment. Prayer is our connection with God, His help, His blessing, His protection, His comfort and care, His healing of body and soul, His direction – prayer is about living every moment with an awareness of His presence in every aspect of our life! Thus, our physical stance during prayer is dictated solely by the context of our life at the moment we lift our hearts heavenward in recognition of our need for and dependence upon God!

#### 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.



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

#### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL – A STUDY IN ROMANS

#### Text and Notes from Our Last Study of Romans 1 and 2

#### Please Note:

All Text is from the New King James Version

[ ] – My words

A Different Version Used Here

Recurring Themes to Watch for in Romans 1 – 8:

Who God Is

Who We Are

Who Jesus Was/Is

Claiming What's Yours

Living Fearlessly

#### Romans 1

#### **Background Information**

- ◆ The Book of Romans a "letter" to the Christians in Rome was written about 25 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Romans is the first of Paul's thirteen letters to churches and individuals found in the New Testament, half of which was written by Paul!
- ◆ The first four Books of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, tell the actual story of Jesus His life on earth from His birth in Bethlehem to His ascension to heaven after His resurrection. Paul, "the Apostle of the Gospel", writes in his letters the meaning of the life and death of Jesus and what they mean to us when we place our faith in Him. Romans, chapters 1 8, contains the only systematic treatise in the whole Bible on how Jesus' doing and dying offers sinners eternal life, completely apart from anything we can do to deserve it! THE GOSPEL.

#### **Paul's Introduction and Credentials**

1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. 5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.

- "Called to be an apostle" of the Gospel the story of Paul's call by Christ on the road to Damascus
- ◆ "The Gospel, promised before through the prophets" in the Old Testament in type and promise
- ◆ Jesus, the Son of God, born into the human family as part of the human family! This will be come extremely important in Paul's treatise in the following chapters!

#### Paul's Greeting to the Church in Rome

**7** To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: **Grace** to you **and peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

◆ Paul uses these two words together in each of his greetings to every church and person he writes to in his 13 letters! These words go together, for it is God's grace (His undeserved favor) that brings peace to our hearts, in regard to our standing w/God!

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, 10 making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. 13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. 14 I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. 15 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

#### The Gospel in Just Two Verses – A "Capsule" of the Entire Gospel Treatise

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For 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." (NIV).

#### The Secular World Is Lost!

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them (NIV). 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

- ◆ "The wrath of God" against evil and deliberate rebellion against God those who "suppress the truth in unrighteousness".... Even in our world, these things bring judgment upon the evildoer! How much more a God who hates the evil that brings pain and heartache to His creatures! ... In the end, God's "wrath" against evil is the fruit of His love for the righteous, as He ends sin and its effects upon us forever!
- No one has any "excuse" to deny God's existence or His authority over His creatures, as that which He has made clearly makes known to all His existence, power and authority.
- ◆ The point of this chapter, verses 18-32, is that the secular world is lost and under God's righteous judgment
- ♦ In the following verses of this chapter, Paul describes in detail the sins of the secular world which warrant their condemnation

26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

#### Romans 2

#### The Religious World Is Lost!

- ◆ The primary point of Romans 2 is that, not only is the **secular world** lost and under God's judgment, the **religious world** is also lost and under God's righteous judgment!
- 1 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. 3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do

you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? 5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.

- "You who judge practice the same things"! Jesus called the Pharisees out the same way Paul does in this text. He said to the religious leaders of His day just before they put Him on the cross, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in....Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." Matthew 23:13, 27, 28.
- My observations over the years are that some professing Christians have been, by their hypocrisy and compromising lives, one of the greatest obstacles to non-Christians being open to even listen to the message the Church is supposed to be sharing with the world the Gospel!
- And so, Paul says of the religious world, "In accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart
  you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of
  God"

#### Paul now introduces the Law of God. Here is where we pick up our study next time:

◆ The condemnation of the secular world and the religious world above is a legal matter. Law is the basis of their condemnation, and Law is the basis of their reconciliation with God, if they claim in faith to what He has done to save them. God's justice is not arbitrary! Nor is it flimsy and subjective!

#### In Summary:

- In the first two chapters of Romans, Paul shows how desperately lost and under God's judgment the secular and the religious worlds are, creating a vacuum that only the Gospel can satisfy.
- But just before he delivers the condemning verdict, which in Chapter 3 he extends to all of humanity (you and I included), he summarizes the remedy for our sin and lostness in just two verses, which become the basis of his entire thesis in the following chapters:

"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.

# Gary Kah's Newsletter



Providing in-depth coverage of today's global events – from a Christian perspective.

### A Time for Courage & Discernment

By Gary H. Kah

NEWS ALERT: I am absolutely heartbroken over today's tragic death of Charlie Kirk. Less than an hour after I completed this article Charlie was shot and killed, becoming a martyr for Jesus Christ and our country. May the courage that he exemplified be wildly contagious and lead to a true "turning point" in America, causing multitudes to turn to Christ and reject the deceptive and hollow teachings of Marxism and the other false religions. Although Charlie is now with His Savior, let us not stop praying for his dear wife Erika and their children, that the Lord would comfort them as they grieve their enormous loss.

In light of the many events unfolding in the US and abroad – some of which are covered in the various articles of this fall issue – I will endeavor to briefly address a few items of importance here in response to questions and comments received from friends. These significant issues will be impacting all of us in the near future, if they aren't doing so already. The need for courage and godly discernment is great.

#### Hatred of Jews and Christians

As Israel's efforts to root out the remaining Hamas fighters intensifies, public opinion has turned against Israel. Despite the fact that Hamas still holds innocent hostages taken captive two years ago, the global media has succeeded in portraying Israel as the aggressor and the Palestinian people as the victims. The narrative has shifted, and the hostages are rarely even mentioned

What is intentionally being withheld from the public is the fact that a vast majority of Palestinians in Gaza have been supportive of Hamas. Here's some history: In 2005, the George W. Bush administration brokered a deal forcing all Jews out of Gaza. Under this one-sided "unilateral disengagement plan" Israel had to move its 8,000 plus Jewish residents out of Gaza. Even the buried bodies of Jews had to be exhumed and removed. Anything Jewish had to go; no Jewish remembrance would be tolerated.



Members of Hamas terror group's military wing

A few months later, in a January 2006 election, the Palestinian people voted in favor of Hamas, but the Fatah-ruled Palestinian Authority (PA) held on to power in Gaza until June 14, 2007, when Hamas took control. Polls at the time showed that approximately two-thirds of Gaza's citizens supported Hamas, despite the fact that this terrorist group had openly campaigned against Jews, brazenly calling for their annihilation and the complete destruction of Israel.

Since Hamas took power, an entire generation of Gaza's children have been indoctrinated to hate Israel. I have personally viewed cartoons specifically created for young Palestinian children, spewing vitriol and showing them how to kill Jews. As a result of this sick and relentless propaganda, an even higher percentage of Gaza's young people support the extermination of Jews. Gaza has effectively been turned into a terrorist state.

But it wasn't always like this. Prior to Israel's forced withdrawal from Gaza, the Jewish pres-

ence was able to keep things under control. Gaza City, and the surrounding territory as a whole, were safer than most large US cities. Lawlessness was kept in check and the Palestinian people in Gaza were forging ahead, able to improve their lives. However, Hamas had different plans.

Rather than using the funds from Western nations to advance Gaza's standard of living Hamas leaders poured these monies into building their military infrastructure and purchasing boatloads of weapons, while lining their own pockets. They brought Gaza low, essentially creating a military dictatorship in line with Nazi ideology and Islamist dictates. I have compassion for the minority of Palestinians who do not support Hamas, yet are caught in the current nightmare, especially the remaining small number of Gaza's Christians who continue to suffer persecution under Hamas. (The last Christian bookstore in Gaza was forced to close some years ago because of the overwhelming hostilities directed toward them. We must pray for the protection of these dear saints and support them in whatever way we can. May God give them strength to stand firm for Him.)

As for Israel, imagine living next door to a terrorist state, knowing that a vast majority of its inhabitants want to see you dead. Most Americans and Europeans have no idea what this is like; yet our governments are pushing Israel to stop its pursuit of Hamas terrorists. Growing

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