

ARE THE HEATHEN LOST??

Rom 1:18-20 2:12-16

ROM 1:18-21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

ROM 2:12-16 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

"Are the Heathen Lost??" This sounds like an "Interesting" question that would make a good discussion for a group of preachers gathered around a coffee table; but one that the average Church member wouldn't find interesting. Yet, I believe it is one of the most vital questions Christians must face today. If we are going to change our emphasis from the "ME" Generation to the "MISSION" Generation then we must become convinced of the fact that ALL MEN WITHOUT CHRIST ARE GOING TO HELL for Eternity and that we have a responsibility to them.

In order for us to see this, I want to reveal 4 PRINCIPLES:

- I. EVERYONE WHO HAS NOT TRUSTED CHRIST AS SAVIOR IS LOST
- II. EVERY LOST PERSON WILL FACE THE WRATH OF GOD
- III. THE ONLY WAY TO BE SAVED IS THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST
- IV. THIS INFORMATION CONFERS RESPONSIBILITY TO THOSE WHO HAVE IT.

Paul begins by "getting Everyone Lost". You cannot correct a problem unless you admit you have it. It is fairly easy for us to quote "ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) but it is much harder to admit that your son, or your spouse, or YOUR SELF is a sinner, separated from God. So Paul "eases" his Jewish readers into this by showing 3 Groups of People are that are Lost:

1> The HEATHEN (Pagan) 1:18-32; 2> The HYPOCRITE (Moral) 2:1-16; and 3> The HEBREW (Religious) 2:17-3:8. This covers Everyone! Today we are going to look at the "Heathen"; but realize that, in one sense, this message applies to Everyone.

The first statement that is normally made about the Heathen is that a "Loving God" would not send them to Hell without an opportunity to be saved-- and since many of them do not have the same privileges of being exposed to the Gospel messages that we have here then they will somehow be "saved". (If this statement were true then it would be better to call our missionaries home and leave the Heathen in the dark; if being in the dark absolves them of responsibility for sin. But if you follow this thru then it means we should also close all our churches here as well! If darkness saves then we need to put out all the light; since light imparts responsibility!).

I believe a JUST GOD is able to judge the Heathen on the Basis of: **THE WITNESSES THE HEATHEN HAVE:** You find among all cultures a sense of Sin, a fear of Judgment, and an attempt to atone for sin and appease a "God". This is caused by-

A) The Witness Within- Conscience: Conscience= "To Know with". There is within every man "something" that bears witness to right or wrong. There are many types of Conscience mentioned in the Bible-- Defiled (Tit 1:15), Seared (I Tim 4:2), Weak (I Cor 8:10-12), Pure (I Tim 3:9, Acts 24:16), and Witnessing (Rom 2:15). When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden they immediately knew to hide their nakedness.

B) The Witness Without- Nature 1:20 Ps 19:1-3 *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

ACT 14:15 *And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.*

While the Heathen does not have enough knowledge to Save them they do have enough to cause them to Seek God (Cornelius). Since they know to seek God and do not do so then they are responsible to answer to God.

THE WRATH THE HEATHEN FACE: "The Wages of Sin is Death" (Rom 6:23). The ONLY WAY to escape the Penalty of Sin is through Faith in Christ- (Acts 4:12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby ye must be saved*).

[I do believe there will be:

1. Degrees of Judgment- Many stripes LUK 12:47-48 *And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

2. Degrees of Accountability- Parable of Talents]

This brings us to:

A DUTY WE ALL HAVE:

- a> Be Saved and Sure of it ourselves
- b> Share the Gospel- We do not come to Church to ISOLATE ourselves but to EDUCATE ourselves that we may go out and EVANGELIZE others.

If the Heathen are Lost (and they are), our Responsibilities are:

1. EVANGELISM- Do it, Support it, Pray for it
2. MISSIONS- Become a Missionary, Support Missions, Pray for Missions (Ladies Aux responsible to give Mission request during Wednesday Prayer Service following their monthly meeting)
3. OUTREACH- Do it, Support it, Pray for it, Help Distribute it

The ONLY HOPE a lost world has is the light of the Gospel. We have been made "keepers of the light". Will we hide it under the "bushel of busyness" or under the "bed of Laziness"; or will we do what we can to shine the light as far as possible in a sin darkened world?

WHEN GOD GIVES UP

Rom 1:18-32

One of the most awful things imaginable would be to believe that you were abandoned by God. We can expect to be disappointed by, and sometimes abandoned by, people in this world but we always have the Love and Grace of God to cling to. What a horrible thing to believe God had abandoned us.

It has happened several times in the Scriptures as men or countries went so deep into sin until God told Prophets not to pray for them and even to "Let them alone". But we normally think that only someone who is a "hard down dirty" sinner would find themselves in this situation. I want us today to see that it CAN HAPPEN TO US; and, I believe, has already begun to happen in America.

God says 3 times in these verses that He gives up on men (24, 26, 28). The reasons for this drastic action are **FALSE IDEAS ABOUT:**

- 1) Who God Is- Went from God to Idols
- 2) What God Says- Went to Man as God
- 3) What God Wants- Believe Man's Pleasure is God's Goal

Because of these False Ideas God brings 3 **JUDGEMENTS UPON MEN:**

- 1) God gives them up to uncleanness and idolatry 24-25
- 2) God gives them over to be controlled by vile passions 26-27
- 3) God gives them over to a REPROBATE MIND 28-32

The Downward spiral is

INDIFFERENCE- Hold the Truth in unrighteousness vs 18

INGRATITUDE- Knew God Glorified him not as God, neither were thankful

IGNORANCE- Professing themselves wise, became fools

IDOLATRY- Worshipped the creature instead of Creator

INDULGENCE- Do those things which were not convenient.

NOTICE THE ERRORS THESE PEOPLE MADE:

I. IGNORING WRATH 18-20

Like many people these men thought the Way God's Wrath worked was like a billboard I saw once- "Believe in Jesus or Burn in Hell". While this statement is true it does not show the **ONLY** way God's wrath is revealed. It is also revealed in man's misuse of man and nature. God keeps allowing mankind to receive "payments" for his sin before the final "Pay Day" to try to get man to repent.

Mankind first of all Refused this Truth, then Turned the Truth into a lie, and finally Abandoned the Truth

II. VAIN IMAGINATION 21-23

They failed to give God Glory or be Grateful for God's Goodness- Just like Hogs, they never thought to look up at their provider. {Note that man is **NOT** a product of Evolution but of "Devolution"- went from Worship of God to worship of man, to worship of Birds, then beasts, then reptiles. As men became worst so did their worship.

III. INDULGENCE 24-27

Because they worshipped what God created instead of God who created, God gave them up to be controlled by the power of sinful desires. This degrading passion led to deeper and deeper sexual perversion until Homosexuality became a way of life. (God does not call Homosexuals "Gay", He calls them Ghastly!).

IV. IMPENITENT 28-32

They did not like to acknowledge God, or consider God, so God allowed them to be filled with ever kind of sin. Having abandoned God they were now abandoned by God.

If you continue in Sin, God will one day give you up to be controlled by your passions and perversions. Today is the day of Salvation. Will you accept God's Mercy; or His Wrath??

SECOND HAND SINS

ROM 1:32 *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

One of the prevalent evils in society today is what I call "Second Hand Sins"- No ones wants to be an "outcast of society" by going into "Gross sins" so they won't have an affair, but they don't mind viewing "R" and "X" rated movies; Many people wouldn't take drugs or alcohol but they don't mind selling them; and, while many people would not even own a gun they fill their life with hate and jealousy. I want us today to see that these "second hand sins" can do just as much harm as actual participation; and I want us to repent of and renounce them.

[Just a little "side bar". It's also possible to have **Second Hand Faith**- Mark 2:5 *When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.* I think there are numerous times when others "travel along" with someone else's faith- Sometimes Pastors lead a lot of "doubting Thomases". And how many times in a Church have you heard someone say, "I don't think it will work but I'm willing to let you try"!!]

WHAT ARE SECONDARY SINS?

1. Sins of "Accomplice"- Rom 1:32

a> The **BAD** we Condone or Congratulate. We don't participate in the wrong but we encourage it by our support as spectators. We won't commit Adultery but we'll laugh at and support TV shows that promote it. We pay Rock Stars Millions to glamorize drugs and sex for our Children.

b> The **GOOD** we Fail to do- James 4:17 *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.* Much Church work "dies on the vine" because no one is against it; but they won't support it either.

2. Sins of Attitude- Heb 12:15 *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* The Poison of Passions destroy so many people.

3. Sins of Influence- JAM 4:4 *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.* No man is an island, We affect others by what we say and do.

a> The Influence of Family-

1. There is no such thing as "Second Generation Sin" - EZE 18:19-23 *Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.-* but there is a tremendous **INFLUENCE** given by **PARENTS**- Over and over in the Scriptures God tells the Children of Israel they have "walked in the ways of their fathers and done wickedly". Children learn so much from the example of their parents.

2. Then there is the **INFLUENCE OF THE SPOUSE**. God gave the Rules for the Man to be the Head of the Household for specific reasons. One of these is the fact that the Husband is the "Priest" of the Household and is responsible for it's spiritual leadership. Wives who won't do right cause great hardship on Husbands (Think what it would mean to my ministry if my wife would not attend church; went into sin...). Husbands who are more interested in sleep than they are in Church or serving God hinder many wives and children.

b> The Influence of Society-MAT 13:57-58 *And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.* (Peer Pressure, Public Pressure, Professional Pressure)

Second hand sin can bring First hand punishment. Repent

THE WISDOM GOD WANTS

Rom 1:22 *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

These "wise-fools" allowed their "wisdom" to cause them to:

1. Changed the Glory of God into an image- vs 23 (Tried to bring God down to their level)
2. Changed the Truth of God into a lie- vs 25 (Tried to make themselves God)
3. Did not like to retain God in their minds- Result Reprobate Mind-28 (Refused to acknowledge God so they began to live like animals).

I. NOT THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD- I Cor 1:19-21 *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. God is looking for Wisdom that produces FAITH in Him and His Plans*

II. THE WISDOM OF GOD- 1CO 2:1-7 *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.*

The Wisdom of God is Preaching Based and Power Demonstrated. It will never be understood by the Natural Man.

III. THE WAY TO WISDOM IS THROUGH "FOOLISHNESS"- 1CO 3:18-23 *Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*

Contrast:

WISDOM OF THIS WORLD	WISDOM OF GOD
1. Speech 1:17, 2:4	1. Power 2:4-5
2. Man originates 2:4	2. Spirit's Words 2:13
3. Foolishness to God 1:20	3. Foolishness to Man 2:14
4. Philosophy 2:6	4. Preaching 1:31,2:4
5. Ignorance 1:21	5. Knows God 2:12
6. Leads to Condemnation 1:18	6. Leads to Glory 1:18, 2:7

WHERE WISDOM BEGINS-PRO 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. PRO 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

WHAT WISDOM DOES-PRO 2:10-12 When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;

HOW WISDOM IS OBTAINED-

A) Desire-PRO 18:1 Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

B) Discipline-PRO 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his

WHAT SIN DOES

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

We are always asking men to turn from sin to God - WHY???

The BIBLE CALLS FOR:

1. A Changed Mind - Repentance
2. A Changed Heart - Regeneration
3. A Changed Life - Conversion
4. A Changed Standing - Justification
5. A Changed Service - Sanctification

The reason men aren't Changed (Converted) is because of what sin does. (It's important to realize that "man does what he does because he is what he is". Man is not basically good - He is a sinner by nature and a servant of sin my choice. Left to himself he will go deeper into sin).

What then does Sin do that empowers it to draw men away from Heaven into Hell?

SIN:

I. DECEIVES PEOPLE

A) By the Way it LOOKS: Jesus said in Matt 23:47 that sin is like a Graveyard; it looks pretty but it's full of dead mens bones. The Best ads on TV are Liquor ads; they picture one thing and deliver another.

B) By the PROMISES it Makes: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat (Gen 3:5-6).

How many people have started on Drugs for the thrill and stayed for the kill!

II. HARDENS HEART Heb. 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Prov. 29:1 He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. (Pharaoh - hardened till God hardened) If you wind sewing thread around your hand enough times even a strong man can't break it! The same sun that melts snow hardens concrete.

III. FINDS YOU OUT Num. 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out. (You think it's hidden but it's not) Samson - Arose as before but had no power. I once planted most of my peanuts in a hole at the end of the row. Everything was fine until the peanuts started coming up and my dad started coming down on me!

IV. REPRODUCES SELF Gal. 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (What you put in mind you get back with interest) Plant peanut - Get Peanuts, Plant Anger - Get Anger; except it gets bigger and bigger.

V. KEEPS FROM GOING TO HEAVEN Rev. 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The wages of sin is death - But the gift of God is eternal Life thru Jesus Christ our Lord. Turn from Sin to Christ today

How does God bring Conviction?

Daniel Chapter 1 By putting Christians in the place of Testimony.

1> Daniel and his friends were captured in order for God to use them as witnesses.

2> The little captive girl that told Namaan how to be cured of his leprosy (Go to Elisha).

3> Paul in the Philippians jail- Sang up an earthquake.

Be sure you are known as a Christian instead of a complainer.

Chapter 2 SECOND- By showing that only HE has the answers for the future. Nebuchadnezzar began to wonder what the future held. God revealed it to him in a dream. No one could interpret the dream and this angered him. Finally Daniel said God would give him an answer. He called his friends together and they prayed. God gave the answer and Nebuchadnezzar said, *Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret (Dan 2:47).*

In an uncertain world where war, crime, and disease can conquer you at any time you need a Rock to hold to (and hide under).

Are you fearful of the future?? God holds it in his hand.

Chapter 3 THIRD- by showing you can't overcome God's Plans

Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold (Trying to over rule God's plan by making the entire image of Chapter 2 of Gold) and required everyone to bow before it. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego decided to burn instead of bow and this angered Nebuchadnezzar. (The Life Application Bible list 8 excuses these men could have used to justify bowing- 1) We will bow but not actually Worship the idol. 2) We will do it this one time and ask God's forgiveness. 3) The King has absolute power and we must obey him. 4) The King appointed us- we owe him this much. 5) We must obey the customs of this country. 6) We aren't as bad as our ancestors who set up idols in the Temple! 7) We're not really hurting anyone. 8) If we don't do this then we'll be killed and some heathen will take our place and our people will be treated roughly as a result. The one thing they couldn't get by was "Thou shall have no other gods beside me".

He ordered them thrown into the fiery furnace but God turned on the "Holy Air Conditioner" and the fire became a place of fellowship with God!

This brought Nebuchadnezzar to realize that God was not only A god but the MOST POWERFUL GOD- Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort (Dan 3:28-29).*

Have you told God, "I'll marry who I want to marry, get the job I want to get, live where I want to live, etc."

Chapter 4 By finally Brings you to the place of admitting your own helplessness. Nebuchadnezzar in his pride refused to believe God's proclamation and was stricken with a disease that make him act like a wild animal. Finally Nebuchadnezzar was willing to admit that God was truly God.

What will God have to do to get YOU to acknowledge Him??

ABRAHAM'S EXAMPLE

Rom 3:27-4:16

Having shown the sinfulness of man and the Righteousness of God Paul now comes to a "reasonable" conclusion- *We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.* This sounds wonderful;... but how do you explain this principle to people who have "worshipped" the Law for hundreds of years?? Paul decides the best thing to do is to go back to the "Father" of the Nation of Israel and show from Abraham's Example how God used this principle from the very beginning.

As we look at Abraham's example I want us to see the things in our own spiritual life that God expects us to do to bring Glory to Him. This will change Abraham's example from a "mind-game" into a life changing demonstration.

ABRAHAM'S GLORY- 4:2 *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.* Abraham did many wonderful works- He left home at God's bidding, went into the Promised land and claimed it as his own (Even though he never owned anything in it except a grave!), expected his seed to be as the "sand of the sea" (Even though he was 100 years old before the child of promise was born), and built many altars to the Lord God as a means of worshipping God and as a witness to the surrounding tribes. Yet all of this is not counted as his glory; instead the scriptures say *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness* (vs 3).

PRINCIPLE #1- Man Looks at Physical works to ascribe glory to a man while God looks at Man's Faith. (When you try to "justify" yourself before God remember that. Things that please men do not affect God).

ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS- 4:9b *for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.* Abraham's righteousness was not a "reward" for his works (4:4); this would only incur increased debt! The more you try to "pay" off your debt to God with works the bigger the hole you tear in the "old cloth" (Matt 9:16). 4:5 *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

PRINCIPLE #2- The only Righteousness that can have fellowship with a Righteous God is that that enters thru the door of Faith. Later on Paul is going to be so bold as to say (Rom 14:23) *whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* The things that God is looking for in a "saint" is a settled Faith in God's Provision and Plan (Which will in turn affect a man's character and conduct. Just don't get the cart ahead of the horse).

ABRAHAM'S FAITH-

A) Manifested in a sign- "Circumcision" (vs 11): This sign was received AFTER Abraham's Faith was manifested and was the symbol of his covenant with God. This relates to many areas of Christianity today- Faith must precede Feelings, Salvation must precede Service, Believing must precede Baptism.

PRINCIPLE #3- There are many Manifestations of Faith but they must never be accepted IN THE PLACE OF FAITH!!

B) Multiplied to the world- vs 16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.* Abraham's way of access to God (Faith) is also OUR WAY OF ACCESS. Jesus was a Jew; but He's MY Savior!

PRINCIPLE #4- The People in God's Family have different talents and abilities but they all must come into His house by the same door! Never let Pride or Popularity make you forget that.

ABRAHAM'S FAITH

Rom 4:17-22

Paul says that it was Abraham's Faith that "impressed" God; not his works. And we have stressed that the *Just shall live by his Faith*. That should make it important for us to determine what kind of Faith Abraham had.

ABRAHAM'S FAITH WAS:

A "SENSELESS" FAITH- *Who against hope believed in hope, (vs 18)*

A) Believed the Impossible- *He believed God who quickened the dead.*

B) Believed the Invisible- *He called those things that be not as though they were.*

THE RESULT- "He became the father of many nations"

A STRONG FAITH- (vs 20) *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; He would have*

A) As opposed to being "weak in Faith" if he would have considered his own body now dead, (vs 19)

B) As opposed to "Staggering" at the promise of God through unbelief (vs 20).

THE RESULT- "He Gave Glory to God"

A SAVING FAITH-

A) Because it Trusted God's Promises (vs 21) *Being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

B) Because it accepted God's Pardon (vs 22) *Therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

THE RESULT- He was delivered from Sin's Penalty and made part of God's Family.

Do You have Abraham's Faith... or an absence of Faith??

PROMISE VERSUS PERFORMANCE

Rom 4:20-22

Moved any mountains lately?? Jesus said (Matt 17:20) *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* Seems to me like there are a lot of Christians with extremely small faith...or sometimes the promises do not translate into performance. (Just for Information, Jesus said the problem with these disciples was their "Unbelief".... and yet he ended his admonition by saying *Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.* So was the Problem their Faith or their Fasting??).

Abraham was in somewhat of this dilemma. He had received a Promise from God but Time (Almost 25 years had transpired since the Promise), Circumstances (He had to *consider not his own body now dead, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb* (vs 19)), and Emotions (*Who against Hope believed in Hope*-vs 18) all combined to defeat the performance of this Promise. If you too have been "buffeted in your belief" lately maybe it's time we examined the difference between Promise and Performance.

FIRST, let's see how you tell a Promise from a "Pipe Dream". Then let's see how you turn the Promise into reality.

Everyone has "Pipe Dreams"; that is, things they desire to have or to have happen. These can be anything from wanting dad to stop for ice cream to having a millionaire like your looks so much until he gives you a million dollars. "Pipe Dreams aren't altogether harmful (Sometimes they may even be a little helpful) but they must be recognized for what they are- WISHFUL THINKING!!

"Pipe Dreams" are caused by CONDITIONS (You're broke and so is your car! Your child/husband/wife is not acting like you'd like and you want them to suddenly "magically" change into the image you've dreamed of); or FEELINGS (People would like you better if you had some great talent. If I won a million dollars today, I wouldn't have to go to work!). A "Pipe Dream" is just a HOPE-- that you'll suddenly lose weight, or become rich, or wondrously develop into the best basketball player in the world.

A Promise, on the other hand, is something that is based on the WORD of someone who is Able (and willing) to do what he has promised. There are CONDITIONAL PROMISES- You do this and I will do that (Whosoever Will may come. You make the decision and I will provide the way); and UNCONDITIONAL PROMISES- In spite of anything you do I am going to do certain things. There are very few, if any, of these promises to be found (Every time I thought I had found one I would find a condition attached to it somewhere. The closest thing I could find was a number of Promises based on Faith without Works; yet they were conditional upon Faith).

That Conditional aspect of the Promise is very important. A Performance is expected from the Person receiving the Promise as well as from the person who made the Promise. We will soon spend an entire lesson on the Performance required by the person receiving the promise, but right now I want us to look at what sort of Performance we can expect from the one making the Promise.

A FAITHFUL Performance- If the conditions are met the Promise WILL BE KEPT.

A TIMED Performance- God seems to always wait for the "fullness of time" so the fulfilled promise will do good instead of harm.

A GOD HONORING Performance- The outcome of the promise is not simply to bring you pleasure but to build your trust and adoration of God.

You can count on the Performance of the one giving the Promise; can He count of the Performance of the one receiving the Promise???

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Today's message is much too serious to bring to a congregation exited by Easter activities, tired from a Sunrise Service, and looking for a quick "Hallelujah" about a risen Savior. If I asked for a show of hands on who believes in the Resurrection I would probably get a unanimous vote. Yet, I fear we just want to feel good about Jesus raising from the Dead so we'll have something we can remember when "cousin Clem" dies, or something to hold on to if WE become deathly sick.



In the next few minutes I want us to see the Importance of the Resurrection, the Power of the Resurrection, and the Practice of the Resurrection in our daily living. I want us to see the possibility that we've made an "idol" out of Jesus, that we put the empty cross above the empty tomb, and that one of the reasons Christianity has become more "talk than walk" is that we are trying to live in Silent Saturday instead of Resurrection Sunday.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION. I could give you some good Human reasoning here but I think the best sermon ever preached on the Importance of the Resurrection was preached by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:13-19 *But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* Without the Resurrection, Paul says our Preaching, our Faith, our testimony, and our hope of eternal life are all worthless!! The Resurrection is not simply a doctrine we consider; it's the vital ingredient in everything Christianity stands for and is.

II. THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION- It is critical that we understand the difference between "Raised from the Dead" and Resurrection. Many people in the Bible were "raised from the Dead"; but all of them had to die again-- they simply received an "extension" on their life. Jesus was Resurrected from the Dead- He received a new body and He will never die again!!

It is Important that we realize that The Source of this Power is God. We make the mistake of attributing Resurrection Power to Christ (as if He raised himself from the dead!). In our minds that means that we have to accept Christ's Payment for Sin's Penalty but somehow we must break Sin's Power on our own! We MUST grasp the truth of Rom 4:25 that Jesus *was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification....* Delivered for our Offenses- Sin's Penalty Paid

Raised Again for our Justification- Sin's Power Broken. [This doesn't mean that sin cannot Brother us- see Rom 7- but it does mean that we have the power available to CONQUER OUR SINFUL NATURE. And as we conquer our Sin Nature we conform more and more to the image of Christ-- Which is our ultimate goal!!!].

III. THE PRACTICE OF THE RESURRECTION Eph 1:18-20 *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

A) In Our Salvation- It is NOT ENOUGH to simply believe that Jesus died on the Cross for you, that only takes care of your debt to death; now you must have power to Live-

ROM 4:24-25 *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

ROM 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

I Pet 1:21 *Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*

B) In Our Service- Belief in the Power of the Resurrection changed scared fishermen into world shaking Missionaries. They witnessed many people being raised from the dead but that did not give them courage to stand when Jesus was arrested. However, A risen savior motivated them to preach to the multitude and stand fearlessly before religious leaders.

C) In our Relationship with God

Have we made an "Idol" our of Jesus because He is the only part of God that was seen by Humans??? Have we stressed Salvation by Jesus to the point we hardly recognize Justification with God?? Has Redemption replaced Relationship??

When we begin living on the "Easter Side of the Tomb" then life will be abundant and meaningful. As long as we stay at the cross we will remember our past instead of living our future- Eph 2:5-6 *Even when we were dead in sins, (GOD) hath quickened us together with Christ, (By grace are ye saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;*

The Resurrection was the greatest thing that has ever happened on the earth. It affirms our Salvation, Motivates our Service, and allows us to "sit together in Heavenly place in Christ Jesus". Is it a Doctrine in your head or a life changing power in your heart???

HOW MAN DEFEATS GOD

Rom 3:1-4

Paul has spent the first 2 chapters bringing the condemnation of sin upon all men- The Heathen, the Moral Man, and the Religious Man. Now, before he makes some final statements about sins in order to show Faith as the only way out of Sin, Paul stops to show the Jews that even though they are sinners they have been entrusted with Special Privileges. This is a natural question. The Jews would want to know what would be the advantage of being God's chosen people if it didn't protect them from sin.

Paul tells them that the Jews have been entrusted with some Special Privileges (The mark of the Covenant- Circumcision, and the distribution of the Oracles {sayings} of God). These Privileges have allowed them to be Blessed of God as well have continual access to the Plan of Salvation. This should have brought about Faithfulness TO GOD and Love FOR GOD; instead, the Jews developed into a self righteous society that was more interested in Separation from the world than in Salvation for the world.

The Church today has been given the same type Privileges- the "mark of the Covenant" (The Holy Spirit) and the responsibility to distribute the "Sayings of God". And, sadly, we seem to be making the same type mistakes- Joining the Church takes the place of Submitting to God, Enjoying God's Blessings becomes more important than worshipping the God who Blessed us, and we're more interested in bettering our Conditions than in Bearing our Cross!!

This brings us to the amazing statement of Paul in vs 3, "shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?". Is it possible that the God of the Universe can be defeated by mere mortal man!? (The answer is given in the next verse, "God forbid"! We can and do defeat God's plans for our lives but we can't Defeat God. God will remain GOD in spite of all we do, or fail to do; but His heart will be hurt and His work will not be accomplished in the way He desires when we fail to follow through with our Faith).

The question we must ask ourselves today is, "Does the Privileges God has given us require a corresponding Obligation"? What does God expect from us??

God expects us to TRUST Him for Salvation and then to obey his plans for our life. This is the "Rub" with many people. They don't mind going to Heaven but they don't want to commit themselves to following God's Plan when they don't know every detail of what that means {Walking by Faith}. They fear that somehow God will demand too much of them; or God will ask them to do something that they will hate doing. Because of this, they end up making "half hearted" commitments and live miserable life themselves as well as displeasing God. Let's begin by looking at some ways we "limit" God's ability to work in and through us and then see how we end up "Defeating" God; and then let's determine to completely obey Him.

WE LIMIT GOD BY:

1. Disobeying Him- Ps 78:41 *Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.* They allowed themselves to be controlled by Senses and Sight instead of Faith in God's word and as a result spent 40 years dying in the desert. I wonder how often we limit God by refusing to obey His plan for our lives??

2. Disbelief- Mark 6:5-6 *And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.* Familiarity killed their Faith and Jesus was unable to do much to help them! Today we get so familiar with the Worship service and with the Word of God until we "go thru the motions" instead of receiving a Blessing. Men will launch a Million Dollar Business on the basis of a Survey while the Church won't do anything extraordinary even though it's commanded in Scriptures!

It's bad enough when we limit God but it's even worst when

WE DEFEAT GOD BY:

1. Lack of Love- The one thing God wants from us is our Love. We offer Him our Money or our Morals or our Minds but it is our Loving Devotion He desires. He won't force it from us; we must willingly give it. This Lack of Love is shown by:

a> Failing to Obey Him- John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

b> Failure of Zeal for Him- Rev 2:4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

2. Giving God our Emotions or Mind without giving Him our will.

Emotions are largely governed by Circumstances

Intellect is governed by Reason

Will is guided by Faith that sometimes must ignore Circumstances and Reject Reason and "against Hope believe in Hope" (Rom 4:18). "Will" causes us to Persevere in God's Plan when Emotion and Intellect would have us give up.

People who give God just their emotions are those who "make a commitment" during a stirring revival or crisis time in their life and then "cool down as they calm down"!

People who Give God only their Intellect are those who decide it is the best and proper thing to "make things right with God". They strike a bargain with God in which they promise they'll do "good" things in return for God's Blessings here and Heaven in the Future. They know the Plan of Salvation and the Purpose of the Bible but they've never met Christ as a Person who they will follow as Lord and Savior.

People who yield their "Will" to God are those who deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Christ. They don't serve God by Feelings but by Faith. They don't try to make bargains with God because they know they have nothing to bargain with! They are sincerely sorry for their sinful state (Repent) and by Faith accept God's provision of Salvation through Christ. Then they live their lives for God- first, last, and always!

Are your "Making the Faith of God without Effect" by your lack of Love or Commitment?? Jesus said you must come to Him "as a little Child". Let me tell you how a Little Child comes, "Lord, I don't have many 'things' but I do want to give you ME". Are you willing to give God YOU?? He'll give you Pardon and Peace and a Place- the Abundant Life you've longed for.

JUDGING THE JUDGER

ROM 2:1-4 *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

We talked several weeks ago in our Sunday School lesson about one of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible- Matt 7:1-2 "Judge Not that ye be not Judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." That day we looked at "Judging" from the standpoint of the world and their judgment of us. In today's scripture Paul is dealing with the problems we have in judging our own actions.

In Chapter 1 Paul had shown how the Heathen descended deeper and deeper into sin until he listed a group of sins that would make even a "sailor blush". Now he must deal with the MORAL MAN who looks at this group of sins and feels fine about judging these people as sinners; and yet will not admit his own guilt.

This is the situation with the vast majority of people today. They aren't as good as they want to be but they're certainly not as bad as SOME people are! This allows them to condone their wrong while condemning the wrong of others. I want any of these who are here today to see the seriousness of their situation.

I. THEIR EXCUSE- Therefore thou art inexcusable. God says that the wrong of others is not a justification for your wrong. James said that if I keep the whole law and yet offend in one point I am guilty of all (James 2:10).

II. THEIR CONDEMNATION- Wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself: for thou doest the same thing. SELF CONDEMNATION. The very things you find wrong in others are going to be the basis of the wrong found in you. See 2:17-23

III. THEIR JUDGMENT- of God. If you expect God to judge the wrong done by the Heathen then you must also accept the fact that He will judge the wrong done by YOU.

1. Do you have a list of "Bad" Sins and "good" sins?
2. Do you compare yourself to other men; or to God's Word??
3. Are you able to face the Judgment of God today; AS YOU ARE??

THINGS THAT LEAD TO REPENTANCE

Rom 2:4-6 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

We live in the day of the "Christian" Stripper (She doesn't want you to lust after her body, just admire how good God has been to her!), the "Christian" Pick-pocket (He steals your wallet with one hand while putting a gospel tract in your pocket with the other), and the sexually driven, money desiring, TV Preacher (No explanation needed!).

It seems that Christians act like the world, the world acts like the devil, and no one seems to know right from wrong except Oprah and Donahue! The main reason for this is that we've come to the day of "Cheap Easy Believism" where all a person has to do is "Believe" on Jesus to be saved. The problem with this "belief" is that it is a mental acknowledgement instead of a Heart commitment. (That's why a man can be "saved" on Sunday, not be changed on Monday, and not think enough of God to even come back to Prayer Meeting on Wednesday). The "missing ingredient" in most Salvation today is REPENTANCE.

I. REPENTANCE DEFINED- Repentance means to "have another mind" and is used to indicate a change of mind in respect to sin, God, and self. Repentance does not simply means to "feel sorrow for something" I have done (This was the kind of Repentance Judas had). That's like crying over "spilt milk"- it won't help you or the milk! Repentance is not simply a desire to start "doing good"; multitudes of very good New Year's resolutions have already been broken.

Repentance is primarily A JUDGMENT UPON SELF. It is an acknowledgement that I am wrong; that I am unable to correct that wrong; and that only the mercy and Grace of God can help me. This is why REPENTANCE IS THE NECESSARY FIRST INGREDIENT IN SALVATION.

II. REPENTANCE ILLUSTRATED-

A) By a City's action- Jonah 3:10 *And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.* The Principle is this: The city of Nineveh saw the errors of it's ways and turned from them toward God. God accepted that.

B) By John the Baptist's Preaching- Luke 3:7-14 The "Fruits of Repentance" here were (1) A turn from selfishness to sharing- vs 11, (2) A turn from Stealing to Honesty- vs 12-13 (3) A turn from a Violent Spirit to a Peaceful Spirit- vs 14

C) By a "Backslidden Boy"- The Prodigal Son in Luke 15 was willing to say, "I have sinned. I am unworthy." and he left the hog pens of the world for the father's house.

REPENTANCE MAKES US FORSAKE SIN AND TURN TOWARD GOD

III. REPENTANCE DESIRED-

A) The men who preached Repentance- John the Baptist, Jesus (Matt 4:17), and Paul (Acts 26:20 *But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance).*

B) The Methods that lead to Repentance-

1 > Knowledge of Wrath to Come- Acts 17:30-31 *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* As man becomes aware of the consequences of his actions he is prone to turn from them and adopt a new life style. This is the **FEAR** Method and it works as long as the person fears the bad enough to motivate him.

2 > Sorrow- II Cor 7:9-10 *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.* This is the **EMOTIONAL** method- The person is sorry that the Results of his sins affect him and those whom he loves. If he becomes sorry for what he's done to God then it can lead to Salvation; but if he's only sorry for the way it effects him or his loved ones then it will make only a surface change.

3 > Sermons (To make a person aware that **THEY** are the ones that need to repent)- Matt 9:12-13 *Jesus said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* This is the **MENTAL** Method- It brings a person to an intellectual acknowledging of their sinful state and their need of God. While Repentance must continue into actions; it must begin in the Mind (A man must admit he is lost before he will come to be |wved). This deals with the **ROOT** of the Problem; not the Fruit- Most people are willing to throw away their spoiled apples but they don't want you pulling up the tree!

4 > Goodness of God- Rom 4:6. Of all the Methods, this is probably the least expected or understood. All of the other methods go at changing a person from the **NEGATIVE** side while this one looks at the **POSITIVE** side. God provides men with His goodness and His mercy and in return expects them to lovingly desire to leave sin and sinfulness to enjoy Fellowship with Him. When they continue in sin it brings about:

C) Wrath stored up by failing to repent- Rom 2:5 *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*

Spurning God's Love and forgiveness; accepting God's Goodness without even so much as a "Thank You"; Man continually stores up God's wrath until it will one day thunder down upon him.

Repentance is a necessary first step to Salvation. It begins when we see our sinfulness and our hopelessness. It brings about a departure **FROM** sin and a clinging **TO** God. It is produced in many ways but the most common is the Goodness of God that leads you to Repent and accept God's Love. Will you Repent and accept Christ today??

Let me close with a final exhortation of Peter: (II Pet 3:9) *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

JUSTIFICATION

Rom 3:21-26

During a recent Revival service we attended the Preacher stressed in his message to be "sure that you're sure that you're sure" of your salvation. In the context of the message he was delivering it made a person really sit up and examine their relationship with the Lord. Later on my wife and I were talking and she said that even though she had no doubts about her salvation sometimes messages like this caused her to wonder if she could ever COMPLETELY KNOW SHE WAS SAVED. This people had cast out devils and done many wonderful works and yet when they faced God He said, "Depart from me, I never knew you!".

This is one of the most common problems I face as a Pastor; how do I get a Christian to rest peacefully in the security of their salvation and at the same time keep them from resting so peacefully until they become unfruitful in God's work (Which eventually would mean being cut off and cast into the fire!). {In reality, the way preachers try to accomplish this is to have some services where they "hold the Christians close" and tell them everything will be all right and other services where they "scold" them for not being all they should be- It's called the hold and scold method! Most parents have developed it to perfection years ago}. (Just a side note- when a Pastor or Parent uses only one side of this "sword" they will eventually get into trouble).

Well, Today's message is one of the "Hold" Messages where we find out how stable our Salvation really is. Paul has just finished the first part of Romans where he has shown the sinfulness of man. Now he's going to the second part where he's going to show God's way out of this sinful state. A key word he's going to use is "JUSTIFICATION". I want us to look at what that word means and see how marvelously it affects our relationship with God.

JUSTIFICATION IS:

1. An act, not a process. There are no degrees of justification; each believer has the same right standing before God (That is why Paul could call the people in the Corinthian Church "Saints" even though they had many problems). I am not going to have Eternal Life if I somehow learn to live a certain way; THE MOMENT I RECEIVE CHRIST AS SAVIOR THAT MOMENT I RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE (John 3:36).

Justification does not mean God makes us righteous, but that He declares us righteous. Do not confuse Justification and Sanctification. Sanctification is the process whereby God makes us more and more like Christ each day. Justification never changes; as long as we maintain faith in Christ we are absolutely justified before God. We must continually realize that the Blood of Christ covers ALL MY SINS ALL THE TIME.

2. Something God does, not man. No sinner can justify himself before God.

God does this:

WITHOUT LAW- vs 21

BY FAITH- vs 22

FOR ALL- vs 23

THROUGH THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST- vs 24-25

THAT GOD MIGHT REMAIN RIGHTEOUS- vs 26

Faith means trust, reliance, confidence; and always involves a personal commitment of oneself to Christ. It is based on confidence in Him and His work, which is in turn based on a conviction about the facts of who He is and what He had done. Genuine faith always involves these three elements: Conviction, Confidence, Commitment.

We are justified BY the Death of Christ- Peace with God

We are justified THRU the Grace of God- Access for all

We are justified ONLY by Faith's acceptance of God's Provision.

God had to provide a way to be "Just and the Justifier of them that believe". This Justification can be your today; Accept God's Provision by trusting Christ.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Rom 3:21-26

Having Convinced and Convicted the entire world of Sin, Paul now begins showing that the only method God has ever accepted for the remission of sins is Faith in the Sacrifice God Provides. This goes against the grain of Gentile as well as Jew because all mankind wants to believe that somehow he can master anything, even his sinfulness. This means that, having shown man how sinful he really is; Paul must now show how hopeless he is apart from God's intervention. This causes us to come to grips with the "righteousness of God". For it is this Righteousness that shows that only a Holy God can offer a sinless sacrifice to enable sinful man to be forgiven and returned to fellowship with a Righteous God.

"Righteousness" is an abstract term that is hard to grasp in today's society. The world today is shifting and changing so fast until it's difficult to keep up with it. Things that used to be thought of as "unrighteous" are now considered all right. Standards have shifted to such a degree until men can "religiously" desire to ordain homosexuals to be preachers; "Christians" can roll in the muck and dirt of the world all week and yet smilingly sit in church on Sunday and sing "Jesus, I my cross have taken, All to leave and follow thee"; and Prayer, Fasting, and regular Church attendance are thought of as Fanatical instead of Faithfulness.

"Righteousness" is defined as the character or quality of being right or just. It was formerly spelled "Rightwiseness" and is used to denote an attribute of God that shows his character as faithful and true. This means that God cannot overlook sin just because He loves someone and that the punishment for sin must be consistent. God cannot allow man's sins to go unpunished and He cannot allow the punishment to be anything less than His Holy nature requires.

This is why man cannot provide the payment for sins- anything he "pays" is not sufficient to meet the righteous requirements of God. It's like a little boy with three pennies trying to buy a baseball glove; the three pennies are all he's got, and to him they're very valuable, but they are nowhere close the price of the glove.

Before we go on and see how the righteousness of God requires the Justification of God; I want us to see some of the "Requirement of Righteousness" so we will more clearly understand how and why God used the method He did to bring about our Justification. And that brings us again to look at **What Sin Does to us:** (Look at the example of Adam and Eve)

1. **Robs us of our clothing-** We hide from God and from each other. No longer able to face our frailty we hide behind the "bushes" of hostility and hypocrisy.
RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST FIND A WAY TO CLOTHE US. (And Remember- All OUR Righteousnesses are as filthy rags, so it must come from God).

2. **Causes us to run from God-** We run FROM Responsibility; failing to realize that the string makes no music until its bound by the bow.
We run FOR the greener pastures of the world and find they're really "Hog Pens".
RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST DEAL WITH OUR FEAR (Perfect love cast out all fear).

3. **Brings disorder into our lives-** a line of authority becomes necessary (Adam over Eve, Man over Nature, etc) and the more regulations we make the more we rebel against them. **RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST CHANGE OUR CHARACTER** - Greatest of all is servant of all

4. **Incurs Penalties-** cursed ground, driven from garden. **RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST GIVE POWER OVER OUR PROBLEMS-** Holy Spirit
"Do this and live; the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands.
A better word the gospel brings.
It bids me fly and gives me wings."

5. **Requires a Payment-** Blood sacrifice to cover nakedness **RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST SATISFY OUR SIN DEBT-** The Cross met God's Righteous Requirements.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

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4. Incurs Penalties- cursed ground, driven from garden. **RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST GIVE POWER OVER OUR PROBLEMS-** Holy Spirit

"Do this and live; the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands.
A better word the gospel brings.
It bids me fly and gives me wings."

5. Requires a Payment- Blood sacrifice to cover nakedness **RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST SATISFY OUR SIN DEBT-** The Cross met God's Righteous Requirements.

JUSTIFICATION

Rom 3:21-26

During a recent Revival service we attended the Preacher stressed in his message to be "sure that you're sure that you're sure" of your salvation. In the context of the message he was delivering it made a person really sit up and examine their relationship with the Lord. Later on my wife and I were talking and she said that even though she had no doubts about her salvation sometimes messages like this caused her to wonder if she could ever COMPLETELY KNOW SHE WAS SAVED. This people had cast out devils and done many wonderful works and yet when they faced God He said, "Depart from me, I never knew you!".

This is one of the most common problems I face as a Pastor; how do I get a Christian to rest peacefully in the security of their salvation and at the same time keep them from resting so peacefully until they become unfruitful in God's work (Which eventually would mean being cut off and cast into the fire!). {In reality, the way preachers try to accomplish this is to have some services where they "hold the Christians close" and tell them everything will be all right and other services where they "scold" them for not being all they should be- It's called the hold and scold method! Most parents have developed it to perfection years ago}. (Just a side note- when a Pastor or Parent uses only one side of this "sword" they will eventually get into trouble).

Well, Today's message is one of the "Hold" Messages where we find out how stable our Salvation really is. Paul has just finished the first part of Romans where he has shown the sinfulness of man. Now he's going to the second part where he's going to show God's way out of this sinful state. A key word he's going to use is "JUSTIFICATION". I want us to look at what that word means and see how marvelously it affects our relationship with God.

JUSTIFICATION IS:

1. An act, not a process. There are no degrees of justification; each believer has the same right standing before God (That is why Paul could call the people in the Corinthian Church "Saints" even though they had many problems). I am not going to have Eternal Life if I somehow learn to live a certain way; THE MOMENT I RECEIVE CHRIST AS SAVIOR THAT MOMENT I RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE (John 3:36).

Justification does not mean God makes us righteous, but that He declares us righteous. Do not confuse Justification and Sanctification. Sanctification is the process whereby God makes us more and more like Christ each day. Justification never changes; as long as we maintain faith in Christ we are absolutely justified before God. We must continually realize that the Blood of Christ covers ALL MY SINS ALL THE TIME.

2. Something God does, not man. No sinner can justify himself before God.

God does this:

WITHOUT LAW- vs 21

BY FAITH- vs 22

FOR ALL- vs 23

THROUGH THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST- vs 24-25

THAT GOD MIGHT REMAIN RIGHTEOUS- vs 26

Faith means trust, reliance, confidence; and always involves a personal commitment of oneself to Christ. It is based on confidence in Him and His work, which is in turn based on a conviction about the facts of who He is and what He had done. Genuine faith always involves these three elements: Conviction, Confidence, Commitment.

We are justified BY the Death of Christ- Peace with God

We are justified THRU the Grace of God- Access for all

We are justified ONLY by Faith's acceptance of God's Provision.

God had to provide a way to be "Just and the Justifier of them that believe". This Justification can be your today; Accept God's Provision by trusting Christ.

We have spent the first 2 months of 1990 in the first section of the book of Romans trying to show you that ALL have SINNED and stand guilty before God. Paul ends the first section of his letter by showing WHAT SIN DOES. He wants us to see that Sin is not simply a Doctrine we believe but Deeds we Do that Damn us.

I. WHAT SIN IS:

1. Failure in Righteousness (vs 10) - Our STANDING with a Holy God is broken resulting in Condemnation.
2. Failure in Reasoning (vs 11a)- "none Understandeth"- Our MINDS have become Polluted and incapable of right reasoning (Controlled by Pleasures, or Passions).
3. Failure in Reverence (vs 11b)- "none seek God"- Our ATTITUDE is Proud instead of Repentant.
4. Failure in Right living (vs 12a)- "They are all gone out of the way"- Our PURPOSE in life has vanished.
5. Failure in Responsibility (vs 12b)- "They are together become unprofitable"(like spoiled Milk)- Our ACTIONS are Harmful instead of Helpful.
6. Failure in Reformation (vs 12c)- "There is none that doeth good, no, not one"- Our BEING is corrupt. Man achieves neither innocence before God or positive good (All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags).

The whole of man's inner being is controlled by sin:

- His MIND- None that understandeth
- His HEART- None that seeketh after God
- His WILL- None that doeth good

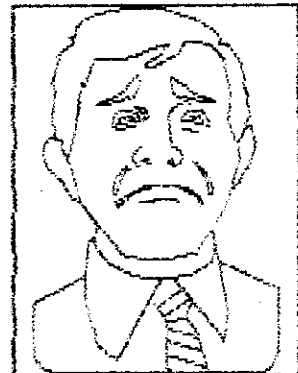
II. WHAT SIN DOES

A) Drives us from God- Our Failures should drive us TO God but instead we run FROM God! Gen 3:8-10, Luke 15: Luke 19:10

B) Destroys Our PEACE with:

1> Others-

- Their throat is an open sepulchre- graveyard, mouth With their tongues they have used deceit- forked tongues
- The poison of asps is under their lips- deadly words Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness- foul mouths
- Their feet are swift to shed blood- Look for trouble
- 2> Ourself- Destruction & misery are in their ways: The way of peace have they not known
- 3> God- There is no fear of God before their eyes



WHAT SIN BRINGS- Rom 3: 19-20 "Now ye know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin". We become "Lawyers" instead of "Lovers of God". We become people who Tolerate, then Spectate, and finally Participate in Sin until the Wrath of a Holy God falls upon us. We end up wallowing in the "Hog Pens" of sin instead eating at the Father's House.

Sin will Contaminate you, Control you, and Condemn you- Abandon Sin today and accept God's offer of forgiveness by Faith in Christ.

WHEN GOD GIVES UP

Rom 1:18-32

One of the most awful things imaginable would be to believe that you were abandoned by God. We can expect to be disappointed by, and sometimes abandoned by, people in this world but we always have the Love and Grace of God to cling to. What a horrible thing to believe God had abandoned us.

It has happened several times in the Scriptures as men or countries went so deep into sin until God told Prophets not to pray for them and even to "Let them alone". But we normally think that only someone who is a "hard down dirty" sinner would find themselves in this situation. I want us today to see that it CAN HAPPEN TO US; and, I believe, has already begun to happen in America.

God says 3 times in these verses that He gives up on men (24, 26, 28). The reasons for this drastic action are **FALSE IDEAS ABOUT:**

- 1) Who God Is- Went from God to Idols
- 2) What God Says- Went to Man as God
- 3) What God Wants- Believe Man's Pleasure is God's Goal

Because of these False Ideas God brings 3 **JUDGEMENTS UPON MEN:**

- 1) God gives them up to uncleanness and idolatry 24-25
- 2) God gives them over to be controlled by vile passions 26-27
- 3) God gives them over to a REPROBATE MIND 28-32

The Downward spiral is
INDIFFERENCE- Hold the Truth in unrighteousness vs 18
INGRATITUDE- Knew God Glorified him not as God, neither were thankful
IGNORANCE- Professing themselves wise, became fools
IDOLATRY- Worshipped the creature instead of Creator
INDULGENCE- Do those things which were not convenient.

NOTICE THE ERRORS THESE PEOPLE MADE:

I. IGNORING WRATH 18-20

Like many people these men thought the way God's Wrath worked was like a billboard I saw once- "Believe in Jesus or Burn in Hell". While this statement is true it does not show the **ONLY** way God's wrath is revealed. It is also revealed in man's misuse of man and nature. God keeps allowing mankind to receive "payments" for his sin before the final "Pay Day" to try to get man to repent.

Mankind first of all Refused this Truth, then Turned the Truth into a lie, and finally Abandoned the Truth

II. VAIN IMAGINATION 21-23

They failed to give God Glory or be Grateful for God's Goodness- Just like Hogs, they never thought to look up at their provider. (Note that man is **NOT** a product of Evolution but of "Devolution"- went from Worship of God to worship of man, to worship of Birds, then beasts, then reptiles. As men became worst so did their worship.

III. INDULGENCE 24-27

Because they worshipped what God created instead of God who created, God gave them up to be controlled by the power of sinful desires. This degrading passion led to deeper and deeper sexual perversion until Homosexuality became a way of life. (God does not call Homosexuals "Gay". He calls them Ghastly!).

IV. IMPENITENT 28-32

They did not like to acknowledge God, or consider God, so God allowed them to be filled with ever kind of sin. Having abandoned God they were now abandoned by God.

If you continue in Sin, God will one day give you up to be controlled by your passions and perversions. Today is the day of Salvation. Will you accept God's Mercy; or His Wrath??

OBEYING GOD'S COMMAND

I hope each of you would readily agree that obeying God's Commands is an absolute must in our lives. Then why don't we do it?? What keeps us from letting the "will of God be done on earth as it is in Heaven"?

Let's look at several times God gave commands to men; and they hesitated to do what He said. Then as we find out why they wouldn't do God's Will it may help us realize why we fail to obey God's Command.

1. II Kings 5:9-14 Naaman was told to dip in the Jordan River 7 times in order to cure his leprosy. He didn't want to do so because he was looking for some great magic show instead of a simple act of obedience- **The Command of God deals with our PRIDE.** Naaman's servants said that if Elisha's had told him to do some great thing then he would have done it but he didn't want to do anything that would make him look foolish. We must come to God thru the Foolishness of Preaching, Become Fools for Christ's sake, and live by what the world calls "Foolish Faith".

Will Pride keep you from Obeying God in the matter of Salvation or Service?

2. Acts 10:9-16. Peter didn't want to eat with, or associate with, the Gentiles so God used this vision to show him that anything God made was not unclean. **The Command of God deals with our PREJUDICES.** Christians are color Blind and pocket book blind (James 2:1-4); although we are not character blind (We love everyone equally- which means we dislike sin or slothfulness in anyone).

Some sinners are prejudice against the hypocrites in the Church. If they're good enough to spend eternity in Hell with they're surely good enough to spend a Sunday with!

3. *And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue (Exo 4:10).* Moses was willing to go back to Egypt but he didn't want to speak- **The Command of God deals with our PERSONALITIES.** Many People don't mind serving the Lord as long as it doesn't require any real effort or stress.

We become New Creatures at Salvation. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit to conform us to the image of Christ. God uses the Bible and the events of life to mold and make us.

Are you going to miss Heaven because you think you aren't good enough, or bright enough, or strong enough?? Obey God's Command.

"Look at your life as you will see it on ETERNITY'S MORNING when life will be all behind you. What will you and I count on Eternity's morning? Money? No, that will be gone, never to come back again. Position? That will have passed away forever. Pleasure and ease? They, too, will have gone.

But there will be two things which we shall value with all our being on Eternity's morning. The first is to know that we have done His will with our lives, and the second thing will be to know that there are precious souls standing around the throne on the solemn morning that God used us to have a share in winning." (G.S. Graham)

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (1 John 2:17)

CIRCUMSTANCES

If I asked you today if you believed the Bible was the Word of God I believe most of you would readily say "YES". Now let's look at our text verse and see if you still believe that: *There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.* (Prov 12:21)

That simply doesn't seem to be the case. It seems more and more that the Wicked are blessed and the righteous suffer. Why is this? What really determines a man's circumstances?

1> Some circumstances happen to people irregardless of their:

A) Intellect- *The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all. Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.* (Eccl 2:14-15)

B) Relationship to the Lord- *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity.* (Eccl 8:14)

C) Ability- *I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* (Eccl 9:11)

2> Some Circumstances happen in our live to teach other people:

A) The Events in Israel- *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* (1 Cor 10:11)

B) The Events in Paul's Life- *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;* (Phil 1:12)

3> Some Circumstances are a trial from Satan:

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: (1 Pet 4:12)

4> Some Circumstances happen because of Sin:

Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. (Jer 44:23)

The thing to remember is that God uses these Circumstances to Shape us into the Vessel we're supposed to be. The Sculptor hammers at the stone- not to harm it, but to make it into a thing of beauty. It was persecution that drove the early church from the "safety" of the "nest" at Jerusalem to spread the Gospel around the world (Acts 8:1). It is the file, and not the feather, that sharpens the axe!!

Heb 5:8 *Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.*

Ps 119:71 *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

Remember also that Hell doesn't just "Happen". It comes to those who refuse to accept Christ as Savior. Don't ease your way into destruction. Accept Christ today

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH- The word "Church" comes from the Greek word "Ecclesia" and means "Called out ones". It is composed of people who have been called out of the ways of the world and are now "Pilgrims and Strangers" on their way to Heaven. These "called out ones" are:

The Bride of Christ- Set Apart for one "man" (Christ)- Companionship

The Body of Christ- Individual Members of one Body- Service

The Temple of the Holy Spirit- The Habitation of God- Power

The Church, then, loves Christ, Serves Christ, and is empowered to Work for Christ by the indwelling Spirit. Are these Attributes in YOUR life?? Are you a member of the "Church Club" or are you a "Called Out Christian"???

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH- What responsibilities do Christians have to the Church??

A) To come in the Front Door- Jesus is the Door and if you come over the wall you are a thief and robber (John 10:1). You can "Buy" your way in the world but you must be "Born" into the Church.

B) To be Participants instead of Spectators- Christianity is not a spectator Sport; it is a Transformed Life!! Here are 4 ways to help:

I. ATTEND IT

A. First there is the commandment in Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.

B. Second there is the comfort in doing it.

- the approval of Christ.

- fellowship with other Christians.

- fulfillment in helping others. Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

* to find Christ

* to face their difficulties

C. Third there is the cheerfulness of doing it. Psalm 122:1 I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Christians enjoy going to the "Father's" House and eating at His table while fellowshiping with "Brothers and Sisters".

D. Forth there is the commitment of doing it. Jesus always asked people to make a commitment ("Take up Cross") because He knew that a Commitment would provide motivation. Today, people don't want to get involved and so their lives are shallow and hallow.

II. ACCEPT FROM IT. Most people want the Church to do something for them. Here are two things the Church will gladly give you:

A. A place in its ministry. EVERY Christian has a Gift from the Holy Spirit to use in the work of God (I Cor 12:7) and if you don't function in your place the entire body suffers.

B. A place to invest your life. When Jesus asks you to give an account of your use of your talent will you say, "I was scared and hid my talent" or "I invested and Profited"?? (Lu 19:12-27).

III. APPROPRIATE TO IT- II Cor 9:6-7 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

A. GOD'S TITHE- I Cor 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him,

B. OUR OFFERINGS- Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Isn't it amazing how men will pay hundreds of dollars a year for tickets to ball games and then give God a Two Dollar "Tip" on Sunday Morning. It shows you what he really loves, doesn't it??!!

IV. ADVERTISE IT- Christians come to Church because of Christ; the World comes to Church out of Curiosity. You must stir their interest often if they are to make the effort to attend. Bad Advertisement majors on the Church's Problems instead of it's Pluses. Good Advertisement shows that while men (and Christians!!) aren't perfect yet they can find forgiveness and help in Christ (Christ said if HE was lifted up HE would draw all men unto himself). Talk often about what God is doing in your Church (and if He isn't doing anything the Church needs to spend some time on the Altar "unblocking the flow of water"!).

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH- Many people attend a Church without really understanding it's Purpose and how it's trying to accomplish that purpose. That knowledge is the key to Motivation and accomplishment in the work of the Church.

A) The Gospel- The Message of the Church is simple-

TO SINNERS: Jesus died for your sins, was buried, arose from the dead and offers forgiveness of sins and newness of life by simple Faith.
TO SAINTS: After you accept Christ as Saviour by Faith you become a Son of God and part of the Body of Christ. You have Peace with God, a Place in the work of Christ, and Power through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The Purpose of the Church, therefore, is to Win the Lost and Equip the Saved to live the Christian Life. There are a lot of "junctions" on this Main Road but we must never take the "rabbit trails" instead of the Heavenly Highway.

B) The Goals- The difficulty many Churches encounter is in determining their place in God's overall program. Somehow we have assumed that EACH individual Church is to perform the function of EVERY individual Church. We forgot the words of Paul (II Cor 10:12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.) and as a result end up dissatisfied and disenchanted when OUR Church does not accomplish the same things as THEIR Church. I believe that as each Christian has a different place in the Body of Christ so each Church has a different objective in the plan of God. Some Churches are "family" churches, some are "Community" Churches, and some are "Ethnic" Churches. Some are "Success" Churches, some are "Spiritual" Churches, and some (Like us!) are "Service" Churches. When a Church can determine it's own Ministry, and then Perform that Ministry, then the world will marvel at what God accomplishes thru His People.

ARE YOU PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD??? ARE YOU FUNCTIONING???

GOING...NOT KNOWING

How do you know when it's time to change jobs? or go in a new direction in you life??

How do you change the Christian life from the ordinary hum drum into adventures and opportunities (Abundant Life)?

Far too many Christians have a "Saving Faith" that never turns into a Sanctifying Faith or a Satisfying Faith. They never "leave the Nest" and spread their wings to fly; instead, they sit in envy or anger at those who do try to do something for God.

The reason for this is because one of the most fearful things about Faith is that it requires us many times to take Action without knowing the results of that action (That's why it's called Faith!!). Yet this same "fearful Faith" brings an excitement and energy into our lives that can be found no where else.

Abraham is a man who made this step of Faith- Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. At the "tender age of 75" Abraham was told to leave his home and friends. When people asked him where he was going he would simply shrug and say, "I don't Know. I just know God said Go". He must have taken a lot of ridicule from friends who couldn't understand that kind of faith; but today Abraham is a world known example of Faith! Let's Follow his Example.

I want us to look first at what it means to walk like this (Going without knowing) and then I want to share several principles that will enable us to distinguish Faith from Folly as we apply this kind of Faith to daily living.

I. THE WALK OF FAITH- Abraham determined to join his life with God and follow God's Plan for his life. Such **A JOINT WALK REQUIRES Agreement-** Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed? You must agree that God is the leader and you are the follower. Have YOU agreed with God about your life or are you constantly "fighting your fate"?? Stop Fighting and start following.

Confidence- Ps 23:4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil. You must accept the fact that the walk will be filled with "unknown" obstacles as well as Opportunities. You must learn to trust God THRU the Obstacles and FOR the Opportunities.

Faith- II Cor 5:7 We walk by faith, not by sight. I Cor 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. You must follow even when you don't know how, when, where or what. Look at the example of Paul- Acts 20:22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem; not knowing the things that shall befall me there:. Paul did not know what God had in store for him as he traveled the road God had "staked" out (and what he did know was not very reassuring- vs 23 the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me). But Paul was Committed to the Task God had given him and nothing would stand in his way- vs 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. Are you Committed to God's Purpose for your life??

Common Sense- Eph 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. A walk of faith is not the way of foolishness or feeling; It accepts the natural and Expects the Supernatural!!

Are you willing to follow God's Directions EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE LEADING YOU?? Faith does not know where the Future will lead but it does know who will go with it as it travels and will be there when it arrive!

II. SOME GUIDELINES FOR THE WALK:

1. Trust God's Protection on the Path of Faith- Ps 121:8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world!!
2. Trust God to take care of the Results- II Tim 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. God does not always "pay up on Friday" but He keeps accurate books!
3. Don't wait until you can see the end of the path before you begin the walk- Prov 20:24 Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his ways? Your responsibility is the next step!
4. Make sure it's God's Direction you're following or you'll end up on a "dead end street". Don't let Parental Pressure, Peer Pressure, or Prideful Pressure cause you to get on the wrong road.
5. Make sure it's Faith and not just "Feelings" because the Feelings will change or ebb. We tend to begin with great Enthusiasm and Anticipation; Until the trouble comes! If it's the right road troubles may "bump" you but they won't Break you.
6. Make a Definite, Determined Commitment to the way God wants you to go- When you know the road God wants you to take; Don't let anything or anyone cause you to turn back or turn off. If you can't make this kind of commitment then don't start--- Better not to start than to put you hand to the plow and look back! (Luke 9:57-62)
Have a Dream, Tell a Dream, Do a Dream.
7. Prepare for an Exciting Life!! No longer will you bog in the mud of mediocrity; you will travel the path of life- Ps 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

God has a road with YOUR NAME on it! It starts at the foot of the cross and leads to an abundant life. Get on it today-- Who knows if you will be the one to change a "Billy the Kid" into a Billy Graham?

Whatsoever He bids you, do it:
Though You man not understand,
Yield to Him complete Obedience,
Then you'll see His mighty hand.
Fill the waterpots with water;
Fill them to the very brim.
He will honor all your trusting,
Leave the miracles to Him.

THINGS GOD CALLS SIN

Rom 6:23 The Wages of Sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is a classic "commonly Known" verse that has tremendous implications. While most Christians would willingly say "amen" to the verse they find it a little harder relating it to real life situations. It is easy to say that God's wrath rests upon the sinner but it has become increasingly hard to define just what sin really is. It used to be "sin" to own a TV but today almost everyone has one and our Church is using Videos as a method of outreach. Drugs, Divorce, Preacher Scandal, etc. have all invaded the Church today and many preachers who preached against sin now find an excuse for it when it happens in their life.

If sin is as bad as it seems- it will send a person to hell and it cost Jesus his death on the Cross - then we need to know What Sin really is and learn how to Avoid it.

I. THE PRINCIPLES OF SIN--The Westminster Short Catechism defines SIN as "any want of conformity unto, or any transgression of, the law of God." Paul says in Rom 14:23 *for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* Faith is responding to the Will of God. When I do not seek, or do not obey, the will of God then it is Sin. It may seem cultured or refined; or crude and vulgar, but if it is a violation of God's will it is Sin- That's why Jesus would Berate "righteous" Pharisees and offer forgiveness to prostitutes.

"Sin" is from an old English word that means "To miss the mark" and was used to describe an archer missing the bull's eye on the target. It is used several ways:

A) A Transgression of the Law as laid down by God.

B) Iniquity- an act that is Wrong (Usually known by the conscience even if not written in the Law- Rom 2:12-15)

C) Scofield also lists Trespass (the intrusion of self will into the sphere of divine authority), lawlessness (Spiritual anarchy), and Unbelief (Insult to Divine veracity) but all of these are basic to the original meaning of sin MISSING THE MARK

The basis of Sin therefore is to go outside of the bounds and plan of God. You may be "good" as far as the world is concerned but you've missed the mark of God's Plan either by Omission or Commission and have violated the Divine plan.

The Word Sin is used in three ways:

1. A Man's Actions in regards to God's Laws. Man Sins

2. A Man's Nature of Rebellion against God's Plan. Man is Sinful

3. A Man's Standing in Regards to Relationship with God. A Sinner

Sin Separates us from God; Deteriorates our lives; and Slays us.

One Basic principle you must keep in mind is that YOU must answer for YOUR sins- Deut 24:16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

II. THE PRACTICE OF SIN - People practice sin in Two ways:

A) Attitude Sins-

1. Jealousy- To allow someone's elses success to cause you to fail to do your part (Saul has just been make King and Samuel said) I Samuel 12:23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. James 2:9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

2. Hating Brother- Lev 19:17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. I John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

3. To demand Your "Rights" at the expense of a weaker Christian I Cor 8:12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

B) Action Sins- There are a number of "Common Sins" listed in the Bible by Godly Men- Joseph called Adultery Sin- Gen 39:9.

Moses Called Idolatry Sin- Ex 34:31 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

But there are some things that God calls Sin:

1) Blaspheming: Levi 25:15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.

2) Failure to Function for God- Deut 32:23 But is ye will not do so, (That is, be faithful to your service for God) behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out. James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

3) Not heeding the Cry of the needy- 24:14-15 Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.

4) Failure to keep a Vow to God- Deut 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

5) God even lists some things that will keep you out of Heaven:

I Cor 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

III. THE PARDON FOR SIN- II Cor 5:21 God made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Christ paid the "wages of Sin" (Death) for us and now we can receive PARDON and FORGIVENESS by placing our Faith in Christ.

But God does not just pardon our Past sins; He provides us ways to avoid sin-

Reverence God Ex 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. Ps 4:4

Avoid Sinners- Ex 23:33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

Read the Bible- Ps 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

ARE YOU A SINNER? OR ARE YOU SAVED BY GRACE???

VICTORY THRU THE SPIRIT

Rom 8:13-39

Paul has been telling the Romans why they needed to be saved, and how God has made Salvation available. Now he's dealing with the sinful nature that refuses to accept it's defeat at God's Hands.

Paul says that the way to live victoriously is to walk thru life obeying the Spirit instead of the flesh (8:1). He then goes on to show the many ways the Spirit gives us victory; victory that eventually makes us More than Conquerors.

3 Relationships to the Spirit:

1. you have not the Spirit - Lives in the Flesh and For the Flesh
 - a. in the flesh/in the spirit 8:5
 - b. death/life 8:6
 - c. war with God/Peace with God 8:6-7
 - d. Pleasing Self/pleasing God 8:8 "I" Will or "Thy" Will
2. You have the Spirit 8:9-11
3. The Spirit has You 8:12-17

When the Spirit has you then you have Victory:

1. Over the deeds of the body vs 13 We do not habitually live under the direction of the Flesh but thru the Spirit we mortify (Put to death) the deeds of the flesh (Not by trying but by yielding- You don't overcome the darkness by trying; you turn on the light-- and then you can see how to walk without stumbling.

2. Over Childish, Immature living vs 14 The Spirit leads us to act like mature sons, not babes in Christ. We grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ as the Spirit teaches us of Him.

3. Over fear and Doubt vs 15, 16 Eternal Assurance thru the Witness of the Spirit.

4. Over Suffering vs 17-18 The Spirit points to the Glory ahead that makes the suffering seem as nothing.

5. Over Death vs 23 The Spirit points to the Blessedness of the new Body.

6. Over failure in our Prayer Life vs 26 The Spirit teaches us HOW to pray and WHAT to pray for.

7. Over Self Pity vs 28-30 We are the Clay and God is the potter. Knowing that He loves us means that the Spirit will not allow us to be tempted or tried above our limit.

8. Over Everything vs 30-39 More than conquerors means that we not only defeat the enemy; WE TURN THE PROBLEM INTO A PLUS. (Example of man on desert island who lost everything in a fire that brought his rescue ship!).

Do you have the Spirit?? Does the Spirit have You??

Chapter 6 deals with the believer being Dead to Sin, Chapter 7 deals with the believers death to the Law, and chapter 8 deals with the believers Spirit given Victory. I want us today to look at chapter 6 and see some things about our relationship with sin that will hopefully change our attitudes and our actions.

(Sin here is not acts of sin but the old sin nature that produced these acts. Sins are the fruit, sin is the root).

1. Sin's Payment PAID: vs 3- Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? vs 4 THEREFORE we ARE Buried with him that we should WALK in newness of life. We don't OWE Sin anything. Sin tries to claim our passions for the "pleasures" it's given us but that debt is paid.

2. Sin's Power Destroyed: vs 6- Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that HENCEFORTH WE SHOULD NOT SERVE SIN. vs 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. God did not take away the ability to sin but He did change our Appetite for Sin. Now it's a pain instead of a pleasure.

3. Sin's Penalty Conquered: vs 9- Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. vs 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. You faithfully believe that sin's power is broken and God's Power is at work in you life. Eternal life is something you live instead of look forward to.

4. Sin's Patterns Broken: vs 16- Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? You change character (new Creature), Companions (Ps 1:1), and Conduct (Let him that stole steal no more but rather labor to give, Ep 4)

3 Things you YIELD-

1. Your Body unto God: vs 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

2. Your Obedience unto God: vs 16-

3. Your Life unto Holiness: vs 19- I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

These are a daily attitude of life not an emergency measure when you face some special temptation. The answer to the sin problem in the believer's life is NOT determination, discipline, starvation, resolution, reformation, legislation, or any other fleshly means. Victory comes thru Crucifixion- see Gal 2:20

The REWARD of Obeying what you Know- vs 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

The RESULT of Disobeying- vs 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We apply this verse to sinners all the time but Paul is using it in a statement to Christians! John said there was a sin unto death. Paul told the Corinthians that sin caused many of them to be sickly and die. And Samson had tremendous strength for God when he yielded himself to God but when he yielded himself to sin he died among his enemies.

THE REGENERATED LIFE

Rom 6:1-6

Regeneration; the most important thing that can happen in your life. What does it mean to have a "Regenerated Life"?

I. **CONVERTED-** 6:2 How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? A Christian is one who is Dead to Sin's Penalty because Jesus Christ has paid the "Wages" of Sin (Death) and given us the "Gift" of God (Eternal Life). Convicted of his rebellion against a Holy God this person has Believed in his heart that Jesus died for him and has confessed with his mouth that God has raised Christ from the dead.

II. **CONDUCT CHANGED-** 6:4 even so we also should walk in newness of life. Performance is expected. God did not just save you FROM Sin's Penalty; He saved you FOR His honor and glory.

Our life is now lived according to God's will instead of our own.

Sometimes it's hard to determine what God's will is. Let's look at some things that "Weary" God and we can begin to see the positive by showing the negative.

1) **PLAYING CHURCH-** Is 1:14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

2) **DISREGARDING HIS WORD-** Mal 2:17 Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?

3) **CONTINUING IN OUR SINS-** ISA 43:24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

4) **PRETENDING TO REPENTING-** Jer 15:6 Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.

All of these focus on one common theme- Using God instead of Loving God. God does not like "Hypocrites" that give Him Lip service instead of Life Service. He expects you to Walk different as well as talk different.

III. **COMMITMENT GIVEN-** 6:6 That henceforth we should not serve sin.

A) To God- To Love Him and Let Him use your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

B) To the Church- We commit ourselves to

1. Attend it regularly- Heb 10:25

2. Prepare for the Worship Service-

3. Give to it as God has prospered us

4. Become a Member- that will take the place assigned to us in the Body by the Spirit of God.

Being Saved should be TRANSFORMATION as well as SALVATION. It should change us from "worms of the world" into "Believing Butterflies" that are a beauty to behold because of our Character and Conduct.

Are you Floating in the breeze or wallowing in the mud??



WORTHY WITNESSES

Rom 9:1 *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,*

Having shown the NEED of Righteousness, the WAY of Righteousness, and the RESULTS of Righteousness; Paul now must deal with the puzzling fact that the Jews had REJECTED God's Righteousness for a Religious Righteousness that enslaved them to Law instead of liberated them for Life.

This is a "crossroads" that every Christian worker comes to- You know what you ought to do, and why you ought to do it, but you become discouraged and disappointed by the rejections and failures of people. At this Cross-Road you'll either keep going by Faith or Turn aside into unhappy, unfruitful, living because things didn't turn out as you expected.

The need in your life at this time is "TOTAL COMMITMENT", and we'll look at that in the next hour, but you also need to know that what you're doing is the right thing (Doubts come when you ask yourself this question, "Is it my fault that the people aren't being faithful?"). That's what I want us to look at now; Is your witness a "worthy Witness"? Are you on the right road giving the right message?

Paul gives three things about his witness in today's verse and these three things are what God is looking for in each of us as witnesses.

1. The Truth we Proclaim: *I say the Truth in Christ.*

a. "I say"- The Communication of a Witness. You must have courage enough to "come out of the crowd" and take the stand for Christ. There are multitudes of ways of communicating: Lips, Life, Light, Love, etc

b. "The Truth"- A Faithful Witness. You can't cry "wolf" and be believed. The Truth is not always easy to bear but it's the only thing to believe.

c. "in Christ"- A "Fellowship" witness- He speaks in fellowship with Christ, so that falsehood is impossible. He speaks the things that Christ would have him speak. (Which means we must ask ourselves what we are to be witnesses OF and who we are to be witnesses FOR. Christ did not come to simply save us FROM sin; He came to save us FOR God).

2. The Lie we Avoid: *I lie not.* A Big clean sheet with one spot of dirt will look dirty to everyone who sees it. Jesus was "death" on Hypocrites! We have learned to say what we think we ought to say instead of what is real- For example: "Christian parents will have good children" (Truth- Christianity is taught, not caught. If the Prodigal's father represents God then the Prodigal represents initial failure and the elder son represents continued failure).

Some people have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge; and their zest won't pass the test! And a witness who is false in one area is hard to believe in another.

3. The Conviction we claim: *My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.* This witness of the soul brings PEACE to the Life and PURPOSE to our work (It is this witness that gives us drive and determination in our work for God. Some people call it "Vision", others a "Call", but whatever it's name it allows us to know we're on the right road).

(It even bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God. Rom 8:16).

What kind of Witness are you?? Do you Know and Proclaim the Truth? Do you avoid hypocrisy and falsehood? Do you have the inner witness of God about what you're doing??

THE REIGNING LIFE

Rom 5:11-21

Now that we know that the way to have the Rejoicing Life is to KNOW the Reason for life's difficulties and then GROW thru them into the people God would have us be; it's just a logical step from the Rejoicing Life to the Reigning Life. After all, if the troubles of life make us better instead of bitter then we should feel like rulers instead of being beaten and battered by life's circumstances.

This is not how most people feel however. Most people feel their life is out of control instead of under their control. They're trapped in difficult jobs, difficult marriages, and prolonged diseases. They long to be masters of their circumstances and rulers of their own fate; but....it doesn't seem to work that way. And, since many of them expected Christianity to accomplish this for them, they feel like Christianity is a failure because Christians have more problems and pains than sinners do.

The Holy Spirit must have felt some of this coming into the minds of people because He led Paul to leave the Rejoicing Life and explain about the Reigning Life. And in this explanation I believe some Christians will find answers they desperately seek.

The word "Reign" means to "Possess sovereign power" to have "royal Authority" and carries the idea of "Ruling Over, Governing". That's what we long for, the ability to possess Power over Problems and to rule over our situation (Secretly, we want to be "God". We want to determine what's best for us and then have the ability to do anything we want).

"Reign" is used in 4 situations in today's scripture:

vs 14- Death Reigned from Adam to Moses

vs 17- They that have received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ

vs 21- Sin hath reigned unto Death

vs 21- Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Note two significant things immediately- Death reigned OVER man while Christians reign IN Life. One governs by Force, the other by Faith. Note also that Sin Reigns UNTO Death while Grace reigns THROUGH righteousness. And finally, see the RESULTS of the reigning- Sin reigns unto DEATH while Grace reigns unto ETERNAL LIFE.

Now, let's go back and catch the general theme of the verses. Paul is explaining that the Law is not God's method of Salvation- Faith is. He has given the example of Abraham's Faith and then shown how Faith is the only method available to us since we were enemies of God (Wouldn't seek Him) and without strength (Couldn't seek Him). Now he is showing that sin's penalty (Death) was visited upon men long before the Law was given- Therefore, if men must keep the Law to be saved then they should not have been punished for not keeping the Law when the Law was not yet given!

That brings us to "Father Adam" who brought sin into the world (vs 12). Adam's original sin has tremendous theological implications but today I want us to simply look at what it was and what it did; and how that affects our ability to Reign in this life.

WHAT WAS ADAM'S SIN? 3 Words are used to describe it and then 3 words are used to show it's results:

Offense-----Judgment
Sin-----Condemnation
Disobedience-----Death

Adam "Offended" God by not trusting Him, Sinned against God by "Missing the Mark" of God's Will, and was willfully disobedient to God's instructions (Remember that Eve was deceived and, although she was the first to eat of the fruit, Adam is contemned because he willfully disobeyed).

THE RESULTS OF ADAM'S SIN were that (vs 12) *by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, .* Now instead of ruling in God's Garden, man labors among the weeds of this world awaiting the day breath finally stops. Adam's sin brought man from Reigning to Ruin.

It is the Promise and Privilege of the Gospel to bring man back to the Reigning Life--- A life that contains:

A TASK- Given by God and answerable to God for it's completion

Some TROUBLES- To build our Dedication and our Faith.

Many TEMPTATIONS (That bring consequences to you and others when you fail)

Ultimate TRIUMPH as you go through the training here for the future God has planned for you.

Rom 5:17 *For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)*

It's essential that you realize the Reigning Life comes not from your TRYING but from your TRUSTING. We reign in life BY ONE, JESUS CHRIST. It is not our Ability, zeal, or strength that enables us to be the Victorious person God expects; it is allowing Christ to live thru me- Gal 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*



**SET YOUR
GOALS HIGH**

Are you Reigning in Life?? Or is Life defeating and destroying you?? We're saved by Faith and we live by Faith. Have you put your faith in Christ today??

RESPECT OF PERSONS

Rom 2:5-11

Rom 2:11 *For there is no respect of persons with God.*

Having shown the sinfulness of the Heathen and the failure of the Moral Man; Paul now goes to the "Religious" man and begins to show him that he too must come to God as a sinner to be saved by God's Grace. In order to do this he must first break the "shell of Pride" that these people had wrapped around themselves.

These people thought that because they were "better" morally than others that God would somehow accept them. In their particular case, it was the fact that many of them were Jews; and, as such, God's "Chosen people". In today's Church it is the person raised in the Church who knows just enough Bible to make them dangerous; the moral man who has a reputation but no relationship; the young married couple who is "good" but who worships at the Idols of Work, Family, and Pleasure.

These people think that a youthful profession somehow cancels all their present sins. They think it's alright to drink as long as you don't become a drunk; to play with some "recreational" drugs as long as you don't become an addict. They think they're alright with God as long as they meet most of Societies Standards. Somehow or other the fact that they're "average Americans" makes the Bible requirements for Faith and Faithfulness unimportant. Like many of the people in the Bible they're easing their way into Hell by slow stages.

These people must come to the place of acknowledging that **ACCEPTANCE BY THE WORLD IS NOT RESPECT BY GOD**. They must abandon their "Shell of Pride" and come to God for Salvation and Service because **It is this "shell of Pride" that is a direct contributor in sending more people to Hell than any other single factor!** This Pride cause men- 1 > To Fail to admit they are lost. 2 > To refuse to accept the fact that they cannot save themselves with their own works. 3 > To refuse to come to God even when they find they are helplessly lost.

Isn't it strange that everyone expects God's People to follow the admonition of James 2:1 *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.* And yet somehow they think that God will follow a different plan and accept them because of who they are or what they wear! Let Peter say again what Paul has just said, (Acts 10:34-35) *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

Now that you know the Negative let's look at the Positive. I have found that when someone clears up a forest and doesn't plant something in this "new ground" that Thorns come up and make the situation as bad or worst than before. Since we know that God does not respect our "Person", let's find some things that He does respect and sow these seed in our lives.

THINGS THE LORD RESPECTS:

1. **The Humble:** Ps 138:6 *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.* The reason God said the greatest of all shall be servant of all is because this shows an attitude of Humility. Remember "the meek shall inherit the earth". Instead of taking pride in your abilities or adornment you should Praise God for His Blessings and Pray to God for guidance in using what He's Given.

2. **His Word:** II Kings 13:23 *And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.* The Lord is Faithful and He expects Faithfulness. It is true that God does not respect the Jew above anyone else in regards to sin but it is also true that God honors those who honor Him. I believe that God "spoils" me today because of some commitments that we made to each other in my early Christian Life!

3. **Coming to God on God's Terms:** Gen 4:4-5 *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.* The Lord doesn't look for what YOU think is best; He wants what He has demanded in the Word. That's why it's so important to find God's Plan for your life and get in it. A Good person doing a good work doesn't please God UNLESS that work is what God is looking for!

4. **Holy Living:** I Peter 1:16-17 *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* God can't use Dirty Vessels. A "beat-up old pot" available for service is better than the best pot you've got that's dirty and can't be used.

5. **Obedience:** God lists a series of Blessing upon those who obey in Levi 26:3-8 and then says in verse 9 *For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.* But then in vs 14-32 lists as horrible a list of punishments as could be imagined to those who are disobedient. God gave 4 Reasons for Obedience:

1. I will respect you
2. I will make you Fruitful
3. I will multiply you
4. I will establish my covenant with you.

God does not respect the our Pride in our Person or Personality but He does respect our Committed Service to Him. Cast off your rags of self righteousness today and put on the garment of Salvation. Find the things that God is looking for and commit yourself to them.

HOW GOD JUDGES

Rom 3:3-8

Isn't it strange that we "glorify" "Bad" sinners when they accept Christ but act as if it doesn't take as much to save a "good" person?? Paul is faced with a little of this attitude today. Since he has "convicted" ALL men of Sin and established that ONLY GOD can make a way for a sinful man to be accepted by a Holy God some men were asking if it was not GOOD TO SIN since that allowed God to get greater glory by saving a "worse" Sinner!

There are many ways this attitude affects us today:

1. The man who is "eternally secure" says it doesn't matter if he sins a little because Jesus has already paid for ALL his sins and it will only mean that he might lose some of his reward (Which he willingly exchanges for a few of sin's pleasures!)
2. Teens and Young Adults think it's better to "sow your wild oats" and then get saved since you'll be a better Christians after having seen the "horrors" of sin (Forgetting that Satan Blinds their eyes so they see sin thru "rose colored glasses!").
3. "Good" little boys and girls think they don't need to repent when they come to Christ since they aren't as "bad" as many others; failing to realize that this very Pride is an abomination to a Holy God!

I think it's time we took a realistic look at how God judges Christians (It may interest you to know that the Saints will judge the world as well as Angels- I Cor 6:2-3!)

God Judges with a:

I. REALISTIC JUDGMENT- According to Truth- Rom 2:2 "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things". God will give an Honest Evaluation of your Work

II. RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT- According to men's deeds- Rom 2:5-6 "the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds:" God will take an Honest Evaluation of your Actions

III. REVEALING JUDGMENT- The Secrets of Men- Rom 2:16 "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel". God sees an Honest Evaluation of your Heart.

Ask yourself these questions-

How will God Evaluate my work as a: (1) Christian (2) Family Member (3) Witness in the World

How will God Evaluate the way I accomplish my task?? Do you do the right thing in the wrong way? Do you give your best on the Field of Prayer or the Field of Play??

How will God Evaluate the Motives of my Mission?? Do you work only when others honor you? Are you building YOUR Kingdom or God's Kingdom? When the secrets of your heart are revealed, will you be ashamed of what motivated you (The Love of Christ constrained Paul to witness- II Cor 5:14)

God will Judge us with a True Judgment and a Through Judgment. When your Mind and your Mission and your Motive are laid out for the world to see, will it Honor God or Humble You??

WHAT SIN DOES

Rom 3:9-20

We have spent the first 2 months of 1990 in the first section of the book of Romans trying to show you that ALL have SINNED and stand guilty before God. Paul ends the first section of his letter by showing WHAT SIN DOES. He wants us to see that Sin is not simply a Doctrine we believe but Deeds we Do that Damn us.

I. WHAT SIN IS:

1. Failure in Righteousness (vs 10) - Our STANDING with a Holy God is broken resulting in Condemnation.
2. Failure in Reasoning (vs 11a)- "none Understandeth"- Our MINDS have become Polluted and incapable of right reasoning (Controlled by Pleasures, or Passions).
3. Failure in Reverence (vs 11b)- "none seek God"- Our ATTITUDE is Proud instead of Repentant.
4. Failure in Right living (vs 12a)- "They are all gone out of the way"- Our PURPOSE in life has vanished.
5. Failure in Responsibility (vs 12b)- "They are together become unprofitable" {like spoiled Milk}- Our ACTIONS are Harmful instead of Helpful.
6. Failure in Reformation (vs 12c)- "There is none that doeth good, no, not one"- Our BEING is corrupt. Man achieves neither innocence before God or positive good (All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags).

The whole of man's inner being is controlled by sin:

- His MIND- None that understandeth
- His HEART- None that seeketh after God
- His WILL- None that doeth good

II. WHAT SIN DOES

A) Drives us from God- Our Failures should drive us TO God but instead we run FROM God! Gen 3:8-10, Luke 15: Luke 19:10

B) Destroys Our PEACE with:

1 > Others-

Their throat is an open sepulchre- graveyard mouth
With their tongues they have used deceit- forked tongues
The poison of asps is under their lips- deadly words
Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness- foul mouths
Their feet are swift to shed blood- Look for trouble

2 > Ourself- Destruction & misery are in their ways; The way of peace have they not known

3 > God- There is no fear of God before their eyes

WHAT SIN BRINGS- Rom 3: 19-20 "Now ye know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin". We become "Lawyers" instead of "Lovers of God". We become people who Tolerate, then Spectate, and finally Participate in Sin until the Wrath of a Holy God falls upon us. We end up wallowing in the "Hog Pens" of sin instead eating at the Father's House.

Sin will Contaminate you, Control you, and Condemn you- Abandon Sin today and accept God's offer of forgiveness by Faith in Christ.

THE GREATEST VERSE IN THE BIBLE

Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

If I were to ask the average congregation what was the most famous verse in the Bible they would probably say, "John 3:16". If I asked them for the most famous chapter they would probably say, "Psalm 23". But if I asked for the "Greatest verse in the Bible" there would probably be a number of different answers (almost everyone has a "favorite verse". Most of you know that my verse is Psalm 16:11).

This morning I want to show you a verse that I think can justly be called the "greatest verse in the Bible" and then show you some reasons I have come to this conclusion. My objective in doing this is not to justify my position with you but to seek to get you to learn how YOU can be justified before God. After all, that's the most important information you'll ever receive; and that's what this verse is all about!

FIRST, I believe it is the greatest verse in the Bible because it is the only verse I know of that is repeated in 4 different books of the Bible- Habakkuk, Romans, Galatians, Hebrews. It's almost as if God keeps "hammering" at us with this verse so we won't miss it's meaning.

SECOND, It's not only found in 4 different books of the Bible but it is the "Key Verse" in each of these books. In Habakkuk 2:4 it is used in it's entirety to show God's people that God does not see people as "bad and better" but as Justified and Unjustified; thus punishment for sin must come on ALL who sin. In Rom 1:17 it keys on "The JUST"; in Galatians 3:11 it magnifies "Shall LIVE"; and in Heb 10:38 it stresses "by FAITH". It's almost as if God thinks that if we can learn the lesson of this verse then all other lessons will fall in place.

THIRD, this is the verse that God used in Martin Luther's heart to bring about the Protestant Reformation (that kept the Church from dying on the dogmas of Rome). I believe that when we get to Heaven and examine the 2000 year history of the Church we will see more Revivals coming from the impetus and inspiration of this verse than from any other single verse.

FOURTH (and most important), I believe this to be the most important verse in the Bible because of it's content. It answers the most momentous question a Human can ask, "How can a man, doomed by the penalty of sin and captive to the power of sin, be Justified by a Holy, Sin avenging, God?". The absolutely vital answer to this question it found in one simple sentence in this verse- "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH".

Two questions of tremendous consequence come from this verse-

- 1) Who are the "JUST" and how did they become so?
- 2) What is "FAITH" and how do we obtain it?

A **JUST PERSON** is one who meets God's standards for His life. Paul is going to spend the next several chapters showing us **WHO declares men just- GOD**; Not the Law (as man interprets it) {Rich Young Ruler said he kept the Law but Jesus wanted him to examine his heart}; Not Societies Standards (Men set standards that suit them in their present circumstances, see how standards have changed in the past 20 years).

He will then show that **It is impossible for man to meet this standard on his own!!** This will bring us to the Substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ as our only hope; and lead directly into the need and basis of Faith

The Faith Paul talks about is not a mere act of intellectual assent, but a continuing and obedient trust in God through Christ. This Faith is Belief that motivates to continued action. It is this kind of Faith that "Saves" us. It comes into our heart as we hear the Word of God (Rom 10:17). This Faith Justifies us and allows us to live. Do YOU have it?? That's the most important question you'll ever answer.

5-4-97
HAM w/ Hymn
GRACE

\$3.67

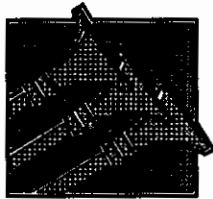
Before Lois Chapman Sing

WHAT YOU OWE GOD

What does God have a
Right to Expect of His
Children??



Worship
Work
Wealth
Witness
Waiting



ALLELUIA

A DEBT you Can't Pay-(Rom 6:23) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A DELIVERANCE You Can't Buy-(Eph 2:8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

A TIMING you can't Match-(Rom 5:8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Chicken Soup Book

*ENVIous
Covetous*

THE WILL OF GOD

ROM 12:1-2

SEVERAL YEARS AGO THE NUMBER ONE QUESTION CHRISTIANS ASKED ME WAS HOW TO KNOW GOD'S WILL FOR THEIR LIFE- NOW THE MOST OFTEN VOICED CONCERN IS HOW TO GROW AS CHRISTIANS. I BELIEVE THE BASIC QUESTION IS THE SAME, BUT PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION HAS CHANGED. WHEN YOUR BASIC GOAL IS TO LEARN, AND OBEY, THE WILL OF GOD THEN YOU ARE ADMITTING THAT YOU ARE THE SERVANT AND GOD IS THE MASTER; WHEN YOU WANT TO GROW AS A CHRISTIAN, MANY TIMES, THE DESIRE HAS CHANGED TO MAKE YOURSELF MORE "GODLIKE" AND LESS OF A SERVANT [I BELIEVE THIS IS A SUBCONSCIOUS DESIRE -- I ALSO BELIEVE THAT MANY CHRISTIANS DESIRE TO GROW AS CHRISTIANS IN ORDER TO BETTER DO GOD'S WILL].

I WANT US TODAY TO LOOK AT HOW TO GAIN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OF GOD AND THEN SEE THE GLORY OF DOING GOD'S WILL; AND THEN I WANT US TO DEDICATE OURSELVES TO DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

I. HOW TO LEARN GOD'S WILL- MARTIN DE HAAN II IN HIS BOOK ENTITLED "HOW CAN I KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO DO?" LISTS A NUMBER OF METHODS PEOPLE USE TO DETERMINE GOD'S WILL:

1. FLEECE (ASKING GOD FOR A SUPERNATURAL SIGN)
2. FLIPPING COINS (LEAVING IT TO "CHANCE")
3. FEELINGS (OBEYING YOUR FEELINGS IN SPITE OF LOGIC)
4. FLOUNDERING (FISHING EVERYWHERE FOR ANSWERS)
5. DEFAULTING (LETTING EVENTS DECIDE)
6. DIPPING (RANDOM BIBLE READINGS)
7. DELEGATING (LETTING OTHERS DECIDE FOR YOU)
8. DREAMING (ASKING FOR A VISION OR A VOICE)
9. SLIDING (TAKING THE COURSE OF LEAST RESISTANCE)
10. THINKING (USING LOGIC IN SPITE OF FEELINGS)

WE MUST REALIZE THAT WE HAVE WARING FACTORS WITHIN US ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE EVERY DECISION WE MAKE- GAL 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. THAT MEANS WE NEED TO LOOK AT SOME BASIC RULES FOR DETERMINING WHAT GOD WANTS US TO DO.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GOD IS GOD- PROV 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE GOD WHEN WE:

- (1) DEMONSTRATE TRUST [WANT TO KNOW HIS WILL BECAUSE IT'S BEST],
 - (2) PRACTICE SUBMISSION [WILLING TO ACCEPT WHATEVER HIS WILL IS],
 - (3) GIVE OURSELVES TO PRAYER [ASK FOR HIS WILL TO BE SHOWN US],
- AND (4) LIVE IN OBEDIENCE TO HIM [DO WHAT HE TELLS US TO DO]

ALAN REDPATH SAID "DON'T EXPECT GOD TO REVEAL HIS WILL FOR YOU NEXT WEEK UNTIL YOU PRACTICE IT FOR TODAY."

2. ACCEPT THE BIBLE- DEUT 4:1-2 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.

A) THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT THE BIBLE SPECIFICALLY SAYS

1. TO DO- 10 COMMANDMENTS, TEACHINGS OF JESUS, EPISTLES

2. NOT TO DO- KILL, STEAL, COMMIT ADULTERY, ETC.

B) THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES LISTED IN THE BIBLE:

REGARDING YOUR RICHES, REPUTATION, ETC.

REMEMBER- (1) GOD WILL NEVER ASK YOU TO DO ANYTHING THAT VIOLATES HIS WORD. (2) KNOW THE CONTEXT OF THE SCRIPTURE (IF IT'S QUOTING THE DEVIL OR A MAN THEN REALIZE THAT- SATAN TRIED TO GET JESUS TO DO WRONG BY MISAPPLYING SCRIPTURE).

3. ACQUIRE WISDOM- PROV 4:11-13 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life.

1- WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES IN YOUR SITUATION?

2- WHAT ARE THE ASPECTS OF YOUR SITUATION?

3- WHAT ARE YOUR ABILITIES TO DO THE SITUATION?

4. ASK COUNSEL- PROV 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

1- OTHERS MAY HAVE EXPERIENCE IN YOUR SITUATION

2- OTHERS CAN BE MORE OBJECTIVE OF YOUR SITUATION

3- OTHERS MAY HAVE MORE WISDOM IN DEALING WITH YOUR SITUATION

SOME PARTING ADVICE -DON'T EXPECT GOD TO "TIE YOUR SHOES FOR YOU"-- GOD IS NOT GOING TO MOVE HEAVEN AND EARTH TO HELP YOU DECIDE BETWEEN A PINK AND BLUE SWEATER!!

-DON'T EXPECT "INSTANTANEOUS ANSWERS": ABRAHAM KNEW GOD'S WILL FOR 25 YEARS BEFORE IT CAME TO PASS

-REALIZE THAT GOD GIVES HUMANS A VAST AMOUNT OF "FREEDOM": GOD MAY DIRECT YOU TO BUY A CAR BUT ALLOW YOU TO CHOSE BETWEEN A FORD AND CHEVY

II. GLORY OF GOD'S WILL

1. CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S CARE II TIM 1:12

A) YOU CAN TRUST HIM AS MASTER- GOES BEFORE SHEEP

B) YOU CAN TRUST AS FRIEND- CALLS BY NAME, NUMBERS HAIRS ON HEAD

2. IT BRINGS JOY IN YOUR LIFE- Ps 40:8 I Delight to do thy will

O Lord NOT AN ADDITION TO LIFE, BUT A COURSE OF LIFE.

DO YOU DESIRE TO DO GOD'S WILL FOR YOU TODAY?? ARE YOU WILLING TO BE A FOOL FOR CHRIST (I COR 4:10)?? SALVATION INVOLVES SUBMITTING. HAVE YOU??

5-2-76 pm "THE MINUTE YOU'RE SAVED"

Rom 15:13

WHAT DO I MEAN WHEN I SAY SAVED?? Lost, dead, unable to help self. Repented and believed Jesus.

I. YOU RECEIVE:

- A) Forgiveness of sins (I Jn 1:9) *see attached paper
- B) Peace With God (Rom 5:1) Which means fellowship
- C) Eternal Life (Jn 3:16) What is Eternal Life? jn 17:3
- D) Satisfaction (Jn 6:25) Salt water can't satisfy
- E) Promise of Provision (Ps 37:3)
- F) Priviledge to Pray (Jn 15:7) one of world's greatest (Jn 16:24)
- G) Power thry the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8)

II. YOU BECOME:

- A) A new creature II Cor 5:17)
- B) A Son of God (Jn 1:12)
- C) An heir to Heaven (Jn 14:1-2)

THE MINUTE YOU'RE SAVED

4-30-74 pm Review' Columbia

Rom 15:13 Now the God of hope full you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. (God wants our Faith to FILL us with Joy and Peace. This can only happen when we realize what happened the minute we're saved.)

WHAT DO I MEAN BY BEING SAVED?? I mean you were Lost, Dead in sin, with ^{out} help, and on the road to Hell. You repented of sin, accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, and trusted Him for Salvation.

I. YOU RECEIVE:

- A) Forgiveness of sins I Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *
- B) Peace with God Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: *The Peace of God in Life's Storms*
- C) Eternal Life. Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. (Jn 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.) *Passed from death unto life*

- D) Satisfaction Jn 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. *I have found that that my soul longs for!*
- E) Promise of Provision Ps. 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. *Seek first the Kingdom of God And His Righteousness And all added to*

F) The Priviledge to Pray Jn 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

G) Power thru the Holy Ghost Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

*Power To witness
Power for wisdom - Ask AND you mean Can you witness
for work
Power of the Word - however
had*

DEATH TO THE LAW

Rom 7:

The Principle-- vs 1-4 A dead person is not obligated to fulfill the law

The Practice- vs 5-6 Delivered from the law that we should walk in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (of the law)

The Performance vs 7-

the Law exposed sin vs 7

killed me vs 11

is Holy and Just- I just can't keep it vs 12-17

The Plea vs 18-25 How to do what I know is right (vs 18). Instead I don't do the good and do do the bad (vs 19).

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Satan's Defeat

April 4, 1911

Rom 16:19, 20

I Satan has been defeated by Christ (John 4:13)

II Satan can be defeated by his own sword

III Satan will be defeated finally in the last days.

II Thess 2:18

He L 2:14

J 3:13, 18

Satan's Cause Ever to Him

15 119:11

JW 4:14

4-24-83 Am Shiloh 2 sal
[used before Baptism]

3-30-84 Revival
Piney Grove

THE MINUTE YOU ARE SAVED

Rom 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

God wants our Faith to FILL us with Joy and Peace. This can only happen when we are Saved, Sure we're saved, and know what we received the Minute we were saved.

Put Your Trust in His sacrifice
for your sins
Public Profession
PART in Body of Christ

I. WHAT I MEAN BY BEING SAVED.

Realize you're lost in sin without help or hope.

Repent of Sin and turn to God for help

Receive Christ as your personal Saviour.

II. THE MINUTE YOU DO THIS THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU RECEIVE

A) Forgiveness of Sins I Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness
- see sin as God sees - Rebellion
WHAT HAPPENS TO FORGIVEN SINS??

1. Ps 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
2. Is 38:17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.
3. Is 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
4. Mic. 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us: he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

B) Peace with God Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: *Peace with God Peace of God*

C) Eternal Life Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Jn 17:3 AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

A Relationship with God

D) Satisfaction Jn 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Salt water won't satisfy!!

The desire that your soul craves is found in God

E) The Privilege to Pray Jn 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Access to greatest "Bank" in the world - Privilege of ASKING in Jesus' NAME

F) Power thru the Holy Ghost Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses...

Power to Witness - Holy Ghost gives words

Power for Work - Raise dead

Power for Wisdom - Holy Ghost is source of

Power of Word - Like a hammer to break rock

III. THE MINUTE YOU ARE SAVED THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU BECOME

A) A New Creature II Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new

A New heart - New desire can still sin but don't want to

B) A Son of God Jn 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

C) An heir to Heaven Jn 14:1-2 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Are You Saved Today? Would you like to leave here with all these promises??

10-25-87 in trace

THE MINUTE YOU'RE SAVED

ROM 15:13 Now the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

GOD WANTS OUR FAITH TO FILL US WITH JOY AND PEACE. THIS CAN ONLY HAPPEN WHEN WE ARE SAVED, SURE WE'RE SAVED, AND KNOW WHAT WE RECEIVE THE MINUTE WE'RE SAVED.

I. WHAT I MEAN BY BEING SAVED

- A) REALIZE YOU'RE LOST IN SIN WITHOUT HELP OR HOPE
- B) REPENT OF SIN AND TURN TO GOD FOR HELP
- C) RECEIVE CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOUR.
 1. PUT YOUR TRUST IN HIS SACRIFICE FOR YOUR SINS
 2. PUBLICLY PROFESS HIM AS SAVIOUR
 3. PART OF THE "BODY" OF CHRIST (CHURCH)- FUNCTION AS SUCH

II. THE MINUTE YOU'RE SAVED THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU RECEIVE

A) Forgiveness of Sins I Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness WHAT HAPPENS TO FORGIVEN SINS? IN RELATION TO:

1. DISTANCE: Ps 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
2. SIGHT: ISAIAH 38:17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.
3. MEMORY: ISAIAH 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
4. DISPOSITION: MIC 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (with a "No Fishing" Sign!!) Our Sins are away from us, out of sight, out of mind, & gone

B) Peace with God Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: We have Peace WITH God and the Peace OF God.

C) Eternal Life Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 17:3 AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. A Relationship with God

D) Satisfaction Jn 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. The desire of your soul is found in knowing Christ. The things of the world are like Salt Water- they look like they will quench your thirst but they actually kill.

E) The Privilege to Pray Jn 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Access to the greatest "Bank" in the world- with the ability to "Sign" Jesus' name to the check!!

F) Power thru the Holy Ghost Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses...

- Power to Witness- Holy Spirit gives you the words
- Power for Wisdom- Holy Spirit is the Source of Wisdom
- Power for Work- The Power that Raised the Dead
- Power from the Word- that is like a hammer to break rock

III. THE MINUTE YOU'RE SAVED THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU BECOME

A) A New Creature I Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. You have a new "Heart" that gives you a new desire. You can still sin but you don't want to.

B) A Son of God Jn 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Part of God's Family.

C) An heir of Heaven Jn 14:1-2 Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. A Known Joyful End awaits you- Death is not a leap into the Dark but a Joyous homecoming.

ARE YOU SAVED TODAY?

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Jn 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent

Jn 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst

Ps 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shall thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Jn 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Jn 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

II Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become ^{new}

Jn 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his ^{name}

Jn 14:1-2 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if I were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

SINS OFTEN COMMITTED BY CHRISTIANS

Ps 51:1-11

I. THE THREE ENEMIES WE FACE:

- A) Idols- Anything we put ahead of God- Job, Joy, Journying
- B) Ideas-
 - 1> Personal: Controlled by our Feelings or our Failings
 - 2> Pharisee: Go from a relationship to a Religion.
- C) Idleness-
 - 1> Out of place of Duty: When David was at home instead of at war he committed Adultery.
 - 2> Out of place of Devotion: Because Iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold

II. THE THREE TYPES OF SIN WE COMMIT:

- A) Action- Things we do- (1) Have another God in our life, (2) Make an Idol (a Physical thing to replace God who is Spirit), (3) Taking God's name is Vain, (4) Rejecting the sabbath, (5) Dishonoring Parents, (6) Murder, (7) Adultery, (8) Steal, (9) Lie, (10) Covet.
- B) Attitude- Rebellion (I'll never submit to MY husband)
- C) Apathy- To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin. *Things we don't do.*

We are not to Love the world's:

Popularity- We are people of the Cross. "Dead in Christ"

Pleasures- We are to deny self. Abundant Life in Christ not passing Pleasures.

Profits- Love of money is the root of all evil which while some have coveted after they have pierced themselves thru with many sorrows.

RESULTS OF SIN:

1. In the World:

Physically- Gen 3:18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

Morally- John 8:34 Jesus answered them, verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Spiritually- Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. For the Christian:

A) Breaks -Fellowship with other Believers and the Holy Spirit (He must go from working THRU you to working ON you).

-The Heart of God and causes Him to bring Chastening upon you.

-Confidence of the world in You and other Christians

B) Brings Fruits of sin into your life- While God will forgive it you still must fact the consequences- Divorce, Disease, etc.

You reap what you sow, you reap later than you sow, and you reap more than you sow.

WHAT TO DO WITH SIN

Ignore it- and face the consequences

Repent of it and receive God's Forgiveness

We need to return to Bethel- Twice Jacob met with the Lord- First it affected his wallet, Second it affected his walk. Many times people will "make a bargain" with God as Jacob did. They are willing to sacrifice part of their Possession. God is looking for people who will meet with Him and walk different as a result.

5-1-83 AM Shiloh

WHAT SHALL WE SAY TO THESE THINGS?

Rom 8:28-39

- INTRO- Rom 1-3 Man is a sinner 1- Gentiles prone to get worse and worse
2-3 Jews are law keepers yet were guilty
- Rom 4-6 Abraham justified by Faith
Man justified by Christ
Christ fulfilled the Laws Debt
- Rom 7 Not only was the debt paid but God recognized the need of man being changed (Dealt with sin and the Sinner)

WHAT SHALL WE SAY TO THESE THINGS?? (The Experience of Justification, The process of Santification thru suffering, and the stability of Hope in God.)
I have tried thee in the Furnace of Affliction

I. WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?? vs 31 If God be for us.
(By way of example of what God is willing to put at our disposal- vs 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?)
*Jesus could have called 12 legions of angels
James and John wanted to send lightning or hail*
All power is Available To us - don't Kill A Fly with a cannon -

II. WHO SHALL LAY ANYTHING TO THE CHARGE OF GOD'S ELECT?? vs 33 It is God that justifieth (Even against the "accuser of the brethern"). It was God who was sinned against and God has agreed to accept the payment of the shed blood of Christ.
Do Away with doubt - God is satisfied with the Payment.
Accuser of Brethern

III. WHO IS HE THAT CONDEMNETH? vs 34 It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, (for our justification Rom 4:25), who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous)
If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart I Jn
while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

IV. WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST vs 35
Shall tribulation, etc.
Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us
(How is it possible to be more than conquerors?? We take hold of the very thing that threatens us, and transmute them into ministers of Grace.
We are conquerors when we defeat the opposition: we are more than conquerors when we turn the problem into a help and blessing "Paul's thorn in the flesh"

Ex of man on desert Island who's possessions were burned but the fire served as a smoke signal to bring a rescue ship.

- Personality Problems - Ep 4*
- Personal Problems - II Cor 12 thorn in Flesh*
- Proverty Problems -*

HOW CAN YOU KNOW?

Rom 8:28-39

One of the hardest questions of life is "WHY?". Why am I poor, sick, lonely, etc. Why can't I get ahead?, be happy?, find a job? The answer the Preacher (And 500!) gives is that we know that all things work together for the good to them that love the Lord, to them that are the called according to His purpose. But HOW can we KNOW this??

1. God's Plan- vs 29-30 "For" 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

HE DID FORKNOW- GOD KNEW IN ADVANCE WHO WOULD BE SAVED. {THIS DOES NOT MAKE THEM BE SAVED; GOD SIMPLY KNOWS}.

HE DID PREDESTINATE- TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

HE CALLED- HE CALLED ALL WHO WOULD HEAR TO BE LIKE JESUS

HE JUSTIFIED- HE MADE IT POSSIBLE TO HEED HIS CALL

HE GLORIFIED- HE REWARDS THOSE WHO COME TO HIM.

2. GOD'S PROTECTION- VS 31-34 "WHO"

A) Against Enemies- vs 31-32 What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

B) Against Accusations- vs 33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth

C) Against Inability vs 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

D) Against Anything- vs 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

ROM 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

ROM 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

ROM 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

ROM 8:39 Non height, non depth, non any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

HOW CAN WE KNOW? WHEN WE REALIZE THAT GOD HAS A PLAN FOR US (CONFORMING US TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON), AND WE BELIEVE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THAT PLAN IS THE BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO US. AND WHEN WE ACCEPT THE PROVISION GOD HAS FOR US TO ENABLE US TO BE MORE THAN CONQUORERS IN ANY SITUATION OF LIFE. *

Men today are dominated by:

1) Wives-Isaiah 3:12 As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

2) Work- Mark 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

3) Wickedness- Temptations abound, wickedness is now the norm in the world instead of the abhorred, and (Matt 24:12) Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

5-2-90
Prayer Meet GRACE

SOME THINGS WE KNOW

Rom 8:21-28

1. We Know About GROANINGS- vs 22

A) Creation Groans- vs 22 For man to return to righteousness. The world is linked to man; When man fell the world was cursed, when man is redeemed the world will be made new.

B) We Groan- vs 23 For a new Body; of which the Spirit is the "Firstfruits" and the "Earnest". How we long for full development in the Spirit.

C) The Spirit Groans- vs 26 For man to have a Spiritual Perspective This gives us HOPE

2. We Know that God Knows the MIND OF THE SPIRIT- vs 26

This gives us CONFIDENCE

3. We Know about CIRCUMSTANCES- vs 28

This gives us FAITH in God's LOVE

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ROMANS

- I The Doctrinal Section 1-8
- A) The Doctrine of Sin 1:1-3:20
 - B) The Doctrine of Justification 3:21-5:21
 - C) The Doctrine of Sanctification 6:1-8:39

- II The Dispensational Section 9-11
- A) Israel, Its Past 9
 - B) Israel, Its Present 10
 - C) Israel, Its Future 11

- III The Duty Section 12-16
- A) Duty in Service 12:1-13:14
 - B) Duty concerning Disputed Issues 14:1-15:13
 - C) Duty of Paul 15:14-16:27

Doctrines so faith can be:

- 1) Defined
- 2) Defensed
- 3) Distributed
- 4) demoustrated

ROMANS STUDY 12 - 16

Page 2-3	Dedicated Dads	12:1-2
Page 4	Measure of Faith	12:3
Page 5-6	Parts of the Body	12:4-8
Page 7	Practical Duties	12:9-21
Page 8	When Someone Does Wrong	12:17-21
Page 9-10	OverComing	12:21
Page 11-12	Christian Citizens	13:1-7
Page 13-14	Love's Debt	13:8-10
Page 15	Sleeping Christians	13:11-14 (3 Admonitions)
Page 16	Why Christians Differ	14:1-5
Page 17	Christian Dependence	14:7-9
Page 18	Accountability	14:10-12
Page 19	Accepted by God and Approved by Men	14:17-18
Page 20	Building the Brethern	14:19
Page 21	Condemning Self	14:22-23
Page 22	Effective Church	15:1-6
Page 23-24	HOPE	15:4, 13
Page 25	3 Ways to Build the Body	15:7-13
Page 26	How God Fooled Me	15:14-15
Page 27	The Job God Gave	15:14-21
Page 28	God's Travel Agency	15:22-33
Page 29	Praiseworthy People	16:1-16
Page 30	Trouble Makers	16:17-20

WHAT HAPPENS TO FORGIVEN SIN???

- A. Ps 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- B. Is 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
- C. Is 38:17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.
- D. Is 44:22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me: for I have redeemed thee.
- E. Is 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
- F. Mich 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us: he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.
- G. I John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

WILL YOU BE CUT OFF?

Paul has dealt with Israel's past and present and now he wants to show them, and us, that God is not through with the Nation of Israel. As he does so, he sounds a warning to the Church about it's Pride. A warning that I believe a lot of Christians need to hear today. A lot of Christians are lukewarm, lazy, and unconcerned about their relationship with God. They have a form of Godliness but deny the power thereof. I pray God will use this message to convict their hearts and renew their dedication.

Paul list 5 witnesses in this chapter that show God is not through with the nation of Israel:

1. Paul's Conversion- Paul says in I Tim 1:16 that his Damascus Road Conversion was a "Pattern". Yet noone else is saved today by a blinding light and an audible voice. This is evidently the way God will use to bring about the sudden miraculous conversion of the Jewish nation. Paul says he was one "born out of due time" and he looks forward to the day the Jewish nation will come to know Christ.
2. Elijah's Remnant- A Remnant according to the election of Grace- vs 5. Today the Church is open to Jew as well as Gentiles and some Jews are being saved.
3. The Gentiles- Used by God to "Provoke Israel to Jealousy" vs 11
4. The "Olive Tree"- Even though the Gentiles have been grafted in, the Root is still God's promises to the Jews.
5. God Himself- vs 26 shows that God gave His word to Israel and God will keep His Word.

In the middle of this wonderful news for Israel Paul sounds a warning to the Gentile Church. This warning is about PRIDE in the fact that the Church has been grafted into God's Olive Tree. Paul lists several warnings about this Pride:

1. The Root of the Tree is still the nation of Israel (vs 18)- Jesus is our Savior but He came as the Jewish Messiah.
2. Unbelief broke off the original branches and it can break off you (vs 19-21)
3. It is the goodness of God (not YOUR goodness) that brought you into the tree (vs 22)
4. God is able to graft the original branches back into the tree to replace you (vs 23-24)
5. Don't let your own thinking mislead you about God's Plan (vs 25).

Remember that John 15 says that fruitless limbs are cut off and cast into the fire- Faith without works is dead being alone (The devils believe in God and tremble but they don't live different).

Faith is not a one time decision; it's a life time dedication- vs 22 *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

God's plans are long range plans (for Israel and for you). You can ignore them, or wander from them, and be cut off; or you can follow God's leadership and obey God's will and be a fruitful part of His work.

THE REASON BAD WINS

Rom 11:1-15

One of the most perplexing problems Christians face today is why the world is becoming increasingly wicked and the Church is becoming increasingly lukewarm. We've never had so many opportunities to do good and yet we've never had so many unconcerned Christians. Why is the Church dying instead of overflowing at the seams?

Then there is the problem of prosperity. Why do the wicked prosper and most of God's children suffer financially or physically? Job makes a good preaching point but no one wants to follow his example!

Paul looks at Israel's future in this chapter and in doing so he explains some startling things about the way God works. Brace yourself, this is not going to be pleasant.

Israel determined to go their way instead of God's way and ended up with a slumbering spirit and sightless eyes (vs 8). After they were rejected the Lord selected the Church (Bringing in the Gentiles in order to provoke Israel to jealousy (vs 11)). Now the Church is becoming Apostate. Eventually God will rapture the faithful remnant of the Church and renew His dealings with the Nation of Israel.

Principles:

1. Bad overcomes Good- Adam in the garden fell. Throughout the Bible Godly men and nations have fallen. The Church is getting more and more lukewarm. Put one sick man in a room with 100 healthy people and they will get sick instead of him getting well (It's not that Bad is stronger than Good. The 100 well men are much stronger than the 1 sick man. The problem is that Evil can be Caught while Good has to be chosen).

2. God takes bad situations and uses them for good- Through the fall of the Jews Salvation is come to the Gentiles (vs 11). The struggle against sin draws us closer to God. The struggles of life strengthen us and expand our horizons (Almost all inventions are the answer to a problem). Whether it is Paul's Thorn in the Flesh that God used for His Glory or the man blinded for 40 years to allow Christ to show God's Glory or the fact that we glory in the Cross; all these are "bad" situations that God uses for good.

3. If God can use Bad Situations for good just think what He can do with Good Situations (vs 12-15)! What is the 100 healthy men refused to stay closed in the room with the sick man?? What if they opened the windows and let in fresh air and sunshine? What if they ate healthy food themselves and gave it to the sick man? What if they obtained medicine and gave it to the sick man?

Several things we need to stress:

(1) God is still on the Throne. Because Good is defeated does not mean God is defeated!! God works within our will to conform our spirit to the image of His Son. The circumstances aren't controlling God, God is controlling circumstances.

(2) Despite the fact that bad is winning we must keep up the fight. God gives rewards for faithfulness; not territory conquered. Look with eyes of Faith instead of eyes of Flesh or you will become discouraged.

(3) Keep in mind that when the final chapter is written in the Book "Good" will be in mansions in Heaven while "Evil" will be cast into the Lake of fire forever.

PARTS OF THE BODY

Rom 12:4-8

One of the reasons the Church is failing to win the Lost and influence the world is the fact that it is paralyzed! By that I mean that many of it's body parts fail to function and as a result the rest of the Body cannot go forward. I want us today to begin looking at our obligations and opportunities as part of the Body of Christ.

There is ONE Body but many Members. The Head of the Body is Christ. The Body exist to exalt the head and obey it's will. The Head, in turn, will protect and nourish the body. Let's see some basic things about the these BODY PARTS:

The Body is made up of MANY PARTS- All members have not the same office. We are one and yet individuals.

The Body needs ALL THE MEMBERS- Different Functions are not reason for pride or superiority (See 1 Cor 12:14-26). Therefore when we talk about Gifts it is for Edification, not Exaltation. Warren Wiersbe said about Gifts, "Spiritual gifts are tools to build with, not toys to play with or weapons to fight with."

1. WHAT IS A GIFT? The Word "Gift" is the Greek work "Charisma".

A "Gift" of the Spirit is "an extraordinary endowment bestowed by the Holy Spirit sovereignly and undeservedly on believers as instruments for Christian service and church edification". Thayer- "Gifts are extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the Church of Christ; the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating in their souls by the Holy Spirit".

Talents are natural techniques and methods; Gifts are supernatural abilities or supernatural powers given to Christians only. God may use a natural ability or inclination in the endowment or use of a Gift but talent is not necessary for (sometimes it even hinders) the Gift God gives.

Gifts are not Offices in the Church; although every Church officers needs certain gifts to effectively do their duty.

The Gifts of the Spirit are not the Fruits of the Spirit. Gifts have to do with service, Fruits with Character.

2. HOW DO WE GET A GIFT?

From the Spirit as He wills- vs 6 (1 Cor 12:11) But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. (Therefore they are not to be turned down- For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Rom 11:29)). EVERY member of the Body has a function to perform, given to them by the Spirit, when they become a Child of God.

From the 4 lists that Paul makes [The other 3 lists of gifts are found in 1 Cor 12:8-10; 1 Cor 12:28; and Ephesians 4:11] there are 18 Gifts identified. These are not the only gifts and most of them have "branches" (For example- Giving could be gifts of money or gifts of hospitality).

SPEAKING GIFTS

Apostleship
Prophecy
Evangelism
Pastor/Teacher
Teaching
Word of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Exhorting

SERVING GIFTS

Helps
Giving
Ruling
Showing Mercy
Faith
Discernment

SPECIAL GIFTS

Miracles
Healings
Tongues
Interpretation



Now let's look at the List Paul uses in today's text:

1. Prophecy-

A) The Office- "The inspired delivery of warning, exhortation, instruction, judging, and making manifest the secrets of the heart" (Vincent).

B) The Action- according to the proportion of faith. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: (1 Pet 4:11)

2. Ministry-

A) The Office- Same word used to describe Deacons but it refers to anyone who renders service.

B) The Action-let us wait on our ministry (Active serving).

3. Teaching-

A) The Office- To cause to understand

B) The Action- Actively engage in Teaching. In classes, by example

4. Exhorter-

A) The Office- To motivate the heart and will

B) The Action- Actively seek to motivate others. How many times does a project begin to grind to a halt until someone says, "Come on now, let's get back to work."

5. Giver-

A) The Office- The ability to share your resources with others.

B) The Action- Let him do it with simplicity. You're not interested in who gets the credit but in who receives the gift.

6. Ruler-

A) The Office- Rule means to "place in front of" and refers to a position of authority.

B) The Action- With diligence (Determination).

7. Shows Mercy-

A) The Office- To Show Compassion, to be moved by others needs.

B) The Action- with cheerfulness. Cheerfulness comes from the Greek word "Hilarity". It means that those who minister to the sick should do so with so much cheerfulness until they are like a sunbeam in the sick-chamber.

vs 6-8 in the Phillips Translation- "If our gift is preaching, let us preach to the limit of our vision. If it is serving others let us concentrate on our service: if it is teaching let us give all we have to our teaching; and if our gift be the stimulating of the faith of others let us set ourselves to it. Let the man who is called to give, give freely; let the man who wields authority think of his responsibility; and let the sick visitor do his job cheerfully."

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Pastor's Message: "Why is this Happening to Me?"

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Many times things happen in our lives that we can't understand and our hearts are troubled as we seek an answer. Sometimes the problems continue to grow until we feel like crying with the Psalmist, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me,..." (Ps 22:1). Other times the problems seem to make no "sense" no matter how many different ways we look at them. And then there are times we look back on problem areas in our life and see with amazing clarity the hand of God at work. The thing we need to get firmly planted in our hearts today is that ALL things work together for good to them who are in the will of God. This will bring peace in the midst of problems and help us to maintain a sweet Christian testimony during times of trial.

With that basic fact in mind, let's look at several reasons God may allow troubles in your life:

1. TO SHOW US OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure...most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (II Cor 12:7, 9b). It is only when we learn that "when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Cor 12:10) that we can ever be an effective worker that brings Glory to God and not to us as Servants of God. Is your problem caused by Pride in your own ability?

ISAAC was of Promise - Now Abraham was looking To ISAAC instead of God.

2. TO SHAPE US INTO THE VESSEL WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE The Sculptor hammers at the stone- not to harm it, but to make it into a thing of beauty. It was persecution that drove the early Church from the "safety" of the "nest" at Jerusalem to spread the Gospel around the world (Acts 8:1). It is the file, and not the feather, that sharpens the axe!!

Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.

Ps 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

3. TO SAVE US FROM OUR OWN CARELESSNESS Ps 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

Heb 12:10 But He (chastened us) for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

I didn't like it when I was growing up that my dad made us work all the time. But now I rejoice that it's part of my character to work. Anyone who doesn't have a "boss" to l-ok over their shoulder all the time needs that to avoid becoming careless at his work.

It's hard to smile in the valley sometimes. But remember that God knows how many hairs are on your head, He knows when a sparrow falls to the ground, and He works all things together for good to them that Love Him and stay in His will. Faith trusts the Love of God without knowing Why!!

Rom 8:31-39 THE GOD YOU CAN TRUST WITH YOUR TRUST

WHO IS YOUR GOD? *For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, (1 Cor 8:5-6)*



Japan

You need a God who is Rock Solid and can be Trusted in Every circumstance of Life. Like David You need to be able to say, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence (2 Sam 22:2-3)

TRUST in God's PARTNERSHIP- What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? (Roms 8:31)



God is: FOR us IN us WITH us

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me (Phil 4:13)

TRUST in God's PROVISION- *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Rom 8:32)*



TRUST in God's PARDON- *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth (Rom 8:33)*



TRUST in God's PRAYERS- *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Romans 8:34)*



TRUST in God's LOVING CARE- *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39)*



Loving Care

Adoni-bezek- "Lord Lightning" cut off the thumbs and big toes of his enemies and then had his thumbs and big toes removed. Represents Satan who can no longer hold or outrun a child of God

