

1993

# Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,  
we are CHANGED . . . ." II Cor. 3:18**

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

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# Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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No. 2

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Jesus Christ and His Church

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## Theme for Second Quarter

### LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE OF PAUL, THE APOSTLE, TO THE ROMANS

In the letter that Paul wrote to the saints who dwelt at Rome are found some very important and precious truths. We feel inspired to present a series of lessons this quarter drawn from this epistle. We will not endeavor to cover the complete contents, but have selected those articles of doctrine and counsel that afford the spiritual light and edification that is so beneficial to us today. We have excluded chapters 9 and 11 which deal much with the relation between the Jew and the Gentile. We hope to study this subject in the future and will cover that material then. We also have not used chapters 14 and 16, not because the contents are not needful or beneficial, but rather for want of space because of the other portions of the epistle that we wanted to include in this series of lessons. The subjects of the righteousness of faith in contrast to that of the law, sin and its consequences and the deliverance found in Christ, the hope and confidence that Christ affords, and the life of love and service to others that the Christian life is calling us to—these subjects are well expressed and clearly revealed in this epistle to the Romans. We trust and pray that this series of lessons with the inspiration of the Lord will be a blessing to everyone.

### Down Roman's Road

Come walk with us down Roman's Road  
And view the sights divine;  
The doctrines from Paul's pen that flowed  
With heaven's pure design.

We'll see the gospel pure and free  
Of Christ our blessed Lord  
To captives of iniquity  
Deliverance afford.

The dark condition of mankind  
In all their foolish pride  
We'll see as sins more tightly bind  
Their willful downward stride.

Look up ahead, the judgment day  
Is facing everyone

When you and I will have to pay  
For all the deeds we've done.

Yes, all have sinned, 'tis plain and true,  
And helpless we are bound,  
But grace through faith gives hope anew:  
We hear the gospel sound.

The law has failed to justify  
And give us victory,  
The righteousness of faith comes nigh  
A faith for you and me.

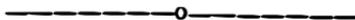
What Adam lost in Christ is gained,  
There's freedom from our sin,  
There's Spirit-life and hope unstained,  
A crown of life to win.

A living sacrifice we bring  
To Him in service true,  
We keep His precious laws and sing  
Each day with gladness new.

To God be all the glory now,  
And to each other love,  
To all His precious will we bow,  
Our treasures are above.

Come walk with us down Roman's Road  
Each lesson seek to learn;  
And faith will lift our heavy load  
As to the Lord we turn.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee



April 2, 1989

## THE GOSPEL PRESENTED TO A DARKENED AND PERVERTED WORLD

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

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

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 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:

21 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.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

**Memory Verse:** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Romans 1:18.

**Central Thought:** In the face of clear manifestations of God's power and majesty, man has chosen to follow the downward course of sin and folly, but the gospel of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, affords man a way to escape the captivity of sin.

**Word Definitions:** *"From faith to faith"*: From the faith of the saints in ages past communicated to those of the present who will believe. *"Hold the truth in unrighteousness"*: To suppress or hold down the truth, and keep God's Word from having rightful effect. *"Recompense of their error which was meet"*: Reward of their wrongdoing which was due. *"To do those things which are not convenient:"* To engage in practices which are not proper. *Reprobate mind*: A mind void of judgment.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

This epistle of the beloved Apostle Paul to the Romans, was written for the benefit of the Christians at Rome, the capital of the known world. It is very evident that Paul, at the time of this writing, had never been to Rome. However, he had heard much about the work of the Lord in Rome, probably through Aquila and Priscilla who had been among the Jews who had been ordered to leave Rome. He spoke of himself as the servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He had promised in times past by His prophets, whose writings had been preserved and now opened up as to their real meaning. He stated that the gospel was concerning the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. This is the basis of his writing and his apostleship, not only to those at Rome, but to all nations. He rejoiced to be able to address these saints at Rome as the called of Jesus Christ and the beloved of God. He thanked God for them, that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world. Without ceasing he made mention of them in his prayers. And he further expressed as part of his prayer to God that he would be permitted to come to them soon and impart spiritual blessings, and share the benefit of the mutual faith of him and them. Stating that he counted himself a debtor to all men, he expressed his readiness to preach to them at Rome also. —Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was Paul's regard for the gospel that he was called to preach?
2. What was revealed in the gospel and to whom was it revealed?
3. What else besides the righteousness of God was revealed from heaven in the gospel?
4. Why is man's iniquity and ignorance of God without excuse?
5. In what way can the invisible things of God be clearly seen?
6. What happened to man when he failed to be thankful and to glorify God?
7. Our lesson tells us of three things that God gave man over to. What were they?
8. What is the great widespread evil of our time that is mentioned in our lesson?
9. What is man worshipping today instead of the Creator?
10. What is going to be the outcome and end of all the vile affections and perverse habits of this present evil world?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

The righteousness of God is pure, holy, and just what mankind needs. It is not obtained by keeping the law, but it is obtained by believing and trusting in God and accepting the Saviour that He has sent. In the gospel that Jesus and His apostles introduced to the world is revealed this righteousness and saving grace. But at the same time the wrath and displeasure of God is revealed against all ungodliness and wickedness that is dominating our world and the human family. How did the world get in the pitiful and degraded shape that it is in today? It started in the early days of time when men in their pride and vanity failed to see the goodness and reality of a loving Creator. Losing sight of God and His plan for them, mankind launched on a course away from God under the power and influence of the devil. This condition has worsened with each passing generation of time. We, in our society today, are reaping the harvest of centuries of straying from God. We wonder how far it will go, and how much worse it could get. But, if time lasts, it will get worse and go farther. The tide of evil and iniquity is intensifying and gaining momentum every year. Think back twenty years and compare. Things are licensed and promoted now that were not allowed back then. Homosexuality and the aborting of little innocent children have taken their lawful place in our society. Mankind

is doing so many things that are not convenient and beneficial to themselves. Mankind is destroying itself by the corruption and disease that their evil ways are causing. In the midst of it all, the gospel is offering man a way of salvation and escape. By believing in and following the meek and lowly Lamb of God man can recover himself from the snare of the devil and live a holy, pure, and peaceful life right here in this present world.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We have a contrast portrayed in our lesson that is the difference between night and day. The Apostle Paul begins by stating the power of God to save a soul. He then asserts that the beauty of this is revealed all down through history. When he mentioned "faith to faith", no doubt he was thinking of the chain of patriarchs he took time to enumerate in Heb. 11th chapter; Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. It is hard to say any one of these men was more outstanding in their service than another, but Enoch's life is so impressive. He walked so close to God that He was carried into the presence of God by translation.

What a contrast when we read of the uncleanness and vile affections Paul described as existing among those of his time. We wonder how these things can continue from one generation to the next. Paul pointed out that God indicates the consequences of such a life. (Rom. 1:18-20). Yet even in our present day, sin flourishes in a very real way. We wonder why anyone would take up evil practices when they see the diseases and degradation that accompanies it. It seems that those in the throes of drink, drugs and immoral practices would be testimony enough to drive people away from such a life style. Then when the life of a Christian is manifested to them, it seems they would run to the light. It is sad that this is only true in a few cases compared to those who do otherwise. Many in our world today are being given over to a reprobate mind because they do not retain God in their knowledge. Let us live the true life and carry a burden for those upon whom the wrath of God is being revealed.

—Wayne Murphey



April 9, 1989

**ALL MANKIND TO BE JUDGED BY  
A RIGHTEOUS GOD**

Romans 2:1 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.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 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?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

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;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 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;

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 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:

15 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;)

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

**Memory Verse:** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things

done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. II Corinthians 5:10.

**Central Thought:** There is coming a day when the righteous God will sit in judgment and will render to every man according to his deeds, for there is no respect of persons with Him.

**Word Definitions:** "*Wrath against the day of wrath*": The displeasure and impending punishment being reserved for the ungodly toward its execution in the last great day. *Contentious*: Without knowledge of God's law violated the law of their conscience.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In the last few verses of chapter 1, Paul listed several evils that dominate the sinful race of man. It is to be observed and acknowledged that man allows these evil dispositions and practices to exist and take place in his life without excuse. What ignorance man is in is basically willingly there. He does not have to be in the dark. To do the things that sinful man does and to continue to do them with light and knowledge within his reach shows the stubborn and sinful attitude that dominates him. Right while they are indulging in the sinful pleasures of the flesh, there is a deep down awareness that they ought not to be doing those things. In our lesson today it is clearly pointed out that not only does man willingly offend the righteous monitor in his heart, but he also goes into judgment with his fellow man concerning things that he counts in his sight as evil when he, himself, is guilty of the same type and magnitude of transgressions. Oh, the sad and foolish attitude that rules the sinner who is under the yoke of the devil! God is seeking to bring repentance and reform to his life, but he stubbornly goes on in the forwardness of his heart. On to the judgment he hastens, blinded by his pride and vanity, someday to wake up to his lost and hopeless condition, too late to change. It is the mercy of God that any of us ever comes to a state of conviction for our sins and conceives a purpose and a desire to repent and turn to God! For this cause came the blessed Saviour into the world. The truth that man is to be judged by a righteous and holy God is unchanged. But a way has been made for man to prepare for that great judgment day. We have a faithful and merciful High Priest who is at the right hand of the Almighty God, pleading for our salvation now and pledging His protection and security against that day of wrath. "In the day when God shall judge

the secrets of men by Christ Jesus," oh, what serious words! People who lived before the visible commandments of the law of Moses were revealed will be in the judgment to answer for how they have respected or denied that voice deep within them. Even before the law was given, history shows how that man had a sense of right and wrong. Man will stand without excuse before the great tribunal of the judgment of His Maker.

—Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What makes a person sit in judgment against his fellow man when he himself is guilty of the same iniquity?
2. In despising and counting lightly the riches of God's forbearance and longsuffering, what is man overlooking?
3. What is a sinner treasuring up for himself by his hardness and impenitent heart?
4. To whom will God render eternal life?
5. What is promised for them who are contentious and do not obey the truth?
6. What difference is there between the Jew and the Gentile?
7. How will the person be judged who has not been taught the written law of God?
8. Will his ignorance excuse him before God?
9. Where is the real law written that causes man to do what he does?
10. What kind of disposition and attitude must mankind assume before they can come to understand and accept their real condition before God?
11. What will God judge in that day?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Everyone of us should really face up to the truths that are contained in our lesson today. We are all to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. We are going to have to give an account of how we have lived in this time world. There is no use to condemn our fellow man if we have not found the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ for ourselves. We hear many things spoken in condemnation against the way people are doing, but what we need to do is to turn the searchlight of the holiness and the Word of God upon ourselves. We want God to search us out and see if there be any wicked way in us. "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts." Proverbs 21:2. And just because we do not see ourselves as wrong and sinful does not mean that we

are right and approved. There is a tendency in man to justify himself and condemn others. It is hard for a human being to come to grips with his real condition. This is true with mankind in general. It is hard for a person to reckon himself sinful and wicked. But, before one can ever experience the saving grace of God, he or she must be made aware of their need of a Saviour. God gave us His law to help us to see where we have strayed from His good ways. If we will be honest before God and humble ourselves before Him, He will help us to see ourselves so that we can turn from our ways to go in His precious and holy way. At all times we need to be reminded that we are going to appear before God in the judgment day. He will render to every man according to his works and deeds. We want to continue patiently in doing His precious will every day of our lives. Our life should be spent seeking for glory and honour and immortality. This should be the goal that we are constantly pressing toward. Our faith in Christ as our Saviour must be constant and steady every day that we live. We want to be willing to do anything that He would lead us to do or to follow whatever His precious Word teaches us. At no time should we relax in our ardent desire to do His precious commands. To be rewarded with the blessing of eternal life, we must seek for immortality during the earthly pilgrimage we are passing through. If a person is contentious, and insistent upon doing his own fleshly pleasure, with no regard for the will of God, that person is bound to suffer the vengeance of a wrathful God who will be just in His deliberations in the day of His wrath. Our future is in our hands and it is up to us what our destiny in yonder world to come will be.

—Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Doesn't it seem strange and ironic that someone would judge another of that which they themselves are guilty? Yet the scriptures are true. It does happen all too often.

One incident tells of a profane father who learned that his little son had uttered some blasphemous expressions, doubtless a second edition of his own. He called the child to account for his conduct and reproved him severely for his profanity. He then commenced whipping his son, and swore several profane oaths while in the process. Do you suppose that when this father stands before God he will have any legitimate excuse for his utterance of profanity? No! He had already judged himself in his dealings with his son.

This same scenario is illustrated in many different ways. How easy it is to judge someone else. It would bring much more of a carefulness on us if we realized that in every way that we are judging another we are judging ourselves before the great and final Judge. We are, in fact, witnessing against ourselves and exposing that we have knowledge on that particular truth.

Paul addresses the subject of the heathen which has many people in wonderment today also. How much are they accountable for? They do not have light on the gospel and do many wicked things, so how can God judge them for their ignorance? A minister was abruptly asked one time if any of the heathen would go to heaven. His answer was, "I am not appointed judge of the world, and consequently I cannot tell; but if ever you get to heaven, you shall either find some of them there, or a good reason why they are not there." Here was a minister that had explicit faith in the righteous Judge. Let us have the same and be satisfied to let Him do the judging.

—Wayne Murphey

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April 16, 1989

### ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD

Romans 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

- 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:  
15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:  
16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:  
17 And the way of peace have they not known:  
18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.  
19 Now we 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.  
20 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.

**Memory Verse:** 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. Romans 3:20.

**Central Thought:** The Word of the Almighty God has concluded that all men are under the condemnation of sin and disobedience, and God wants men to realize just how guilty they are before Him so that He can show His love and goodness in saving them from their sins and giving them a new life free from sin.

**Word Definition:** "*Oracles of God*": What God has spoken to man.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In the latter part of chapter 2, Paul talked to the Jew concerning his attitude of having confidence in the law and his boast of God. Because the Jews had been especially favored in times past with God's dealings and the giving of the law, they allowed themselves to become overly confident and failed to take heed to their personal lives of pleasing God. Looking down on the Gentiles and trying to teach them, they fell a prey to their own depraved condition of heart and life. He said that they made their boast of God and the law, but at the same time through breaking the law dishonored God. He said also that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through the Jews. In the last two verses of chapter 2, Paul reminded them that a real Jew is one inwardly and the real circumcision is that of the heart and in the spirit. As our lesson brings out, the Jews did have an advantage in that unto them were committed the oracles, or the Word, of God. That was their main advantage, but it did them very little good because they were not able to live up to the Word that God had committed to them. They fell far short on faith and did not have the laws of God written in their hearts as they

should have. In our lesson today we see Paul pressing the point that there is no difference in the Jew and the Gentile because they have both been concluded by God to be under the power of sin. In verse 4 he quoted from the writings of David in Psalm 51:4 where he acknowledged that against God was his sin committed, "that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." The Jew is no better than the Gentile when it comes to being in sin and in need of a Saviour. He quoted from Psalm 14:1-3 and also Psalms 10:7 and 36:1 along with Isaiah 59:7 in clinching the fact that man was judged by God to be under the yoke and dominion of sin. Let us notice that he said that the law spoke these things, "that every mouth may be stopped (or silenced), and all the world may become guilty before God." The law was not given to save man, but to help man to be conscious of his sinful and lost condition so that his heart could be prepared to receive the Saviour, Jesus Christ, who was to come in the fulness of time. No boast was to be made in the law, for its real purpose was to bring man into condemnation so that he could receive peace and forgiveness. —Leslie C. Busbee

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the special advantage that the Jew had?
2. Why did the Jew's unbelief not make the faith of God of none effect?
3. ". . . Let God be \_\_\_\_\_, but every man a \_\_\_\_\_ . . . ."
4. What had Paul proven concerning both Jew and Gentile?
5. According to the Scriptures quoted from the law, what was the condition of mankind before Christ?
6. How should every soul relate to the decree of God that he or she is under the condemnation of sin?
7. What if a person fails to sense or realize his lost and sinful condition?
8. What are some of the ways that verses 9-18 are manifest in humanity today?
9. Why does God want a soul to become conscious of his sinful condition and state of guilt?
10. Why is it hard for man to count himself thus guilty and condemned before God?

#### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We first studied the dark and perverted world that Jesus came and gave His gospel to. Then we considered the impending judgment that all men are destined to meet. Today we

want to think and study about the sinful state that mankind is in, with the thought in mind that a plan of salvation is being made available for all who will acknowledge their guilt and apply for help and mercy from heaven. God is true, right, just, and perfect. Man is bad, wicked, wrong, evil, and full of destruction. God has not failed or moved from His habitation of holiness and truth. Man is the offender. Man is the guilty party. And until the individual soul becomes aware of this and will acknowledge his offense, he cannot and will never be justified. God cannot and will not justify a soul who has not come to grips with his own sinful state. God did not send the law and bring to light man's sinful state just for the fun of it or to belittle and make fun of man. He wants man to realize his lost and undone condition so that he can avail himself of the wonderful plan of salvation and correct himself and be delivered from his sin. Man has a problem here; there is hypocrisy, pride, and an unwillingness in the human nature to own up to his guilt and true condition. Even when a man's sins bring sorrow, adversity, hardship, loss, and suffering to his life, he is very slow and hesitant to throw up his hands and from the heart say, "It's me, O Lord, standing in need of prayer." Pride keeps a person from being honest and confessing his sins. There is a tendency for one to justify himself and to blame someone else for his condition. One young man who went on a rampage of sin and drinking brought this complaint when the woes of his error caught up with him: "Why did God let me do it?" Instead of laying the judgment on himself, where the blame really belonged, he seemed to think that God was responsible for letting him do it. How foolish to blame God or anyone else for the consequences of our sins! It is wise for us to put the blame where it belongs and to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and see ourselves as we really are. Only then can we get help from God for our never dying souls. —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The story is told of a minister who was preaching many years before he actually experienced the renewing power of God upon his heart. Going out one day into his field where a deeply pious farmer was at work — a man unlearned in the business of the world, but deeply learned in the hidden mystery of God in the soul of the believer — he said, "John, what do you think is the hardest thing in religion?" "Well, why," replied John, "should you put this question to me, who am but

an ignorant and unlearned man? Allow me to turn it back and ask you the question." "Well," said the minister, "it seems to me that the hardest thing in religion is to give up those pleasurable indulgences to which our nature is so prone, but which are contrary to the requirements of religion." "Ah," said John, "I think that there is a harder thing in religion than even this." "Well, what is it?" "It is to feel that we are wretched and lost, and perishing, and to relinquish all other hope than that which rests in the atoning blood of the Redeemer."

It seems that man does not want to feel vulnerable and weak, therefore he covers it up. For that reason he goes without help. They say that the biggest battle in helping a drunkard is in getting him to admit his problem. This was the purpose of the law; to open man's eyes to his condition.

"After all, I do not hate God. No, sir: you will not make me believe that. I have a good heart. I don't hate God." These were the words of a man who was prosperous in the things of the world. A few months afterward, a flood swept down the valley and threatened destruction to his large flour mill. A crowd was watching, in momentary expectation of seeing it fall, while the owner, standing in the midst of them, was cursing God and pouring out the most horrible oaths." It is a wise person who will believe God's account of the state of his heart by nature, acknowledging his guilt, and seek divine redemption.

—Wayne Murphey

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April 23, 1989

## THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD WITHOUT THE LAW

Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

**Memory Verse:** For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Hebrews 7:19.

**Central Thought:** Seeing that man is guilty of sin and not justified by the law, God has brought forth a provision of deliverance for man through believing and following Jesus Christ who paid the penalty for man's sin and affords life to the soul.

**Word Definitions:** *Manifest:* Brought to light and made clear and available. *Propitiation:* The victim for the atonement of sin; the mercy seat where God and man can be united.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our last lesson Paul brought Scriptures to prove that both Jews and Gentiles were all determined by God to be under sin. The Word of God passed the judgment that all men had sinned and come short of the glory of God. As we said before, it was not that God wanted to pass this judgment upon men for the pleasure of seeing man condemned. It was for man's own good that he recognize his true condition. But, as our lesson today clearly shows, the purpose of it all was that man could be freely justified and delivered from the power and dominion of sin into the light of victory and holiness. In our first lesson it was stated that the gospel of Christ was the power of God unto salvation to all that believed, and that the righteousness of God was revealed therein from faith to faith. The old time saints were saved because of their faith and faithfulness to God. This faith was passed on down from generation to generation, communicated from fathers to children, and from one to another. This righteousness of faith was brought forth before the law was given through Moses. Abel, Enoch, and Noah possessed it. Abraham enlarged upon it and became the father of the faithful. This faith was to be

passed not only to the Jews, but to all mankind. Through His love and dying passion on Calvary's cross where His blood flowed as a fountain for sin and uncleanness, the Saviour purchased salvation for a world that was lost. This faith and salvation is for all men, the Gentile as well as the Jew. There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile; both are under the judgment of sin. God is a God of the Jews and He is the God of the Gentiles, also. There is no boasting then. It is excluded and shut out. We are saved not by the works of the written law of Moses (thou shalt, and thou shalt not), but we are saved by the law of faith and trust in God, a law that every living person can live up to if they will. He quoted from David in Psalm 32. David had a chance to experience God's loving favor in forgiving him of his sin. The keeping of the law could not avail for David. It was God's own goodness and grace that prevailed for him. Even so it is with us today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How is the righteousness of God manifested to us now?
2. How is this righteousness obtained by a person?
3. Who is this righteousness for?
4. What does the blood of Jesus have to do with righteousness?
5. Why is there no room for man to boast concerning this righteousness?
6. Does a man need to keep the deeds of the law in order to be truly righteous?
7. Do we then make void the law through faith?
8. How is it that through faith we establish the law?
9. How is the reward reckoned to him that worketh?
10. What is his faith counted for who believes on him who justifies the ungodly?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We have concluded that man was under sin and unable to help himself by keeping the law of God. It is a dark picture of man bound with cords of his own sins and helpless, unable to loose himself to go free. As one put it: "Mankind is dead in sin and locked up in the graveyard of the law, but grace and mercy in Christ comes and unlocks the gates and resurrects the souls of men." There is no way that a man can be justified by keeping the law of God. Even if he could reform and begin to live up to the holiness of God, his past sins would condemn

and frustrate every bit of ground gained. There must be a perfect price paid to atone for those sins already committed. This is found in the blood of Jesus and obtained by believing in Christ from the heart. Righteousness can be substituted for the sins that are past. Instead of a record of transgressions and offenses, the record can be that of the salvation and grace of Jesus Christ. We have no cause for boasting then. We can only thank and praise God and His Son for their love and mercy to us. As we shall see later on, we are given grace to live up to the standard of the holy law of God through the help of the Holy Spirit. Now we also have in our lesson today the faith of Abraham introduced. We will study him more in depth next week. But we want to notice now that Abraham had nothing as pertaining to the flesh wherewith he could glory before God. It was through his faith and steadfastness to God in believing His promises that Abraham was accounted righteous. This same faith is for us today, and it is the only means by which we can avail with God and find favor in His sight. To find favor with God by trying to reform one's self and stretching up to standards of righteous practice and behavior is a useless endeavor. Faith must come first, and then through the strength and closeness of God that faith brings is found the ability to live up to the holy and righteous laws of God. Many are discouraged and defeated in their minds from living for God because they are looking at the strictness and high standard that is required in the profession of being saved. This is just what the devil wants. He does not want people to look at faith and the way God has ordered. May the Lord help us all to put faith first and let His grace work in our lives so that we can live for Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Jews, under the old law, fell in disfavor with God many times and felt the heat of His wrath. In order to stay in His favor they had to offer sacrifices and keep all the precepts of the law. There were laws that dealt with every aspect of their lives. A person had to be quite astute to keep them. Perhaps this is why they were told to talk about them when they sat in their houses, walked by the way, laid down and rose up. Can you not see that there would be a certain amount of fear associated with these things?

What then is the righteousness of God like without the law? It brought in a better hope whereby fear was replaced by

assurance. Under the new covenant we can draw nigh unto God in full assurance of faith. (Heb. 10:22). Our faith in God is what we believe about Him. When Christ became the propitiation for our sins and assuaged God's wrath towards mankind, it made a way for us to have a personal relationship with Him. Should not having this one on one access to Him increase our faith? It is hard to imagine why anyone would want to go back to living under a law system, yet we find some who seem to find a type of security in such a system, the same as the Jews that Paul dealt with. Once a person experiences the assurance that is found in this better hope, it spoils them for anything else.

"Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Those who believed in circumcision and those who did not were believing in the same God. This God was accepting those who practiced circumcision because they did it believing it was required. It is what their faith took in concerning what would please Him. This same God was also accepting those who were enlightened enough through their faith in God to know that it was not required. It boils down to the reality that some things are neither holiness nor sin. Paul verified this when he wrote, "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6.

—Wayne Murphey

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April 30, 1989

## THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM A PATTERN FOR US TODAY

Romans 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

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,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

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

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

**Memory Verse:** Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Galatians 3:7.

**Central Thought:** The faith that the patriarch Abraham possessed and maintained in God and His promises is the kind of faith that we must have if we are to be saved in Christ from the power of sin and the grave.

**Word Definitions:** "*Against hope believed in hope*": Beyond or opposed to hope, in the face of seemingly no hope,

when everything pointed contrary to hope. *"Staggered not"*: Did not falter or hesitate. *Persuaded*: Convinced beyond all question or doubt. *Imputed*: Accounted to one's credit, reckoned. *Faith*: Belief, trust, persuasion, reliance, confidence, assurance.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Abraham is held in the Scriptures as holding one of the most (if not the most) important places in the unfolding of the plan of God for the souls of mankind. His name is mentioned in the New Testament as much or more than any other Old Testament man or woman. No other individual in the Old Testament was tried and put to the severe test concerning his faith and confidence in God. His faith stands like a beacon light shining down through the ages, inspiring and showing the way to have success and favor with God. He is called in the Old Testament the friend of God. Isaiah 41:8; II Chronicles 20:7. The faith that he manifested and held to through the years of God's dealings with him is a pattern that everyone who hopes to obtain eternal life in Christ must earnestly follow and imitate. It is easy to have a form or profession of faith and not have the real faith that Abraham possessed. Woe to the individual whose faith is a mere profession of words with no works or action to back it up! The life of Abraham and the example of faith that he left us should be taken very seriously. Our faith in Christ should contain the very same ingredients and attributes that the faith of Abraham had. This is the main import of our lesson today. We have seen in our studies thus far in this Roman letter the wickedness of man, the surety of the coming judgment, the Almighty's decree of all men being under sin, and the blessed appearing of the righteousness of faith doing what the law could not do. In our lesson today we want to consider this righteousness of faith in the light of how it worked with the patriarch Abraham. Let us examine this matter earnestly, prayerfully, and with a willing heart and mind. —Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Faith was reckoned to Abraham before or after he was circumcised?
2. How did the covenant of circumcision relate to the faith that he already had?
3. Why was the promise to Abraham not through the law?

4. How can the promise be so sure if it is of faith and by grace?
5. Why does the law work wrath?
6. In what way did Abraham become the father of us all?
7. What were the two things mentioned in our lesson that Abraham's faith had to surmount?
8. In what way can we partake of the faith that Abraham had?
9. For who else besides his own sake was faith imputed to Abraham?
10. How shall faith be imputed unto us as it was to Abraham?

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

To have faith like Abraham and be counted as a child of that cherished man of God is one of the greatest challenges that we can ever encounter in life. To believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of our precious soul is the greatest accomplishment that we can make in this short life. If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered up to be crucified for our offences, and raised again for our justification, that is, if we really believe with a faith that will line up with that of Abraham, our faith will be imputed for righteousness that avails with God. Abraham's faith was a living reality with him. It was not a dead faith or a head faith. It was a living faith, alive with action and activity. He showed his faith in God by obeying Him in every thing that God commanded Him to do. When God first called Abraham to leave the land of his nativity and go to a land which He would afterward show him, Abraham obeyed, believing God, and went out, not knowing where he was going. Most human beings have to know quite a ways ahead about how things are going to be before they will make any kind of move, but Abraham moved with no knowledge of where he was going or what kind of land he would inhabit. Careful study of the life of Abraham reveals that he had his struggles and battles. In the matter of obtaining a son which God had promised him, he had his conflicts. The time was long and both he and his wife, Sarah, were becoming too far advanced in years for a son to be born of natural consequence. But his faith and confidence triumphed. Isaac was born and grew up to be a young man, filling Abraham with joy. Even when God tested him by commanding him to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, Abraham did not hesitate to obey God, believing that God would keep His promise at any rate. Let us seek God that our faith in Christ

will stand the same tests today. It is the only way that we can successfully run life's race and gain the prize that waits in glory.  
—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Rom. 4:17 lets us know that God is a Creator, and being One, He "callesh those things which be not as though they were." If we have faith in the Creator we can do the same. That is faith. Faith is what it takes for us to receive anything from God. We have to have faith in His Word. If we do not believe the first verse in the Bible then we won't believe anything else in the Bible. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Gen. 1:1. God is still a Creator. "Is anything impossible with God?" Faith is an increasing grace. The very obstacles that would stagger the faith of a doubting soul will be changed by the believing man into the means whereby his faith is strengthened. Abraham, by believing was strengthened in his faith. How wide are the promises? "To him that hath shall be given!" In order for there to be an increase there must be a growth. In order to grow, there must be food and exercise. Faith is fed by the promise and the Word of God holds the promises. God spoke to Abraham and he believed God. Physical and intellectual strength will fade and has a limit but inner, spiritual strength has no limits. It is eternal and we grow in strength by not wavering at the promises of God. We must believe without wavering that God cannot lie. For God to break His promises would be untrue to His own nature, and that can never be. —Marie Miles  
(Written in 1976.)

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May 7, 1989

### WHAT WAS LOST IN ADAM IS RESTORED IN CHRIST

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

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

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:

17 For if by one man's offence 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.

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Memory Verse:** For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Romans 5:15b.

**Central Thought:** In being justified by faith, all that was lost to man in the fall of Adam is restored to us in Christ, giving us victory over sin, death, and the grave.

**Word Definitions:** *Justified:* Made just and sinless, without guilt or condemnation. *"Without strength":* Helpless and hopeless. *Peradventure:* There is a short possibility. *Atonement:* Reconciliation or restoration to the favor of God.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have established the fact so far that the law, of itself, was not the means of redeeming man from the dominion of sin. The law only brought to light man's sin and offered no means of deliverance or escape. We have also clearly beheld that faith and the righteousness which is by faith is the only

righteousness that will avail with God. In our previous lesson, we have beheld the quality and character of that faith that is needed to gain the favor of God and the salvation of our souls. Our lesson declares that being justified by this faith we have (present tense) peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through this same faith we have access to victorious standing grace in sanctification of the Spirit and perfect love, and we are able to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. He goes ahead to say that we not only possess these things but we glory and triumph in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation only betters us, working and effecting patience, while patience brings about experience (or trustworthiness) in our life, and experience brings about more hope. Hope helps us to triumph over all sorrow and despair, and we are never defeated or cast down because of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit. When we behold how Christ died for us when we were helpless sinners, it brings us such assurance of the unfailing truth of His great love, that all our doubts and fears are swept away. Praise the Lord! Just as Adam's disobedience brought sin into the world, and with it came death, even so Christ's obedience to God did away with sin and brought deliverance to our hearts and lives. Christ is called the second Adam. But just as Adam brought us down, even so Christ lifts us back up into the holiness that Adam was created in.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What do we have, being justified by faith?
2. Into what else do we have access by faith?
3. How can we be assured of the great love that God has for us?
4. Why would it take more love to die for a sinner or ungodly man than for a righteous or good man?
5. If we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son while we were enemies of God, what shall we receive from Him after being reconciled?
6. Why can we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ?
7. How is Christ in our lesson compared to Adam?
8. Make a list of the things Adam, through his transgression, brought on us. Make a corresponding list of the things Christ brings to us. How do they compare?
9. Why did the law enter?
10. Where sin abounded what did grace do?

## ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How wonderful is the plan of salvation that God has brought to us in Christ, His blessed Son! It is a perfect plan and answers every need that man has ever had. By us believing from the depths of our hearts in Christ and putting our trust in the merits of His precious blood for our acceptance with God, we obtain peace and quietness of heart and mind. His grace is sufficient for our every need in life. All the troubles and sorrows that our sinful ways have brought upon us are triumphed over victoriously with His presence in our souls. Where once there was frustration and disappointment, there is happiness, hope, and contentment. We have access into standing grace through the infilling of the blessed Holy Spirit. We no more lie and languish in defeat and discouragement, but He causeth us always to triumph no matter what comes against us. The world has lost its beckoning allure and charm. We have found a richer treasure, one that does not fade away, but continues to grow and abound richer every day. Our sins are forgiven and buried in the sea of God's forgetfulness forever. And we know that all of this comes to us because of that precious Friend and Saviour who was willing to die for us so that the punishment for sin could be done away with. For a world that was lost, Christ went to the cross that day. A world steeped in sin and dark iniquity was sinking in despair. Jesus died for the ungodly so that they could have a chance to recover strength and hope to live in His sight. Christ made it possible for us to gain back all that was lost in Adam. The image of God can once more be restored in our souls. His grace is triumphant and will reign over all the opposing powers that come against us in this world, and will keep us to the end of the journey unto eternal life.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Many years ago, after a fierce battle at Marengo, Napoleon Bonaparte had placed his sentinels at different points of the camp. They were charged, on pain of death, to stay alert and guard against a surprise by the enemy. About midnight, Napoleon rose, and walking about discovered one of the sentinels asleep, his gun lying beside him. The soldier was worn from the terrible fatigue of the preceding day; but the law must be obeyed, discipline must be maintained, the sentinels duty must be done, or else he must die. What did the emperor

do? Softly and silently he took up the gun, put it on his own shoulder, and acted as sentinel till the dawn of day. When the soldier awoke, he was filled with alarm at having left his duty undone, concluding himself to be a lost man. But Napoleon simply handed back his gun, and bade him be more watchful in the future. ". . .by the obedience of one" the law was kept to the letter.

It is a real miracle to think of how the grace of God was prevalent among the Israelites during the law dispensation. Sin abounded among the people, and although God would become weary of it, His grace resurfaced again and again. The greatest grace was manifested when He gave His son on the cross. It can only be concluded that Christ also possessed the same compassion in His heart as His Father. There are many stories that tell of men who bore punishment for others, but there are none that parallel the story of Christ. No one has given what Christ surrendered; the joy of heaven for the debasement of earth. He suffered a death like no other. Yes, there were others crucified on each side of Him, but He bore the weight of the sins of the whole world as He died. His death was not just to spare us from an untimely physical death, but an eternal death. The price has been paid. It is now up to each individual to take full advantage of His offer of grace. We can have the presence of God with us just as Adam and Eve enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. —Wayne Murphey



May 14, 1989

## DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE UNTO GOD

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

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.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Memory Verse:** But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Romans 6:17.

**Central Thought:** Because Christ died for our sins we can die to sin, and because Christ arose again, we can be resurrected to a new life of victory, purity, and peace, with grace to live above sin.

**Word Definitions:** *Members:* The limbs or parts of the physical body. *Instruments:* Implement, utensil, or tool. "*I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh*": The apostle meant here that he is speaking plainly, using simple natural expressions, so that they would not be misled by the reasonings of those who might try to influence them by their fleshly mind. No matter how triumphant Christ's death and resurrection was, if they did not quit yielding their bodies to the practice of sin and begin exercising themselves rather to godliness, it would all be vain.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a strong conclusion from the strong language and doctrine of chapter 5. Paul had just stated that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. In our lesson he asked the question: "What shall we say then?" That is a great question today. What are we going to say to the truth that he had just brought out about the triumph of God's grace? What are people saying today to what Christ has wrought for them? In so many lives and church circles they are saying everything but the right thing. There are many thousands of deluded souls today that say that Christ died so that His grace may abound and cover all the sins that we do, and that it is impossible for us to live without committing sin. Paul asks the question: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" No doubt he was apprehensive that some would take that idea. And it is the belief of many today that grace abounds to cover and forgive every sin that we commit from day to day. But notice Paul's reaction to such a suggested attitude: "God forbid!" Then he asked another question: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" He emphasizes in our lesson that Christ's death was a death to sin, a severance from the association and sustenance of the sin life. We die to sin. This means that we no longer live in sin. When a person dies we separate ourselves from his body by burying him deep out of sight in the ground. Their physical presence is no longer part of our life; so it is with sin. We are dead to it and it is no longer part of our lives. As we once lived to those fleshly thrills and sinful practices, we now live unto God, unto righteousness and true holiness.—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we not continue in sin that grace may abound?
2. Being baptized into Jesus Christ means that we are baptized into His \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How should we walk if we have been buried with Christ and are risen with Him?
4. In that Christ died, what did He die to?
5. How are we to reckon ourselves with relation to sin?
6. Does the body still sin in the plan of grace?
7. How are we to control our bodies and its members?
8. As we once yielded our members as instruments unto sin, how must we yield our members now that we are saved?

9. What do we have our fruit unto now that we are made free from sin?
10. What are the wages of sin, and what is the gift of eternal life.

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Praise the Lord, we don't have to sin any more! It does not matter how many people or false teachers declare that we cannot live free from sin, we know that the grace of God has freed us from the power and dominion of wrong and sinning against God. We might make mistakes, but that is not sin. Sin comes from a wrong principle and attitude of the heart, and that is what the blood of Jesus purifies from us. We die to sin, and we live no longer therein. What sin do we have to commit? There is no sin that we have to commit since we have been resurrected to a life of purity and holiness with Christ. We can walk each day in the way of holy love and truth, and we can overcome temptation to do wrong. The devil may tempt us through the desires and appetites of the flesh, but by the grace of God we can say no to every sinful enticement. We do not want to sin and grieve the Lord. His seed of love and life remains within us and we cannot allow ourselves to be humbled to the level of transgression and disobedience to God. We love God and Christ for what they did for us, and we do not want to do one thing that would offend or displease them. We used to yield our eyes to look at sinful things, read books and magazines that were not wholesome. Now we want to use our eyes for things that are good and edifying to the soul. We used to use our ears to hear things that would not be to the glory of God, but now we want to hear things that are good. We used our feet to take us to places that were not according to godliness. We used our hands to execute wrong deeds and sinful habits. But now that we are resurrected to a life of godliness and faith, we use these members to carry out our righteous and holy commitments. Thank God for His unspeakable gift that lifts us from sin and its bondage into the sweet liberty of the Christian life!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the fourth century, when the Christian faith was preached in its power in Egypt, a young brother sought out the great Macarius. "Father," said he, "what is the meaning of being dead and buried with Christ?"

"My son," answered Macarius, "you remember our dear brother who died, and was buried a short time since? Go now to his grave, and tell him all the unkind things that you ever heard of him, and that we are glad he is dead, and thankful to be rid of him, for he was such a worry to us, and caused so much discomfort in the church. Go my son, and say that, and hear what he will answer."

The young man was surprised, and doubted whether he really understood; but Macarius only said, "Do as I bid you, my son, and come tell me what our departed brother says."

The young man did as he was commanded, and returned.

"Well, and what did our brother say?" asked Macarius.

"Say father!" he exclaimed; "how could he say anything? He is dead."

"Go now again, my son, and repeat every kind and flattering thing you have ever heard of him; tell him how much we miss him; how great a saint he was; what noble work he did; how the whole church depended upon him; and come again to tell me what he says."

The young man began to see the lesson Macarius would teach him. He went to the grave, and addressed many flattering things to the dead man, and then returned to Macarius.

"He answers nothing, father; he is dead and buried."

The truth expounded in this story is that to be dead with Christ is to have our ears stopped to many things, especially those things of the world that would defile our mortal bodies and our soul. To be dead with Christ also means to have our hearts tuned with His.

There are several other principles taught in our lesson. It shows us that the Christian's duties are interwoven with his privileges. There are many who like to believe in the privileges and overlook the duties. Because we are alive unto God, we must renounce sin, since that corrupt thing belongs to the estate of spiritual death.

We must also keep in mind that although the lowest sinner is not below the grace of God, neither is the highest Christian above temptation of the enemy.

Let us continue to follow after that whose fruit is everlasting life.

—Wayne Murphey

## THE PIOUS WASHERWOMAN

Among the flock to which it was once my joy to minister in one of our southern states, there was a poor woman, who, at the age of fifty, in spite of every obstacle in her earthly lot, sought and found the Savior. Few cases in my charge touched my heart more than hers.

Though homely in speech and ungainly in person, she is yet, I believe, one of the "pure in heart," who "shall see God." Probably she never knew much joy until she found it at the foot of the cross, for her husband was a drunkard, and she lived in the midst of poverty and ignorance. Through the abounding mercy of God, some word from my lips was made the arrow that pierced her heart, and she sought the Lord with strong crying, until He heard her prayers, and gave her peace. And now with what a beaming face, hearty voice, and eager grasp of the hand did she always meet me!

Her gratitude to the Lord who had bought her did not end in protestations of love to me, one of His ambassadors. Like the woman of Samaria, she could not keep the glad news to herself, but went about telling to others what a Savior she had found. When there was sickness, sorrow, or death among her neighbors, there by the bedside or the coffin was I sure to meet her face of honest sympathy. There, too, was her hand outstretched in such aid as even the poor can give each other.

Once I was called to visit the sick-chamber of a young girl. I had been there often, for her decline was slow, had expounded to her the way of salvation, and she had listened with sorrowful, meek attention, but had not expressed a decided hope. Now her young life was wasting rapidly away. The time had come when she required the constant aid of those around her, for her strength was gone, and she lay as helpless as an infant.

As my wife and I entered the house one beautiful afternoon, we were met at the door by the hushed and tender greetings of our friend Mrs. G—. "Are you here?" I said with some surprise. "Can you leave your work, and come so far at this time of day?" "Oh, yes," she said, "I did up my washing early this morning, and have been here all day. The poor thing can do no more than a babe for herself now, and her mother is worn out with nursing."

Ah, thought I, we call it benevolence when a wealthy lady selects from her ample stores a few delicacies, and riding in her easy carriage to some humble abode, spends half an hour beside some bed of languishing, and then, having made the

inmates glad with her bounty, takes her leave. It is benevolence, and when offered from the heart, is a sacrifice well pleasing to God. How much greater is the self-denial which the poor must practice when they would do a charity! "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all; for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God, but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." Luke 21:3, 4. In like manner did our humble friend, for she lived by the labor of her hands.

She then led us up to the chamber of suffering. How neat and pleasant had the hand of watchful kindness made the poor little room! There was a clean white counterpane on the bed, and a window open beside it, through which the genial beams of spring sunshine came in, and fondly strove to warm the slender frame upon which the chill dews of death were beginning to fall. Before the little mirror was a bouquet of simple flowers.

The young girl was only sixteen. Her auburn hair was neatly combed back from her delicate brow, and rested softly on her cheek, where the tender bloom of youth still lingered, as feeling loath to fade so soon. Her mournful blue eyes were cast down. It was a sad sight, and at first we hardly knew what to say. But soon, taking the little transparent hand in mine, I talked to her of the tender mercies that are in Christ Jesus. I then opened the Bible and read to her from its precious promises. Mrs. G— sat weeping, partly concealed by the bedpost. Presently she exclaimed, "Oh, how true, how sweet that is! I have been trying to tell Julia about that in my poor way. I am so glad you have come."

Some days before her departure, the young girl expressed a timid trust in Christ; but when the hour of darkest trial came, the glory that had been veiled with clouds suddenly flashed out,

*"And lit her raptured spirit up  
With joys unspeakable."*

Her faithful friend, Mrs. G—, assisted in the last kind duties, and we stood together beside her early grave, hoping one day to behold her rise, clad in garments of light.

At length I was called to part with my beloved people, and in my farewell rounds I could not forget this faithful servant of Christ, and loving friend of my own. It was moving to see her unspoken agony as she came out to meet me for the last time as her pastor. As I was closing a brief visit, she broke off a large branch from a beautiful oleander in full bloom, and said: "Give this to your wife, (then sick in bed,) with love and

good-by from me." I remonstrated with her for thus mutilating her only bush. "It doesn't matter now," said she, "I don't mind. I was only growing it for her." She then wrung my hand, with tears, sobs and blessings on us all, and we parted.

Some years after, I had the opportunity of visiting that still cherished congregation. Among those who called to greet me was Mrs. G—, as hearty and loving, as ready with smiles and tears as ever. My heart overflowed into my eyes as I listened to her graphic account of the obstacles that had threatened to interfere with her joy in hearing me preach on the Sunday just past. "I would not let anything trouble me," she said, "I was determined that should be a happy day. My poor husband got drunk, and railed against Christianity. But I said to myself, 'It shan't trouble me today. I am determined this shall be a happy day.' This thing went wrong, and that thing went wrong, but I said to myself, 'I won't let it disturb me today.' It was a happy day, oh, such a happy day! It made me think of the time when you found me in our alley at the wash-tub, and spoke those words I can never forget to my dying day. I had gone to church for a while, and then dropped off. You looked so solemn at me and said, 'No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.' Those words still ring in my ears."

I parted from her with the assured hope that if I see her honest face no more on earth, I shall one day behold it beaming with the reflected glories of the Lamb, before the Father's throne.

*From Sketches From Life*



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May 21, 1989

## THE CAPTIVITY OF SIN UNDER THE LAW

Romans 7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

**Memory Verse:** Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be

married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Romans 7:4.

**Central Thought:** Sin rules the life that is without the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ even though the law of God condemns and forbids it. The desires of the flesh will overrule the desire of the spirit if the Spirit of God is not abiding there.

**Word Definitions:** "*Motions of sins*": Feelings, emotions, affections, and desires. *Lust*: Translated from the same Greek word as was the word concupiscence; it means strong longing or desire. "*Sold under sin*": Held in slavery by sin.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is from a chapter that has been a difficulty to many people. It deals with the power and domination that sin wields in the lives of people who have not experienced the victory of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The present wording and expression has been taken by many as to mean that Paul was speaking of his present day experience as a Christian in Christ. It would appear and seem logical that Paul was speaking of his experience as a Christian when he stated: "I am carnal, sold under sin." And several other expressions in this chapter would sound like he is indicating that what he was saying was an index to what he had in the Lord Jesus, and His relationship to Paul. Many, many church people believe that Paul is referring to his Christian experience in this 7th chapter of Romans. But this is error. Adam Clarke correctly observes: "The apostle is here demonstrating the insufficiency of the law in opposition to the gospel; that by the law is the knowledge of sin, and by the grace of the gospel is the cure of sin. He cannot be talking about himself, nor any Christian believer. If it could be proved that Paul is referring to his Christian experience, the argument of the apostle would go to demonstrate the insufficiency of the gospel as well as the law. It is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the Church, or prevailed there, that 'the apostle speaks here of his regenerate state; and that what was, in such a state, true of himself, must be true of all others in the same state.' This opinion has, most pitifully and most shamefully, not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence and disgraced its character." We can readily see from his expression that Clarke certainly did not hold the position that so many have of our day that the 7th chapter of Romans was the New Testament experience of salvation. It is not consistent with the 6th chapter and the

8th chapter to conclude that we must serve the law of sin with the flesh in the New Testament plan of salvation. Paul was speaking of his experience under the law when he made the statements in our lesson concerning him being under the domination of sin. He was made to recognize that it was not him that was doing the wrong, but it was sin that dwelt in him. That is why he was crying out for deliverance—the deliverance that he finally found in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What is it that works in the members of the unsaved to bring forth fruit unto death?
2. Being delivered from the law, we can serve God in of spirit, and not in the oldness of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How is a person made aware that sin is sin?
4. When was Paul alive without the law?
5. What happened when the commandment came?
6. How did the holy, just, and good commandment cause death in the soul?
7. When the soul is conscious of what God requires and finds himself unable to obey, what is the source of his trouble?
8. What word did Paul use to describe the condition of a man who wants to serve God but cannot because of sin that is dwelling in him?
9. He thanked God that he was to find deliverance through whom?
10. What was Paul describing in this chapter?
11. Was it his experience under grace or under the law?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Sin has dominion over the soul who does not have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in his heart and life. The feelings and emotions that work in the members of the body of an unregenerated man lead and bind that person in the paths of sin and evil. Lying, stealing, hatred, wrath, strife, lust, greed, covetousness, immorality, and all other wicked practices and ways increase and abound in the life of a person who is under the domination of sin. He or she covets and hates and does many other things that are displeasing to God. The feelings and overpowering affections of the flesh hold sway. In fits of anger many terrible crimes are committed. Homes are wrecked, lives ruined, and precious souls are lost forever

because sin has domination and the soul never finds the true deliverance that they so greatly need. Husbands and wives are separated, and children are raised up in bitterness and evil because of the overpowering influence of sin in the flesh. Little pure and innocent children grow up into hardened criminals and wards of the state. Once they were so sweet and pure, but sin takes its toll everyday. Sin is to blame. Satan wants to degrade the individual and make them feel helpless and hopeless, telling them that there is nothing that they can do. Oh, that they could but realize that their trouble is sin. Many try on their own to reform and do better, only to fall back in the same old rut worse off than ever before. They become defeated and disappointed and bitter against everyone, but sin is to blame. The Lord Jesus Christ has paid the price for the penalty and redemption from sin. Sin is the cause of all sorrow and trouble in the human family. And Christ has the cure for sin. The law and the courts and the prison house can produce no cure for sin. Only in Christ Jesus and His wonderful grace can a person find deliverance and freedom from the wretchedness of the body of death that weighs down the soul.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Philosophers have measured mountains;  
Fathomed the depths of seas, of states and kings,  
Walked with a staff to heav’n and traced fountains  
But there are two vast, spacious things,  
The which to measure it doth more behoove;  
Yet few there are that sound them; Sin and Love.”

—George Herbert

The law was given that sin might appear as sin. Charles Spurgeon, in one of his sermons commented, “To many men sin does not appear sin; ay, and in all men in their natural blindness there is an ignorance of what sin is. It needs the power of the divine omnipotence, the voice of the same Majesty which said, ‘Let there be light.’ and there was light to illuminate the human mind, or else it will remain in darkness as to much of its own actual sin, and the deep and deadly evil which belongs to it. Man, with wretched perverseness of misconception, abides content in a wrong idea of it; his deeds are evil, and he will not come to light lest he should know more concerning that evil than he wishes to know. There are men in this world steeped up to the throat in iniquity, who

never dream that they have committed anything worse than little faults. There are those whose souls are saturated with it till they are like the wool that has been lying in the scarlet dye; and yet they conceive themselves to be white as snow."

"For we know that the law is spiritual." This is why man

"For we know that the law is spiritual." This is why many people are in ignorance of what true righteousness is. Men read the 10 commandments and suppose that they mean only commit murder," they straightway feel above guilt, when in fact they hold hatred in their heart towards others. They read, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and figure they are in good shape there, not figuring that this is a condition of the heart. Let us be thankful that the Holy Spirit will show the seeking soul just what sin is, and then the power to live above it.

—Wayne Murphey

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May 28, 1989

## VICTORY BY THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

**Memory Verse:** For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Romans 8:13.

**Central Thought:** The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets us free from the bondage of sin and gives us life and power to live after the Spirit and not after the flesh which had caused us to be in captivity to sin and its consequences.

**Word Definitions:** *Condemnation:* Sentence of guilt and judgment, a verdict against. *Carnal:* Fleshly. *"The body is dead because of sin":* The body is dead in reference to sin, that is, the members of the body do no more perform the work of sin, just as a dead body no more performs the functions of natural life. —Clarke. *"We are debtors, not to the flesh":* We no longer have to live to the flesh. *"Abba, Father":* This is used to express the relationship that we feel and have with God in the grace and fellowship of His Son, Jesus.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

After the dark hopeless condition that was pictured in chapter 7 of the bondage to sin that is upon the soul who has not experienced the new birth of the Spirit in Christ, the 8th chapter in our lesson today begins with a blaze of victorious expression. The law of sin and death was what the law of Moses was. It showed up man's sin and brought him into condemnation and spiritual death, while affording no passage out from its dark domain. But the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees us from the law of sin and death. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the law of love and Holy

Spirit inspiration and strength. It not only tells us what to do and what not to do, but it warms and inspires the soul with strength to do, and gives fortitude and courage to say no to what is forbidden. With the law of the Spirit of life abiding within us, we no longer live to the flesh and its lusts and desires. The natural desires of our bodies are strictly monitored and controlled by the love and purity of the Lord that dwells so sweetly within us. We just do not want to do what is sinful and wrong, and if we are ever tempted, we look to the Lord and He gives us strength to resist the temptation in the name of the Lord. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus quickens us from the low plane of sin and death to the heights of purity and trueness to God. It gives us a spiritual mind that envisions spiritual values and treasures that we seek after, rather than the vain pleasures of the flesh. We are dead to the world and its pleasures, and our affections are centered on things above. The great problem of sin in the flesh is solved as we resist the temptations of the flesh and sow to the Spirit in every move we make in life. We are truly the sons of God, not only by being created in our bodies by God, but by having His Spirit ruling and reigning in our hearts and lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Who is it that has no condemnation?
2. Why do we have no condemnation?
3. Explain the difference between the law of sin and death and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.
4. What was it that the law could not do?
5. What did God condemn when He sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh?
6. How is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us?
7. What is the result of being carnally minded?
8. What is the result of being spiritually minded?
9. In Christ, what is the body's relation to sin?
10. How will God quicken our mortal bodies?
11. What is the proof that a man is a son of God?
12. What kind of Spirit have we received in Christ?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Christ, our Saviour, came down in human flesh and wrought salvation and strength to overcome the force and dominating power of sin that had held humanity in captivity since the fall of man. Christ was filled with the Holy Spirit

and He never allowed the flesh or sin to have sway in His life. He always did those things that pleased His Father. When the time came for Him to yield up His precious body to the wicked men who were thirsting for His blood, He submitted to their fury and allowed Himself to be crucified on the cross of Calvary. He subdued the flesh and its desires in that one great supreme sacrifice. His sacrifice and obedience to the will of God pleased the Father greatly. God accepted Christ's offering of Himself as the perfect atonement for sin, and holds it out to us as the means of subduing the flesh to His perfect will and holy purpose. Now in Christ Jesus we are lifted up above the flesh into the realm of the Spirit. This does not mean that we are outside the body and its desires. It means that our hearts are tuned to spiritual values and that we have our bodily desires and senses in full control to what is good and acceptable with God. The power of sin and its dominion is broken. The Kingdom of God in all of its righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit is the dominating force of our earthly pilgrimage. With His Spirit ruling and leading our lives we are truly the sons and daughters of God. It is not a spirit of bondage and slavery, but rather a spirit of love and honor and obedience to God as our heavenly Father. Our relationship with God is that of children beloved, dear, and precious to a parent who loves and cherishes them. We are subject to Him, the Father of spirits that we may live triumphantly and happily in this world, overcoming the flesh and its influences.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The steps to be taken which will lead from a life of sin to a life of victory over sin are made plain in the Bible. The first step is to let the Holy Spirit show us our sins. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin." John 16:8. We should then be sorry for having committed those sins. "For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin." Psa. 38:18. Shamefulness will accompany sorrow. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" Rom. 6:21. These steps will automatically bring about a confession. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28:13. Thus will the sins of our past life be wholly destroyed. But this is not the end. There are many scriptures pointing to an experience that destroys the root of sin but which here we will not take the space to enumerate.

Daily we should guard against sin. "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah." Psa. 4:4. I Thess. 5:22 tells us to "Abstain from all appearance of evil." There is a further battle against sin. We should strive against it, even to the point of hating it. "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." Psa. 97:10.

Why do we outline these steps to be taken against sin? Because if we are faithful in each of them we will have no condemnation in our lives. There is nothing in the law or any accusation that the enemy may bring against us to destroy the joy of our salvation. This is truly living victoriously by the law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus. —Wayne Murphey

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June 4, 1989

## THE HOPE AND CONFIDENCE OF A SPIRIT-LED LIFE

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall

tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

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

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

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

39 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.

**Memory Verse:** 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. Romans 8:28.

**Central Thought:** The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus gives us confidence of God's grace and care for all the conflicts and needs of this present life, and assures us of a bright hope of life in the resurrection unto eternal life in the world to come.

**Word Definitions:** "*Beareth witness with*": Testifies jointly, makes more firm and certain our testimony. "*Earnest expectation*": Intense anticipation. "*Manifestation of the sons of God*": The disclosure or bringing to light and view of the real true saints in glory. "*The creature was made subject to vanity*": The creation (mankind) was placed under vanity. "*The adoption, the redemption of our body*": The final and eternal phase of sonship that we will enjoy when our body is redeemed from corruption, death, and the grave in the last resurrection. *Persuaded*: Completely convinced.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson, we beheld the wonderful victorious life that we are given in the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, that we are truly born again and the children of God, strengthens our faith for victory here and brightens our hope for the future. The soul needs a strong consolation and source of comfort while passing through this sinful dark world. The pressures from the world around about, the infirmities and weaknesses of our mortal flesh, and the constant opposition from the devil himself, all make up a great conflict through which the soul must continually pass. Without the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit witnessing to our hearts of His grace and love, and

His personal aid to us, we would not be able to maintain a constant victory. With this sweet assurance of the Holy Spirit comes the lively hope and anticipation of that future bliss and joy with Christ in that day of days that the soul is yearning to see. Being joint-heirs with Christ brings us fellowship with His sufferings, but these sufferings will be forgotten in the glory that will follow. We are content for the time being to live in this state of mortal vanity, because we possess a hope of being set free from this bondage of corruption. Our vile and weak physical bodies will be replaced by glorified bodies like Jesus has. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God that he is speaking of here. We have liberty in the Spirit of God now to serve the Lord with victory over sin. We are made more than conquerors over every opposing power of the enemy. There is absolutely nothing that can overcome us as we keep in the Spirit. And then when this vain life is finished, we can leave this world with hope of living again in the great and glorious liberty of the children of God in heaven forever.

—Leslie Busbee

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What does the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit do for us?
2. What is there for us in being heirs of God?
3. In being joint-heirs with Christ, what are we called upon to do with Him?
4. What confidence do we have when we are called upon to suffer with Christ?
5. What is the earnest hope and expectation of a child of God?
6. What are we waiting for while we suffer in our mortal flesh?
7. In what way could you say that we, as the followers of Christ, are killed all the day long and accounted as sheep for the slaughter?
8. What can we do in meeting with the battles of the Christian life through Him that loved us?
9. What is your explanation of the expression "more than conquerors?"
10. If we are persuaded that nothing shall separate us from Christ, what will be our attitude and disposition toward life?

## ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How wonderful that Christ through the Holy Spirit gives us grace and courage for every day we live in this world, and gives us such comfort and hope concerning that which is beyond this life! The hope of a child of God is the anchor of his soul. It helps to hold him in the storms of this life. As a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will encounter many hard times of suffering and trial. There will actually be those experiences when being accounted as sheep for the slaughter will be a reality. The pressures and the conflicts will be severe and prolonged at times. But through it all, there will be a power lifting the soul above all of the distresses and discouragements around about. As human beings, still subject to vanity and human flesh, we will feel the arrows of persecutions and sorrow. We will feel the piercing thorns of hurtful words and bitter treatment. And, as human beings, our steps may falter for the moment, but as we lift our hearts in prayer, and call to mind God's promises of help and comfort, there will be a refreshing and a surge of courage and faith that will help us to rise up and overcome the difficulty. We, who are seeking for immortality, are constantly aware of the mortality and corruption that we are in. We sense the decay of human nature and ever are reminding ourselves that our sufferings will soon be over. We pray that God will continually strengthen us by His Spirit, and we rejoice when the Spirit of the Lord visits us and refreshes our spirits. We do not yield to temptation or discouragement because we know that there is nothing out there in the realms of sin that is better for us. We know that God loves us and will work out our needs someway, somehow, so we just keep on pressing with each new day, confident that His mercies are new every morning, His compassions fail not, and great is His faithfulness! (Lamentations 3:22, 23). Sometimes it seems that we are about to give out, but as we call on the Lord, He recharges us with life and vigor and we take up the journey onward. Our hope is bright and we cheerfully press on to the prize that is waiting at the end of the race.

—Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Many times it is the knowledge that "all things work together for good to them that love God. . ." which gives us hope to continue on. Sometimes it seems that life is not worth the problems. There are times that being "killed all the day

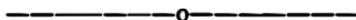
long" and "being accounted as sheep for the slaughter" has absolutely no glamour in it.

There is a maxim that "life is what you make it," which at times we cling to. There is some validity to this, but there is a stopping point of mind over matter. It doesn't matter how much a person wishes it differently, they are at times brought face to face with the reality of trials. Sometimes, all our efforts to make life pleasant are futile.

The conclusion that this leads us to is that we must go through hard times and find our contentment in the midst of them. The only way that this is possible is to dwell in the presence of God. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psa. 16:11. There are no stipulations on this verse. There are no qualifications of what our earthly circumstances are. If we can enter into the presence of God we will find fulness of joy.

History proves these truths to be true. There are many illustrations that could be drawn, but I think the prophet Daniel is a prime example. He suffered jealousy and ill treatment at the hands of the presidents and princes that were under him. I am sure that he did not enjoy these things, but he drew strength to face them by daily going into the presence of God. Think of how much good was wrought by this. Because of his deliverance from the lion's den, God's name was glorified among all people, nations and languages. (Dan. 6:25). Surely all things do work together for good to them that love God.

—Wayne Murphey



## THE SKEPTIC'S CHALLENGE

Over the heads of the crowd the confident cry rang out, "There is no answer to prayer; it's all imagination. Don't be carried away. Use your own common sense. There is no hereafter. When we are dead, we are done for."

The speaker was standing at the foot of a monolith erected in an open space of a busy city. A large crowd stood around listening as he tried to prove the nonexistence of God and the inefficacy of prayer. He concluded his speech with a professed readiness to debate the question with any person in the audience.

Instantly a man was seen making his way towards the speaker, saying at the same time, "I will accept the chal-

lenge." The people eagerly made way for the champion of prayer. He was tall and well dressed. But he was no orator; he had not the winning, catchy demeanor of his opponent. For a moment he stood looking at the sea of faces before him, faces waiting with eager expectancy for him to open the debate. A flush of color spread over his features, and the sweat stood in beads on his brow.

"Friends, I am not a public speaker," he said. "I did not come to this meeting with the intention of disputing anything our friend might say, but when he denied that there was any efficacy in prayer, and challenged anyone to prove the contrary, I felt bound to come forward." The crowd cheered. He went on:

"You see standing before you a man who was once as big a scoundrel as it was possible to find in the city. I was a drunkard, a gambler, a wife-beater—yes, everything the word 'brute' implies! My wife and child dreaded the sound of my footsteps, and yet, bad as I was, unknown to me, my wife had for years been praying for me, and had taught my child to pray. One night I went home rather earlier than usual and by accident, sober. When I opened the door, my wife had just gone up the stairs to put the little one to bed. I stood listening at the foot of the stairs. My child was praying; she was praying for me. 'Dear Lord Jesus save my dear Daddy!' And as she prayed in her simple child-like way, I heard my wife saying with a sob in her throat, 'Lord Jesus, answer her prayer.' I crept softly out of the house. Strange feelings were coming over me, and ringing in my ears was my child's prayer: 'Dear Lord Jesus, save my dear Daddy!' Was I indeed dear to that child? In what way? She had never known a father's kiss. And as I thought of it, a great lump came into my throat, tears filled my eyes, and I cried aloud, 'Lord, help me! Lord, answer my child's prayer!' And He did.

"Years have passed away since then. Today I am a respected member of society. The past is under the blood. I live in the present, a new creature in Christ Jesus, a living testimony to direct answer to prayer." He paused and then said earnestly. "Friends, don't you think I should have been a coward if I had kept silent today? Can I do other than believe there is a God, and that He not only hears, but answers prayer?"

The skeptic made no reply and the people went silently and reverently away. —Selected

**June 11, 1989**

**CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW  
FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart. Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

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.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

**Memory Verse:** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Romans 10:12.

**Central Thought:** The righteousness that comes by believing in and obeying Christ has replaced the righteousness that obeying the law was supposed to bring. By believing from the heart that Christ died for our sins and that He is risen from the dead, we can be saved to a life of victory through faith.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In the latter part of the 9th chapter, Paul had been speaking of how that the Gentiles who had not followed after righteousness had attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith. He spoke of Israel who followed after righteousness (seeking to have favor with God) but not attaining unto righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but by the keeping of the law. He said that Israel stumbled at that stumblingstone. That stumblingstone was Jesus who came not to pay men for their righteousness, but to impart unto them His righteousness through believing and following Him. Paul quoted from Isaiah 8:14 about Christ being a stumblingstone and rock of offense, and Isaiah 28:16 about Christ being layed in Zion (or the Church) for a foundation. He united these two quotations from Isaiah into one expression, which put it that God lay in Zion a stumblingstone and rock of offence. To the Jews who prided themselves in their being God's chosen people, Christ was a stumbling block. He upset their Jewish pride and offended their conception of what Christ was to be. Paul, in our lesson today, acknowledged that they had a zeal of God, but their zeal was not according to the light and knowledge of God. They were ignorant and in the dark about the true righteousness of God. Paul undertakes to describe and compare the two forms of righteousness. He said Moses described the righteousness of the law. The place to which he refers seems to be Leviticus 18:5, "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them. . . ." We must confess that righteousness in that manner is impossible and unattainable, for it has been proven that all have sinned. No one can truthfully say that they have kept the law. Christ brings such a system of righteousness by the law to an end. Paul describes the righteousness of faith as

being brought to us without effort—human effort—on our part. Compare his description of the righteousness of faith with Moses' words in Deuteronomy 30:11-14. The word of faith is not beyond us, but is right in our mouth and in our heart. Then he quoted again from Isaiah 28:16 concerning whosoever believeth on Christ, the Foundation, emphasizing again that there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Before a soul can call on the Lord they must believe, and they cannot believe in someone they have never heard about, and they cannot hear without a preacher. He then quotes the beautiful passage from Isaiah 52:7 concerning the beautiful life and walk of the true ministers of the gospel. From Isaiah 53:1 he adds the challenging question: "Lord, who hath believed our report?" The gospel needs to be preached, people need to hear and believe it, and they need to call on the name of the Lord to be saved.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. What was Paul's heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel?
2. What did he bear them record of having?
3. What was wrong with Israel's zeal of God?
4. What were they ignorant of?
5. What were they doing?
6. What had they not submitted to?
7. Is there any danger of us being that way today?
8. Who brought an end to the law for righteousness?
9. In your own words explain the difference in the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith. (It is extremely critical that you understand the difference!)
10. How does our lesson describe the real way to be saved?
11. If a person really, from the heart, believes in Christ and His risen life, what kind of life will he or she seek to follow?
12. Just how can a person acquire saving faith?

### ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart:" (Romans 10:8). When we give a listening ear to the simple and true gospel of Jesus Christ, what do we visualize? We see Christ coming down to this cold dark world to give His life as a ransom for our sins; we hear His doctrine and blessed teachings; we see His tenderness and loving service for the

welfare of our souls. "All of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6). We are helpless and lost and undone before God. We see Christ nailed to the Roman cross, dying for our sins. The gospel tells us that He did that so that we could escape the wrath of God and be forgiven and set free. As we listen with an open heart and mind, the Spirit of God accompanies the Word and our hearts are touched and inspired to believe that it is so. The more we ponder over it, and look upon the wondrous truths that the gospel presents to us, we are more and more persuaded that it is true. We yield unto the Lord and bow down before Him, calling upon His name for mercy and salvation. We seek Him with all of our hearts, and soon the love of Jesus begins to encircle and comfort us. Assurance and hope springs up in our hearts, and we begin to thank and praise Him for His salvation and grace. We are filled with joy and gladness, and we begin to testify and bear witness to others of the great blessing we feel down in our souls. This is the way it works. Now to every person God reserves a right to bless in special and individual ways, but, as a general pattern, our lesson illustrates the method of finding Christ and His salvation. The Lord is a great and wise God to bring such a simple and accessible plan for our souls to partake of His favor and saving love. Satan has fought this simple truth down through the ages and sought to pile all kinds of requirements and heavy things on souls to decoy them from the simplicity of faith. But the truth still stands and it still works the same way for the sincere and humble soul who seeks the salvation of Jesus Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It is recorded that an Indian and a white man were both convicted by the same sermon. The Indian was soon to rejoice in pardoning mercy. The white man was under distress of mind, and at times almost ready to despair; but at length he was also brought to an experience of forgiving love. Sometime afterwards, meeting his red brother, he thus addressed him: "How is it that I should be so long under conviction, when you found comfort so soon?" "O, brother," replied the Indian, "I tell you. There come along a rich prince; he promised to give you a new coat; you look at your coat and say, 'I don't know, my coat pretty good, I believe it will do a little longer.' He then gave me a new coat. I look on my old blanket; I say, 'This good for nothing.' I fling it away and take my new coat. Just

so, brother, you try to make your old righteousness do for some time, you loth to give it up; but I, poor Indian, had none, therefore I glad to receive at once the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Down through time there have been many things upon which man has established his righteousness. The Jew had the Mosaic law, the Gentiles had their idols, the heathens have their gods and all of them feel justified by them until they come in contact with the righteousness of God. If they will forsake the righteousness of these earthly ceremonies they can enjoy the riches of God's righteousness. Sad to say, many are not willing to do this.

In comparing distances one astronomer has said, "Our sun is 886,000 miles in diameter, yet seen from a distant star, it could be hidden behind a thread that was near the eye." How true this is in the spiritual realm. Too often man allows a very slender thread of self-righteousness to hide the Son of righteousness. If we will reach out by faith we can find Him no matter what our background or nationality might be.

—Wayne Murphey

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June 18, 1989

### A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY, ACCEPTABLE UNTO GOD

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

**Memory Verse:** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12:1.

**Central Thought:** Since the great mercies of God have provided such a wonderful plan of salvation and hope for us, we ought to give our lives to Him completely, and spend our mortal years in service to His cause and for the sake of others.

**Word Definitions:** *Beseech:* To lovingly entreat, to invite, console, or comfort. *Prove:* To test, discover, and approve. *"Think soberly":* Think in order to have a sound mind. *Acceptable:* Well-pleasing. *"Love without dissimulation":* Unfeigned and genuine. *"Be not wise in your own conceits":* The Greek expression is, "Do not become wise within yourselves.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In chapter 11 Paul spoke extensively of the Jew and the Gentile and their relation one with another. He brought out how that the Jews fell because of their unbelief and the Gentiles were grafted in because of their faith. He said that they should not be high minded, but rather fear. For if God spared not the Jews because of their unbelief, neither would He spare the Gentiles if they were found in unbelief. He summed it all up by saying concerning the Jew and the

Gentile that "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Paul rejoiced and marveled at the great wisdom of God and His unsearchable judgments and ways. It is to be noted in the book of Romans that up to the twelfth chapter, which is our lesson today, there have been very little if any commands put forth. The most of the first 11 chapters are dealing with truth and what God has provided and made available to man. Now in the twelfth chapter is found various injunctions and counsels that we are entreated to carry out and obey because of the love and mercies that our God has manifested to us. Every commandment of the New Testament is enjoined upon us because of the love that God has for us and the love that His love inspires in us. All of these commandments found in this lesson today are not grievous burdens, but rather the normal reaction of a loving and grateful heart for the goodness that God has so graciously shown; they are spiritual duties and responsibilities that bring great joy and happiness to fulfill. As you read each one, notice how right, beautiful, beneficial, and rewarding each one really is. Count it a joy that the grace of God is given to enable us to live such a beautiful life for Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Paul beseech these brethren by the mercies of God?
2. What did he beseech them to do with their bodies?
3. Why is this kind of sacrifice consistent with the Christian standard of life?
4. Instead of being conformed to the world, what did he tell us to be?
5. Why is it our reasonable service to sacrifice ourselves like this to the service of God?
6. What are we to prove by being transformed by the renewing of our minds?
7. How does each one of the duties that our lesson speaks about benefit our fellow man as well as glorify God?
8. What does a life that conforms to these principles of loving service point to?
9. What will be the disposition and attitude of a soul who follows what is taught in our lesson today?
10. Who has the priority or greatest importance in a life that is lived like this chapter teaches?

## ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The Lord Jesus poured out everything in His service to us. He came as the gift of God to us and He gave Himself not only for us but also to us. He belongs to us. We can have His precious help and service at any time day or night. He ever lives as our Saviour and Friend at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. God concluded all of us in unbelief and sin that He might have mercy upon all of us. We were not His counsellor nor did we first give to Him that He might recompense to us again. It was from His great goodness that He prepared of His goodness for us poor and needy people. What else is there for us to do but to give ourselves unreservedly to Him as a living sacrifice of our whole being for His use and service? The life we live needs to be consistent with His holiness and honour. We need not only to love and to serve Him, but we need to love and serve one another as His children, and also our fellow man as well. It is a beautiful life that is lived in loving gratitude to the Saviour and for the cause of mens souls. All glory must be His. If we do anything, it must be done with the strength that He gives and as His Holy Spirit leads. We must diligently pursue the knowledge of His will and we must be willing to do anything, go anywhere, and be everything that would be well-pleasing to Him. This would be a hard and wearisome life to follow, if we did not have the love of God in our hearts. But with His love in our hearts, it is a delight to follow the Master through the various scenes of service and duty. A living sacrifice, given wholly unto our loving Lord is the only true expression of gratitude that is befitting to His wonderful and righteous name.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Paul was teaching the change from the law to the Holy Spirit's work in the heart. The Jews failed to accept Christ while He was with them in the flesh, and it was very difficult to go a step further and accept the Holy Spirit by faith. Paul painted a picture before them by listing some of the actions of a Holy Spirit filled life.

These qualities of holiness were not accessible until they made a complete change over and presented their bodies a living sacrifice. We read where Peter, on the mount of transfiguration wished to honor Moses, Elijah and Christ equally. He wanted the law, prophets and the gospel. This could not be.

It would be like the moon and stars shining in all of their glory, after the sun had arisen. Peter "knew not what he said."

It is possible for us today to be influenced by a law spirit. Take note that under the law system, hatred, revenge, conceit, dishonesty, hypocrisy, oppression, deceit and many more evils continue to exist in the hearts of men. We must turn from every hindrance and by faith present our bodies a living sacrifice. Then we can live holy and acceptably before God and our fellow man.

—Wayne Murphey

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June 25, 1989

## GLORIFYING GOD AND RECEIVING ONE ANOTHER

Romans 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

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.

**Memory Verse:** We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Romans 15:1.

**Central Thought:** God has shown such mercy and love to us Gentiles in giving us the gospel of His Son, that we should have the same attitude toward one another of mercy and patience, receiving one another and seeking to help one another instead of casting one another off.

**Word Definitions:** *Infirmities:* This refers to what was brought out in chapter 14 with regard to things that are troubling to some people's consciences that perhaps are not a difficulty with others. The Greek meaning of the word "infirmity" here is "a scruple of conscience." Webster defines scruple as "hesitation from action or decision because of the difficulty of determining what is right or fitting." *Edification:* A building up or being profited and helped. *Consolation:* Solace and comfort. "*Minister of the circumcision*": Minister to the Jews. *Laud:* To praise highly and abundantly.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In chapter 14 Paul brought out how people's consciences are not always the same concerning things that they should do and not do. With regard to what one should eat or not eat, and with regard to regarding one day more than another or regarding all days alike becomes cause of difficulty in relating to one another. He that eats despises or counts lightly those who eat not. He that eats not judges those who eat. One man will be conscientious about esteeming one day above another, while others esteem every day alike. These variations can affect other things, too. In our lesson today we see that the Lord would have us to bear with one another and not judge each other regarding one another's conscience. We are to assume the attitude and mind of Christ toward one another. Think how Christ bore all of our sins and the things that we reproached God with in His body on the tree. He took the blame for our shortcomings, failures, and even our sins. If Christ so freely did that for us, what should be our attitude toward one another? Ought we not to be very slow about condemning and judging our brother just because he sees

things differently than we do? Instead of wanting to cast him or her aside and get rid of them, we should ask God for grace and guidance to know how we can help that brother or sister. If they come short and fail of the Word of God, we should have charity in our hearts to seek the Lord to know how we can edify that person and inspire him to better things. The God of patience and consolation wants us to be patient and consoling to our fellow man. When we think of the mercy that God has shown to us, it helps us to have a merciful and longsuffering attitude toward one another. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How should we treat people who differ in conscience with us?
2. What should be our goal in dealing with our brother and sister?
3. What was Christ's attitude toward those who had reproached God?
4. What were the things written aforetime in the Scriptures for?
5. What kind of mind does God want us to have toward one another?
6. What happens when we do not have one mind and mouth in our congregations?
7. How should we receive one another?
8. What did Christ minister to the Jews?
9. What did the Scriptures say concerning the Gentiles?
10. What did Paul pray that we would be filled with?
11. What did he want us to abound in?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God wants us to be strong in His grace and salvation. He wants us to be spiritual and balanced in our walk with Him. But He also wants us to be aware that not every one of our brothers and sisters in Christ will be at the same point of spiritual growth and understanding. There will be those new in the faith or weak in their conscience who will need special consideration and patience in being dealt with. We are not to be judges, but rather be helpers. When you see a brother or sister not up to the scriptural standard of life and faith, you must bear with, and earnestly pray for them. You must not count them as unsaved and hold them in contempt or condemnation. Just bear with them, put up with them, and pray earnestly that God will bless and cause them to advance in

the knowledge of the Lord. Seek ways to encourage and help them. In praying and seeking God on their behalf, the Lord may inspire you with some loving words of edification and admonition for them. Pray more for grace and guidance as you approach them. If we will follow the guidelines in our lesson today relative to bearing with and receiving one another as Christ received us, much confusion and trouble will be avoided. Above all, let us never forget that it was the mercy of God that offered His gracious gospel to us, the good news that Christ loves all and died for all to be saved. Instead of mulling over problems and shortcomings of others, let us keep our minds stayed on Him. Let us be constantly offering the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the mercy He has shown to us Gentiles. Let us not look for faults in others, but praise the Lord, feast on His Word, and pray that we will be a blessing and a benefit to every soul in life that we come in contact with. Our hearts and minds will be so taken up with believing and rejoicing in the grace of God that we will have no time for anything but the service of the Lord and the joy that we have found in this wonderful plan of salvation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Sometimes we must bear and forbear. As you mingle with others who are striving to live for God, it is surprising the scruples that can be seen at times. But our lesson makes it plain what kind of attitude we should have toward such. It helps us to be able to love others as they are when we turn the search light on ourselves. It is so easy to see the problems others have, but difficult to perceive how others view us. One story tells about a man who became disillusioned with people in general and told his wife, "I think everyone is a little strange except you and I, and sometimes I wonder about you."

It can be a humbling experience to discover how people perceive us, but it will work wonders on how we are able to bear with others. We will no longer look down on those we consider weak, nor bear with them simply because we have to, but we will love them and desire to build a helpful relationship.

Let us keep in mind that God continually bears with our humanity. He forgives when we err and turn back to Him. He bestows unmerited favor when we are weak. He offers kindly instruction when we blunder. He does not hesitate to take us into a close embrace when our spirit is wounded from a lack of wisdom on our part. What a beautiful example we have to

follow. Just as surely as you have experienced these virtues in God, display them to your brother. —Wayne Murphey





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