

Book of Romans



Chapter 8

*Theme: The new man; the new creation;
the new body; new purpose*

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Romans Chapter 8

Missler: The Most Inexhaustible Book

One of the most frustrating things about teaching the Bible is its inexhaustibility, especially the Book of Romans. For many chapters of the Bible, you can consult a dozen commentaries, do a little further background research, explore a few pivotal exegetical issues, and feel that you have a reasonable grasp of the chapter.

Not so, Romans! It would be easy to lecture over an hour on each verse! (Donald Grey Barnhouse's exposition on Romans extends to 10 volumes.) (At Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, Sunday nights Pastor Chuck would survey the entire Bible, covering about 5 chapters each evening. Thursday nights would be an in-depth verse-by-verse study of some particular book. We used to quip, "If you wanted to go through the entire Bible in two years, you would attend Sunday nights. If you wanted to go through the Book of Romans in two years, you would go Thursday nights!")

Romans is, perhaps, probably the most inexhaustible book in the entire Bible. But we shall attempt a balance... And we are now about to embark on one of the most uplifting chapters in the entire Bible!

Godet: "This is the Holy of Holies of the Word of God."

General Review of Chapters 1 - 7

- 1a Introduction & Background
 - The most comprehensive doctrinal book
 - GRACE = God's Riches At Christ's Expense
 - The first of a trilogy on Hab 2:4
- 1b The Plight of the Pagan
- 2 The Moral Man & the Religious Man
- 3 God's Greatest Problem
 - How can a Just God justify sinful man?
- 4 God's Greatest Gift
 - Faith is the one thing we can do which has no merit on our part.
- 5 The Sequence to Maturity
 - Tribulation > Perseverance > Experience >
 - (the climax:) = Hope.
- 6 The Death of Defeat
 - "It ain't gonna reign no more!"
 - [5:20 Purpose of the Law: that sin would increase! (To reveal our sin nature.)]
- 7 Law School
 - The purpose and nature of the Law.

Contrasts:

In Chapter 5: A summation of the saving work of Jesus Christ;

In Chapter 8: A summation of what Christ did to provide Victory in each of our lives.

In Chapter 5, justification (declared righteous) by faith is forever;

In Chapter 8, we learn that a godly life is insured through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Chapter 5, our performance is based on our understanding of God's love for us

In Chapter 8, our performance is based on the power of the Holy Spirit
In Chapter 5, it reveals our relationship to God;
In Chapter 8, it reveals our relationship to the world, conflict, the flesh, tribulation...
In Chapter 5, the Holy Spirit is mentioned only once (v.5);
In Chapter 8, the power available to us through the Holy Spirit is developed in its fulness to
give us assured victory.
Chapter 5 is the capstone on our salvation in Christ;
Chapter 8 is the capstone on our victory in Christ.

Romans 8 Outline

8:1-11 Deliverance from the flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit.
8:12-17 Realization of our Sonship by the Holy Spirit's inner witness.
8:18-30 Preservation in suffering by the power of the Holy Spirit
8:31-39 Hymn of Praise for Victory.
(God's logic of our security)

Exposition

[The first 4 verses are a continuation from Chapter 7. The chapter divisions are not "inspired": they were devised by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury in the early 13th century. These opening verses are a summing up of the truths unfolded from chapter 5:12.]¹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

We have reached the (more or less) halfway point in the Book of Romans as we enter chapter 8. So, it is fitting that the first word of chapter 8 is "therefore". "Therefore" is a word that indicates that what follows is a conclusion of things previously said. Because Paul has been using the Talmudic style of debate popular among rabbis (complete with straw man), then the sentence and religious ruling that Paul makes in verse 1 is meant to sum up (at the least) what he said throughout chapter 7. But from a higher view it is actually a ruling of the extensive case that Paul has been building since the opening of chapter 1 for trusting Yeshua of Nazareth as Israel's Messiah and how this solves the problem of sin and death.

So, I too will begin today's lesson with a "therefore" and use this opportunity to summarize some things we have learned in order to continue building up your general body of knowledge about various aspects of our faith. The goal of Bible study here at Seed of Abraham is not about study and knowledge for its own sake. Rather it is a search for divine truth as a means to spiritual and personal maturity in the Lord, and an ever closer and more obedient relationship with Him. Sometimes to achieve that we need to look to our own history as the body of Christ and understand how we got here from there.

While chapter 7 of Romans is thought by many Bible commentators to be the most theologically important chapter in the Bible (a very questionable perspective in my opinion), chapter 8 is thought by other Bible commentators to be the pinnacle of New Testament narratives that portrays just what it means to be a Christian. What I'd like you to take from this is that Western Christianity finds Romans chapters 7 and 8 to be both a Bible within the Bible and the primary source of doctrinal belief for the Church from the time of the early Church Fathers right on up to our current era. For those who have studied with Seed of Abraham Torah Class for a few years, learning what the Old Testament has to say, I suspect it is a little easier for you to see that there is danger in a mindset that makes a mere 2 chapters of the New Testament as essentially the molten core of our faith; 2 chapters that decides the most important of Christian

¹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

doctrines. When studying the Bible, at any point in either Testament, one must look not only at the meaning of individual words but also at the entire sentence in which the words appear. And the sentence must be understood within the context of the entire chapter, and the chapter within the context of the entire book. But even a Bible book must be taken within the larger context of the entire Word of God. In other words, to arrive at a well-rounded conclusion and a proper doctrine we must look at Scripture from the near, mid, and far view.

Some time ago I told you that many Christian Bible commentators readily admit that the Church as we have known it for centuries, and never more so than within the last 200 years, is not so much the Church of Christ as it is the Church of Paul. By no means am I saying that the modern Church believes in Paul rather than Jesus as Lord and Savior. However, the Church has decided to rely more on the words of but one single highly venerated man, Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles, for our doctrines and theology than all the other Biblical writers combined. But even more, Church authorities have decided to focus on words of one particular book in the Bible more than any other; the Book of Romans. And even beyond that, Romans chapters 7 and 8 are regularly regarded as the epitome of doctrinal teaching above all else written in the New Testament or Old (I'm speaking in broad generalities of course, since the Church is not monolithic in its thoughts and doctrines). Thus, whatever else is written in the Bible, it is often made to conform to Paul's supposed thoughts of Romans chapters 7 and 8. I say "supposed" thoughts because Paul has been miscast and poorly misunderstood over the centuries; less so by the Bible scholars, but more so by the Church government. This leads me to a brief comment about Church structure in order to perhaps help you gain some insight on how it is traditionally operated.

The institutional Church within a plurality of its mainstream denominations (including Catholicism) is usually organized into two basic branches: the academic branch and the governing branch. The academic branch is those scholars and Bible commentators whom the Church looks to for Biblical knowledge on the one hand, but on the other hand they also are the scholars who devise the apologetics for accepted Church doctrine. That is, these scholars who are devoted to a particular denomination of Christianity provide for both Biblical exposition and for a formal rationale as to why their denomination believes the things it does. However, this branch of Church organization is visible only in books and commentaries as reference sources. It is the governing branch of the Church that Christians are most familiar with because it is the visible branch; it is what we see and hear when we attend a worship service. The governing branch on the local level is the Pastor and ministerial staff. Above him, if he is part of a recognized denomination, are usually a regional and then a national board that not only determines Church rules and doctrine, but also enforces them. However, their decisions on rules and doctrines influence and control the academic branch far more than the academic branch influences the governing branch. From the governing branch's viewpoint, the search for biblical truth was concluded long ago upon the establishment of their denomination. With their founding a set of doctrines were established by the original founders that would henceforth be considered as immutable truth. These doctrines are not meant to be reexamined; they are meant to be obeyed. The job of the governing branch is not to continue searching God's Word to be certain that their beliefs are accurate; their job is to enforce the status quo and to emphasize the validity of their doctrines upon the members. From an institutional perspective it is imperative that the research and knowledge of its scholars validates what the governing branch of denomination already believes.

As I have conducted my biblical studies and research I have found that the Catholic Church seems to allow their academic branch far more freedom of thought and doctrinal expression than any other denomination I've run across. It can be quite striking to read the works and conclusions of some of the finest Catholic scholars that regularly run counter to Catholic Church doctrine; even openly challenging it. However, it is also self-evident how little influence the academic side has on the governing side of the Catholic denomination. I don't wish to communicate that other denominations don't have their mavericks as well; but my point is this: it is always dangerous to begin a search for truth from the consensus Church doctrine and then working backwards from it to establish it in the Bible. More times than not the doctrines will prove out; but at other times they won't. So, the typical solution for this dilemma is to either ignore those passages that fly in the face of a denominational doctrine and instead highlight those passages that seem to uphold it.

Since Paul is the primary writer of the New Testament then indeed it is nearly always Paul's statements that are used as the basis of Christian denominational doctrines. However, as anyone who has ever carefully studied Paul knows, he can be frustrating because on any particular subject one doesn't have to look hard to find more than one viewpoint. Thus, a denominational Church board has to pick those statements of Paul they will rely on the most and dismiss the others as of lesser importance.

So, when we take 2 chapters out of one book in the Bible as the source of the truth and beliefs that we all ought to hold; 2 chapters out of the hundreds of chapters in the Bible as having the most weight or even as a manual of corrections for what other parts of the Bible seem to say, we need to be equal parts cautious and skeptical. To be clear: I am not a Paul skeptic. But neither do I hold up Paul as the highest Biblical authority on spiritual matters. For a proper understanding of what Paul says at any given time, it must be taken in context not only within the particular book we find it in, but within the overall context of the several books he wrote. And not only within the several books he wrote, but within the context of what Our Savior said within the Gospel accounts. And not only that, but within the context of what other writers have said in all parts of the Bible. As I have stated on more than one occasion: to take Paul as the preeminent writer to rely on for our Christian doctrine is as wrong as taking Luke, or King David, or John as preeminent. This is not Paul's fault; it is gentile Church authorities who have placed him in that position. It is critical that Believers remain balanced; but if we are going to lean especially hard on anyone's words in Holy Scripture, then it must be the Father's first, Christ's second and Moses's third with all other biblical writers and characters falling in behind them.

But the other thing that needs to be said at the halfway mark of our study of Romans is this: because Paul is rightly called the Apostle to the gentiles, this is the main reason that the gentile Church has held him above all other writers of the Bible. The thought is that Paul is like a specialist; he is the theology-for-gentiles specialist. So, we need to listen to the specialist first and foremost and give less credence to the non-specialists (meaning all the other writers and characters of the Bible). Yet at the same time, because of this designation Paul has also come to be perceived as more gentile than Jew with his Jewishness very nearly disregarded. Thus his words are stripped of their Jewish cultural and religious contexts and so are regularly misconstrued. This is why we are crawling along so deliberately through the Book of Romans, just as we did through the Book of Acts. For the earliest readers of Paul's letters (those to whom his letters were addressed), the context was understood because they were living within it. However, for the early Church Fathers who were gentiles, the Jewish cultural context was mostly a mystery, they were antagonistic towards it, and over time the Jewish component was deemed to be irrelevant. It is this combination of mindset and circumstance that has led us, as the Church

body, to some very dubious doctrinal conclusions that are said to originate from the words of Paul. Hopefully our lessons in Acts and now in Romans have shown you that what Paul is supposed to have said is often terribly misunderstood due to a lack of knowledge about Paul's Jewishness, about Judaism in his time, and thus his intended meaning.

As we take up Romans chapter 8, I'll spend more time adding in the Jewish cultural backdrop that I hope will aid in our taking Paul's words as he meant for them to be taken.²

McGee: THEME: The new man; the new creation; the new body; new purpose

This chapter brings us to the conclusion of sanctification. In fact, it presents three great subjects: sanctification, security, and no separation from God. Here it is powerful sanctification in contrast to powerless sanctification. In this chapter we are going to see God's new provision for our sanctification.

While inadequacy has been my feeling all the way through this epistle, especially here I feel totally incapable of dealing with these great truths. This is such a glorious and wonderful epistle that all we can do is merely stand as Moses did at the burning bush with our feet unshod and our head uncovered, not fully realizing or recognizing the glory and wonder of it all. Chapter 8 is the high-water mark in Romans. This fact is generally conceded by all interpreters of this great epistle. Spencer said, "If Holy Scripture were a ring and the epistle to the Romans its precious stone, chapter eight would be the sparkling point of the jewel." Godet labeled it, "this incomparable chapter." Someone has added, "We enter this chapter with no condemnation, we close with no separation, and in between all things work together for good to those that love God."

My friend, how could you have it any better than that? We find that joy and peace is to be given to the child of God in this life. He is to live for God in the very presence of sin. Sin is not to dictate his life's program. It has already been shown that there is nothing in the justified sinner that can produce this ideal state. We have seen that the new nature has no power and the old nature has no good. Then how is a child of God to live for God? Paul cried out for outside help, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). In other words, who is going to enable me to live for God?

Paul concluded chapter 7 by saying, "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." Now chapter 8 will give us the modus operandi; that is, the means by which the victory is secured.

This chapter introduces us to the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification. The Holy Spirit is mentioned nineteen times in this chapter. Before chapter 8 there were only two casual references (see Rom. 5:5; Rom. 7:6). In this epistle we see the work of the Blessed Trinity:

God the Father in creation (Rom. 1:1 -- Rom. 3:20)

God the Son in salvation (Rom. 3:21 -- Rom. 7:25)

God the Holy Spirit in sanctification (Rom. 8:1-39)

Now here in chapter 8 we see the Holy Spirit and real sanctification. A life that is pleasing to God must be lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. As Paul said to the Ephesian believers, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in the regenerated life of a believer, delivering the believer from the power of sin -- even in the very presence of sin -- and performing all God's will in the life of the believer.³

² <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

³ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

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

Missler: ["Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." was added in KJV from v.4. Not in any of the original reliable texts. All the oldest manuscripts agree. First appears around the 6th century; not in manuscripts in the 3rd and 4th century. Added by either scribal error, or misguided attempt at smoothing the transition to v.2. Yet this would promote a contradiction to all that has gone before.]

"Now:" in the sense of logic, as summarizing and concluding the argument of what has gone before.

Wow. This is one of the greatest assurances that a Christian can receive. No condemnation from any source, for any reason, at any time. Cf. John 3:18. No qualifying clause; it does not depend upon our walk!

[It is not how I feel, but it is what God says... A prisoner before the bar of justice, hard of hearing and dull of sight, might imagine his doom was being pronounced at the very moment that the judge was giving a verdict of full acquittal. Neither his blindness nor deafness would alter this fact.]

Chapter opens: no possibility of condemnation.

Chapter closes: no possibility of separation!

How does one become "in" Christ? By the baptism of the Holy

Spirit (Rom 6:3,4) Cf. 1 Cor 12:13. We are in an inseparable organic union with Him! The safest place in the entire universe is on that Cross! That was validated by emptying a tomb. And that's where we all need to be.⁴

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

As I stated at the outset, the first word of this chapter is "therefore". This means that what Paul is doing is summing up (coming to a conclusion) about what he has previously said. Remember that when Paul wrote this there were no chapters and verses, so it only appears as though there is a break between the final verse of chapter 7 and the first verse of chapter 8; originally it was just all one long letter. The point being that we don't have to debate whether the "therefore" is truly Paul drawing a conclusion about what he said in chapter 7 and before; it is. And what is Paul's conclusion as stated in verse 1? Is Paul's conclusion that the Law is now a dead letter for Christians? He says nothing of the kind. But you'd think so if you were to listen to most denominations and their scholars. Paul's words to open chapter 8 are very specific and I want to give them to you in 3 English versions so that you can see that there is no issue of different translation possibilities.

CJB Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is no longer any condemnation awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua.

KJV 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.

NAS Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

As you can see, these verses from various versions all say essentially the same thing and use the same key word: condemnation. What Romans chapters 1 through 7 all adds up to according to Paul is that there is no "condemnation" awaiting those who are Believers in Yeshua as Lord and Savior. What does condemnation mean? In modern times to condemn mostly means to judge

⁴ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

someone, or to publically censure them, or to denounce some action that someone has taken. That is not at all what condemn meant even a couple of hundred years ago. In the Bible era it meant one thing only: to sentence to death. So to use modern words this verse says: 'Therefore, there is no longer a death sentence awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua'. What death sentence is Paul speaking about? It is the death sentence that all humans have coming to us due to our a) being related to Adam and thus inheriting the consequence of Adam's original sin and b) for us, as individuals, who break God's divine laws. As Paul has carefully pointed out in making his case during the previous 7 chapters, God's laws come in 3 forms: 1) a direct commandment given one-on-one from God to a specific person (as when God told Adam not to eat a specific fruit from a specific tree); 2) the Natural Law, which is inherently present within all human beings regardless of race, culture, ethnicity or nationality; and 3) The Law of Moses.

I want to point out a couple of things to consider: if, as some Christians claim, the only divine law that Believers have to obey is the law of love, then why doesn't Paul mention that as a 4th form of God's divine law? If our only commandment is to love, then why when we don't show love isn't that breaking God's divine laws? And of all people that might overlook mentioning it, it would certainly not be Paul. The other thing Christians often claim is that the Holy Spirit directly tells each person the laws he or she should do and not do and that is the sum total that any particular individual has the obligation to follow. Or that only the things Jesus repeated from The Law of Moses are divine laws for His followers. Do we hear a hint of any of that from Paul? No. For Paul there's only 3 sources of God's laws and instructions; not 4, 5, or 6. And all 3 come directly from the Old Testament, the *Tanach*. These other so-called sources of "laws" that are popular in the modern Church are no more than manmade doctrines.

So, it is the death sentence of God than Believers no longer face as a result of our union with Christ. Does this mean that Believers don't die? No. This is referring to eternal or spiritual death that is the result of sin. So biblically, and as it relates to any of the 3 forms of divine law (including the Law of Moses), the ONLY aspect of those laws that changes due to the advent of Messiah Yeshua is that breaking those laws does not condemn us. Or using the word that The Law of Moses employs (but it means the same thing), Believers are no longer subject to the "curse" of The Law. The Law itself is not done away with nor is the Law a curse; Believers can still break the Law and sin as Paul lamented to end chapter 7. It is only that the eternal death penalty due to us has been paid for by Messiah and so we don't suffer it.⁵

McGee: "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" does not really belong in this verse. Apparently, some scribe picked it up from verse 4 where it belongs. The literal rendering is: "Therefore now, not one condemnation." This is the inspired statement that, in spite of the failure that Paul experienced in chapter 7, he did not lose his salvation. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. However, he wasn't enjoying the Christian life -- he was a failure, and he was a wretched man. God wanted him to have joy in his life. Now how is he to have this? Notice the next verse.⁶

⁵ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

BKC: The question naturally arises; must a believer spend his whole life on earth frustrated by ongoing defeats to indwelling sin? (7:21-25) Is there no power provided to achieve victory? The answer to the first question is no and to the second, yes. In chapter 8, Paul described the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God who is the source of divine power for sanctification and the secret for spiritual victory in daily living. But first Paul reminded his readers that therefore—since deliverance is "through Jesus Christ our Lord" (7:25)—no condemnation (*katakrima*, "punishment") awaits those who are in Christ Jesus, as a result of their faith and identification with Him (cf. 6:13; John 5:24). They are justified, declared righteous, and therefore stand in His grace (Rom. 5:2) and not under His wrath (1:18), and possess eternal life (5:17-18, 21). Christ is the sphere of safety for all who are identified with Him by faith. In the better Greek manuscripts, 8:1 ends here. The words "who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit" were probably transcribed from verse 4.⁷

Guzik: a. There is therefore now no condemnation: The simple declaration of no condemnation comes to those who are in Christ Jesus. Since God the Father does not condemn Jesus, neither can the Father condemn those who are in Jesus. They are not condemned, they will not be condemned, and they cannot be condemned.

Paul's therefore is important. It means that what he says comes from a logical argument. It's as if Paul begins, "I can prove what I say here." This is what he proves: if we are one with Jesus and He is our head, we can't be condemned. You can't acquit the head and condemn the hand. You can't drown the foot as long as the head is out of water. Joined to Him, we hear the verdict: "no condemnation."

In Christ: "This phrase imports, that there is a mystical and spiritual union betwixt Christ and believers. This is sometimes expressed by Christ being in them... and here by their being in Christ. Christ is in believers by His Spirit, and believers are in Christ by faith." (Poole)

The verdict is not "less condemnation." That's where many believe they are – thinking our standing has improved in Jesus. It has not been improved, it's been completely transformed, changed to a status of no condemnation.

We perhaps need to consider the flip side: If you are not in Jesus Christ, there is condemnation for you. "It is no pleasant task to us to have to speak of this matter; but who are we that we should ask for pleasant tasks? What God hath witnessed in Scripture is the sum and substance of what the Lord's servants are to testify to the people. If you are not in Christ Jesus, and are walking after the flesh, you have not escaped from condemnation." (Spurgeon)

No condemnation: This place of confidence and peace comes after the confusion and conflict that marked Romans 7. Now Paul looks to Jesus and he finds his standing in Him. But this chapter is more than just the answer to Romans 7; it ties together thoughts from the very beginning of the letter.

Romans 8 begins with no condemnation; it ends with no separation, and in between there is no defeat.

Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit: These words are not found in the earliest ancient manuscripts of the Book of Romans and they do not agree with the flow of Paul's context here. They were probably added by a copyist who either made a mistake or thought he could "help" Paul by adding these words from Romans 8:4.

⁷ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

While it is true that those who are in Christ should not and do not consistently walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, this is not a condition for their status of no condemnation. Our position in Jesus Christ is the reason for our standing of no condemnation.

“The most learned men assure us that it is no part of the original text. I cannot just now go into the reasons for this conclusion, but they are very good and solid. The oldest copies are without it, the versions do not sustain it, and the fathers who quoted abundance of Scripture do not quote this sentence.” (Spurgeon)

No condemnation: We receive this glorious declaration from God’s court. We receive it though we certainly deserve condemnation. We receive this standing because Jesus bore the condemnation we deserved, and our identity is now in Him. As He is condemned no more, neither are we.⁸

ESV: Therefore, indicates that Paul is stating an important summary and conclusion related to his preceding argument. The “therefore” is based first on the exclamation of victory that comes “through Jesus Christ our Lord” (7:23–25), which in turn is linked back to 7:6, where the idea of the “new life of the Spirit” is first mentioned. But more broadly Paul seems to be recalling his whole argument about salvation in Christ from 3:21-5:21. The now in 8:1 matches the “now” in 7:6, showing that the new era of redemptive history has “now” been inaugurated by Christ Jesus for those who are “now” in right standing before God because they are united with Christ. But the summary relates further to the whole argument presented in chs. 3, 4, and 5. No condemnation echoes the conclusion stated in 5:1 (“Therefore . . . we have peace with God”) and underscores the stunning implications of the gospel first introduced in 1:16–17. As Paul immediately goes on to explain, there is “no condemnation” for the Christian because God has condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son (8:3) to pay the penalty for sin through his death on the cross. The following verses then show that indwelling sin is overcome through the power of the indwelling Spirit, with ten references to the Spirit in vv. 4–11.⁹

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

Missler: Summarizes Romans 7. Cf. 7:23. While the law of sin and death will be with us as long as we are in this body; but it doesn’t necessarily have dominion. The “law” of the Spirit can have dominion.

Example: The law of gravity is upon all of us. However, with a proper air foil, and sufficient velocity through the air, we can enjoy dominion over gravity. We can take advantage of the greater power over the law of gravity.

“The law of the Spirit of life”: genitive case = “The law of the Life-giving Spirit.”

Abiding in Him: John 15:1-5; organic union with Him.¹⁰

⁸ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁹ ESV Study Bible Notes

¹⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 2 can create some problems for us if we don't recognize something important. The problem is that Paul uses different words and phrases for essentially the same thing. Why? Because within Judaism in his day all these words and phrases were in common use, and people understood them. Too often we try to nuance what are essentially synonyms so that we can show some differences between those choices of words; but the differences aren't actually there. For instance: Paul says that the "law" of the Spirit, which produces life, has set him free from the "law" of sin and death. This is not a new kind of law he is speaking about; it is simply a manner of speaking. In our modern English it is like saying "principle". But what else can be confusing is the introduction of the word "spirit" into the narrative. What does he mean by spirit in this case? If you were a Jew in his day, you would probably understand his reference.

I've told you of the doctrine of the Two Ways or Two Masters that was common knowledge within Judaism and how even Yeshua used this long held Jewish doctrine in His teaching (no man can serve two masters). Throughout Romans Paul constantly falls back on the doctrine of Two Masters in his teaching as an essential element of the effect of the Gospel. The Essenes (the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls) held essentially the identical doctrine but being the separatists that they were, they gave it a slightly different name that they preferred: the doctrine of Two Spirits. So, they thought and wrote of the evil and good inclinations as spirits of evil and good. Thus, Paul was merely using the Essene's vocabulary when he introduces the word "spirit" in verse 2; but it is virtually synonymous with the Two Masters doctrine and that's how Paul meant it.¹¹

BKC: The word because (gar, "for"), connects through (lit., "in") Christ Jesus in this verse with the identical phrase "in Christ Jesus" in verse 1. (In the Gr. word order of the sentence in v. 2, "in Christ Jesus" follows the law of the Spirit of life.) If 7:7-25 is Paul's testimony of his struggle as a believer with indwelling sin, then "the Spirit of life" is the Holy Spirit of God, not the spirit of the new nature each believer receives. The Holy Spirit is the Member of the Godhead who regenerates every believing individual (Titus 3:5) and bestows new life (John 3:5-8), the resurrection life of Christ (Rom. 6:4, 8, 11). Romans 8:2 has the second mention of the Holy Spirit since 5:5, but He is mentioned 18 more times through 8:27. This law ("principle"; cf. 7:23) set me free (the Gr. aorist tense suggests a once-for-all act of freedom at salvation) from the law of sin and death. That principle is called the principle "of sin and death" because sin, as Paul said repeatedly, produces death (5:15, 17, 21; 6:16, 21, 23; 7:10-11, 13; 8:6, 10, 13). As the principle of sin it contrasts with the Spirit; as the principle that brings death it also contrasts with the Spirit who gives life. For the pronoun translated me some Greek manuscripts read "us" and others "you" (sing.). The difference is incidental; the truth stated applies to every believer.¹²

McGee: This is a very important statement. This little word for occurs seventeen times in this chapter. Because it is the cement that holds the chapter together, it is a word that requires real mental effort. We need to follow the logic of the apostle Paul. One of the great expositors of Romans said that if you do not find Paul logical, you are not following him aright.

"The law of the Spirit" means not only a principle of law, but also the authority which is exercised by the Spirit.

"The Spirit of life" means the Holy Spirit who brings life because He essentially is life.

¹¹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

He is the Spirit of life.

"In Christ Jesus" means that the Holy Spirit is in complete union with Christ Jesus. Because the believer shares the life of Christ, He liberates the believers.

"The law of sin and death" is the authority that sin had over our old nature, ending in complete severance of fellowship with God. That new nature could not break the shackles at all. Only the coming of a higher authority and power could accomplish this, namely the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit operates upon the new nature, which is vitally joined to the life of Christ. The man in Romans 7, who was joined to the body of the dead, is now joined to the living Christ also.¹³

Guzik: The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death: The law of the sin and death was a strong and seemingly absolute law. Every sin we commit and every cemetery we see proves it. But the law of the Spirit of life in Christ is stronger still, and the law of the Spirit frees us from the law of sin and death.

We are free from the law of sin. Though he inevitably does, the Christian does not have to sin, because he is freed from sin's dominion. We are free from the law of death; death therefore no longer has any lasting power against the believer.

Romans 8:1 tells us we are free from the guilt of sin. Romans 8:2 tells us we are free from the power of sin.¹⁴

³For 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:

Missler: Summary of Chapters 7 and 6.

3a: Cf. Rom 7:15..19... The flesh (our selves) will always fail.

3b: Rom 6. Christ died, not only for my sins, but for the sinner, that is, my sin nature.

[The Book of Romans is more about God's problems than ours; however, if those are solved there aren't any others!]

"In the likeness of sinful flesh." He was truly human, yet without sin: the perfect man. The virgin birth, as prophesied in Gen 3:15, Isa 7:14...¹⁵

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Paul says a mouthful in verse 3; enough that theologians could write entire essays just on pieces of it. First Paul says that what The Law could not do, God did. This is definitely referring to the Law of Moses, and Paul is about to tell us that there was something that the Law was not capable of, so God accomplished it using another means. Most often this is an "Aha!" moment for Christian Pastors and Bible Teachers. They see this as an admission by Paul that the Law of Moses was defective and so God had to apply a patch; or perhaps it was an excuse for God to just get rid of it for something else that worked better. All that is being said is that God did something that The Law was never created to do. The Law of Moses was not designed as some kind of universal redemption devise that solved all of mankind's problems with sin and death. It served a limited but critical set of purposes that will remain needed until we have the new

¹³ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁴ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

¹⁵ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

heavens and earth that we are promised will eventually come. The thing the Torah, The Law, was never created to do was to change the nature of humans. It could not effect the evil inclination that dominates what Paul calls "our old nature". The Law defines sin, it characterizes God's nature, it explains how to live a righteous life, and it tells us what to do to make peace with God when a law is broken. But The Law could not cause a person to love God or obey God; it could only instill a fear of God in them due to harsh consequences for disobedience.

Yet in a certain, very real, sense The Law was God being accommodating towards His people. He knew that His people needed a rather detailed roadmap on how to live as His redeemed people; the Natural Law was very broad and left much for humans to determine for ourselves (always to our detriment). But the moment He issued The Law His people would need help for when they did not follow God's road map as they knew they should; they would need to be rescued from God's wrath when they sinned. So in a marvelous act of grace, God instituted ritual animal sacrifice. Why is this grace? Because when one of His people broke a law, instead of them facing the spiritual death penalty (which is permanent separation from God) the life of an innocent creature (an animal) could be substituted. That is the essence of the purpose for the sacrificial system and it is important to remember that the God-principle behind this system is exactly what has saved us. Yeshua's death was nothing more nor less than substitutionary sacrifice on our behalf.

In the second half of verse 3 Paul says something that has caused enormous debates within Christianity. He says that the way God accomplished doing this thing that The Law of Moses was never designed to do, was by sending His Son as a human being with a nature like our own sinful one. Notice that Yeshua was sent as a human being; He was not an apparition who only appeared to be human; He was fully human. In fact, says Paul, Yeshua had the same nature as all humans; a sinful one. That is another never ending doctrinal battle within Christianity; the idea that Yeshua had the same sinful nature as all of us is not universally accepted within the Church.

In most English versions the word "likeness" is present to modify the words about Yeshua having sinful flesh. Here is an example of other English versions of this verse:

KJV Romans 8:3 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:

The word "likeness" is indeed there in the Greek; but what does it indicate? Does it mean that while Yeshua looked like He was made of the same stuff as regular humans (flesh), in fact He wasn't an actual human? Was his physical presence merely an illusion? Was he like the Terminator? Flesh stretched over a non-human frame? If the word likeness was not there, then it would unambiguously indicate that God sent His Son in typical human sinful flesh; but the word is there. So, what's the answer? I think the most logical answer that fits with the context of the chapter, with what Paul says elsewhere, and within the context of what we read about Messiah Yeshua in the Gospels is this: indeed, He came in sinful flesh, but as we find out later, He never succumbed to it. That is, He had within Him an evil inclination so that He could be tempted and feel what all the rest of us feel; but He also had God's Spirit in Him and with the power of the Spirit He was able to resist His evil inclination.

So Yeshua, theoretically, could have lived to a ripe old age and died (as do all humans). But, He never sinned; He never once allowed Himself to be a slave to the Master of His evil inclination. Yet He could suffer, He could feel pain and cold and heat; He could feel hungry and thirsty; He had emotions including fear and anxiety; He could bleed, and He could die.

Matthew 26:38-39 CJB 38 and he said to them, "My heart is so filled with sadness that I could die! Remain here and stay awake with me." 39 Going on a little farther, he fell on his face, praying, "My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! Yet- not what I want, but what you want!"

Or, in this even more dramatic version:

Luke 22:42-44 CJB 42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, let not my will but yours be done." 43 There appeared to him an angel from heaven giving him strength, 44 and in great anguish he prayed more intensely, so that his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

So, I can only conclude that Paul added the term "likeness" to make it clear that the Word had become flesh; real human flesh.

CJB John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..... 14 The Word became a human being and lived with us, and we saw his *Sh'khinah*, the *Sh'khinah* of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

That is, the Word that was with God from the beginning remained Himself even when He became flesh and blood (Jewish flesh and blood), was brought into this world through a human mother as are all humans and was given the human Jewish name of Yeshua. And since it was the Word of God who was the author of the Torah, then what else could He do but fulfill what Christians always say is impossible; He did The Law and never once broke it.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 CJB 11 For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach. 12 It isn't in the sky, so that you need to ask, 'Who will go up into the sky for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 13 Likewise, it isn't beyond the sea, so that you need to ask, 'Who will cross the sea for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 14 On the contrary, the word is very close to you- in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it!

So, since Yeshua had an evil inclination, then it means He also had free will. He could have chosen to avoid the cross and clearly as He was in the Garden of *Gat Shemanim* (Gethsemane) He was battling His own will that wanted to live and not die. But, His good inclination again won as He virtually defined the difference between the good and evil inclinations....between the evil Master and the good Master....when He said: Matthew 26:39 CSB Yet not as I will, but as You will." Because the good inclination is doing the Father's will, while the evil inclination is doing our own will.

The Good News is that once arisen, Christ no longer suffered with an evil inclination. And that is one of the things that we Believers can look so forward to; when we arise from our rest upon our resurrection we will no longer have to battle an evil inclination. It is gone, forever, never again to afflict us because as Paul said, we have died in Christ. Through our baptism we have identified ourselves with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. We have already achieved the likeness of His death and burial; but now we await the End Times and His return, and for the likeness of His resurrection.

I want you to appreciate why Paul spends all this time and ink speaking about the same two or three principles that were already well known and taken for granted within Judaism. Please hear me: as much as Paul's teaching has crossed the boundaries of time and space to affect us in the 21st century, he was by no means thinking in terms of speaking to gentiles in the 3rd Millennium A.D. He was writing this letter to the Roman congregations and addressing matters directly pertinent to them, using terms they generally understood. But at the same time it is important to understand that because these principles that Paul quotes were well established and operating

within 1st century Judaism, then of course Believers in every age need to understand them within that same Jewish context. I think one of the better ways to help bridge this difficult gap is to hear what the renowned 12th century Jewish sage RamBam (Maimonides) had to say about the limitations of the Torah. In his work the "Guide for the Perplexed" he says that The Law of Moses indeed has no power over the human nature, and so no power to affect change to the human nature, and nothing ever will. This belief was a core doctrine of Judaism in Paul's day and so this is why Paul was going into such depth and essentially repeating himself a number of times, or better, saying the same thing a number of different ways to get this difficult point across especially to his fellow Jews (the gentile Believers would not have known much if anything about this Jewish doctrine). He was refuting this 1st century doctrine of Judaism that there is no way to change our human nature and be rid of the evil inclination. Paul was explaining that while that may have been true at one time, it is no longer. Yeshua is able to do the impossible; He can change human nature.

Listen to the RamBam:

What was there to prevent (God) from causing the (human) inclination to accomplish acts of obedience willed by Him....to become a natural disposition fixed in us? God does not change at all the nature of human individuals by means of miracles.....it is because of this that there are commandments and prohibitions, rewards and punishments. We do not say this because we believe that the changing of the (human) nature of any individual is difficult for Him. Rather it is possible and fully within His capacity. But according to the foundations of the Law, of the Torah, He has NEVER willed it, nor shall He EVER will it. For if it were His will that the nature of any human individual be changed because of what He wills from that individual, the sending of prophets and all giving of the Law would have been useless.

What an amazing admission from Maimonides. First that the human nature is untouchable by any earthly device, including The Law of Moses. And second, that IF God decided to change the nature of humans (to get rid of the evil inclination), then the RamBam couldn't understand what the role of The Law would become. If only he would have read what Paul had to say here in Romans.

Again: in his letter to the Romans Paul was not establishing some distant, ethereal, theoretical systematic theology. He was directly addressing real issues of his time. It was a firm and settled belief within Judaism that God, although fully capable, would never undertake the task of changing the human nature.¹⁶

McGee 3-4: We have here the whole crux of the matter. Let me give my translation, which may bring out several things we need to understand. "For the thing impossible for the Law in which it was powerless through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin, and in regard to sin, He condemned the sin in the flesh; in order that the justification (the righteous result) of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to flesh but according to Spirit."

It was impossible for the Law to produce righteousness in man. This is not the fault of the Law. The fault lay in man and the sin in his flesh. The Law was totally incapable of producing any good thing in man. Paul could say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). And friend, that is Scripture, and that is accurate. Man is totally depraved. That doesn't mean only the man across the street or down in the next block from you, nor does it mean only some person who is living in sin; it means you and it means me. The Holy

¹⁶ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

Spirit is now able to do the impossible. The Holy Spirit can produce a holy life in the weak and sinful flesh. Let me illustrate this truth by using a very homely incident. Suppose a housewife puts a roast in the oven right after breakfast because she is going to serve it for the noon meal. The telephone rings. It is Mrs. Joe Dokes on the phone. Mrs. Dokes begins with "Have you heard?" Well, the housewife hasn't heard, but she would like to; so she pulls up a chair. (Someone has defined a woman as one who draws up a chair when answering a telephone.) Mrs. Dokes has a lot to tell, and about an hour goes by. Finally, our good housewife says, "Oh, Mrs. Dokes, you'll have to excuse me. I smell the roast -- its burning!" She hangs up the phone, rushes to the kitchen, and opens the oven. Then she gets a fork and puts it down in the roast to lift it up, but it won't hold. She can't lift it out. She tries again, closer to the bone, but still it won't hold. So she gets a spatula. She puts the spatula under the roast and lifts it out. You see, what the fork could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, the spatula is able to do. Now, there is nothing wrong with the fork -- it was a good fork. But it couldn't hold the flesh because something was wrong with the flesh -- it was overcooked. The spatula does what the fork could not do.

The Law is like the fork in that it was weak through the flesh. It just won't lift us up; it can't lift us up. But a new principle is introduced: the Holy Spirit. What the Law could not do, the Holy Spirit is able to do. Therefore, you and I are to live the Christian life on this new principle. We are not to try to lift ourselves up by our own bootstraps. We'll never make it that way, my friend. We make resolutions and say, "I'm going to do better" -- all of us have said that. But did we ever do better? Didn't we do the same old things?

God is able to do this new impossible thing by sending His very own Son, His own nature in the likeness of sinful flesh. Christ had the same kind of flesh that we have, apart from sin. Notice how the writer to the Hebrews puts it: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil... . For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:14, 16-17). Also, he says, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). Then he says, "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. 10:5).

This was God's way of getting at the roots of sin in our bodies, minds, and spirits. He could condemn and execute sinful flesh on the Cross so that it had no more rights in human beings. God was able to deal with sin itself -- Christ was identified with us -- what condescension! Sin has been condemned in these bodies of ours. It has not been removed, in spite of the belief of some very sincere people. These bodies are to be redeemed -- "...raised a spiritual body..." (1Cor. 15:44). Today, the Holy Spirit is the Deliverer from sin in the body. A great many people think it would be wonderful if Christ would come and take us out of this world of sin -- and that would be wonderful. I wish He would come right now. However, there is something even more wonderful than that. It is this: He enables you and me to live the Christian life right where we are today in this old world of sin. That is more wonderful. Our Lord Jesus said in His high priestly prayer, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). Down here is where the victory is.

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled" -- this is the passive voice. It means that the Holy Spirit produces a life of obedience which the Law commanded but could not produce. The Holy Spirit furnishes the power; the decision is ours.

The next verse introduces us to a new struggle. It is not for us to do the fighting. Now it is the Holy Spirit versus the flesh.¹⁷

BKC: 3-4. Having stated the fact of freedom, Paul then explained how it is achieved. He declared again the impossibility of attaining freedom over sin through the (Mosaic) Law. It was powerless to free from sin. Not that the Law was weak in itself (as many translations suggest), for it was good (7:12). But because of sinful human nature, the Law could not deliver from sin. The words "sinful nature" translate *sarx* (lit., "flesh"), which can mean either human sinful corruption or human weakness (cf. 7:5, 18, 25; 8:4-5, 8-9, 12-13). God accomplished deliverance over sin, however, by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man (lit., "likeness of flesh of sin"). Jesus was sent not in sinful flesh but in the likeness of it. His human nature was protected and preserved from the indwelling principle of sin that has plagued all other human beings since Adam (cf. Luke 1:35). He was also sent, literally "concerning or for sin" (*peri harmartias*, not as the niv has it, to be a sin offering). In other words He came to do something about sin. What He did was to condemn it; by His death on the cross, He condemned sin (*katekrinen*, "passed a judicial sentence on it"; cf. *katakrima*, "punishment," Rom. 8:1) so that those in Christ are not condemned. The goal of this was so that the righteous requirements of the Law—a life of holiness (Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7)—could be fully met as believers do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. The provision of deliverance from the power of sin is through the death of Jesus Christ, but experiencing it in one's daily conduct comes through the controlling power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸

Guzik: For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh: The law can do many things. It can guide us, teach us, and tell us about God's character. But the law cannot give energy to our flesh; it can give us the standard, but it can't give us the power to please God.

Morris, quoting Manson: "Moses' law has right but not might; sin's law has might but not right; the law of the Spirit has both right and might."

"The law is weak to us, because we are weak to it: the sun cannot give light to blind eye, not from any impotency in itself, but merely from the incapacity of the subject it shines upon." (Poole)

In that it was weak through the flesh: The law is weak because it speaks to our flesh. It comes to fleshly men and speaks to them as fleshly men. But the work of the Spirit transforms us by the crucifixion of the old man and it imparts the new man – a principle higher than the flesh.

"A vine does not produce grapes by Act of Parliament; they are the fruit of the vine's own life; so the conduct which conforms to the standard of the Kingdom is not produced by any demand, not even God's, but is the fruit of that divine nature which God gives as the result of what he has done in and by Christ." (Hooke)

What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son: The law could not defeat sin; it could only detect sin. Only Jesus can defeat sin, and He did just that through His work on the cross.

¹⁷ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁸ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh: In order to defeat sin, Jesus had to identify with those bound by it, by coming in the likeness of sinful flesh. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul carefully chose his words here, indicating that Jesus was not sinful flesh, but He identified with it entirely.

We could not say that Jesus came in sinful flesh, because He was sinless. We could not say that Jesus came in the likeness of flesh, because He really was human, not just like a human. But we can say that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh because although He was human, He was not sinful in Himself.

He condemned sin in the flesh: Sin was condemned in the flesh of Jesus as He bore the condemnation we deserved. Since we are in Christ, the condemnation we deserve passes us over.¹⁹

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

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

“That” = purpose clause. All that has been said now converges to this fact: all righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in [not by] us, who walk according to the Spirit and not according to flesh. [that is, not trying by own efforts].

A statement of fact, not an imperative. (Gal 5:16 is an imperative.)²⁰

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

We'll continue to work our way through Romans chapter 8 today and I'll tell you in advance that we'll be knee deep in some important theology. Since chapter 8 sums up what Paul has been teaching and presents the conclusion to be drawn from it, I'm going to do some of the same. Even though we're only at the halfway point, we've studied enough of Romans that we should do this.

Thinking back to what I told you in the introduction to the Book of Romans, I remind you that the most common position held by Christian Bible Commentators is that the Book of Romans is aimed primarily at gentiles (this is why the Book of Romans has grown in stature to become preeminent in Christian theology and doctrine). The assertion is that in his letter Paul is speaking mainly to what today we'd call "the Church" (since the Church is generally envisioned as a nearly exclusively gentile religion) and considerably less to Jews (Believers and non-Believers). I hope our journey through Romans is demonstrating that this traditional viewpoint of Romans being mostly gentile oriented simply cannot be supported. Paul's choice of words reflects unique Jewish idioms and expressions, common Jewish cultural norms for his day, typical approaches as used by early rabbis to explain and debate Scripture, and even comments such as the first verse of chapter 7, which makes it explicit that in several parts of his letter to the Romans he is aiming mostly at Jews. The first verse of chapter 7 said: "Surely you know, brothers.....for I am speaking to those who understand law.....that law has authority over a person only so long as he lives?" Clearly "those who understand law" are Jews and not gentiles, especially since "law" in this case is referring to Jewish Law; Halakhah.

¹⁹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

²⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

So, most everything Paul says in chapter 7 is aimed at the Jews in Rome (although the principles he elucidates apply to gentile Believers as well). Thus, in chapter 8 Paul tells his readers what conclusions they ought to draw from what he has previously said (mainly pertaining to chapter 7 but also to the underlying principles of his letter up to this point) as it begins: "Therefore, there is no longer condemnation awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua". So, this comment is (as is all of chapter 8) also equally aimed primarily at Jews who know law (Halakhah), and this can be deduced because chapter 8 is but an uninterrupted continuation of chapter 7. We can get lulled into a false notion that Paul has begun an entirely new thought pattern in chapter 8 merely because we have changed chapters. But Paul didn't write in chapters; chapters were artificially added by others 11 centuries after Paul's day. Paul didn't write using modern English literary and grammar conventions; he wrote using the standard Jewish literary and grammar conventions of his time, which did not include chapter breaks and verse numbers.

The point is this: while on the surface (especially to gentile Christians) it seems to be that Paul is instructing only the new Believers in Yeshua, Jew and gentile, just under the surface we find that he is also addressing Israel and the Jewish people as a whole; as a nation of people, if you would. The nation of people is God's original chosen people (Israel), which is why he has used the promise given to Abraham as a foundational premise for his doctrines. But back in Romans chapter 3 he also alluded to the exclusive advantages given to Jews by God (such as being entrusted with God's Word) and he also says something else that can easily escape our attention.

Romans 3:1-4 CJB 1 Then what advantage has the Jew? What is the value of being circumcised? 2 Much in every way! In the first place, the Jews were entrusted with the very words of God. 3 If some of them were unfaithful, so what? Does their faithlessness cancel God's faithfulness? 4 Heaven forbid! God would be true even if everyone were a liar!- as the Tanakh says, "so that you, God, may be proved right in your words and win the verdict when you are put on trial."

When Paul's straw man asks the question in Romans 3:3: does the Jews' unfaithfulness to God cancel God's faithfulness to the Jews, Paul immediately answers and refutes his straw man by saying "Heaven forbid!" But what, exactly, does Paul have in mind when the discussion turns to God's faithfulness to the Jews? He is speaking of God remaining faithful to the covenants He has made with Israel; covenants that set them apart from all other nations. What every Jew in the 1st century would have understood is that the main point of God's covenants with Israel is that they are what make Israel, Israel. Those covenants are what set Israel apart as God's chosen. In fact in Matthew 15, in the famous story of Yeshua venturing outside the Holy Land and up to Tzor and Sidon, he met a Canaanite woman who begged Yeshua to exorcise a demon from her daughter. Although Yeshua eventually agreed to do so, His initial response is one that ought to prick the ears of the Church and cause us to take notice. 24 He said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Isra'el." Oh my! To whom did Our Lord Yeshua say He was sent? ONLY to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Yeshua, in theory, was Israel's Savior because the Lord's purpose in sending Christ was to solve the deadly problem of sin among His chosen and set apart people, Israel. In fact, in Matthew 10 Yeshua explicitly instructed the 12 Disciples to go ONLY to the house of Israel with the Gospel and to avoid gentiles. Much later, of course, we find the risen Yeshua confront Paul on the road to Damascus and instruct him that the time has come to take the Gospel to the gentile world.

So, if Yeshua was really only the Messiah for Israel, then on what basis could gentiles be included? There would be two basis for this: the first is that in Romans 4 we learn that gentiles who trust God through Yeshua become spiritual seed of Abraham and thus co-inheritors of the Kingdom of God; and second is what we'll study when we get to Romans chapter 11: gentile Believers have been divinely grafted into the covenants of Israel and thus effectively become part of Israel (from a spiritual, not a physical, perspective).

Here's where I'm going with this. Especially in chapters 7 and 8 Paul is not only addressing Believers, Jew and gentile, but on a secondary level he is also addressing Israel in general: national Israel. That is, from the near view that we discussed last time (it is necessary to study Scripture from the near, mid, and far view to obtain proper context), Paul is speaking to Believers. But if we pull back from the few verses we've read and see it in the wider context of the entire Bible (the far view) then Paul's inclusion of Israel-in-general comes into focus. At the same time that he has been explaining why the Gospel works, and what exactly it does for humanity, he has also been defending Israel's election as God's set apart people (especially for his Jewish audience but also as a reminder to gentiles). So part of Paul's underlying message to his audience is that despite Israel's unfaithfulness to God and to the covenants meant to bind them to Him, God has remained faithful. And the chief way God is showing His faithfulness is 1) by not abandoning or rejecting Israel, and 2) this continuing love and concern for Israel is proven by God sending His only Son to give Israel a way out from the death penalty that they have earned for themselves by being disobedient to His covenants (especially as it applies to Covenant of Moses; The Law). So, there is a dual meaning going on here; one meaning that many Jews would recognize as being about their Israelite heritage, and another meaning that explains why the Jews would have to begin to share that heritage (from a spiritual standpoint) with Believing gentiles. The part about Israelite heritage would mostly have flown right over the heads of the Roman gentile readers of Paul's letter, just as it does to this day within the Church. But many Jews in Rome would have immediately understood these thoughts in the perspective Paul intended because his choice of terms and his recounting of Israel's history centered on Abraham, and his constant mention of the role of The Law, would have resonated with them.

So now that you are informed, keep this dual purpose of Paul in mind as we continue our study of Romans chapter 8. Since we only addressed the first 3 verses of this chapter in our last lesson, we'll re-read the entire chapter for the sake of continuity.²¹

Guzik: That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us: Because Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirement of the law, and because we are in Christ, we fulfill the law. The law is fulfilled in us in regard to obedience, because Jesus' righteousness stands for ours. The law is fulfilled in us in regard to punishment, because any punishment demanded by the law was poured out upon Jesus.

Paul does not say that we fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. He carefully says that the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us. It isn't fulfilled by us, but in us.

ii. Simply put, Jesus is our substitute. Jesus was treated as a sinner, so we can be treated as righteous.

In us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit: The people who enjoy this are those who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Their life is marked by obedience to the Holy Spirit, not by obedience to the flesh.

²¹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

God wants the Spirit to rule over our flesh. When we allow the flesh to reign over the Spirit, we find ourselves bound by the sinful patterns and desperation that marked Paul's life in his "Romans 7" struggle. Our walk – the pattern of our life – must be according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh.

Walking in the Spirit means that the course, the direction, the progress of one's life is directed by the Holy Spirit. It is continued and progressive motion.

"Observe carefully that the flesh is there: he does not walk after it, but it is there. It is there, striving and warring, vexing and grieving, and it will be there till he is taken up into heaven. It is there as an alien and detested force, and not there so as to have dominion over him. He does not walk after it, nor practically obey it. He does not accept it as his guide, nor allow it to drive him into rebellion." (Spurgeon)²²

⁵For 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.

Missler: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Verses 5 - 27 develops a wide range of truth regarding the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Verses 5-7 emphasize the impossibility of living by any system of resources other than the Holy Spirit: "Positive Thinking;" "Positive Confession;" et al. "Avis-Christianity: We Try Harder." That's why they are always 2nd best.

"Flesh" = human resources.

The contrast between two believers: the impossibility of trying to live for God by human effort, vs. those that are truly walking by the Spirit.

Which is controlling you? The "human" viewpoint [your capability] or God's viewpoint [His ability through you]?

Sincerity, or the lack thereof, is not the issue; the basis is.

Is your mind on the things of the Spirit or on the things of the world?²³

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

If you listened carefully you noticed that the word "spirit" is front and center in this chapter, being used 21 times. This is an important indicator because in the previous chapters of Romans it was the term "law" that Paul used so very often. So Paul is now moving on from his explanation of the effects of The Law and what God has done to counteract the curse that comes from disobeying it (which Paul sums up in verse 1), to explaining that it is the indwelling of the Spirit of God that marks and characterizes a Jew or gentile as having been righteous (justified) by his or her trust in Yeshua's perfect faithfulness. Thus, in Paul's summation of verse 1 about the case he has been building for the last 7 chapters, he says that those who are in union with Messiah Yeshua are no longer under the condemnation (the death sentence) that is the consequence of breaking The Law of Moses.

In verse 2 he explains why this works as it does. And it is that the law of the spirit has set the Believer free from the law of sin and death. We talked about this last time but I'll expand it a bit. The term "law" as used here is an expression (perhaps even a metaphor); it is not meant in the legal sense or is it used to identify some particular holiness code or regulation. In our modern

²² https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

²³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

English this use of "law" more means something like "principle"; something that regulates. So, the principle of the spirit has set the Believer free from the principle of sin and death. Most importantly it must be understood that the meaning of "the law of sin and death" does not mean "The Law of Moses whose substance is sin and death". So, this statement is not setting The Law of Moses over and against the Spirit of God. Rather it is setting life over and against death ("the law of the spirit, which produces life, has set me free from the law of sin and death").

This interpretation is backed up when we read in verse 3 that what the Torah could not do was to change the human nature (because it was never designed to do it). It is our human nature controlled by our evil inclination that is the problem. The Law, because it is essentially words on scrolls, doesn't have any inherent power to reach in and affect the inner self and thus resist the evil inclination that is the Master of human beings (remember: this Mastery of the evil inclination is the result of everyone being related to Adam). So, God sent His Son to deal with the problem of sin and death that resulted from disobedience to The Law, because God's Son DID have the inherent power to reach inside the inner self and change our nature. The irony is that in addition to having divine power, Yeshua also had the same flawed nature that ordinary human beings had. This was necessary because God's plan was to execute (put to death) that sinful human nature....to destroy it.....and God did so by allowing His Son Yeshua and the sinful nature that He carried to be literally executed with Christ behaving as a substitute to represent our sinful nature. It worked just as the Levitical sacrificial system operated and prefigured. Hebrew humans sinned (they broke The Law). But instead of them receiving the eternal death penalty (the curse of The Law), innocent animals could be substituted. The principle was that God allowed the sin that the human committed to be imputed upon the otherwise innocent animal, and then the animal was "executed" as a substitute or a representative for the guilty human. Likewise, our sins were imputed upon the otherwise innocent Christ, and then He was "executed" as a substitute for us.

But we must be honest; while Paul says Believers have been set free from the law of sin and death and instead we are now under the law of the spirit, the reality is that Christians still sin. Our lives remain an illicit mixture of sinning and God-imputed righteousness. This unwelcome phenomenon was well recognized by Paul within himself such that he cries out in angry frustration near the end of Romans 7: "What a miserable creature I am!" So, we are not entirely free from the power of sin and don't let any pious-sounding minister tell you that you are. However, we are entirely free from the power of the consequence of sin, which is death. Thus, we have to think of this freedom we have gained from the power of sin and death as not so much an event as an ongoing process. Just as we have not escaped the reality that no matter we are Believers, our fleshly bodies will still die and decay in the earth just as anyone else, on the other hand the other aspect of death (spiritual death) we already HAVE escaped thanks to Yeshua. It is not in process, it is finished. Thus, while we have a new Master in the Spirit that empowers our good inclination, that doesn't mean that the residue of our old Master, our evil inclination to sin, has fled; we still have to contend with it. But through the Spirit we do have a power in us that is able to fight it effectively. CJB 1 John 4:4 You, children, are from God and have overcome the false prophets, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

So, what are we to do in this present state whereby we are far better off than before we knew Yeshua; yet still we hang in suspension, seemingly neither fish nor fowl? We're saved and our spirits already have eternal life; yet our flesh still succumbs to sin as though we weren't saved. Back in Romans chapter 6 we read of Paul's approach to this problem that in some ways is a

pleasant fiction, but in other ways is quite practical considering the fallen state of the world, and the condition in which we live: CJB Romans 6:11 In the same way, consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God, by your union with the Messiah Yeshua. Notice the use of the word "consider". In Greek it is *logizomai*, which means to infer or to count oneself as something. So to paraphrase: Paul says that even though it is not actually so, count yourselves as though you are dead to sin. In other words, our mindset as Believers.....the way we should understand this strange conundrum we find ourselves in....is to think of ourselves, and to do our best to behave, as though we are completely dead to the power of sin while at the same time we are more alive than ever to God's will. We play a sort of game with ourselves while we are waiting for the reality of it to be actually true.

Don't discount this. There is an old saying about how to change behavior: fake it until you feel it. That is, you know what you ought to do (the right thing) even though you sure feel like doing something else (the wrong thing). So do the right thing, even if not entirely sincere, until doing the right thing is what your inner self WANTS to do. Look: this frustrating position we find ourselves in is exactly what Paul was lamenting in verses 15 – 24 of Romans 7. This is why perseverance MUST be part of every Believer's life, and we must pray for this perseverance every single day.

But now let me assure you: I'm not suggesting a self-help program of positive thinking. What Believers are doing by "counting" ourselves as dead to sin is less a matter of "faking it" and more a matter of steadily dying to self. God's Law has revealed our sin, and now the Spirit gives us the power to fight against our former propensity to sin. Believers are in the process of learning how to disobey our old nature and instead to obey the new nature God has given to us. We are learning how to discern when something is our will versus God's will, and how to choose to do God's will. This is a hard and lifelong process; but immensely worthwhile. Paul says this in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15:16-19 CJB 16 For if the dead are not raised, then the Messiah has not been raised either; 17 and if the Messiah has not been raised, your trust is useless, and you are still in your sins. 18 Also, if this is the case, those who died in union with the Messiah are lost. 19 If it is only for this life that we have put our hope in the Messiah, we are more pitiable than anyone.

Indeed; if our eternal future is no better than this present life that we live as Believers (which is actually a constant struggle to do what we know is right despite how we might look to others) then we are to be pitied by others and not emulated. I'm not talking about a struggle for wealth and abundance in terms of the earthly economy; some of us may have plenty of that and others may not. I'm talking about our internal struggles, which no Believer will escape. The struggles of conscience when looking at ourselves in the mirror after doing what is wrong, and knowing better, and feeling defeated and ashamed, and asking ourselves how God could possibly continue to love us. But the Good News is that there is a divine power that Yeshua's sacrificial actions have given to us that is so much greater than our old sinful nature. The Holy Spirit has been given to guide us, instruct us, comfort us, forgive us, give us hope and perseverance, and show us the greatest mercy so that despite it all, we can live a life of joy and hope. This is the only real source of hope that mankind has. But it is also a source of hope that we can trust and depend upon because Our Creator has guaranteed it.²⁴

²⁴ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

McGee: "Do mind the things of the flesh." When I was holding a meeting in Middle Tennessee after I was first ordained, I was invited to dinner in a lovely country home. The housewife had prepared some wonderful fried chicken. When we were already sitting at the table, she went out to call her little boy again. After she'd called him several times, she came in and said, "That young'un won't mind me." And what she meant was, "That young one will not obey me." Paul, you see, sounds like a good Southerner because he uses this word, "they mind the things of the flesh." We have seen that before in the sixth chapter of Romans. My friend, if you live habitually in the flesh and obey the things of the flesh, and the new nature doesn't rebuke you, you must not have a new nature -- because "they that are after the Spirit [mind] the things of the Spirit." A believer has been given a new nature, and now he can yield himself to the new nature. And this is an act of the will. This is the new struggle that's brought to our attention. "The flesh" describes the natural man. The Lord Jesus said, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" -- it will always be flesh. God has no program to change the flesh. Rather He brings in something new: "and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

A new struggle is brought to our attention. It is no longer the new nature or the believer striving for mastery over sin in the body; it is the Holy Spirit striving against the old nature. The little boy coming home from school was being beaten up by a big bully. He was on the bottom, and the big bully was pounding him very heavily. Then he looked up from his defeated position on the bottom, and he saw his big brother coming. The big brother took care of the bully while the little fellow crawled up on a stump and rubbed his bruises. The believer has the Holy Spirit to deal with the flesh, that big bully. I learned a long time ago that I can't overcome it. So I have to turn it over to somebody who can. The Holy Spirit indwells believers. He wants to do that for us, and He can!

"They that are after the flesh" describes the natural man. Paul paints his picture in Ephesians 2:1-3. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." This was the condition of all of us until we were saved.

And the "flesh" includes the mind. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled" (Col. 1:21). It includes the total personality which is completely alienated from God.

The natural man strives and even sets his heart upon the things of the flesh. Here is his diet: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). It is an ugly brood!

In Colossians Paul says: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:8-9). The Lord Jesus said: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19). It is humiliating but true that the child of God retains this old Adamic nature. It means defeat and death to live by the flesh. No child of God can be happy in living for the things of the flesh. The

prodigal son may get into the pigpen, but he will never be content to stay there. He is bound to say, "I will arise and go to my father."

"They that are after the Spirit" are born again, regenerated and indwelt by the Spirit of God. They love the things of Christ. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-2). And Paul says, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3:12). These are just some of the things for which the child of God longs. You and I cannot do these things by effort. It is only as we let the Spirit of God work in our lives that they will appear.²⁵

BKC: 5-8. In these verses Paul answered the implied question, What does it mean to live according to the sinful nature and according to the Spirit? He explained that the former means having their minds set on (*phronousin*, pres. tense, "keep on being mindful of or aspiring for") what that nature desires. An unbeliever cares only for his sinful interests and has no regard for God. The exact opposite is true of those who live according to the Spirit. They aspire for or have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The sinful nature and the indwelling Spirit are in conflict (Gal. 5:17).

But what difference does it make whether a person is mindful of the flesh or of the Spirit? Again Paul explained. The mind (*phronēma*, "mind-set, aspirations"; cf. Rom. 8:6b-7) of sinful man (*tēs sarkos*, "of the flesh") is death, that is, it is equivalent to death, or it leads to death in all its forms (physical and spiritual). On the other hand the mind (*phronēma*, "mind-set, aspirations") controlled by the Spirit (lit., "of the Spirit") is life (eternal resurrection life) and peace immediately (5:1) and ultimately. In 8:7-8 Paul focused only on the sinful mind (*phronēma tēs sarkos*, "mind-set, aspirations of the sin nature"; cf. v. 6) to explain why he said (v. 6) that it ends up in death: (1) It is hostile to God (cf. 5:10); (2) it does not submit (pres. tense, "is not submitting") to God's Law; and (3) it cannot do so. The result is that those controlled by the sinful nature cannot (pres. tense, "are not able to") please God. The unsaved lead lives that are totally void of spiritual life and ability. A believer, then, who gives in to his sin nature is acting like the unsaved (cf. 1 Cor. 3:3).²⁶

Guzik: Set their minds on the things of the flesh: Paul gives an easy way for us to determine if we walk in the Spirit or walk in the flesh – to simply see where our mind is set. The mind is the strategic battleground where the flesh and the Spirit fight.

We shouldn't think those who set their minds on the things of the flesh are only notorious sinners. They may be noble people who have good intentions. Peter meant well when he told Jesus to avoid the cross, but Jesus responded to Peter with these strong words: you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men (Matthew 16:23).²⁷

Live according to the flesh. This parallels language in the Dead Sea Scrolls: "As for me, I belong to wicked mankind, to the company of flesh . . . As for me, if I stumble, the mercies of God shall

²⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁶ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

²⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

be my eternal salvation. If I stagger because of the sin of the flesh, my justification shall be by the righteousness of God which endures forever.”²⁸

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

Missler: The Greek is more blunt: “For the mind of [under the domination of] the flesh, death. The mind [under the domination of] the Spirit, life and peace.” (Genitive case in each) These are both believers: “death” = out of fellowship; separated.²⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verses 6 and 7 are a continuing midrash (discussion, exposition) on the doctrine of Two Masters or Two Spirits that Paul has used constantly throughout his letter. So, he says that the mind controlled by the old nature (the mind that is a slave to the Master of the evil inclination) is death; but the mind controlled by God's spirit (the mind that is a slave to the Master of the good inclination) is life. And this is because our old nature is naturally hostile to God. Our old nature is virtually incapable of cooperating with God. Thus, those who continue to willfully identify with their old nature (that is, those who have not accepted Messiah Yeshua and thus become identified with Him) cannot please God. Again: it is impossible to please Two Masters. We can't please our old nature and at the same time please God. We can't split time with each and we can't compromise between them.

Paul continues to expand his emphasis on the spirit in verse 9. He essentially equates the term Holy Spirit with the term Spirit of Messiah and with the term Spirit of God. In one sense Paul is making all three terms synonymous. But in another sense, he is speaking of the mysterious nature of God, which is unity (the *echad* of God): Father (Spirit of God), Son (Spirit of Messiah), and Holy Spirit.³⁰

McGee: "For to be carnally minded" means that you are separated from fellowship with God and that flesh is death here and now. The Spirit who indwells the believer brings life and peace. When we sin, we are to come to Him in confession and let Him wash us. This restores us to fellowship.

The "life" He offers speaks of full satisfaction and the exercise of one's total abilities. Oh, to live life at its fullest and best! Many people think they are really living today, but it is a shoddy substitute for the life God wants to provide.

"Peace" means the experience of tranquility and well-being regarding the present and future. Oh, my beloved, how you and I need to get into that territory!

There is one thing for sure: if you are living in the flesh, and you are a child of God, you are not having fellowship with God. You can't. The Lord Jesus in the Upper Room said to Simon Peter, "...If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8). Now, my friend, He meant that. He will not fellowship with you or with me if we are committing sin and are continuing to live in the flesh. "Well," somebody says, "what are we to do?" Do what Simon Peter had to do -- he stuck out his feet and let the Lord wash them. And you and I need to go to Him in confession. 1John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins." Who is "we"? We Christians. "He is faithful and

²⁸ First-Century Study Bible Notes

²⁹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

just..." when He does it, because it will take the blood of Christ, my friend. You and I do not know how wicked the old nature is. And we need to go to Him for cleansing.

The English poet, John Donne, using the mythological story of the labors of Hercules -- where that strongman of the ancient world was confronted with the task of cleaning out the Augean stables -- illustrates this important truth. Though Hercules was able to perform the task, Donne shows that man cannot clean the much greater filth of the human heart. He writes:

Lord I confess that Thou alone are able to purify this Augean stable. Be
the seas water, and all the land soap Yet if Thy blood not wash me --
there's no hope.

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, keeps on cleansing us from all sin (see 1John 1:7). This old nature is totally depraved. God has no plan to redeem it. He gives us a new nature. And you and I can't live for God in that old nature. If you continue to live in that old nature, you must not be a child of God. Somebody says, "Then if a child of God sins, what's the difference between him and the lost man?" The difference is simply this: when the lost man goes out at night and paints the town red, he comes back and says, "I'll get a bigger brush and a bigger bucket of paint next time; wow, I want to live it up!" While the child of God, if he does a thing like that, will cry out to God, "Oh, God, I hate myself for what I've done!" And this idea today that you can somehow train your old nature, and live in it, is false. That's the thing that leads to legalism. Legalists -- well, I call them Priscilla Goodbodies and Goody-goody-gumdrops, those sweet lovely people who are trying to control the flesh -- they are so pious! I want to tell you, they are the worst gossips you have ever met.

Dr. Newell has put down some very interesting statements which I would like to pass on to you. "To hope to do better is to fail to see yourself in Christ only." You say, "I hope to do better." You know you're not. You need to see yourself in Christ today and realize that only the Spirit of God moving through you can accomplish this. And then Newell says again, "To be disappointed with yourself means you believed in yourself." Somebody says, "Oh, I'm so disappointed in myself." Well, you had better be disappointed in yourself. You know no good thing is going to come out of the flesh, friend. Stop believing in yourself and believe that the Spirit of God today can enable you through the new nature to live for God. Also, Newell says, "To be discouraged is unbelief." Somebody says, "Oh, I'm so discouraged." My friend, that means you don't believe God. God has a purpose and a plan, a blessing for you. And you need to lay hold of it. Here is another statement: "To be proud is to be blind." We have no standing before God in ourselves. Oh, my friend, see yourself as God sees you. Here is the final gem: "The lack of divine blessing comes from unbelief, not a failure of devotion." I am so sick and weary of these super-duper pious, "dedicated" Christians who talk about their devotion. My friend, the lack of divine blessing comes because we do not believe God. It is not because of a lack of devotion. Oh, to believe God today! Now, real devotion arises not from man's will to show it, but from the discovery that blessing has been received from God while we were yet unworthy and undevoted. Nothing I get from God has come through my devotion. I haven't anything to offer Him. It comes because of His marvelous grace. And I've seen these folk who preach "devotion" troop down to dedicate their lives in services. I got so sick and tired of seeing that same crowd come down -- and you could not trust them, my friend. They were liars. They were dishonest. They were gossips, and they would crucify you. May I say to you, you do not need to dedicate yourself. What you need today is to believe God can do something and you can't do anything. Now,

somebody says, "That's pretty strong." I hope that it is. I intend for it to be that way, because Paul is making it very clear here. The carnal mind is enmity against God.³¹

Guzik: For to be carnally minded is death: When our minds are set on the things of the flesh (carnally minded) we bring death into our lives. But walking in the Spirit brings life and peace.

We must, however, guard against a false spirituality and see that Paul means the flesh insofar as it is an instrument in our rebellion against God. Paul is not talking about normal physical and emotional needs we may think about, only the sinful gratification of those needs.

ESV: To set the mind on the flesh means to think continually about and constantly desire the things characteristic of fallen, sinful human nature, that is, to think just the way the unbelieving world thinks, emphasizing what it thinks important, pursuing what it pursues, in disregard of God's will.³²

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

Missler: Romans 7 again. The things I hate I keep doing...The flesh will never be improved. We are powerless to change our nature; therefore, we cannot—in our own efforts—really please God. He alone is the source of power for holiness.³³

McGee: This verse reveals how hopelessly incorrigible and utterly destitute the flesh really is. It is a spiritual anarchist. This demolishes any theory that there is a divine spark in man and that somehow, he has a secret bent toward God. The truth is that man is the enemy of God. He is not only dead in trespasses and sins but active in rebellion against God. Man will even become religious in order to stay away from the living and true God and the person of Jesus Christ. Man in his natural condition, if taken to heaven, would start a revolution, and he would have a protest meeting going on before the sun went down! Jacob, in his natural condition, engaged in a wrestling match. He did not seek it, but he fought back when God wrestled with him. It wasn't until he yielded that he won, my friend.

Anything that the flesh produces is not acceptable to God. The so-called good work, the civilization, the culture, and man's vaunted progress are all a stench in the nostrils of God. The religious works of church people done in the lukewarmness of the flesh make Christ sick to His stomach (see Rev. 3:15-16).

I wonder if we are willing to accept God's estimation of our human boasting. This is a terrible picture of man; but it is accurate. Yet there is deliverance in the Spirit of God. Are you willing, my friend, to turn it over to the Holy Spirit and quit trusting that weak, sinful nature that you have? That is the question.³⁴

Guzik: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: The flesh battles against God because it does not want to be crucified and surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ. It does not want to live

³¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

³² ESV Study Bible Notes

³³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

out Galatians 5:24: those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. In this battle to tame the flesh, the law is powerless.

Paul didn't say that the carnal mind was at enmity with God – he put it even stronger than that. The carnal mind is enmity against God. “It is not black, but blackness; it is not at enmity, but enmity itself; it is not corrupt, but corruption; it is not rebellious, it is rebellion; it is not wicked, it is wickedness itself. The heart, though it be deceitful, is positively deceit; it is evil in the concrete, sin in the essence, it is the distillation, the quintessence of all things that are vile; it is not envious against God, it is envy; it is not at enmity, it is actual enmity.” (Spurgeon)

It is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be: We can try to do good in life without being subject to the law of God. We may hope to put God “in debt” to us by good works, thinking God owes us. But it doesn't work. In the flesh we cannot please God, even if the flesh does religious things that are admired by men.

Newell on Romans 8:7: “Perhaps no one text of Scripture more completely sets forth the hideously lost state of man after the flesh.”³⁵

ESV: Those who are in the flesh behave as sons and daughters of sinful Adam and are hostile to God. They do not keep God's law, and indeed they are unable to keep it because they are slaves to sin (6:6, 17, 19-20).³⁶

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

Missler: “In the flesh” under the dominion of the flesh; an unbeliever.
[vs. According to]: a lapse in a believer.³⁷

⁹But 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.

Missler: “But” = However...

“in” = under dominion of...

“Spirit of Christ” = Holy Spirit, whose mission is to reveal Christ; (John 16:13, 14. et al).

[Cf. Isa 11:1, 2; Rev 1:4; 3:1, et al = the Seven-fold Spirit of God.]

Every believer has the Holy Spirit. But is He in control of your life? Do you have the Spirit of Christ in you? Are you in the power of His presence? Do you take advantage of it?³⁸

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Whereas Paul has been speaking in a duality to Israel in general and to Believers in specific (at the least since Romans chapter 7), in verse 9 he is addressing only Believers because only Believers actually have the Spirit of God living in us. And he is also laying down a doctrine: if we don't have the Spirit in us, then we don't identify with Messiah. And if we don't identify with Messiah, then the only alternative is that we identify with our old sinful nature. There is no in-

³⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

³⁶ ESV Study Bible Notes

³⁷ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁸ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

between. I don't wish to create a theological debate (but I probably will). Some Believers think that the New Testament envisions a process whereby first we are baptized into an identity with Christ and then sometime later we are baptized into the Holy Spirit. Essentially this means that we first identify with Messiah (that is we first come to believe in Yeshua), and then later at some point, if we believe correctly, the Holy Spirit will indwell us. If I am interpreting correctly what Paul seems to clearly say here in Romans 8:9, then such a thing cannot be accurate. Paul says that if you have the Holy Spirit you are identified with Christ; and if you have identified with Christ you have the Holy Spirit. So, to me this destroys any thought that a new Believer can, for a time, be "saved" (identified with Christ) but has not yet received the Holy Spirit. This is because Paul sets up the dynamic that the one validates the other. Or to put it negatively: you can't have one without the other. In other words, it operates like sin and death. Sin and death come as a fused pair; you can't have one without the other. So, it is that identity with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit come as a fused pair; you can't have one without the other.³⁹

McGee: This first "if" is not casting a doubt over the Roman believers' salvation. They are saved. Let me give you a literal translation: "But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit since the Spirit of God really dwells in you." That is the real test. But if anyone has "not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The true mark of a born-again believer and a genuine Christian is that he is indwelt by the Spirit of God. Even Paul could say to the carnal Corinthians: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1Cor. 6:19). When Paul went to Ephesus the first time, he missed something; he missed the distinguishing mark of the believer. So he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They didn't even know what he was talking about. So he asked them, "...Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism" (Acts 19:3). Well, John's baptism was unto repentance; it was not to faith in Jesus Christ. So he preached Christ to them. Then they received Him and were baptized in His name (see Acts 19:5). A believer is a new creation. Do you love Him? Do you want to serve Him? Are these things uppermost in your mind and heart? Or are you in rebellion against God?⁴⁰

BKC: 9-11. After speaking objectively about the two types of persons, Paul now addressed his readers directly. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit (lit., "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit"), if (*eiper*, "if, as is the fact"; cf. v. 17) the Spirit of God lives (pres. tense, "is dwelling") in you (cf. v. 11). The indwelling Holy Spirit gives a believer a totally different life (2 Cor. 5:17). The opposite, however, is also true: If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ (lit., "this one is not of Him"). Since only the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life, a person cannot be related to Christ apart from the Spirit. The interchange of the titles "Spirit of God" and "Spirit of Christ" argues for the deity of Jesus Christ. This statement also makes it clear that the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is the identifying mark of a believer in Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 3:24; 4:13). Another significant fact is that Romans 8:10 equates the indwelling presence of Christ (Christ is in you) with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (vv. 9, 11). This adds further support to the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. Verse 10, like verses 9b and 11, is a conditional statement in which in Greek the condition is assumed to be true; it can be understood as "since" or "because." As a result of Christ's indwelling presence, your body is dead (or, "subject to death"; cf. 7:24) because of sin,

³⁹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁴⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. Because of God's imputed righteousness, a believer is alive spiritually. The eternal, spiritual life of God is implanted by the indwelling Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ here and now, even though a believer's body is mortal.

Then Paul wrote about an even better promise (8:11). Since God raised Jesus from the dead (lit., "out from dead ones"; cf. 4:24; 6:4), God promises believers in whom His Spirit... is living (cf. 8:9) that He will also give life to their mortal bodies through His Spirit. In other words, God promises spiritual resurrection life now (6:4, 8, 11) for each believer's mortal body and physical resurrection in the future for that mortal body (6:5; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:42, 53; 2 Cor. 4:14).⁴¹

Guzik: But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you: Because the Holy Spirit is given to each believer when they are born again, every Christian has within themselves a principle higher and more powerful than the flesh.

"Many sincere people are yet spiritually under John the Baptist's ministry of repentance. Their state is practically that of the struggle of Romans Seven, where neither Christ nor the Holy Spirit is mentioned, but only a quickened but undelivered soul in struggle under a sense of 'duty,' not a sense of full acceptance in Christ and sealing by the Holy Spirit." (Newell)

Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His: This means every believer has the Holy Spirit. It is a misnomer to divide Christians among the "Spirit-filled" and the "non-Spirit-filled." If a person is not filled with the Holy Spirit, they are not a Christian at all.

However, many do miss out on living the Christian life in the constant fullness of the Spirit because they are not constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit as Paul commanded in Ephesians 5:18. They have no experience of what Jesus spoke about when He described rivers of living water flowing from the believer (John 7:37-39).

- How does one know that they have the Spirit? Ask these questions:
- Has the Spirit led you to Jesus?
- Has the Spirit put in you the desire to honor Jesus?
- Is the Spirit leading you to be more like Jesus?
- Is the Spirit at work in your heart?⁴²

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

Missler: Cf. Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

[“destroyed” = “rendered powerless.”]

“Righteousness” = whose? His!⁴³

McGee: In other words: Now if Christ *be* in you, the body indeed is dead on account of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. He is saying here that you and I are in Christ, and since we are in Him, when He died, we died. And we are to reckon on this, as we have already been told. Also we are to yield, that is, present our bodies to Him. Don't say you can't do this -- that is not the language of a believer. Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I

⁴¹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁴² https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁴³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

If you today are not conscious of the presence of the Spirit of God in your life and if you do not have a desire to serve God, then it would be well to do as Paul suggests, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2Cor. 13:5). The Lord wants us to know that we are in Christ. "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

If you are not sure that Christ is in you, He extends this invitation: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). Is your door open? Has He come into you? My friend, the body has been put in the place of death. This is something the child of God should reckon on. And he should turn over his life to the Spirit of God, saying very definitely, "I cannot do it, Lord, but You can do it through me."⁴⁴

Guzik: And if the Spirit of Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin: Because Jesus lives in us, the old man (body) is dead, but the Spirit lives and reigns, and will live out His salvation even through our mortal bodies through resurrection.

Not only are we in Christ (Romans 8:1), but He also is in you, and because God cannot abide a sinful home, the body (old man) had to die when Jesus came in.⁴⁵

ESV: The previous verse speaks of the Spirit's indwelling, but here Paul describes Christ's dwelling in Christians. This does not mean that there is no difference between Christ and the Spirit (which is the ancient heresy of modalism), but it does suggest that Christ and the Spirit are both fully God, and work cooperatively. Since the bodies of Christians are not yet redeemed, they still die, even though they are freed from the condemnation of sin. Yet the presence of the Spirit within believers testifies to the new life they enjoy because of the righteousness of Christ that is now theirs.⁴⁶

¹¹But 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.

Missler: The Holy Spirit is the One who raised Jesus from the dead: Paul reminds us that we, too, need a resurrection life! And he is speaking operationally, right now... Answers Rom 7:24: Paul, ostensibly blameless before the law (Phil 3:6) exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"⁴⁷

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Let's move to verse 11 because I think Paul says something quite plainly that for some reason some Believers (or at least some denominations) have a hard time with. There is a belief among

⁴⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁴⁶ ESV Study Bible Notes

⁴⁷ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

some versions of the Trinity doctrine that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are co-equal. That is, one has no authority or pre-eminence over the other. There is no hierarchy. However I find that mindset is the result of the desire of the New Testament Church to shove God the Father to background in order to pull God the Son to the fore. Or to allow God the Father to remain the God of the Jews, but to make God the Son to become the God of Christians. So the solution is to simply make Father, Son and Holy Spirit co-equal if not virtually identical. Yet in verse 11, according to Paul, there was a specific one of these 3 identified and named Spirits that raised Yeshua from the dead (that is, the Spirit of Yeshua didn't raise Yeshua, it was a different spirit). And it is this same Spirit (the same one who resurrected Messiah) that lives in us as Believers. But the last half of verse 11 causes controversy. What does Paul mean that the same spirit that raised Yeshua from the dead will give life to our mortal bodies? Calvin says this is speaking of life in the sense of an ethical renewal of our bodies. David Stern says it is life in the sense of the Holy Spirit giving Believers hope. I find these both to be a reach. Rather in its plainest textual sense, since the topic is who or what raised Yeshua from the dead, then it is comparing our mortal bodies to Christ's mortal body that died. And just as it is the work of a certain Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, so it will be the work of the same Spirit that will raise us from the dead (resurrection). So Paul is speaking of a future time at the End of Days. And, by the way, the Believers of Paul's day thought that the End of Days was imminent; not hundreds or thousands of years into the future.⁴⁸

McGee: These bodies that you and I have will be put in the grave one of these days, if the Lord tarries. However, the indwelling Holy Spirit is our assurance that our bodies will be raised from the dead (2Cor. 5:1-4). Because Christ was raised from the dead, we shall be raised from the dead. The Holy Spirit will deliver us from the "body of his death" -- this old nature.⁴⁹

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

Missler: We owe nothing to the flesh. We are not its debtors to do its service. Not since victory is guaranteed in Christ. 1 Cor 10:13.⁵⁰

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 12 presents us with another point of summation for Paul. All that he has said in the first 11 verses of chapter 8 leads him to conclude what he states in verses 12 and 13. He introduces that summation by saying, "So then, brothers". And what he does is actually to speak of our relationship to our old nature in terms of debt. That is, we don't owe any kind of a debt to our old nature that would force us to keep giving it our allegiance and labors. On the contrary: by switching our allegiance to the Spirit then we are essentially killing our old nature who still thinks we owe it something. We should take this as but a rough illustration in the same way as Paul used the illustration of the widow remarrying in Romans chapter 7.⁵¹

⁴⁸ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁴⁹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁵¹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

McGee: In other words, we are not to live according to the flesh. God created man body, mind, and spirit. When man sinned, his spirit died to God. Remember that God warned, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). After Adam ate of the fruit, he lived several hundred years -- physically; but spiritually he died immediately. Man was turned upside down. The body, the old nature, the flesh became dominant. Today man is dead spiritually. Regeneration means that you are turned right side up, that you are born again spiritually, and that you have a nature which wants to serve God.

Oh, my friend, to stay close to Christ is the important thing. You can be active in Christian work, as active as a termite, yet Christ can be in outer space as far as you are concerned. The natural man says he owes it to his flesh to satisfy it. He may rationalize his dishonesty by saying, "A man has to eat." A movie star has said, "I live for sex, and I have to have my needs met." We hear this today on every hand. Satisfying the old nature has plunged our nation into the grossest immorality! But God says that we as believers are not debtors to the flesh. My friend, the flesh -- and we all have it -- is a low-down, dirty rascal. And we don't owe it anything.⁵²

BKC: 12-14. Paul drew a conclusion and made an application from his previous discussion. Therefore... we have an obligation. Each believer's responsibility is a positive one—to live each day in the control and power of the Holy Spirit. But first Paul expressed this truth negatively—not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. Each Christian is to refuse to follow the inclinations and desires of his sin nature. He is to deny the efforts of that nature to impose its lifestyle on him (cf. Titus 2:12). The reason is that a sinful manner of life results in death. This does not suggest that a believer who sins will face eternal death in hell; instead, it means he will not enjoy his spiritual life. He will seem like an unsaved person (1 Cor. 3:1-4) and will be unable to enjoy the indwelling presence of the Spirit. You will die is literally, "you are about to die," or "you are at the point of dying."

On the other hand, if by the Spirit you put to death (pres. tense, "are putting to death") the misdeeds of the body, you will live. A few Greek manuscripts have "flesh" instead of "body." But the body is the vehicle by which one's sin-nature expresses itself (cf. Rom. 6:6, 13). Only by the Holy Spirit's power can a believer put to death the sins of his former life (cf. Eph. 4:22-31; Col. 3:5-9). This is what Paul referred to when he said "count yourselves dead to sin" (Rom. 6:11).

Paul then continued his explanation. Those who are led (pres. tense, "are being led") by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Many Bible students see no difference between the word translated "sons" in 8:14 and the word translated "children" in verse 16. However, in verse 16 the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence attests the believer's birth relationship to God (*tekna*, "children," is lit., "born ones"). But in verse 14 the Holy Spirit's control and direction attests the believer's privileges in God's family as a "son" (*huios* means a child mature enough to take on adult family privileges and responsibilities). A son in God's family is led by God's Spirit.⁵³

Guzik: We are debtors – to the flesh, to live according to the flesh: The flesh (again, in the narrow sense of sinful flesh in rebellion against God) gave us nothing good. So we have no obligation to oblige or pamper it. Our debt is to the Lord, not to the flesh.⁵⁴

⁵² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵³ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁵⁴ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

¹³For 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.

Missler: Summary of 6, 7 and 8 (so far)

If you keep on living after the flesh ye shall [keep on] dying.
“Die” is in the present tense! (E.g. operational death; separation from fellowship...)
“Deeds” = praxis, something that it’s a deeply ingrained habit.
Re: The commands of Rom 6:12, 13. Empowered by the Spirit.
Mortify: Active voice: requires volition on our part.⁵⁵

McGee: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die" -- die to God. That is, you have no fellowship with Him. I am not talking about a theory; if you are a child of God, you know this from experience. If you are a child of God and you have unconfessed sin in your life, do you want to go to church? Do you want to read your Bible? Do you want to pray? Of course, you don't. You are separated from God.

"But if ye through the Spirit" -- you can't do it yourself -- "do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Let's be practical now. What is your problem today? Liquor? Drugs? Sex? You may say, "I don't have those problems!" Then how about your thought-life? How about your tongue? Do you gossip? Do you tell the truth? Whatever your problem is, why don't you confess it to God, then turn it over to the Holy Spirit? My friend, if you deal with it in reality, you won't need to crawl up on the psychiatrist's couch. He won't help you. He can shift your guilt complex to another area, but he can't get rid of it. Only Christ can remove it; He is in that business. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will rest you" so that you will know what it is to have sins forgiven (see Matt. 11:28).⁵⁶

Guzik: For if you live according to the flesh you will die: Paul constantly reminds us that living after the flesh ends in death. We need the reminder because we are often deceived into thinking that the flesh offers us life.

By the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body: When we put to death the deeds of the body (force the sinful flesh to submit to the Spirit), we must do it by the Spirit. Otherwise we will become like the Pharisees and spiritually proud.

Paul tells us that not only are we saved by the work of the Spirit, but we also must walk by the Spirit if we want to grow and pursue holiness in the Lord. We cannot be like some among the Galatians who thought they could begin in the Spirit but then find spiritual perfection through the flesh (Galatians 3:3).⁵⁷

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

Missler: Realization of Sonship

Present tense: continually. Passive voice: subject receives the action.
“Son:” *huios*, adult son. [Prodigal Son: never lost his sonship...Luke 15]⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁵⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁵⁸ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 14 says that a Believer is God's son because anyone led by God's Spirit is a son to Him. This is a Jewish expression that reflects a universally understood Jewish cultural concept of the value of a son over a servant. Although several Bible characters will be called servants of God (a high status), those called sons of God are even higher. Thus, while priests were called servants of God (a high status), Israel's kings were called sons of God (a higher status). Prophets were called servants of God; but Yeshua is called the Son of God. Thus, the typical Levitical priests, although indeed, properly serving God, do not have God's spirit in them so they can only be called servants. But any Believer is elevated above Levitical priests because we have God's spirit in us, so we are sons of God. And ladies, don't let this bother you. The issue is not a gender issue (son versus daughter). The issue is a status issue. From a status issue you gain the status as sons of God just as does a male if you trust Yeshua.⁵⁹

McGee: That makes sense, doesn't it? God does not drive His sheep; He leads them. When our Lord told of the safety and security of the sheep, He made it clear that they were not forced into the will of His hand and that of the Father. He said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them [and I drive them out! Oh, no] and they follow me" (John 10:27). They are the ones who are safe and secure; they follow Him. They are led by the Spirit of God. They hear His voice because they have a new nature, and they follow Him.

I have been preaching the Word of God for a long time. I have found that those who are His sheep will hear His voice. The others -- they hated me and wanted to get rid of me. Why? They were not His sheep. The Lord Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). A young pastor came to me and said, "I'm having all kinds of trouble!" I asked, "Who is giving you trouble?" He said, "My church officers and my Sunday school teachers." So I asked him what he had been doing. He said, "Well, I've been preaching the Bible, following your Thru the Bible method." I said to him, "Well, thank God. You will find that a lot of your folk are not really His sheep." Friend, His sheep will follow Him -- they have to because they are His, you see. That's what Paul is saying here.⁶⁰

Guzik: These are the sons of God: It is only fitting that the sons of God should be led by the Spirit of God. However, we should not think that being led by the Spirit is a pre-condition to being a son of God. Instead, we become sons first and then the Spirit of God leads us.
i. Paul didn't say, "As many as go to church, these are the sons of God." He didn't say, "As many as read their Bibles, these are the sons of God." He didn't say, "As many as are patriotic Americans, these are the sons of God." He didn't say, "As many as take communion, these are the sons of God." In this text, the test for sonship is whether or not a person is led by the Spirit of God.

How does the Holy Spirit lead us?

- We are led by guidance
- We are led by drawing
- We are led by governing authority
- We are led as we cooperate with the leading. "It does not say, 'As many as are driven

⁵⁹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁶⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

by the Spirit of God.’ No, the devil is a driver, and when he enters either into men or into hogs he drives them furiously. Remember how the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea.

Whenever you see a man fanatical and wild, whatever spirit is in him it is not the Spirit of Christ.” (Spurgeon)

Where does the Holy Spirit lead us?

- He leads us to repentance
- He leads us to think little of self and much of Jesus
- He leads us into truth
- He leads us into love
- He leads us into holiness
- He leads us into usefulness⁶¹

Children of God. This was an extremely important concept for Paul’s Gentile audience. Paul was making a case that in Christ the exclusive nature of Torah observance and blood descent over and against the non-observant Gentile has been overcome. The Christ-following Gentile is a full daughter or son of God without the need to become Jewish or to practice full Torah observance (such as circumcision). This does not imply that the people of Israel, the natural children, have been replaced (see Ro 9–11). Paul was proclaiming the fulfillment of the eschatological vision of the prophets that one day humanity would realize there is only one God and one people (see note on Ro 3:29–30).⁶²

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

Missler: In Roman law, adoption was required, even of a legitimate son, to inherit. This ceremony, legally held in the forum, was called the “Adoption.” All born in his family were children. Only those adopted were recognized as sons. After adoption, they could never be disowned.

[Cf. Lew Wallace, Ben Hur: the Roman admiral adopted Judah Ben Hur as his legal son...]
[But they can be disinherited. We will be taking this up in Chapter 9 and following.]⁶³

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Next Paul explains that it is not a spirit of slavery that we get from God when He puts His spirit into us, but rather it is essentially a spirit of adoption that we gain. The notion here is that the character of God’s indwelling spirit is not one of coercion that works by putting a Believer into a state of fear as it would be for a slave. That is, the reason that a slave is loyal to his master and does the master’s bidding is because the master could severely harm him or kill him if he didn’t. The slave has few rights and no choice, so it is the fear of his Master that compels his loyalty. Instead, says Paul, the character of God’s indwelling spirit operates more the way an adopted son does towards his father; he operates out of love and gratitude, and not out of fear. The son obeys his father not from a fear of bad repercussions if he doesn’t; but rather from a

⁶¹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁶² First-Century Study Bible Notes

⁶³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

motive of sincere desire to reciprocate the love his father shows him by pleasing his father. This is reason that Paul employs the term Abba. Abba means father, but it is a term of endearment and affection.⁶⁴

McGee: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear" -- there is not the spirit of fear within you, wondering about your spiritual condition, unhappy, and despondent. Instead, you are filled with joy because you are His child. And the Spirit of God wells up within you, saying, "Abba, Father."

The word Abba is an untranslated Aramaic word. The translators of the first English Bibles, who had great reverence for the Word of God, who believed it was indeed the Word of God, would not translate it. Abba is a very personal word that could be translated "My Daddy." We don't use this word in reference to God because of the danger of becoming overly familiar with Him. But it expresses a heartcry, especially in times of trouble.⁶⁵

BKC: 15-17. In contrast with the control of sin, which enslaves to the point of fear, believers have received the Spirit of sonship. The word translated "sonship" (*huiiothesias*) means "placing as a son" and is frequently translated "adoption" (as in, e.g., v. 23). Believers are adopted sons (Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5), not slaves (Gal. 4:7); so they need not be enslaved to sin or in fear. In New Testament times adopted sons enjoyed the same privileges as natural-born sons. So, instead of cowering in slave-like fear, Christians can approach God in an intimate way calling Him Abba, Father. "Abba" is a Greek and English transliteration of the Aramaic word for father (used elsewhere in the NT only in Mark 14:36; Gal. 4:6). Besides being adopted into God's family as sons, believers also are His children (*tekna*, "born ones") by the new birth (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1-2). And the Holy Spirit, who gives believers life, testifies with (not to) their spirit(s) of the fact of the new birth.

In many family's children inherit their parents' estates; each child is an heir and the children together are co-heirs. Similarly, since Christians are God's children, they are His heirs (cf. Gal. 4:7), and they are co-heirs with Christ. They are recipients of all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3) now, and in the future they will share with the Lord Jesus in all the riches of God's kingdom (John 17:24; 1 Cor. 3:21-23). Sharing with Jesus Christ, however, involves more than anticipating the glories of heaven. For Jesus Christ it involved suffering and abuse and crucifixion; therefore being co-heirs with Christ requires that believers share in His sufferings (cf. John 15:20; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12). In fact believers do share in His sufferings; if indeed translates *eiper*, which means "if, as is the fact" (cf. Rom. 8:9). Then after the suffering they will share in His glory (2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Peter 4:13; 5:10).⁶⁶

Guzik: For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption: Living as a child of God means an intimate, joyful relationship with God, not like the bondage and fear demonstrated by the law. A child of God can have a relationship with God so close that they may cry out, Abba, Father! (Daddy!)

We cry out, "Abba, Father." It is easy for us to think of Jesus relating to the Father with this joyful confidence, but we may think we are disqualified for it. However, remember that we are in Christ – we have the privilege of relating to the Father even as Jesus Christ does.

⁶⁴ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁶⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁶⁶ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

“In the Roman world of the first century an adopted son was a son deliberately chosen by his adoptive father to perpetuate his name and inherit his estate; he was no whit inferior in status to a son born in the ordinary course of nature.” (Bruce)

ii. Under Roman adoption, the life and standing of the adopted child changed completely. The adopted son lost all rights in his old family and gained all new rights in his new family; the old life of the adopted son was completely wiped out, with all debts being canceled, with nothing from his past counting against him anymore.⁶⁷

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

Missler: “Itself”: The Greek requires a neuter because the word Spirit, *pneuma*, is a neuter noun. In English, it is correct to use the personal pronoun, He. He communes with our spirits; He illumines, instructs, and guides...

“Children:” *teknon*, born one.⁶⁸

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

In verses 16 and 17 the other status benefit of being a son instead of servant to God is brought to bear. A son inherits from his father; a servant does not. So, since God's spirit bears witness that Believers (those who have His spirit in them) are His sons, then there can be no doubt. In the biblical sense a witness is someone who attests or confirms the truth of a statement. Biblically (and in Tradition) usually takes two witness to confirm. So here we have our own spirits and God's Spirit as the two witnesses. Therefore, the proof of our being God's children means we have the right be heirs. Heirs to what? To the Kingdom of God. Yeshua was the first heir, and those who trust Him are now fellow heirs with Him.

I love the way that C.E.B. Cranfield speaks of the next several verses beginning with 17: ".....the subject with which this subsection is concerned (is) Christian hope. The life which is characterized by the Spirit of God, which is a life in which God's Law is established, is a life characterized by hope".

A Believer must have God's Law (which is of the same substance and principles as the Law of Moses) established within him. This happens by an act of God: the indwelling of the spirit. It is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 31:30-33 CJB 30 "Here, the days are coming," says ADONAI, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah. 31 It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says ADONAI. 32 "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says ADONAI: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people. 33 No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, 'Know ADONAI'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more."

Since Yeshua has put an end to the death sentence of the Law for His worshippers, all that

⁶⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁶⁸ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

remains is the Laws themselves....for worshippers. But my brothers and sister, if we should think to ourselves: if there is no eternal death sentence for disobedience, why would I, as a Believer, obey The Laws of God? That my friends is the attitude of a servant; that is the question a slave of the evil inclination would ask. For as Paul rightly says, a slave must be mastered through fear. However, since the spirit of God indwells the Believer, and the spirit of God has written God's Law on the hearts (minds) of His worshippers; and since His worshippers have, by grace, been elevated to the lofty status of sons of God, we have the right to call God Abba (Father). Therefore, the Believer's following of God's Law comes not from fear of consequences if we don't (the death sentence, which Yeshua has already borne for Believers) but rather from our love of Our Father and the desire to please Him.⁶⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Last week in Romans chapter 8 we concluded by discussing the status of Believers before God during our lifetimes. We also discussed that Yeshua (as recorded in Matthew 5) explained how He will determine our status in the future during His reign over the Millennial Kingdom. That is, what will be our position in the Kingdom of Heaven, on earth, once it has been fully realized and what are the criteria for determining that status? Christ defined it in terms of our assignment to one of two basic groups that He labeled as the greatest and the least. If one strove to obey The Law of Moses and taught others to do so, you would be made part of the group called "the greatest". If one determined not to obey the Law of Moses and taught others that The Law is irrelevant to them, then you would be assigned to the group called "the least". But since that is for the future, after Christ returns, what determines your status before God in the here and now? I'm not speaking of saved versus not-saved but rather of our status before God as Believers. And while this is not nearly as cut and dried as Yeshua explained it regarding future times, it is clear that as a worshipper of Yeshua we can harbor one of two possible attitudes, and therefore have one of two possible relationships before God during our lifetimes: one in which we are seen as a servant, or the other in which we are seen as a son. Each of these are a good status; but, just as with Yeshua's definition of status in His Millennial Kingdom in Matthew 5, so we see a hierarchy of a lesser and a greater status for Believers in the here and now.

In the world of the 1st century A.D., and especially within Judaism, there was a distinct understanding of the inherent advantages of a son over a servant. A servant was essentially a slave, and a slave usually obeyed out of fear of his master. On the other hand, a son was family; he loved his father, his father loved him, so the son wanted to please his father and obeyed out of love and gratitude. However biblically and within Judaism, there was a class of people called servants of God and another class called sons of God. Both a servant of God and a son of God were of high and preferred status. Nonetheless a servant of God was a lower status than a son of God thus the attendant privileges were different. The pattern for the difference between the two classes was established, and can be demonstrated, with the pattern of the Levites.

The Levites were set apart from the other tribes of Israel at Mt. Sinai to be servants for God; they were God's designated priests. And interestingly we find out that there could be no land inheritance for Levite Priests (for God's servants). In fact, from Mt. Sinai onward they were not to be considered as part of Israel in the sense of having the same advantages and rights that all the other tribes of Jacob held; the most important advantage the Levites lost in the bargain was the right of inheritance.

⁶⁹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

CJB Deuteronomy 18:1 The *cohanim*, who are *L'vi'im*, and indeed the whole tribe of Levi, is not to have a share or an inheritance with Isra'el. Instead, their support will come from the food offered by fire to ADONAI and from whatever else becomes his. 2 They will have no inheritance with their brothers, because ADONAI is their inheritance....

Thus, the servants of God, the Levite Priests, would receive only a spiritual inheritance and not an earthly inheritance. However, in Israelite culture, among all tribes other than Levi, the sons of a father had inheritance rights, with the firstborn receiving an extra allotment. So, following the pattern, sons of God will receive both heavenly AND earthly benefits because they are legal heirs. Servants have no legal rights to land and property and so will get primarily heavenly benefits. If you had a choice, which would you rather be, before God? A servant or a son? Interestingly Paul explains that the advent of Yeshua has given us all a choice. Romans 8:14 says: CJB Romans 8:14 All who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons. So, since all Believers are given God's Holy Spirit upon their trust in Yeshua, why then aren't we all given the status as God's sons? First, I want to say that essentially, from a spiritual perspective, son status is available for the taking. But as Believers we have to trust God that we actually are sons and respond accordingly. Otherwise if we do not apprehend our position as sons then we will be seen as servants due to our lack of faith. The key words in this verse are "led by". We must be led by God's Spirit; not just HAVE God's Spirit.

Paul has spent the last few paragraphs explaining the frustrating conundrum that Believers face: we live with both God's Spirit and the spirit of an evil inclination living side-by-side within us, so we find ourselves constantly pulled in opposite directions. That is, at times we disobey God and sin even though we know better; even though God's Spirit is dwelling within us and we have The Law written on our hearts. Thus, as Believers we have the challenge of more or less retraining ourselves. We must learn to be led by God's Spirit rather than to be led by the spirit of our evil inclination; the spirit of our former Master. Such a thing is an ongoing process that requires determination and perseverance. Thus just as it is obvious that any clear thinking Believer ought to strive to be greatest rather than least in the Kingdom of Heaven (even though either way we will be members of the Kingdom of Heaven in good standing), we also ought to strive to be sons of God rather than servants of God (even though both are good things, and both indicate that we are redeemed).

The irony is that we ought not to strive for the higher statuses ("son" and "greatest") purely because it benefits us. Rather the benefit should come as a natural outcome of wanting to please God by obeying Him. Seeking a greater status is the wrong motive for obedience. Frankly, we rather taint the outcome if our main purpose for striving to obey God is what we get for ourselves in return. Such a wrong attitude is at the heart of what propels the Prosperity Doctrine of our day.

Thus, concludes Paul, since because of Christ there is no condemnation (no death sentence) for those who trust Messiah Yeshua, then we should set fear on the shelf; we should not take on the attitude of a servant who obeys his Master out of fear. Rather we should take on the attitude of a son who obeys his Master out of love.⁷⁰

McGee: I found this true the first time I went to the hospital for cancer surgery. I turned my face to the wall, like old Hezekiah did, and said, "Lord, I've been in this hospital many times. I've patted the hands of folk and had prayer with them, and told them, 'Oh, you trust the Lord; He will see you through.' Lord, I have told them that, but this is the first time I've been in here. Now I want to know whether it is true or not. I want You to make it real to me. If You are my Father, I

⁷⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

want to know it. And, my friend, He made it real. At a time like that the Spirit of God cries out, "Abba, Father" -- it just wells up within you. How sweet it is to trust Him, turn yourself over to Him.⁷¹

BKC: In one sense this verse is the conclusion of the preceding paragraph in which believers are assured of being heirs of Christ's coming glory. However, Paul reminded his readers that sharing in the glory of Christ in the future required sharing "in His sufferings" in this life. But after careful figuring (*Logizomai*, I consider) Paul concluded that our present sufferings are far outweighed by the glory that will be revealed in (as well as to and through) us. This future glory is so great that present sufferings are insignificant by comparison. Also, the glory is forever, whereas the suffering is temporary and light (2 Cor. 4:17). Certainly, this truth can help believers endure afflictions. Romans 8:18 also serves as a topic sentence for the following discussion on the relationship between believers and the whole Creation, both in their afflictions and in their future glory.⁷²

Guzik: The Spirit Himself bears witness to our spirit that we are children of God: Plainly put, Paul says that those who are God's children, born again by the Spirit of God, know their status because the Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that this is so.

This is not to say that there are not those who wrongly think or assume they are God's children apart from the Spirit's testimony. There are also Christians whose heads are so foggy from spiritual attack that they begin to believe the lie that they are not God's children after all. Nevertheless, the witness of the Spirit is still there.

We are children of God: We don't have to wonder if we are really Christians or not. God's children know who they are.

Jewish law stated that at the mouth of two or three witnesses everything had to be established (Deuteronomy 17:6). There are two witnesses to our salvation: our own witness and the witness of the Spirit.

17And 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.

Missler: You and I cannot begin to imagine what this really means. Compare that to your wildest dreams on this earth...!!!

1 Cor 2:9 "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Romans 8:17b-27 will contrast our present state with the coming glory...
"...if so be that we suffer with Him." There are conditions to our specific destiny that will be taken up when we explore inheritance, (in contrast to salvation alone).

"If" = Greek: Conditional Classes:

1 if and it's so; "since, indeed,"

2 if and it's not so;

3 if: maybe it's so and maybe it's not;

⁷¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁷² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

4 if I wished it was so but probably not;
Greek is the most explicit language ever devised. (Perhaps that is why God chose it for the New Testament.)

This is a Class 1: "Since, indeed..."

Christian Suffering?

Jesus suffered trials; all the apostles suffered. Jesus promised us trials. John 16:33

Two possible errors we can make:

- 1) No trials anticipated;
- 2) Morbid fear of trials; 1 Cor 10:13.

We need the Divine viewpoint: Remember Job. And his three friends... Remember Paul. Thorn in the flesh. Also, how he measured "Success": 2 Cor 4:7-18; 11: 21-28...and we will be "joint-participants" in His glory! (Who can fathom what this really means...)⁷³

McGee: "If so be" assures the fact that the child of God will suffer with Him. I believe it could be translated "since we suffer with Him." I don't think the "if" is as important as some folk make it out to be.

My friend, what are you enduring for Him today? Whatever it is, Paul makes it clear that it is just a light thing we are going through now. But there is a weighty thing, an "eternal weight of glory" that is coming someday. In eternity we will wish that we had suffered a little more for Him, because that is the way He schools and trains us. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6).⁷⁴

Guzik: And if children, then heirs: Because we are in Christ, we have the privilege of relating to the Father as Jesus does. Therefore, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Being a child of God also means having an inheritance. In Luke 18:18 the rich young ruler asked Jesus, "what must I do to inherit?" But the rich young ruler missed the point because inheritance is not a matter of doing, it is a matter of being – of being in the right family.

If indeed we suffer with Him: Because we are in Christ, we are also called to share in His suffering. God's children are not immune from trials and suffering.

If indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together: In fact, our sharing in present suffering is a condition of our future glorification. As far as God is concerned, it is all part of the same package of sonship, no matter how much our flesh may want to have the inheritance and the glory without the suffering.⁷⁵

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

Missler: Paul certainly knew suffering: ... 2 Cor 4:7-11, 16-18; 2 Cor 11:23-28; Heb 11:32-40. Why do Christians have trials? [re: Hal Lindsey, Combat Faith]

1. To glorify God (Dan 3:16-18, 24-25);
2. Discipline for known sin (Heb 12:5-11; James 4:17; Rom 14:23; 1 John 1:9);
3. To prevent us from falling into sin (1 Pet 4:1-2);

⁷³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁷⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁷⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

4. To keep us from Pride. Paul kept from pride by his "thorn in the flesh." (2 Cor 12:7-10); [His eyes? Gal 4:15; 6:11 (signature)];
5. To build faith (1 Pet 1:6-7);
6. To cause growth (Rom 5:3-5); [3 & 4: Faith in the Night Seasons...]
7. To teach obedience and discipline (Acts 9:15-16; Phil 4:11-13);
8. To equip us to comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-4);
9. To prove the reality of Christ in us (2 Cor 4:7-11);
10. For testimony to the angels (Job 1:8; Eph 3:8-11; 1 Pet 1:12).

Thus: James 1:2-4.

Groan #1 (of 3)

Groan with intense longing, emotional pain... But the entire creation is "suffering"!⁷⁶

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Paul speaks of the "sufferings" they were enduring. Does he mean to indicate some sort of tribulation (hard times, persecution)? Perhaps; but the context of the dialogue more seems to be about suffering with the dilemma of having God's spirit within us and yet retaining remnants of our old nature that pull at us and frustrate us as we strive to behave and think as God wants us to; but we fail. And he probably also means "suffering" in the sense of personal identity with our suffering servant Yeshua in that we are willing to take on the hurt and pain of others in order to show mercy and tell them of God's love for them. As of the time of Paul's writing of the Letter to the Romans, which is some years before his journey to Rome as a prisoner, there was no organized persecution of Jews going on in the Roman Empire. Yes, in some cases there was bigotry against Jews (as there always has been and always will be against various races and ethnic groups). However, the Roman Empire operated on the premise of religious tolerance and cultural diversity (to a point) and in fact it is recorded that the Jews were given special dispensation by the Roman government because some elements of their religion were quite demanding. The evidence is that neither the traditional Jews nor the gentile and Jewish followers of Christ were being systematically persecuted at this time as they soon would be under Nero. So, we probably shouldn't think of Paul's reference to "suffering" as any kind of dangerous tribulation beyond some non-Believing Jews giving Paul and other Believing Jews a hard time occasionally.

There are a couple of things we must always keep in mind as we read any letter from Paul. First: while Paul believed in an End Times that involved the return of Christ, he didn't see it as something in the far future. Rather, he thought it was imminent; virtually something that could, and likely would, happen within his lifetime. This is why he had such a great urgency to evangelize, and why in Romans chapter 9 we'll see him express a willingness to forsake his own salvation in exchange for bringing Israel in general to salvation (this, of course, is an expression of his passion; not something that was possible in reality). The second thing is that Paul's understanding of what glory means (as it pertains to the future of Believers in the world to come) is grounded upon the notion of endurance of sufferings and persecution as proof of faithfulness to Yeshua. This notion is very much the same perspective that the Essenes held (the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls) and it is expressed in terms they used to refer to themselves. Terms like "poor in spirit", "paupers of grace", and "desperate of justification" (among others). These were common terms found in the Dead Sea Scrolls to express the Essenes' determination that suffering was the lot of those who sought righteousness as they waited for their deliverance from the sons

⁷⁶ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

of darkness. With the translation and release of the Dead Sea Scrolls it is clearer than ever that there was great agreement and interaction between the Essenes and Yeshua, and no doubt Paul was keenly aware of their views, some of which integrated well with the beliefs of the Pharisees.

What interests me most about this verse is the statement that we will eventually be heirs to a glory that will be revealed in the future. That is, the reward for our perseverance of our current state of spiritual conundrum that comes because of our firm trust in Yeshua will be revealed at a later time in the future (in the world to come; the *olam ha-ba*). And the reality is that to this day we really don't know what our heavenly future looks like (although there is no end of speculation from the pulpit and from books). We must simply have faith that the general characterization of our future with Christ will be as wonderful as promised and greater than anything that is even possible on this earth as it stands today.⁷⁷

McGee: This brings us to a new division in this eighth chapter of Romans.

Not only the bodies of believers are to be redeemed, but we're going to find out that this entire physical universe, this earth on which you and I live, is to be redeemed. That is the purpose of God. In fact, we're trading in this old earth for a new earth, a new model, brand new, wherein there will be no sin. No curse of sin will ever come upon it again. That is something that is quite wonderful. Someone said to me not long ago, "I believe that healing is in the Atonement." I think I shocked the person when I said, "I believe that too. Not only is healing in the Atonement, but a new body is in the Atonement, and a new world is in the atonement of Christ. But we don't have it yet." The political parties and the United Nations have been trying to bring in a new world for years, but we certainly do not have these yet. But Christ is going to bring it in someday through His redemption. And then I'm going to get a new body. I'm looking forward to that. This one I've got is wearing out, and I want to trade it in for a new one. And that's coming. And healing -- I'll grant that it is in the Atonement, but I don't have all of that yet. I still have cancer.

"I reckon" means that Paul calculates, counts upon, both the debit and credit side of the ledger of life.

"The sufferings of this present time" are the common lot of all believers. This generation, which is enjoying more creature comforts than any other in history, frowns upon this statement, but even present-day Christians cannot escape suffering.⁷⁸

Guzik: For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared: Paul was not ignorant or blind to the sufferings of human existence; he experienced more of them than most any of us today. Yet he still considered that the future glory far outweighed the present sufferings.

The glory which shall be revealed in us: Without a heavenly hope, Paul considered the Christian life foolish and tragic (1 Corinthians 15:19). Yet in light of eternity it is the wisest and best choice anyone can make.

Revealed in us: This coming glory will not only be revealed to us, but it will actually be revealed in us.

God has put this glory into the believer right now. In heaven the glory will simply be revealed. "The glory will be revealed, not created. The implication is that it is already existent, but not apparent." (Morris)⁷⁹

⁷⁷ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁷⁸ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁷⁹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

ESV: The ultimate glory that Christians will receive is so stupendous that the sufferings of this present time are insignificant in comparison (cf. 2 Cor. 4:17). They look forward both to the resurrection of the body (1 Thess. 4:13–18) and to the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1–22:5; see Isa. 65:17).⁸⁰

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

Missler: The interrelationship of man with the physical creation of which he is a part was established in God's sentence of judgment on Adam after the Fall (Gen. 3:17-19). This relationship has a future aspect in connection with God's program of salvation for people.

The Creation keeps on "eagerly awaiting": the verb for "eagerly awaits" (*apekdechomai*) is used seven times in the New Testament, each time to refer to Christ's return (Rom. 8:19, 23, 25; 1 Cor. 1:7; Gal. 5:5; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 9:28).

The revealing of the sons of God will occur when Christ returns for His own. They will share His glory (Rom. 8:18; Col. 1:27; 3:4; Heb. 2:10), and will be transformed (Rom. 8:23). All of nature (inanimate and animate) is personified as waiting eagerly for that time.⁸¹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 19 is a bit difficult to deal with because Paul speaks of "the creation" as a living entity of some sort. I think what is really happening is that he is speaking of "the creation" in grammar terms that we call personification. That is, things that are not human are spoken of as though they had human characteristics. So, when Paul speaks of "the creation" it is my opinion that he is referring to everything in existence that is not human: plants, animals, rocks, the oceans, the stars in the sky, and so on. And that all of these things that God created are frustrated because humans have ruined everything. And they know that a restoration is coming, and they're growing wearing waiting for it. Again; these terms like frustrated and waiting are not meant to be taken literally; these words of emotion applied to non-human things are personification. The creation also seems to know that God's work towards the redemption of His creation is predicated upon the revelation of the sons of God: Believers. The appearance of Believers is the signal to the creation that restoration has begun. So, folks, even though you may never have thought of yourselves in this way, you yourselves, as Believers, are a sign that God is in active process of restoring His creation to its original perfection and even greater.⁸²

McGee: Let me give my translation of this verse: For the creation, watching with outstretched head (head erect), is waiting (sighing) for the revelation of the sons of God.

The world is not waiting for the sunrise of evolution's pipe dream. The pipe dream of evolution will never come true. However, creation is waiting "for the manifestation of the sons of God." Creation is like a veiled statue today. When the sons of God have removed the outward covering of this flesh, creation also will be unveiled. What a glorious day that will be!⁸³

⁸⁰ ESV Study Bible Notes

⁸¹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁸² <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁸³ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

BKC: 19-21 Paul demonstrated that this relationship has a future aspect in connection with God's program of salvation for people. He declared, The Creation waits in eager expectation (lit., "for the strained expectation [*apokaradokia* is used only one other time in the NT, in Phil. 1:20] of the Creation keeps on eagerly awaiting") for the sons of God to be revealed. The verb for "eagerly waits" (*apekdechomai*) is used seven times in the New Testament, each time to refer to Christ's return (Rom. 8:19, 23, 25; 1 Cor. 1:7; Gal. 5:5; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 9:28). The revealing of the sons of God will occur when Christ returns for His own. They will share His glory (Rom. 8:18; Col. 1:27; 3:4; Heb. 2:10), and will be transformed (Rom. 8:23). All of nature (inanimate and animate) is personified as waiting eagerly for that time.

The reason for this eager anticipation is stated in verse 20. For the Creation was subjected to frustration. The Greek word *mataiotēti* ("futility, frailty, purposelessness"; cf. Eph. 4:17; 2 Peter 2:18) describes the change and "decay" (cf. Rom. 8:21) that prevails in all created things. This was not a voluntary subjection because the created world as such had no choice. Instead it was a decree of God, the sovereign Creator, who subjected it. (This probably refers to God, not, as some have suggested, to Adam.) And yet it was in hope, that is, in anticipation of a coming day when the "frustration" would be removed (cf. vv. 24-25). God judged the totality of His Creation along with people for their sin (Gen. 3:14, 17-19).

When God's program of salvation for people is completed and the children of God together experience their glorious freedom from sin, Satan, and physical decay, then the Creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay. God had cursed the physical Creation as a part of His judgment on people for sin because of their position and authority over the Creation as God's representatives (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:8, 15). Similarly, since God's program of salvation for people is one of a new Creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), the physical world also will be re-created (Rev. 21:5). This will take place in two stages. First will be the renovation of the present cosmos in conjunction with the return to earth of the Lord Jesus and the establishment of the messianic kingdom on earth (Isa. 11:5-9; 35:1-2, 5-7; 65:20, 25; Amos 9:13). The second stage will be creation of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1; cf. 2 Peter 3:7-13).⁸⁴

Guzik: The earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits: Paul considers that creation itself is eagerly awaiting the revealing of the sons of God. This is because the creation was subjected to futility on account of man's sin, and will benefit from the ultimate redemption of men.

Isaiah 11:6-9 describes this redemption of creation in that day: The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

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

Missler: "Vanity" - *mataiotes*, futility, frailty, purposelessness. (cf. Eph. 4:17; 2 Peter 2:18) describes the change and "decay"

⁸⁴ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

(cf. Rom. 8:21) that prevails in all created things.

God judged the totality of His Creation along with people for their sin (Gen. 3:14, 17-19). Yet the curse was instituted with a future hope. Cf. v.24.⁸⁵

McGee: "For the creation was subjected to vanity" -- vanity means "failure, decay, something that is perishable."

"Not willingly" means not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it on the basis of hope. King Solomon, who was quite a pessimist, by the way, wrote: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. 1:7). There is a weary round of repetition. The rivers run into the sea, and the Lord has quite a hydraulic pump that pumps the water right out of the ocean, and with His good transportation system, the wind moves the clouds across the dry land, and here comes the rain again. It fills the rivers, and the rivers run into the sea. There is a monotony about nature; you see it on every hand. Nature is waiting for the promised manifestation, the unveiling.

"Creation was subjected to vanity" because God made it that way. The curse of sin came upon man in Adam's disobedience, but the physical world also came under the curse. Remember that God said to Adam, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread..." (Gen. 3:18-19). I enjoy going out to the Hawaiian Islands; I know of no place quite as delightful. Yet on a golf course in that "paradise" I found -- of all things -- thorns! I knocked a ball out in the rough there, out in the lava, and I have never seen as many thorns as were there. I have a pair of shoes that have thorns in them to this good day -- I can't get them all out. Even in that paradise there are thorns. There is a curse on creation.⁸⁶

Guzik: Him who subjected it in hope: Only God could subject creation in hope. This was not ultimately the work of either man or Satan.⁸⁷

ESV: 20-21 When Adam sinned, the created world was also subjected to futility. One thinks of the thorns and thistles that were to accompany work in Gen. 3:17–19, the pain in childbirth for the woman (Gen. 3:16), and the repeated refrain that all is vanity in Ecclesiastes (where the Septuagint uses the same Greek word here used for “futility”). The original creation (Genesis 1-2) did not have these things, and on the last day it also will be transformed and freed from the effects of sin and will instantly become far more beautiful, productive, and easy to live in than one can ever imagine.⁸⁸

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

Missler: “Bondage of Corruption” = “Bondage of decay:” the 2nd law of thermodynamics, the law of entropy. It’s all winding down. [Who wound it up in the first place?]

1st Law: You can’t win.

⁸⁵ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁸⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁸⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

⁸⁸ ESV Study Bible Notes

2nd Law: You can't even break even.

3rd Law: You can't get out of the game.

Signal vs. noise. Aging. (Gen 3: Was this when the velocity of light began to decrease?)

"...to be delivered from..."

It will begin with the removal of nature's curse: Isa 11:1-13; 65:17-25; Micah 4:1-5; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Zech 14:1-21, et.

[Can a wolf lie down with lamb today? (Only if the lamb is inside the wolf!)...]

For a 1000 years there will be people living on the earth without the curse!

Since God's program of salvation for people is one of a new Creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), the physical world also will be re-created (Rev. 21:5).⁸⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Why is the creation in such an anxious state? Because as Paul says in verse 21, it is decaying; its condition worsens, and decays more, hour by hour. This decaying was not supposed to have happened to the creation; it is a result of Adam's arrogance and sin. And further, says Paul, the same freedom from death that God's children (another synonym for sons of God or for Believers) have now attained, will also happen for the creation in general at the appropriate time. In other words, when the creation is redeemed, it will stop decaying and be saved from death.

Suffering birth pains is mentioned as describing the condition of the creation. The illustration of birth pains was a common one in Judaism; it was usually used to describe the sufferings of the creation as it awaited the beginning of the Messianic Age (the rule of Messiah) and what was loosely called the entrance into the world to come. So Paul is not inventing anything new; the term birth pain he uses was not only common, it was meant in Judaism precisely in the same context he means it in this passage. It is an End Times expression.⁹⁰

McGee: Man has a dying body. As someone has said, "The moment He gives us life, He begins to take it away from us." And there is death and decay yonder in nature. Go out in the beautiful forest, and there you see a tree lying dead, corrupt, rotting. That's nature. And you catch the stench of the decaying bodies of dead animals.⁹¹

Creation itself. The renewal of all things, including creation itself, was a Jewish theme in Paul's day: "In those days, mountains shall dance like rams; and the hills shall leap like kids satiated with milk . . . The earth shall rejoice; and the righteous ones shall dwell upon her and the elect ones shall walk upon her." According to Paul, this new reality has already dawned in Christ, and one ought to live in hopeful expectation of its completion.⁹²

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

Missler: This will take place in two stages. First will be the renovation of the present cosmos in conjunction with the return to earth of the Lord Jesus and the establishment of the messianic kingdom on earth (Isa. 11:5-9; 35:1-2, 5-7; 65:20, 25; Amos 9:13).

⁸⁹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁹⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁹¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁹² First-Century Study Bible Notes

The second stage will be creation of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1; cf. 2 Peter 3:7-13).⁹³

McGee: Browning in his *Pippa Passes* writes:

God's in His Heaven -- All's right with the world.

The Christian knows that that is not true. God is in His heaven all right, but all is not right with the world. The Word of God is more realistic: "How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate" (Joel 1:18).

Some have called our attention to the fact that nature sings in a minor key. The wind blowing through the pine trees on a mountainside and the breaking of the surf on some lonely shore -- both emit the same sob. The music of trees has been recorded, and it is doleful. The startled cry of some frightened animal or bird pierces the night air and chills the blood. Surely nature bears audible testimony to the accuracy of Scripture. Godet quotes Schelling in this connection, "Nature, with its melancholy chorus, resembles a bride who, at the very moment when she is fully attired for the marriage, saw the bridegroom die. She still stands with her fresh crown and in her bridal dress but her eyes are full of tears."

It is accurate to say that "nature is groaning."⁹⁴

BKC: 22-23. In one sense verse 22 is an appropriate conclusion to the preceding paragraph, summing up the present cursed state of the physical creation. Paul said, We know (*oidamen*, continuing state of knowledge that grows out of perception) that the whole Creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth (lit., "keeps on groaning together and keeps on travailing together") right up to the present time. The emphasis on "together" in these verbs does not include believers in Christ, who are specifically mentioned in verse 23, but involves the various parts of the natural Creation. At the same time verse 22 introduces this new paragraph, which sets forth the hope of future deliverance from suffering under the curse of sin.

Paul had begun this section by referring to the believers' "present sufferings" (v. 18), a subject to which he returned in verse 23. Believers are described as the ones having the first-fruits of the Spirit. This is an appositional use of the genitive and means that the Holy Spirit is "the firstfruits" (*aparchēn*) of God's work of salvation and re-creation in believers. Elsewhere the Holy Spirit is called "a deposit (down payment or earnest) guaranteeing our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22), a similar idea. A farmer's "firstfruits" were the initial harvesting of his first-ripened crops. This first installment was a foretaste and promise that more harvest was to come. Similarly, God the Holy Spirit, indwelling believers, is a foretaste that they will enjoy many more blessings, including living in God's presence forever.

Because of "present sufferings" (Rom. 8:18) believers, like the Creation, groan inwardly (cf. v. 22; 2 Cor. 5:2) as they wait eagerly (from *apekdechomai*, the same word used of the Creation in Rom. 8:19 and of the manifestation of hope in v. 25) for their adoption as sons, which is identified as the redemption of their bodies. The word "adoption" (*huiiothesian*, "placing as a son"; trans. "sonship" in v. 15) describes a believer's legal relationship to God as a result of God's grace received by faith. (Regeneration, however, describes a believer's relationship to God as a result of the new birth.) Israel had received adoption by God (9:4), a reality undoubtedly growing out of her covenantal ties with God (Deut. 7:6-9). In one sense each believer has already received

⁹³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁹⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

the adoption because he has "received the Spirit of sonship" (lit., "adoption," Rom. 8:15) and is a son of God (Gal. 4:6-7). At the same time, as Romans 8:23 states, believers still anticipate their adoption in its completeness, which is said to be "the redemption" (*apolytrōsin*; etymologically the Gr. word describes a release or deliverance, or manumission achieved by a ransom payment [lytron]; cf. comments on 3:24) of their bodies. This is called the revelation of the sons of God (8:19) and "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (v. 21). It will occur at the Rapture of the church when believers will be raised and transformed with glorious bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thes. 4:13-18). Paul called that day "the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).⁹⁵

²³And 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.

Missler: Groan #2

Paul had begun this section by referring to the believers' "present sufferings" (v. 18), a subject to which he returned in verse 23.

Believers are described as the ones having "the firstfruits of the Spirit." This is an appositional use of the genitive and means that the Holy Spirit is "the firstfruits" of God's work of salvation and recreation in believers.

[Elsewhere the Holy Spirit is called "a deposit (down payment or earnest) guaranteeing our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22), a similar idea.]

"Groan" - present tense: "keep on groaning."

In one sense each believer has already received the adoption because he has "received the Spirit of sonship" (lit., "adoption," Rom. 8:15) and is a son of God (Gal. 4:6-7).

At the same time, as Romans 8:23 states, believers still anticipate their adoption in its completeness, which is said to be "the redemption" (*apolutrosin*,) etymologically the Greek word describes a release or deliverance achieved by a ransom payment.

This is called the revelation of the sons of God (8:19) and "the glorious freedom of the children of God" (v. 21). It will occur at the Rapture of the church when believers will be raised and transformed with glorious bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Paul called that day "the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).⁹⁶

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 23, then, says a mouthful. First, it is said that we "have" the firstfruits of the Spirit. A Jewish Believer would have well understood the reference; likely few gentile Believers would have. First let me comment that the words are NOT that we ARE the firstfruits of the Spirit but rather that we HAVE the firstfruits of the Spirit. Let's consider this statement from the Jewish cultural perspective. Even the Diaspora Jews were well aware of Bikkurim, the Festival of Firstfruits, and also of Shavuot, which although known as The Feast of Weeks was actually a 2nd Firstfruits festival (Bikkurim concerned the barley harvest, Shavuot the wheat harvest that came some weeks later). In both cases, the firstfruits is the sign that the harvest is ripening and soon it

⁹⁵ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

⁹⁶ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

will be time for the reaping. As used here, firstfruits is a metaphor that is simply another way of saying that Believers, having the firstfruits of the Spirit, are the sign or pledge that harvesting time is at hand. In Judaism, firstfruits and harvesting are symbolic of redemption.

But in verse 23 Paul also expands on his assertion of Believers being sons of God. He says that since we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we groan inwardly as we are waiting to be made sons of God; and then he defines the phrase "being made sons of God" as having our entire bodies redeemed and set free. This goes back to what we discussed earlier; becoming a son of God is more a process than an event. In fact, redemption is a process and little about it is an all-at-once event. It is similar to the concept of the Kingdom of God. Yeshua said that with the coming of John the Baptist, the Kingdom of God has arrived on earth; it is here, now. And yet, it is in no way fully manifested; it is in its infancy. The Kingdom of God then, and even today, is but a fraction of what it will eventually become. So even though we can be called sons of God today, as Believers we have a long way to go before all the privileges and honors and manifestations of what it means to be sons of God are fully realized. We are currently experiencing but the tip of the tip of the iceberg.⁹⁷

McGee: Not only does nature groan, but the believer is in harmony with nature. This verse is devastating to those who propose the theory that the mark of a Christian is a perennially smiling face. They contend that a Christian should be a cross between a Cheshire cat and a house-to-house salesman. A Christian should grin -- at all times. Smile your troubles away is good for Rotary, but it is not the Christian method.

We groan within these bodies. Some years ago when I began to move into middle age, I would come down the steps in the morning groaning because my knees were hurting. My wife told me I ought not to groan! I told her it is scriptural to groan. Paul says, "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (2Cor. 5:2). Also the psalmist wrote, "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears" (Ps. 6:6). Our Lord Jesus did some weeping also. Although I believe He was a joyful person, there were times when He wept. In these bodies we groan.⁹⁸

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

Missler: Three tenses of "Being Saved"

Have been saved: Positionally (Eph 2:8, 9);

From the penalty of sin.

Called justification salvation.

Are being saved: Operationally, by the Holy Spirit, moment-by moment (Rom 6);

From the power of sin;

Called sanctification.

Shall be saved: from the presence of sin; here called, v.23, "the redemption of our body." This opens up the entire subject of the ostensible controversy between the "Eternal Security" of the believer—positional, justification salvation—and yet the need to persevere: for rewards,

⁹⁷ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁹⁸ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

etc. (This will be explored more fully in subsequent chapters...)⁹⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

In verse 24, Paul explains that it is the hope of this full completeness of becoming sons of God that we wait for with such great expectation. And that it is our salvation that gives us reason for this hope. But he ends this verse by having us remember that as of now our hope remains a faith based hope. Yet, from philosophical viewpoint, we can't call what we hope for "hope" once it comes to full realization. So, we should rejoice in our hope, just as we will rejoice when it is no longer a hope but reality.

It has always been interesting to me that some parts of Christianity want to paint a rosy picture of what life becomes when we finally believe. The idea more or less being that once we come to faith, our troubles are over. And if we do have trouble, it is because we just don't have enough faith, yet. In other words: struggles, failures, and woes in our life indicate a Believer of little faith. None of these matches with what Scripture tells us; and the brutally frank Paul is regularly warning Believers (and Seekers) that coming to faith in Christ brings with it obligations, duties, and suffering.....not utopia. Thus, our waiting for our hope to be fully realized will need much perseverance. And because we are still not perfected....and especially our fleshly bodies are not perfected.....we are full of weaknesses that can make persevering all the harder. But Paul says that the Holy Spirit of God is fully aware of this and is here to help.

I bring this up because it is among my pet peeves that some Christian leaders think that God and the Christian life must be presented to their congregation as super appealing; as a sort of divine welfare system that not only fixes all our problems but fulfills all our dreams. My peeve is that not only is that not true, but especially when immature, new Believers buy into this lie, and the harshness of life comes along to dash this false hope, they fall away from the faith, either blaming God or renouncing Christ altogether. So, let me be clear: our hope is not in daily happiness. It is not in getting the job we want, the perfect spouse we seek, not even in finally getting that 70 inch 4K flat screen Smart TV with surround sound. Our true hope is more future than present. Our salvation has secured our eternal future; not our temporal present. Oh, without doubt, life is so very much better in the present with God than without. We can go to Him in prayer, He will offer us comfort, and give us peace in impossible circumstances. He is a God who will heal, protect us in many instances, and give us guidance and wisdom when we choose to listen to Him. In fact, Paul says that often we won't know how to pray, so God will even help us with that. The Holy Spirit living in us knows our needs and sufferings and longings and will pray for us in the way proper worship and prayer, in God's will, ought to happen.

As you think about what I've said, what God has promised, and your current circumstances I ask you to face a stark reality: we are redeemed, but we live in an unredeemed universe. And there are times when we can feel overwhelmed by not just what comes our way, personally, but by what we see happening all around us. We can become full of fears, foreboding, and get depressed and anxious. Our faith doesn't insulate us from the growing darkness of the world; in fact, it makes us all the more aware of it. The wickedness and deprivation so prevalent all around us, which used to go unnoticed by us, suddenly becomes alive in vivid color and all too apparent. It also becomes apparent that there is little we can do about most of it. Yeshua's advice is don't worry and fret; turn to God in prayer. So, I submit to you that part of the God-ordained process of our becoming perfected in Him is when we have our eyes opened to how God actually sees

⁹⁹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

this fallen world, and how it pains us because it pains Him; and so we learn how to be more dependent upon God, and that means to pray effectively and earnestly.¹⁰⁰

McGee: "We are saved by hope" speaks of the work of Christ for us on the Cross and our faith in Him. But that is not all. We have a redeemed body coming up in the future.¹⁰¹

BKC: 24-25. God has promised that a believer's body will finally be delivered from sin and its effects by the work of His Son. Those who respond by faith to that promise have hope, a confident expectation of that bodily redemption (cf. Gal. 5:5). This is the final step of salvation and it was in that anticipation that we were saved. The redemption of the body (Rom. 8:23) obviously has not yet occurred (Who hopes for what he already has?), but it is hoped for and eagerly anticipated (wait is from *apekdechomai*; cf. vv. 19, 23) with steadfast endurance (patiently is lit., "through endurance") in present sufferings (v. 18).¹⁰²

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

Missler: "Hope": in Greek is stronger than "know!" It is a confidence, sureness, of future things. (The opposite of our use of the term in English.)

Eagerly await: (*apekdechomai*).

He who has the strongest "hope" will have the greatest stability under stress. 2 Cor 4:16-18.¹⁰³

McGee: You see, faith, hope, and love are the vital parts of the believer's life. There would be no hope if all were realized. Someday hope will pass away in realization. In fact, both faith and hope will pass away in the glory which shall be revealed in us. Only love abides.¹⁰⁴

²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Missler: The most important "Groan" of All, # 3

"Helpeth" = present tense: "keeps on helping."

He even is our "line backer" on prayer!

[These are not uttered: This may have nothing to do with praying in tongues, as some suggest. The groaning is done by the Holy Spirit, not believers, and apparently is not stated in words.]¹⁰⁵

McGee: Years ago when the late Dr. A. C. Gaebelein was speaking, a very enthusiastic member of the congregation kept interrupting with loud amens. That annoyed Dr. Gaebelein. Finally, he told him, "Brother, the Scripture says that the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹⁰¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁰² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹⁰³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹⁰⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁰⁵ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

which cannot be uttered -- so don't you utter them if it's the Spirit of God." We didn't even know how we ought to pray; but the Spirit of God will make intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Have you gone to God sometimes in prayer when you actually did not know what to pray for? All you could do was just go to Him and say, "Father." You could not ask anything because you didn't know what to ask for. At times like this the Spirit "helpeth our infirmities." How wonderful that is!¹⁰⁶

BKC: 26-27. These verses point out that believers are not left to their own resources in their sufferings (v. 18) and groaning (v. 23). The Spirit helps (pres. tense, "keeps on helping") us in (the Gr. here does not have the words rendered "us in") our weakness. It is not that the Spirit helps in those occasional times when Christians are weak; their state is one of weakness and the Spirit continually helps them. The Greek word for weakness (*astheneia*) may include physical, emotional, and spiritual disability (cf. comments on James 5:14) evidenced by inward "groaning" (Rom. 8:23). "Helps" translates *synantilambanetai*, a rich word that pictures someone helping another carry a heavy load. (It is used elsewhere in the NT only in Luke 10:40.)

One evidence of their weakness is the fact that believers do not know what they ought to pray (lit., "what we should pray as it is necessary"). In their weakness both the content and the manner of proper prayer eludes them, but the Spirit Himself comes to their rescue and intercedes (pres. tense, "keeps on interceding") for us with groans that words cannot express. Natural Creation groans (Rom. 8:22) and believers groan (v. 23), and so does the Holy Spirit. This has nothing to do with praying in tongues, as some suggest. The groaning is done by the Holy Spirit, not believers, and is not stated in words. The help the Spirit gives (v. 26) is His interceding. "Intercedes" translates *hyperentynchanei*, which occurs only here in the New Testament; it means "approaches or appeals to someone." The One who searches our hearts is God (1 Sam. 16:7; Heb. 4:13), and He knows (*oiden*, "knows perceptively or intuitively") the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes (*entynchanei*; cf. Rom. 8:26) for the saints in accordance with God's will. Even though the Spirit's words are not expressed, the Father knows what the Spirit is thinking. This is an interesting statement about the Father's omniscience and the intimacy within the Trinity. The Lord Jesus continually intercedes for believers in God's presence (v. 34; Heb. 7:25) and the Holy Spirit also intercedes on their behalf! Though believers are ignorant of what to pray for and how to voice those requests, the Spirit voices their requests for them.¹⁰⁷

Guzik: Groanings which cannot be uttered: This help from the Spirit may include praying with the spiritual gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:2, 14-15), but it is certainly not limited to praying in an unknown tongue.

The idea is simply of communication beyond our ability to express. The deep groanings within us cannot be articulated apart from the interceding work of the Holy Spirit.

This, of course, is the purpose of the gift of tongues – to enable us to communicate with God in a manner that is not limited to our own knowledge or ability to articulate our heart before God. The purpose of tongues is not to prove that we are "filled with the Spirit" or to prove that we are especially spiritual.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁰⁷ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹⁰⁸ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

Prayers of the heart. Paul was referring to a kind of wordless prayer from the heart and to a God who searches for such deep groans (see Ps 77:3–4).¹⁰⁹

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Missler: Even though the Spirit's words are not expressed, the Father knows what the Spirit is thinking. This is an interesting statement about the Father's omniscience and the intimacy within the Trinity. The Lord Jesus also continually intercedes for believers in God's presence (v. 34; Heb. 7:25).

[Romans 8:17b-27 contrasts our present state (with trials) with the coming glory...]
“...if so be that we suffer with Him.”

Inheritance: There are also other conditions to our specific destiny that will be taken up when we explore inheritance, (in contrast to salvation alone.). There are different kinds of inheritances in both the OT and NT. The term for inheritance: *kleronomeo*, can mean several things, including a reward for a life of faithfulness.

Jesus achieved His inheritance by perseverance in suffering (Heb 2:10; Phil 2:9-11). His companions (Heb 1:9, Greek *metachoi*) will inherit the same way (Heb 1:14).

An inheritance can also be forfeited because of disobedience (as in the case of Esau (Heb 12:17); and it is only obtained by persevering—“faith and patience” (Heb 6:12)). We will be exploring these issues further in Chapter 9.¹¹⁰

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

The concept that begins in verse 27 flows into verse 28: it is the concept of intercession. That is, the Holy Spirit intercedes....He plays an active role as He sees fit....in the lives of Believers even including helping us to pray. Paul begins verse 28 with "we know"; it is meant in the sense of taking something for granted as common knowledge. Without doubt he is expressing some kind of traditional declaration that was well known among Jews. In fact, whereas Christianity has adopted this verse as among the most memorized and quoted, noting correctly that this is the beginning of Paul speaking of the concept of election, the reality is that Paul is speaking more about the election of Israel as God's chosen people than about the election of gentiles to form a new group of people called Christians. It is not that it can't apply to Christians; but we must realize that God's election of Israel and His ongoing faithfulness to Israel has been an underlying theme of the Letter to the Romans up to this point.

When Paul says that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God, he means "good" in the sense of favor. And when he speaks of those who love God, while it certainly can apply to Believers, it more aptly applies in this context to Israel. Again; throughout Romans an underlying message has been that God created a set apart people called by His name, then God gave this set-apart people His covenants and since doing so has not rejected them and replace them with somebody else. God has remained faithful to His chosen people despite their unfaithfulness to Him. Paul continues that the Lord has an irresistible, unstoppable purpose for His people; and while this is referring to Israel in the main, it certainly

¹⁰⁹ First-Century Study Bible Notes

¹¹⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

on another level can include gentile Believers in Yeshua. The next several words about knowing these people in advance and determining in advance who they would be and who would be conformed to Yeshua, bring us into the controversial topic of predestination. The idea that Calvin holds about predestination is that before any of us were born God not only foreknew but chose those who would trust His Son for salvation. And those whom God decided would become sons of God, he called to be righteous at the right time. In other words, all has been predetermined about our lives before we were born. We didn't choose salvation; the Savior chose us. Free will in this sense, then, is very limited. I don't want to get off track on the issue of predestination; because like with the Doctrine of the Trinity, there is not only one doctrine of Predestination, there are a few with differences of among them. Just know for now that it is this passage that influenced Calvin's doctrine of Predestination the most.

I want us to pause and reorient ourselves. It is close to universally agreed among Bible scholars that Romans chapters 7 and 8 are fully linked (I completely agree with them....it is obvious). They are very nearly a single unit and if we want the best sense of it we should mentally erase the chapter and verse markers and read chapters 7 and 8 as the whole that it was originally written and so intended. Chopping it up with chapter and verse markers (that never existed until a 1000 years after the NT was written) obscure its unity. So, let's remember back to the opening words that started this long unified section, spoken by Paul in verse 1 of chapter 7: CJB Romans 7:1 Surely you know, brothers- for I am speaking to those who understand Torah- that the Torah has authority over a person only so long as he lives?

Or as in the KJV:

KJV Romans 7:1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

Who does Paul say he is directly speaking to? Those who, in this context, he calls his brothers. How does he define his brothers in this case? He says it is those who understand the Torah; those understand the Law. Clearly, he says he is speaking to his Jewish brethren and so throughout chapters 7 and 8 he continues to tie what he is saying back to this verse by regularly calling those he is addressing his brothers. He is addressing primarily the Jewish Believers because since chapter 1 he has been defending God's election (His choosing) of Israel to be His set-apart people, and the Gospel itself is proof of this because the Gospel is how God is rescuing His people from the hole of sin and death they have dug for themselves. The inclusion of gentiles as additional recipients of the Gospel (especially by Paul) has caused some Jews to ask why God is bringing gentiles into the fold. And in turn, some gentiles have wondered if God accepting them means that He is turning His back on His ancient people and choosing a new people. It was complicated and confusing and so Paul has been walking a delicate line. But my point is this: the election of God's people (those from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), and defending their continuing election, has been an important theme of Romans; one that gentile Christian Bible students and teachers seem to overlook. And it is in that continuing context of Paul primarily addressing Jews that we should read chapter 8 and especially so the difficult words beginning at verse 28.¹¹¹

McGee: Now, if I go to God in prayer and say, "Look, Lord, I want You to do it this way," that's the way I usually do it, and I may not get the answer the way I prayed. But it's wonderful sometimes to go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I don't know what to ask for. I don't know what to say. But I'm coming to You as Your child. And I want Your will done." And the Spirit of God

¹¹¹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

then will make intercession for us according to the will of God. My, again, how wonderful that is!¹¹²

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

Missler: The Certainty of Sanctification (8:28-39)

This is the most uplifting passage of the Scripture. Any time that I am down, discouraged, or facing some setback, I simply review 8:28-39.

It simply follows the logic of the previous discussion...

The most important 3 words are the 1st 3: "And we know." To discuss the goal of sanctification—a believer's hope, for which he awaits eagerly and steadfastly—is pointless unless one realizes that that goal is certain. God has provided that certainty and confirms the believer's hope, since sanctification from its beginning in regeneration to its completion in glorification is ultimately God's work, which believers appropriate by faith (cf. Phil. 1:6).

The active voice present tense of the verb synergei ("He works together") emphasizes that this is a continuing activity of God.

[So is every cell division in the human zygote: having the complete coding in each cell—DNA—is not enough: there is the issue of conflict resolution logic to specialize the specific tissue formation, organs, etc. It takes continual external inputs to coordinate the process...]

"Called" means more than being invited to receive Christ; it means to be summoned to and given salvation (cf. Rom. 1:6; 8:30). And maybe even more! (Is that possible?) Example: The saga of Joseph: Gen 50:20.¹¹³

McGee: We come now to the new purpose of God. If Romans is the greatest book of the Bible, and chapter 8 is the high-water mark, then verse 28 is the pinnacle. God's purpose guarantees the salvation of sinners, and the next three verses give the "ascending process of salvation," as William Sanday calls it.

I have translated it this way: But we know (with divine knowledge) that for those who love God, all things are working together for good, even to them who are called-ones according to His purpose.

The late Dr. Reuben A. Torrey (I had the privilege of being pastor for twenty-one years of the church that he founded) was a great man of God, greatly abused and misunderstood. He knew the meaning of this verse, and he called it a soft pillow for a tired heart. Many of us have pillowed our heads on Romans 8:28. We know the whole creation is groaning, but we also know something else: all things are working together for good -- even the groanings.

"We know" is used five times in Romans, and "know" is used thirteen times. It refers to that which is the common knowledge of the Christian, that is, that which the Holy Spirit makes real. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth" (see 1Cor. 8:1), and this is the knowledge that only the Spirit of God can make real to our hearts. Charles Spurgeon used to say, "I do not need anyone to tell me how honey tastes; I know." And I can say, my friend, that I know God loves me. I don't need to argue that point; I know it.

¹¹² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹¹³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

"For those who love God" is the fraternity pin of the believer. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision [that is, there is no badge]; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). Love is the mark. The apostle John put it like this: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [the mercy seat] for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1John 4:10-16). My friend, you are going to have trouble believing that God loves you, and you will have difficulty loving God, if you are hating other Christians. "We love him, because first loved us" (1John 4:19). And the apostle Peter said: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1Pet. 1:8). The thing that will bring joy and brightness into your life is the sincere love of God.

"All things" -- good and bad; bright and dark; sweet and bitter; easy and hard; happy and sad; prosperity and poverty; health and sickness; calm and storm; comfort and suffering; life and death.

"Are working together for good" is causative and means that God is working all things -- there are no accidents. You remember that Joseph could look back over his life, a life that had been filled with vicissitudes, disappointments, and sufferings, yet he could say to his brethren -- who were responsible for his misfortune -- "...ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good..." (Gen. 50:20). And I am confident that we as children of God will be able to look back over our lives someday, and say, "All of this worked out for good." Job could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him..." (Job 13:15). That is the kind of faith in God we need, friend. We know that He is going to make things work out for good because He's the One who is motivating it. He's the One who is energizing it.

However, we often cry out, as Jeremiah did, "Why did you let me see trouble?" (see Jer. 11:14). It was during the San Francisco earthquake many years ago that a saint of God walked out into the scene of destruction and debris and actually smiled. A friend asked her, "How can you smile at a time like this?" Her reply was, "I rejoice that I have a God who can shake the world!" How wonderful to be able to face life -- and death -- unafraid. I think of Paul who could face the future without flinching. He said to his friends, "...What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). Many of us would like to come to that place of total commitment to Him.

Now notice that all things are working together for good for them "who are the called" ones, and it is "according to his purpose." This is something that is hard for a great many people to swallow. "The called" are those who not only have received an invitation, they have accepted it. And they were born from above. They know experientially the love of God. Paul describes three groups of people, and I think they are the three groups that are in the world today: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness: but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1Cor. 1:23-24). (1) The Jews trusted in religion, rite and ritual. To them the Cross was a stumblingblock. (2) The Greeks (the Gentiles) trusted in philosophy and human wisdom. To

them the Cross was foolishness. (3) "The called" were a group out of both Jews and Greeks who were chosen not because of their religion or wisdom. God called them. To them the Cross was the dynamite of God unto salvation. "The called" heard God's call. That is important. Let me go back to my illustration of the turtles. Suppose you go down to a swamp, and there are ten turtles. You say to the turtles, "I'd like to teach you to fly." Nine of them say, "We're not interested. We like it down here; we feel comfortable in this environment." One turtle says, "Yes, I'd like to fly." That is the one which is called, and that is the one which is taught to fly. Now that doesn't have anything in the world to do with the other turtles. They are turtles because they are turtles. My friend, the lost are lost because they want it that way. There is not a person on top side of this world that is being forced to be lost. They are lost because they have chosen to be lost. A boy down in my southland years ago wanted to join a church. So the deacons were examining him. They asked, "How did you get saved?" His answer was, "God did His part, and I did my part." They thought there was something wrong with his doctrine, so they questioned further. "What was God's part and what was your part?" His explanation was a good one. He said, "God's part was the saving, and my part was the sinning. I done run from Him as fast as my sinful heart and rebellious legs could take me. He done took out after me till he run me down." My friend, that is the way I got saved also.

This does not destroy or disturb the fact that "whosoever will may come" and "whosoever believeth." Henry Ward Beecher quaintly put it, "The elect are the whosoever wills and the non-elect are the whosoever won'ts." And it is all according to His purpose. And, my friend, if you have not yet got your mind reconciled to God's purpose and to God's will, it is time you are doing that, because this is His universe. He made it. I don't know why He made a round earth instead of a square one -- He didn't ask me how I wanted it -- He made it round because He wanted it round. My friend, His purpose is going to be carried out, and He has the wisdom and the power to carry it out. Whatever God does is right. Don't you criticize God and say He has no right to save whoever wants to be saved. He has the right to do it. He is just and He is loving, and anything my God does is right.

There was a great theologian in the past by the name of Simeon. In his sermons on Romans 8 he said there were three reasons why he preached on the doctrine of election: It laid the axe at the root of pride, presumption, and despair. I like that. My friend, there is no place for human pride in the doctrine of election. It is God's work, His wisdom, and His purpose that is being carried out. The will of God comes down out of eternity past like a great steamroller. Don't think you can stop it. In fact, you had better get on and ride.¹¹⁴

BKC: This section on the doctrine of a believer's sanctification (vv. 28-39) logically follows the discussion of its goal or end (vv. 18-27). To discuss the goal of sanctification—a believer's hope, which he awaits eagerly and steadfastly—is pointless unless realizing that goal is certain. God provided that certainty and confirms the believer's hope, since sanctification from its beginning in regeneration to its completion in glorification is ultimately God's work, which believers appropriate by faith (cf. Phil. 1:6).

Believers, Paul began, know of sanctification's certainty, and that knowledge is gained by spiritual perception. Christians know intuitively (*oidamen*)—though they may not always fully understand and sense it experientially—that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him (lit., "to the ones who love God He works all things together unto good"). The things themselves may not be good, but God harmonizes them together for believers' ultimate good,

¹¹⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

because His goal is to bring them to perfection in His presence (cf. Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Col. 1:22; Jude 24). Even adversities and afflictions contribute to that end. The active voice present tense of the verb *synergei* ("He works together") emphasizes that this is a continuing activity of God. And His working is on behalf of "those who love Him," who are further identified as the ones who have been called according to His purpose. It is significant that a believer's love for God follows God's calling of him and is undoubtedly the product of the indwelling Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 5:5; 1 John 4:19). The word for "purpose" is *prothesin*, God's plan (Paul used the same word in Rom. 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11). "Called" means more than being invited to receive Christ; it means to be summoned to and given salvation (cf. Rom. 1:6; 8:30).¹¹⁵

ESV: God weaves everything together for good for his children. The "good" in this context does not refer to earthly comfort but conformity to Christ (v. 29), closer fellowship with God, bearing good fruit for the kingdom, and final glorification (v. 30).¹¹⁶

²⁹For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Missler: The Golden Chain: Romans 8:29-30

God's sovereign purpose is exemplified in the next two verses:

Spurgeon quipped: "God chose me before I was born. I'm glad He did; otherwise He might have changed His mind!"

Uncertainty about election arises from some kind of self-righteousness!¹¹⁷

McGee 29-30: "For" refers back to verse 28 to remind us that he is not talking about anybody being elected to be lost, but he is speaking of "the called," the predestined ones. Predestination never has any reference to the lost. You will never find it used in connection with them. If you ever hear someone talk about being predestined to be lost, you know he is not being scriptural. Predestination means that, when God saves you, He is going to see you through. Whom He foreknew, He predestinated, and whom He predestinated, He called, and whom He called, He justified, and whom He justified, He glorified. In other words, this amazing section is on sanctification -- yet, Paul does not even mention being sanctified. Why? Because sanctification is the work of God in the heart and life of the believer. This is God's eternal purpose. It just simply means this: When the Lord -- who is the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, the Good Shepherd of the Sheep, and Chief Shepherd of the Sheep -- starts out with one hundred sheep, He's going to come home with one hundred sheep; He will not lose one of them. You may remember that our Lord gave a parable about this, recorded in Luke 15. There was a shepherd, a good shepherd, who represents the Lord Jesus. One little old sheep got lost, got away. You would think He might say, "Well, let him go. We've got ninety-nine of them safe in the fold. That's a good percentage." Anyone raising sheep knows that if you get to market with a little over fifty percent of those that are born, you're doing well. But this is an unusual shepherd. He is not satisfied with ninety-nine. If He justifies one hundred sheep, He's going to glorify one hundred sheep. I'll make this rather personal. Someday He will be counting them in -- "One, two, three, four, five... ninety-seven,

¹¹⁵ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹¹⁶ ESV Study Bible Notes

¹¹⁷ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

ninety-eight, ninety-nine -- where in the world is Vernon McGee? Well, it looks like he didn't make it. We'll let him go because a great many people didn't think he was going to make it anyway." My friend, thank God He won't let him go. That Shepherd is going after him. The doctrine of election means that the Lord will be coming home with one hundred sheep! This is not a frightful doctrine; it is a wonderful doctrine. It means that Vernon McGee's going to be there; and it means you are going to be there, my friend, if you have trusted Christ. This is a most comforting doctrine in these uncertain days in which we live.¹¹⁸

BKC: 29-30. These verses give Paul's explanation of what it means to be one who has "been called according to His purpose" and why God keeps on working all their experiences together to their benefit (v. 28). Believers are those God foreknew. This does not mean simply that God foreknows what believers will do, but that God foreknows them. Nor does divine foreknowledge merely mean an awareness of or acquaintance with an individual. Instead it means a meaningful relationship with a person based on God's choice (cf. Jer. 1:4-5; Amos 3:2) in eternity before Creation. "He chose us in Him before the Creation of the world" (Eph. 1:4).

This eternal choice and foreknowledge involves more than establishing a relationship between God and believers. It also involves the goal or end of that relationship: Those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son (cf. 1 John 3:2). The entire group that is brought into relationship with God in His eternal plan by divine foreknowledge and choice is predestined (*proōrisen*, "predetermined"; cf. Eph. 1:5, 11). God determined beforehand the believers' destiny, namely, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ. By all saints being made like Christ (ultimate and complete sanctification), Christ will be exalted as the Firstborn among many brothers. The resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus Christ will become the Head of a new race of humanity purified from all contact with sin and prepared to live eternally in His presence (cf. 1 Cor. 15:42-49). As the "Firstborn" He is in the highest position among others (cf. Col. 1:18). Between the start and finish of God's plan are three steps: being called (cf. Rom. 1:6; 8:28), being justified (cf. 3:24, 28; 4:2; 5:1, 9), and being glorified (cf. 8:17; Col. 1:27; 3:4), and in the process not a single person is lost. God completes His plan without slippage. "Glorified" is in the past tense because this final step is so certain that in God's eyes it is as good as done. To be glorified is another way of saying that God's children will be "conformed" to His Son; and that is God's ultimate "purpose." No longer will they "fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).¹¹⁹

FCSBN: Foreknew. Typically, Jews believed in the sovereignty of God over the future but also in human free will. For God to "know" something may have relational intentions apart from simply knowing something ahead of time. For example, in Hebrew God "chose," literally "knew," Abraham (see Ge 18:19). It's possible that Paul meant that those God foreknew relationally, he predestined.¹²⁰

³⁰Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

¹¹⁸ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹¹⁹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹²⁰ First-Century Study Bible Notes

Missler: This eternal choice and foreknowledge involves more than establishing a relationship between God and believers. It also involves the goal or end of that relationship: Those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son:

1 John 3:2: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

[There is some very provocative physics implied in this: when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Not a 3-dimensional representation of an n-dimensional being—but as He really is since we will be like Him! Wow!!]

The entire group that is brought into relationship with God in His eternal plan by divine foreknowledge and choice is predestined, “predetermined” :

Eph 1:11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:¹²¹

³¹What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

Missler: Seven Questions

Seven questions which specifically raise the question of the believer’s eternal security in this magnificent conclusion to Romans 8:

Questions #1 and 2: Can opposition defeat the Christian?

“If” =1st class conditional: “since.”

Obviously, Satan and his demonic hosts are against believers (cf. Eph. 6:11-13; 1 Peter 5:8), but they cannot ultimately prevail and triumph over believers. God is the self-existent One and the sovereign Creator and, since He is for believers, no one can oppose believers successfully.¹²²

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Thus, in verse 31, after saying all these things, Paul then asks in typical rabbinical fashion: "What then are we to say?" This introduces us to the standard format whereby a Halakhic ruling (a Jewish religious ruling) is about to be made. And Rabbi Paul's ruling is this: if God is for us, who can be against us? The question, then, is: who is "us"? Who is it that God is for? Where in any of Paul's narrative has there been some overriding concern that people in general are against Believers (Jew or gentile) and so Paul is trying to convince them that God is for them, so don't worry about what "people" are saying or doing to you? In fact, whatever opposition there has been (although we've not found any in the Book of Romans) has been from Jews, not gentiles, and it has been against Paul specifically as an instigator of trouble. So as to what we just discussed, "us" is Paul and his Jewish brethren as he stated to start chapter 7. Here is what Paul is arguing for: it is selfevident that if God is for His chosen people ("us") then God has not and will not reject His people. In fact, as we'll see in Romans chapters 9-11, Paul will vigorously defend Israel on God's behalf because of the accusation that since Israel has rejected their Messiah, then God has decided to reject Israel. And by the way before we get to those chapters: it is not that there is any historical or biblical evidence that some wide scale or even meaningful protest from gentile Believers that Jews should not be regarded as God's people because most of Israel rejected their Messiah has surfaced yet. Rather it is that Paul anticipates that due to the controversial nature of gentile inclusion in partaking of Israel's covenants that it is an accusation

¹²¹ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹²² Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

that is bound to come up so he is going to deflect it right now. As Paul will argue, Israel's election as God's chosen people (His elect) has not been, will not, and will never be revoked by God. And no power, no principality, and no human king have the authority or ability to do so. But guess what: the Bishop of the Church of Rome in the 4th century decided that he could declare that the Church has replaced Israel, and a large portion of Christianity to this day has declared that God revoked Israel's election and has replaced it with the gentile Church.

Here's the thing: although Paul is speaking directly to Israel, at the same time these same principles apply to all Believers. Redeemed Israel and Believers (Jew and gentile) essentially belong to the same group (spiritually speaking), have been delivered by the same Messiah, are under the same covenants, and are the fulfillment of the same prophecies. And Paul is going to go to some lengths to speak on this complex matter in chapters 9 – 11. It is complex enough that it is difficult for the many denominations of Believers to come to an agreement on the subject. I maintain that it is a lack of understanding of 1st century Judaism and Jewish culture that is the culprit. We're going to work to sort that out over the next several weeks.¹²³

McGee: "What shall we then say to these things?" My answer is, "What can I say? This is so wonderful I have nothing to add!"

"Who can be against us?" God is on our side. Nobody will be able to bring a charge against us in His presence.¹²⁴

BKC: 31-32. It is astounding to realize that God's plan of salvation for people is a program that reaches from eternity past to eternity future which God will carry out perfectly. Recognizing this, Paul asked and answered (in vv. 31-39) seven questions to drive home the truth that a believer's eternal salvation is completely secure in God's hands. The first question is general, What, then, shall we say in response to this? (cf. 4:1; 6:1; 9:14, 30) The obvious response to 8:28-30 would be to say "Hallelujah," or to stand in open-mouthed amazement.

This leads to a series of six more specific questions. The first is, If God is for us, who can be against us? Obviously, Satan and his demonic hosts are against believers (cf. Eph. 6:11-13; 1 Peter 5:8), but they cannot ultimately prevail and triumph over believers. God is the self-existent One and the sovereign Creator and, since He is for believers, no one can oppose believers successfully. He is for believers to the extent that He... did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. The word "spare" (*epheisato*, from *pheidomai*) is the same word used in the Septuagint in Genesis 22:12 where the niv translates it "withheld." God said to Abraham, "You have not withheld your son." Then God directed Abraham to spare Isaac and to offer a ram as a substitute (Gen. 22:2-14), whereas God offered His own Son as the Sacrifice for sin (John 1:29). In view of this supreme act of God's grace, How will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Since God gave the greatest Sacrifice of all, His own Son, He will certainly not hesitate to give believers all other things pertaining to and leading to their ultimate sanctification (cf. 2 Peter 1:3).¹²⁵

¹²³ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹²⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹²⁵ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

Guzik: If God is for us, who can be against us? If all we had were the first few chapters of the Book of Romans, some might believe that God was against us. Now that Paul has shown the lengths that God went to save man from His wrath and equip him for victory over sin and death, who can doubt that God is for us?

“Our weak hearts, prone to legalism and unbelief, receive these words with great difficulty: God is for us...They have failed Him; but He is for them. They are ignorant; but He is for them. They have not yet brought forth much fruit; but He is for them.” (Newell)

Most all men say or think that God is for them – terrorists commit horrible crimes thinking that God is for them. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit guards this statement with an “if,” so we may know that just because a man thinks God is with him does not make it so. God is only for us if we are reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ.

Who can be against us? Likewise, despite the suffering Christians face, if God is for them, what does it matter if others are against them? One person plus God makes an unconquerable majority.

We certainly can be deceived into thinking that God is for us when He actually is not (as do cultists and those like them). Yet it cannot be denied that for those who are in Jesus Christ, God is for them!¹²⁶

³²He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Missler : Question #3: Will we have the resources?

(The KJV and RV failed to translate the little Greek particle *ge*, which gives this passage a peculiar emphasis.)

The word “spare” (*epheisato*, from *pheidomai*) is the same word used in the Septuagint in Genesis 22:12 translated “withheld.” God said to Abraham, “You have not withheld your son.” Then God directed Abraham to spare Isaac and to offer a ram as a substitute (Gen. 22:2-14), whereas God offered His own Son, on that very spot, as the Sacrifice for sin (John 1:29).

Since God gave the greatest Sacrifice of all, His own Son, He will certainly not hesitate to give believers all other things pertaining to and leading to their ultimate sanctification (cf. 2 Peter 1:3).

Answered: Rom 5:6-10. The next two questions are forensic (legal) in nature:¹²⁷

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 32 seems to be Paul widening his scope back to including gentile Believers by saying: CJB Romans 8:32 He who did not spare even his own Son, but gave him up on behalf of us all- is it possible that, having given us his Son, he would not give us everything else too? By saying "us all", the indication is that he is no longer speaking mainly to his Jewish brothers and he makes it clear, therefore, by saying "us all" that regardless of racial or ethnic heritage, God giving up His only Son shows that His love extends to everyone and not just to Jews. Thus, reckons Paul, if God is willing to do all that, He's not going to suddenly throw in the towel and

¹²⁶ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-8.cfm?a=1054001

¹²⁷ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

reverse course. He's not going to send His Son to the cross and then turn around and punish (meaning condemn) those who His Son died to save!¹²⁸

McGee: How wonderful that is! He did not spare His Son. He spared Abraham's son, but not His own. Since He gave His Son to die for us, He will give us all things that we need. Somebody may say, "But I may not be able to hold out." He is going to do that for you -- He will hold you. His sheep are safe, my friend. It is not because they are smart sheep. A rancher in San Angelo, Texas, who raises sheep, told me, "Sheep are stupid!" Also they are defenseless. They don't have sharp claws or fangs to protect themselves. They can't even run very fast. They are little old helpless animals. If a little old sheep stands up and sings, "Safe am I," is that sheep safe? Yes. Smart sheep? No, stupid. That little sheep is safe because he has a wonderful Shepherd. "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Dwight L. Moody illustrated it somewhat like this: Suppose I go into the finest jewelry store in the land, and they bring out the loveliest diamond, and the owner says, "It's yours!" And I say, "You don't mean that you are giving me this valuable diamond!" He says, "Yes. I am giving it to you." If he gave it to me, do you think I would hesitate asking him for a piece of brown wrapping paper to wrap it up and take it home with me? My friend, since God gave his Son to die for you, don't you know that He is going to give you everything that is necessary in this life and in the life to come?¹²⁹

³³Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is God that justifieth.*

Missler: Question #4: Will our failures reverse our justification?

"Charge" - *enkalesei*, "make a formal accusation in court; press charges"; cf. Acts 19:40; 23:29; 26:2) Satan is identified as "the accuser" of God's people (Rev. 12:10; cf. Zech. 3:1). His accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer's sinfulness and defilement. But Satan's accusations will be thrown out of court, because it is God who justifies.

The Judge Himself declares the accused person righteous on the basis of his faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24; 5:1). As a result, all accusations are dismissed and no one can bring an accusation that will stand. Rom 8:1!¹³⁰

McGee 33-34: God's elect are justified sinners. God has placed His throne behind them. Who is going to condemn them? Nobody can condemn them. Why? "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."

Christ has removed all condemnation, and the believer is secure because of the fourfold work of Christ: (1) Christ died for us -- He was delivered for our offenses; (2) Christ was raised from the dead, raised for our justification; (3) He is on the right hand of God. He is up there right now, my friend. He is the living Christ. Do you need Him? Why don't you appeal to Him? (4) He maketh intercession for us. Did you pray for yourself this morning? You should have. But if you missed praying, He didn't. He prayed for you. How wonderful! This fourfold work of Christ is the reason that nobody can lay anything to the charge of God's elect.¹³¹

¹²⁸ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹²⁹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹³⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹³¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

BKC: 33-34. The next two questions Paul raised and answered are forensic or legal in nature. Who will bring any charge (enkalesei, "make a formal accusation in court; press charges"; cf. Acts 19:40; 23:29; 26:2) against those whom God has chosen? Satan is identified as "the accuser" of God's people (Rev. 12:10; cf. Zech. 3:1). His accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer's sinfulness and defilement. But Satan's accusations will be thrown out of court, because it is God who justifies. The Judge Himself declares the accused person righteous on the basis of his faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24; 5:1). As a result all accusations are dismissed and no one can bring an accusation that will stand.

The related question is, Who is He that condemns? The Greek participle *ho katakrinōn* can have a future sense, "will condemn," which seems preferable here. (Cf. *katakrima*, "condemnation, punishment" in 8:1.) Jesus Christ is God's appointed Judge (John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31), so Paul answered this question by stating, Christ Jesus. But Jesus is the very One whom the believer has trusted for salvation. Furthermore, He is the One who died—more than that (lit., "but more") who was raised to life—who is at the right hand of God (cf. Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22) and is also interceding for us. The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Judge, but He is also the One with whom each believer is identified by faith. As a result, he is a believer's Sacrifice for sin (cf. Rom. 5:8; 8:32), his new life (a believer shares in Christ's resurrection life; 6:4, 8, 11; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 2:13), his Intercessor (cf. Heb. 7:25; also the Holy Spirit intercedes, Rom. 8:26-27) and his Defense (1 John 2:1). Certainly the Judge will not condemn His own who are in Him by faith! (cf. Rom. 8:1)¹³²

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

Missler: Question #5: Can anyone condemn us for any reason?

Jesus Christ is God's appointed Judge (John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31), so Paul answered this question by stating, Christ Jesus.

But Jesus is the very One whom the believer has trusted for salvation. Furthermore, He is the One who died—more than that (lit., "but more") who was raised to life—who is at the right hand of God (cf. Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22) and is also interceding for us. The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Judge, but He is also the One with whom each believer is identified by faith.

As a result He is a believer's Sacrifice for sin (cf. Rom. 5:8; 8:32), his new life (a believer shares in Christ's resurrection life; 6:4, 8, 11; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 2:13), his Intercessor (cf. Heb. 7:25; also the Holy Spirit intercedes, Rom. 8:26-27) and his Defense (1 John 2:1). Certainly the Judge will not condemn His own who are in Him by faith! (Again, cf. Rom. 8:1)¹³³

¹³² The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹³³ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Missler: Question #6 & 7: What kind of assurance can we have of victory?

The context (vv. 37, 39) shows that “the love of Christ” is His love for believers (not their love for Him; cf. 5:5).

The apostle suggested seven things a believer might experience (Paul experienced all of them; 2 Cor. 11:23-28) that some might think could come between a believer and Christ’s love:

Tribulation (*thilpsis*), “pressure or distress”; mentioned frequently by Paul in 2 Cor.);

Distress (*stenochoria*), lit., “narrowness,” i.e., being pressed in, hemmed in, crowded)

Persecution (*diogmos*) 10X in NT, always in reference to the gospel.

Famine (*limos*) 12X in NT; The God of Elijah looks after His own.

Nakedness (*gumnotes*); 1 Cor 4:11.

Peril [jeopardy, danger] (*kindunos*) 8X in one verse, 2 Cor 11:26. 1 Cor 15:30.

Sword. The world hates the saints.

These things—stated in increasing intensity—do not separate Christians from Christ; instead they are part of the “all things”

(Rom. 8:28) God uses to bring them to conformity to His Son.¹³⁴

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

So, the meaning of the statement of verse 35 that asks us who will separate us from the love of Christ; and then is followed with a list of hypothetical circumstances that theoretically could be the cause of separating Believers from Messiah's love.....trouble, hardship, persecution, hunger, poverty, danger and war.....is that while all these listed circumstances could certainly happen to a Believer, neither the Messiah nor The Father will pull back their love and cause the separation. Paul then quotes Scripture to support his doctrine. "For your sake we are being put to death all day long, we are considered sheep to be slaughtered". This passage is from Psalm 44:23 and it is about Israel being persecuted by her enemies and exiled to the nations, yet remaining faithful to God's covenant under the harshest of circumstances. Thus, the Psalm writer is appealing to God to come and deliver His people from their tribulation. This is to back up what he has just said about trouble, hardship, war, etc., of itself not being able to separate God from His chosen people. And since Believers have been included as among God's elect, then this is to say that hardships and persecutions are nothing new for those who love God and that we can not only withstand it when it happens, we should expect it TO happen. Paul does not own a pair of rose colored glasses.¹³⁵

McGee: He mentions everything imaginable here.

Is it possible that "tribulation" or trouble can separate us? No, my friend, because He won't let it. "Distress or anguish?" Oh, you may think God has let you down, but He hasn't. "Persecution" -- and this means legal persecution. It means there are those who will carry on a campaign against you. But that will not separate you from the love of Christ. "Or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" By the way, this is a brief biography of Paul's life. He knows from experience that these will not separate you from Christ's love.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹³⁵ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹³⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

BKC: 35-37. Paul's final questions are in verse 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? The context (vv. 37, 39) shows that "the love of Christ" is His love for believers (not their love for Him; cf. 5:5). The apostle suggested seven things a believer might experience (Paul experienced all of them; 2 Cor. 11:23-28) that some might think could come between a believer and Christ's love—trouble (*thlipsis*, "pressure or distress"; mentioned frequently by Paul in 2 Cor.) or hardship (*stenochōria*, lit., "narrowness," i.e., being pressed in, hemmed in, crowded) or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword. These things—stated in increasing intensity—do not separate Christians from Christ; instead they are part of the "all things" (Rom. 8:28) God uses to bring them to conformity to His Son. Then Paul quoted Psalm 44:22 to remind his readers that in this life the people of God must face much affliction (cf. John 16:33) including even martyrdom for some. In the early days of the church one or more Christians were martyred every day, or faced the possibility of it. Their persecutors valued Christians' lives as nothing more than animals to be butchered.

In all these adversities (cf. "all things" in Rom. 8:28 and "all things" in v. 32 with all these things in v. 37), rather than being separated from Christ's love, believers are more than conquerors (pres. tense, *hypernikōmen*, "keep on being conquerors to a greater degree" or "keep on winning a glorious victory") through Him who loved us. Jesus Christ and His love for believers enable them to triumph (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14).¹³⁷

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

Missler: Then Paul quoted Psalm 44:22 to remind his readers that in this life the people of God must face much affliction (cf. John 16:33) including even martyrdom for some. In the early days of the church one or more Christians were martyred every day or faced the possibility of it. Their persecutors valued Christians' lives as nothing more than animals to be butchered.¹³⁸

McGee: This is a quotation from Psalm 44:22: "...yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." This is a frightful picture of the saints in this day of grace. I believe with all my heart that this is the attitude of a satanic system toward the child of God even in this hour. Also the history of the church reveals this. My friend, if you stand for God today, it will cost you something.

My first job, as a kid about fifteen years old, was in an abattoir, a slaughterhouse. I worked right next to the man who took a sharp knife and cut the sheep's throat. To see animals slaughtered by the hundreds was a frightful spectacle. I got so sick I had to go outside and sit in the fresh air.

And, friend, it is sickening to see what is happening to some of the saints of God in our day. But even this will not separate us from the love of God.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹³⁸ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹³⁹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

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

Missler: In all these adversities (cf. “all things” in Rom. 8:28 and “all things” in v. 32 with all these things in v. 37), rather than being separated from Christ’s love, believers are more than conquerors (pres. tense, “keep on being conquerors to a greater degree” or “keep on winning a glorious victory”) through Him who loved us. Jesus Christ and His love for believers enable them to triumph (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14).¹⁴⁰

McGee: How can a sheep for the slaughter be more than a conqueror? This is another wonderful paradox of the Christian faith. What does it mean to be more than a conqueror? It means to have assistance from another who gets the victory for us, who never lets us be defeated. The victory belongs to Christ; not to us. The victorious life is not our life. It is His life.¹⁴¹

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

McGee 38-39: "For I am persuaded" means that he knows.

"Death" cannot separate us -- in fact, it will take us into His presence. The response of many of the early Christian martyrs when they were threatened with death was, "Thank you, you will transport me right into the presence of my Savior." You can't hurt people like that.

"Life" -- often it is more difficult to face life than to face death. But life's temptations, failures, disappointments, uncertainties, and sufferings will not separate us from the love of God that is in Christ our Lord.

"Angels" -- and I think he means fallen angels -- "principalities and powers" are spiritual enemies of the believer (see Eph. 6:12).

"Things present" means present circumstances.

"Things to come" refers to the future.

"Nor height, nor depth" may refer to the space age in which we live.

"Any other created thing" would include anything else you want to mention. Absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God which is centered in Christ.

My friend, salvation is a love story. We love Him because He first loved us. Nothing can separate us from that. We entered this chapter with no condemnation; we conclude it with no separation; and in between all things work together for good. Can you improve on this, friend? This is wonderful!¹⁴²

BKC: 38-39. Paul then ended his discussion on believers' safety in Jesus Christ and the certainty of their sanctification with a positive declaration—For I am convinced (perf. tense, "I stand convinced"; cf. 15:14) that nothing can separate believers from the love of God (God's love for them, not their love for God; cf. v. 35). Paul's list of 10 items begins with death, where the list of 7 items in verse 35 ended. These elements in God's universe include the extremes of existence: (1) death and (2) life (in either death [2 Cor. 5:8-9] or life, believers are in God's presence); the

¹⁴⁰ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹⁴¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁴² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

extremes of created spiritual armies: (3) angels and (4) demons (angels would not and demons could not undo God's relationship with His redeemed ones); the extremes in time: (5) the present and (6) the future (nothing known now, e.g., the hardships listed in Rom. 8:35, or in the unknown time to come); spiritual enemies: (7) powers (perhaps Satan and his demons; cf. Eph. 6:12; or possibly human governments); the extremes in space: (8) height and (9) depth (nothing overhead or underneath can suddenly come swooping down or up to sever believers from God's love); and (10) everything in the entire created realm. Absolutely nothing in His Creation can thwart His purpose for believers in Christ. What a climactic way to affirm the certainty of believers' salvation!¹⁴³

³⁹Nor 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.

Missler: His Final Guarantee

Wow. Angels! Principalities [demons]! Powers [of “darkness”! ...What else is there? What else, in the entire universe, matters?

This should really re-prioritize our entire outlook on everything!¹⁴⁴

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Thus to end this long line of thought that begins with Romans 7:1 and concludes with Romans 8:39, Paul says that nothing dead or alive, not God's own loyal spiritual beings like Angels, nothing that currently exists nor will ever exist by any means, no type of wicked spiritual force or power that refuses to take their direction from God, and nothing that God will create by means of His own will, will be able to snatch us away from God's love, shown through His Messiah.

Paul is fully convinced that neither God nor any other thing whatsoever can stand between us and Him. But notice that all of these things that theoretically could, but won't be able, to separate us from God's love are external to us and out of our control. Also notice that never is there an implication that as Believers we have lost all freedom of our thoughts, our bodies, and our choices; that once saved we somehow are blocked by God from walking away from His love at our own choosing. In fact, in a dire warning some passages earlier, Paul says this:

Romans 8:12-13 CJB 12 So then, brothers, we don't owe a thing to our old nature that would require us to live according to our old nature. 13 For if you live according to your old nature, you will certainly die; but if, by the Spirit, you keep putting to death the practices of the body, you will live.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

¹⁴⁴ Chuck Missler. Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

6 Different “Deaths”

1. Physical Death: when the soul leaves the body.

2. Spiritual Death: separation of the human spirit from the soul. Matt 8:22 “Follow me; let the dead bury the dead.” Let those who are spiritually dead bury the dead... Eph 2:1 “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Col 2:13 “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

3. Sexual Death.

Rom 4:19 “And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body [which is] now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb:”

4. Positional Death:

Rom 6:3-5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Col 3:3-4 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. [ff.: Count that true...]

5. Operational Death

Eph 5:14-18 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Addressed to the believer who is not filled with the Spirit is, thus, operationally dead... [Trammeled by their grave clothes... John 11.] Cf. Rev 3:1; Heb 6:1; Heb 9:14.

6. Second Death

Rev 20:6, 14. “He that is born once will die twice. He that is born twice will die but once.” Many uses for the term “death:” Matt 8:22. Eph 2:1; 1 Cor 15:31. Thus, v. 6 refers to Operational/temporal death. Gal 5:22 ...peace.