

## Romans Chapter 8

Before we begin studying Romans chapter 8, please review Romans chapter 7 by circling the correct answers.

1. Romans chapter 7 is about: **a.** the reign of sin among Christians, **b.** the works that keep us saved, **c.** the inability of Paul to get victory over sin, **d.** the truth that God's righteousness triumphs over sin.
2. Which of these is not scripture? **a.** the Talmud, **b.** the Tanakh, **c.** the Torah.
3. In Romans 7:14ff., Paul teaches that: **a.** Once we get saved, life is easy and Christians have few struggles, **b.** Once we get saved, Christians have a big struggle between the flesh and the spirit.
4. In Romans 7:24, Paul says: "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" Who is the answer to that question? \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 8 is Paul's great chapter about the Holy Spirit** in the life of the renewed man. According to Paul, the only way for Christians to be victorious is by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul mentions the Spirit 19 times in Romans 8. We've studied Identification and Indwelling and the struggle between sin and the new man in Romans 6. In Romans 7, we studied the struggle between the law and the new man. Now, in Romans 8, Paul teaches that victory comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit in the new man, not from our own power.

Paul does something else in Romans chapter 8. He puts some hooks in his writing, some subtle hints to unsaved Jews, who, if they read Romans 8, will be led on, into Romans 9, 10 and 11, as their final warning, before God turns away from the Jews as a nation, for the rest of the church age. Paul puts his heart into his writing, doing his utmost, by the Spirit, to bring the Jews to their Messiah.

### **V. Sanctification: Demonstration of God's Righteousness**

- a. Righteousness is produced in us by the Holy Spirit (Rom 6:1-23)**
- b. Righteousness triumphs over sin through Christ (Rom 7:1-25)**
- c. Righteousness and victory over sin by the Spirit (Rom 8:1-39)**

**Overview:** Paul sums up his major themes from Romans chapters 3-7 in Romans 8:1. He states the result of justification by faith, which is, **1.** no condemnation by the law of sin and death (8:2), and, **2.** the reality of the struggle of being a born again Christian dwelling in *the body of this death*, Romans 7:24, 8:1b.

**A.** In Romans chapter 6, the key word is sin. Paul uses the word, **sin**, 17 times in chapter 6. In Romans chapter 6, we died with Christ, we are dead to sin and alive unto God.

**B.** In Romans chapter 7, the key word is, law. Paul uses the word, **law**, 23 times in chapter 7. In Romans chapter 7, we died with Christ and are free from the law and married to Christ. Nevertheless, there is a conflict between what the flesh or the old man wants to do and what the spirit or the new man wants to do.

**C.** In Romans chapter 8, the key word is, Spirit. Paul uses the word, **Spirit**, 19 times in chapter 8, where the mortal bodies of Christians are quickened or made alive, by the Spirit, Romans 8:11, because our dead spirit has also been quickened, Ephesians 2:1 or born again, John 3:3-7, by the Spirit. Paul resolves the conflict between flesh and Spirit in chapter 8 and it's a dramatic loss for the flesh and a brilliant win for the Spirit.

**D.** There is a secondary key word in Romans 8, the Greek word, σάρξ sarx, sä'rks, translated, **flesh or carnal**, and used 14 times in Romans chapter 8.

Paul wants to be clear that the Spirit trumps the flesh in the life of a Christian. Christians are no longer servants of sin, Romans 6:7, no longer servants of the law, Romans 7:6, no longer servants of the flesh, Romans 8:9. We are free in Christ because the indwelling Spirit and the indwelling Christ have given us liberty in Christ, Galatians 5:1.

Born again Christians need to start living like dead men. Since we are dead to sin and dead to the law and made alive by the quickening Spirit of Christ, we should live in that reality. We must stop being servants to sin, the law and the flesh. We must live as the free men we are, made alive by the Spirit, in the glorious liberty, Romans 8:21, of the grace of God in Christ, Romans 6:7.

Paul has taught us about sin and the old man in chapter 6, and indwelling sin and the new man in chapter 7, so it is no surprise when, in 8:1, he summarizes what he taught, to tie his theme of justification by faith together with his teaching about the struggle all Christians experience with sanctification, as we walk in the Spirit and live for Christ. Romans chapter 8 is about people who are saved. It is not about unsaved people getting saved. Most heresies get started when someone takes a verse out of context and uses the out of context verse to teach something that isn't true, if the verse is left, in context.

Being saved is not a license to sin. *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid*, Romans 6:1-2, and so, as he did in 6:1-2, Paul again

warns us not to walk after the flesh in 8:1. This is standard Pauline exhortation and reminds us of Paul's exhortation in Galatians 5:1. In Romans 8, Paul teaches us about righteousness and victory in our Christian life, by the power of the Spirit. As we might expect, when Paul is writing about such important topics, what he writes is attacked, misunderstood and misinterpreted.

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

**There is therefore** - An old preacher used to say: "Whenever you see the word, *therefore*, in the Bible, check the context to see what it's there for." The word, *therefore*, is a conjunctive adverb. It connects a preceding thought to the next thought, to show consequence or to demonstrate cause and effect. Paul uses *therefore*, here, to link the truths he taught in Romans 7:15-25 with what he says in Romans 8:1.

*Therefore* means: for that reason. It's like saying: because of that, or, that being so, or, as a consequence of those facts, or, because of what I just told you, what I'm going to tell you now is also true. Paul uses the word, *therefore*, 27 times in Romans, to make his point. When Paul says, *therefore*, he means, as a consequence of what I taught you in Romans 7:15-25, about the struggle between flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new man, here is another truth you need to understand. And then he writes Romans 8:1.

In Romans 7:15-25, Paul pointed out the struggle between the old man and the new man. He summed up Romans 7 in verses 24-25, by exclaiming that Jesus Christ would deliver him from the body of this death. The last sentence of Roman chapter 7 says: "*So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*" And then, he writes Romans 8:1, "*who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" to remind us that we have, not only the responsibility but the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, to walk after the Spirit.

It is important to remember that Paul is talking mostly, to born again Christians who are saved and justified by faith. When we get to Romans 8:29-30, that is an important consideration because, knowing that Paul is speaking to Christians will help us understand the predestination verses. Christians are the people Paul addressed his Romans letter to: *beloved of God, called to be saints*, Romans 1:7. In 8:1, Paul is still writing to Christians, *them which are in Christ Jesus*.

Anyone can read Romans, saved or unsaved, and Paul certainly hopes his unsaved Jewish brethren will read it but mostly, Romans is aimed at Christians.

The fact that it's a struggle to serve the law of God and walk after the Spirit, isn't a valid excuse to serve the law of sin or walk after the flesh. We were saved so that we can love and serve God faithfully. That is what God expects of us all.

**therefore now no condemnation** - Paul is restating what he said in 5:16 and 18, that the lost are condemned but the saved are not condemned. The difference is, he is talking about practical Christian living in the last half of Romans 8:1, not a saved man being condemned and losing his salvation and going to hell, John 3:17-19, 3:36. Paul is teaching what Jesus taught.

A lost man is under the wrath of God but a believer in Jesus Christ is not under the wrath of God, doctrinally speaking, therefore, he is not condemned. Paul is continuing his train of thought from Romans chapters 6 and 7. For a Christian who is in Christ, there is no wrath of God and no condemnation by the law of sin and death, Romans 8:2. The condemnation Paul has in mind here is chastening, to help us get right with God, 1 Corinthians 11:32, Hebrews 12:1-13, not God taking away our salvation and condemning us to hell.

The law of Moses has lost its power to condemn us, now that we are in Christ. Paul isn't teaching us to be libertines. He isn't saying, Do anything you want to, now that you are saved and God won't condemn you. He is emphasizing our freedom in Christ (the biblical truth that we are free from OT law, Romans 10:4), not our liberty to live in sin. We are free from the condemnation of the law and that freedom means, we are free to serve Christ, by walking after the Spirit. The particular kind of condemnation Paul describes in 8:1, he promptly explains in 8:2-3.

**to them which are in Christ Jesus**, - You're either spiritually dead in Adam or spiritually alive in Christ. Those are the two choices. There isn't any other category. That is good news because it lets you know where you stand with God. Our Trinitarian God wants you saved, 2 Peter 3:9. Jesus, God the Son, has already, Himself, paid for your sins. God the Father has already accepted the payment Jesus made. You can therefore, get saved by receiving the atonement and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. When you do that, God the Holy Spirit applies salvation to you. Right now, are you in Adam? \_\_\_\_\_ or, Are you in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

The same thing that set us free from the law of sin also freed us from the condemnation of the law. What set me free from sin and the condemnation of the law? **a.** the fact that I'm a good person, **b.** the fact that I faithfully go to a good church, **c.** the fact that I've always been a Christian, **d.** the fact that I got in Christ by believing on Jesus Christ as my Savior.

*There is therefore now, no condemnation, to them which are in Christ Jesus.* That is an incredible fact! The term, *in Christ Jesus*, is never used in the OT. Most of the times the theological term, *in Christ*, is used in the NT, it is used by Paul. To be, *in Christ*, refers to the doctrinal position of a saved and born again believer. It refers to our standing in Christ. To be *in Christ* is a statement that someone is saved and born again and justified by faith, with all sins paid for in full and forgiven forever.

Paul uses, *in Christ*, 73 of the 76 times we find it in the NT. Luke uses it once and Peter uses it twice. Paul uses, *in Christ*, ten times in Romans. No saved person in the OT was in Christ. Getting in Christ only happens after the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Since the resurrection of Christ in the first century AD, people who get saved are, in Christ. That is important to understand because the dividing line between OT and NT is the Calvary event, including the glorious resurrection of Christ.

And, just so there is no misunderstanding about Calvinism, no one was, *in Christ*, before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4, 2:11-13, 2 Corinthians 5:17. You get in Christ when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, at a point in time (never in eternity past because no one was in Christ in eternity past), and when you personally receive *the gift of God which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Romans 5:17, 6:23, 10:9-10.

**who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.** - Becoming a Christian does not protect you from or remove you from, temporal condemnation for sin or temporal consequences of sin. Christians who use meth are condemned to get meth mouth. Christians who drive drunk are condemned to arrests and accidents, are condemned to injure or kill others and sometimes themselves, in car wrecks.

These ten words, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, are omitted in most modern Bibles but don't let anyone talk you into joining their apostasy and unbelief. These ten words are in [the majority of Greek manuscripts](#) and they are legitimately part of Romans 8:1. Every modern version which omits these ten words is wrong to do so. Three times in scripture, God warns us not to mess with His word, Deuteronomy 4:2, Proverbs 30:5-6, Revelation 22:18-19. Let's heed the warnings and trust the scriptures instead of cutting out words and verses, for no good reason.

These ten words are not an interpolation from Romans 8:4. These ten words are not the result of a scribal error in copying ancient manuscripts. These ten words, are not an attack by the apostle Paul, on our standing in Christ. These ten words do not make our salvation dependent upon works. Paul isn't suddenly reversing

everything he has taught so far in Romans, about justification by faith, without works.

The truth is, no one is, in Christ, because he walks after the Spirit. Walking after the Spirit is an indication you are saved, not the way to get saved. You're in Christ because you've believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. Paul is not explaining how to get saved in Romans 8:1. He is encouraging us to live up to our standing in Christ.

**who walk not after the flesh** - Paul repeats this theme from chapters 6 and 7, so we will understand that he is summing up those chapters in 8:1. We cannot understand Romans 8:1 until we factor in what Paul wrote in Romans 6 and 7. Paul has already taught us not to walk after the flesh in the verses which follow.

Remember: When buying real estate, the three most important factors are: location, location, location. When studying the Bible, the three most important factors are: Context, Context, Context. Notice the context of Romans 8:1. Paul has set it up so we cannot possibly misunderstand his meaning.

Here's the short version of the Romans 8:1 context. Paul sets the context in 7:25, where he writes: "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." Romans 7:25.

Paul repeats that comparison and contrast in 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." Romans 8:1.

Paul repeats the same phrase in 8:4. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:4.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Romans 8:6. Do you see the contrast Paul presents? \_\_\_\_\_

Yet again, Paul contrasts flesh and Spirit in 8:13. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Romans 8:13.

Paul's warning: walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, in Romans 8:1, is part and parcel of his message in Romans 6 and 7. We've seen five times, that Paul contrasts flesh and Spirit. Here are sixteen more times, for a total of twenty-one. Paul is intent on getting his point across in an unmistakable way.

**Sixteen more times, Paul reminds us of the conflict between our unsaved flesh and the indwelling Holy Spirit.**

1. *“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.”* Romans 6:6.

**1. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

2. *“For he that is dead is freed from sin.”* Romans 6:7.

**2. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, he that is dead is freed from sin.*

3. *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”* Romans 6:12.

**3. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.*

4. *“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”* Romans 6:13.

**4. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.*

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

**5. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

6. *“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”*  
Romans 6:18.

**6. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

7. *“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.”* Romans 6:19.

**7. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

8. *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”* Romans 6:22.

**8. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God.*

9. *“For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.”* Romans 7:15.

**9. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*

10. *“If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.”*  
Romans 7:16.

**10. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, If then I do that which I would not.*

11. *“For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.”* Romans 7:19.

**11. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

12. "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Romans 7:20.

**12. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

13. "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."  
Romans 7:21.

**13. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

14. "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."  
Romans 7:23.

**14. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, I see another law in my members... bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

15. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24.

**15. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

16. "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." Romans 7:25.

**16. Compare:** *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, with, So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

The conclusion of those twenty-one statements from Paul is that, Christians have a responsibility to resist sin and obey the Spirit, by the power of the Spirit. All of Romans 8:1 was written by Paul, including the last ten words, which inferior translations leave out. All of Romans 8:1 is legitimately part of scripture and all of Romans 8:1 should be in the Bible. Don't allow anyone to steal words and verses from the Bible.

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

**For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** - This is a new law, an automatic law, that is not based on our performance, that is not based on us trying to measure up by keeping it. It is automatic in the sense that it works like the law of gravity. No one has to enforce *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*. It just works. This new law is antithesis to the old law, from which, Christ has set us free. Paul may have in mind, Jesus' discourse in John 15:1ff. When we get saved, we are indwelt by the living Christ and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus becomes operative. We abide in Christ and Christ abides in us. We can not bear fruit of ourselves. Our spiritual life comes from Christ and depends on Christ.

We give thee, sacred Spirit, praise,  
Who in our hearts of sin and woe  
Makes living springs of grace arise,  
And into boundless glory flow.

In Romans chapters 6, 7 and 8, Paul writes under inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, carefully detailing God's plan for our victorious Christian life. The power for our sanctification, comes through Identification and Indwelling. We are identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. We are Indwelt by the risen Christ and by the Holy Spirit. He lives His life through us, Galatians 2:20. New life in Christ takes on new meaning when we consider the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Think carefully about those truths. We are saved and born again but our flesh didn't get saved. How then, can we live for the Lord when we are in this body of flesh? God's ingenious answer is: "I'll come and live in your flesh with you so you can access my power whenever you need it. As a Christian, you are supposed to live by My power." Have you ever heard a lost person say: "If I could see Jesus, then I might believe on Him." They want Jesus to come to them in person, like He came to the Jews in the first century AD.

When you receive Christ as your Savior, He does come to you in person, spiritually, and He, along with the Holy Spirit, does permanently indwell your physical body. By permanently, we mean, He indwells your physical body until the rapture or until you die and go to heaven, Ephesians 1:13-14. In other words, because God gave you eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, not temporary life, God makes provision for your victory in Christ and provides all the power

you need for that victory, for your entire life and then, for all eternity. Isn't that something to shout about? Kept by the Spirit! You cannot lose your salvation.

**hath made me free from the law of sin and death.** - Paul has already mentioned this law in Romans 7:21, 23, 25. In verse 21, he calls it, *a law*. In v. 23, he calls it, *the law of sin which is in my members*. In verse 25, he calls it, *the law of sin*.

God's plan for your life as a Christian is to live IN you and live His life through you, Galatians 2:20. God intends to take over your life after He saves you. He does that because He has plans for your life, Ephesians 2:10. The trouble with many Christians is, that is not what they have in mind when they get saved. God indwelling their body as His temple is not their plan. That is one reason professing Christians do so many crazy things and believe so many ungodly and unbiblical false teachings. This verse should be the theme of your Christian life.

*"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* Galatians 2:20.

*"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."* Galatians 5:1

*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Is that solid Bible truth a daily reality in your life? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you remind yourself of that truth? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you live as if you are free from the law of sin and death? \_\_\_\_\_ You are free in Christ. Start living like you are free.

**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:**

**For what the law could not do,** - The law could not justify or sanctify anyone. The law could not save anyone or give anyone eternal life or eternal security. The law could not kill anyone's old, fleshly nature. The law could not crucify anyone's flesh. The law could not make anyone born again. The law could not make anyone a new creature. The law could not give anyone the indwelling Christ or the indwelling Holy Spirit. The law could not give anyone victory over sin. The law could never, for anyone, be the power of God unto salvation.

The law could not do what the gospel can do because the law was weak, *through the flesh*. That's talking about the weak flesh of everyone who tried to

keep the law. The law could never be *the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession*. The law could not preserve us blameless. The law could not take away our sins. The law could not redeem us from our sins. Does this help you understand what the law could not do? \_\_\_\_\_

We have already pointed out that, doctrinal truths about NT salvation, which Paul writes in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and Colossians, were completely unknown in the OT and during the earthly ministry of Jesus. As great as they were, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David and Daniel had no idea about the NT spiritual truths God would reveal to the apostle Paul, Ephesians 2:15-18, 3:1-6.

It is because the Jews in Paul's day didn't know these truths that they struggled so mightily with Paul's teaching about Messiah Jesus. They thought that the law of Moses would last forever, yet that was never God's plan. God's plan involved the OT law ending when Messiah came, and being replaced by the NT and the Christian teaching of Paul, about grace, which he received by inspiration of God, 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

**in that it was weak through the flesh**, - How was the law weak through the flesh? The law had to contend with the weak flesh of the people to whom it was given. The law had no redeemer. The law had no Messiah. The law had Moses as its mediator, Exodus 20:18-21, Galatians 3:18-21. Before Messiah Jesus came, the law was *weak through the flesh*. The law told people what to do but it was up to the flesh to obey and the flesh is weak. Even if you were in the immediate presence of Jesus during His earthly ministry, your flesh would still be weak, Matthew 26:41, Galatians 5:17.

It's not even enough, to be standing right next to Jesus. That was the situation the disciples were in at the end of the OT period, on the law side of Calvary and it wasn't enough. You need to be in Christ and Christ needs to be in you, Colossians 1:27. The disciples didn't have that on the law side of Calvary but that's what we have now, as born again Christians on the grace side of Calvary. After Messiah Jesus came, the law became obsolete. Why? Because the law was *weak through the flesh*. Whose flesh? Our unsaved, human flesh.

Why couldn't the law be God's final answer? What was the weakness of the law, which kept it from achieving what grace achieves? The fatal flaw in the law was the people to whom it was given. We live in bodies of flesh, in a fallen, sin cursed world. The law provides moral guidance but no power to help us keep it. That is why the law was *weak through the flesh*. It's called the law of sin and death, in contrast to, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The law and our flesh tend toward death. Messiah Jesus brings life, rivers of life flowing out of us by the power of the Holy Spirit John 7:38-39.

**God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,** - God never consulted us before He originated His plan of redemption. Our input would have been worthless. The human race desperately needs a Savior. We don't need a kindness campaign. We don't need religious vestments, religious mumbo jumbo and religious good works. We are too far gone for that. The only thing that can help us in our hopeless situation is a real, living Savior. That's why God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. There was no other way, Galatians 3:21.

**in the likeness of sinful flesh** - Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, the holy infant in a real, sinless, human, physical body. Jesus was not born a sinner, like we are born. His flesh was not sinful flesh. Jesus had no sin nature. In Him was no sin, John 8:46, 19:4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5

1. Why does Paul phrase it that way, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In your own words, what is your understanding of what Paul is saying?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Can you think of a biblical reason why Jesus was not a sinner? **a.** the virgin birth, **b.** Jesus' innate goodness, **c.** He had no human father, **d.** His father was the Holy Spirit, Matthew 1:20.
4. From where do human beings get their sin nature, Romans 5:12? **a.** from their father, **b.** from their mother, **c.** from the gene pool, **d.** from God.
5. Because we inherit our sin nature from our biological father, when Paul says, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, he is making an oblique reference to: **a.** the virgin birth, **b.** the ride of the Valkyries, **c.** man's unending quest for immortality.

Because Jesus was sinless, Paul says, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*. A Savior with sinful flesh could not save himself, let alone save anyone else. Our sinless Savior was born of a virgin, Matthew 1:18-25. God's holiness and justice required a perfect, unblemished, sinless sacrifice. That sacrifice was Jesus. In the first century AD, scores of thousands of Jews believed on Jesus. They humbled down and recognized Jesus as their Messiah.

**and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:** - Jesus, dying on the cross for our sins, was God's sinless sacrifice, condemning sin in the flesh by keeping the law perfectly and never sinning Himself, yet paying for all our sins. Some view this as Paul's explanation of how God dealt with our sin nature. *And for sin*, is said to refer to our sin nature, instead of our individual sins, and, *condemned sin in the flesh*, is said to refer to Christ, by sacrificing Himself, condemning our sin nature, if we follow it instead of, walking after Christ. Think of the best person you know and compare that person to Jesus. Which would you want as a sacrifice for your sin, Jesus or the best person you know? \_\_\_\_\_

When Paul says, *condemned sin in the flesh*, he may be citing the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, in John chapter 3. “*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*” John 3:17. God didn’t send Jesus to condemn you or the world. Jesus condemns your sins, or, your sin nature. The truth is, when God sent Jesus, we were already condemned, in Adam, Romans 5:12.

Unsaved people hate to be condemned; hate to have anyone judge them. They think of themselves as sitting in the courtroom, waiting for a trial, innocent until proven guilty. The Bible truth is, their trial has already happened, they are already condemned, the Judge has already sentenced them and they are really, right now, sitting on death row, waiting to be executed. Only the grace of God stands between them and death.

Jesus is the only cure for your condemnation in Adam. A sinless man took your sins upon Himself, paid for your sins, His payment was accepted, and now, He offers you the free gift of salvation but you must believe on Christ to get saved. Have you taken the cure Christ offers, of salvation full and free, in the Lord Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you telling others about God’s cure for sin? \_\_\_\_\_

Life is short,  
Death is sure;  
Sin the curse,  
Christ the cure.

Sin had a hold on the flesh, that the law of Moses, aka, the law of the LORD, could not break. The flesh is so powerful that it has to be crucified. The flesh has to die. *Condemned sin in the flesh*, refers to Calvary and the death of Christ for our sins. Paul is referring to our Identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. Believing on Jesus as your Messiah and Identifying with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection breaks the power of the flesh and the power of sin. When that belief and Identification happen, there is a great change in the life of the new Christian.

**What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought**

since Jesus came into my heart!

I have light in my soul for which long I had sought,

since Jesus came into my heart!

I have ceased from my wandering and going astray

since Jesus came into my heart!

And my sins which were many are all washed away,

since Jesus came into my heart!

Refrain: Since Jesus came into my heart,  
since Jesus came into my heart,  
floods of joy o'er my soul like the sea billows roll,  
since Jesus came into my heart.

I'm possessed of a hope that is steadfast and sure,  
since Jesus came into my heart!  
And no dark clouds of doubt now my pathway obscure,  
since Jesus came into my heart!

There's a light in the valley of death now for me,  
since Jesus came into my heart!  
And the gates of the city beyond I can see,  
since Jesus came into my heart!

I shall go there to dwell in that city, I know  
since Jesus came into my heart!  
And I'm happy, so happy, as onward I go,  
since Jesus came into my heart!

[Rufus H. McDaniel](#), 1914, 1850-1940

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

**That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us**, - That is accomplished by Identification and Indwelling, not by us keeping the OT law ourselves. This isn't Paul reverting to works salvation and telling us to keep the law. He doesn't say, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled by us. God never starts you off by faith and then makes you revert to works. You don't personally fulfill the righteousness of the law.

The Lord Jesus fulfilled that for us because, frankly, we are not capable of fulfilling the righteousness of the law in ourselves. The indwelling Christ fulfills the righteousness of the law in us, Galatians 2:20. Some people interpret this verse as us needing to keep the law after we get saved. Of course, that is nonsense, according to Romans 6:14 and 10:4. Here's how it works in the real world.

**1.** We get saved. **2.** We are justified by faith alone. **3.** All of our sins are forgiven. **4.** We are set free from sin. **5.** Christ and the Holy Spirit come to dwell in the

temple of our body. **6.** We are set free from the law. **7.** Christ lives in us and loves through us, Romans 5:5. **8.** When we love people through the power of Christ, that fulfills the law. That is, *the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.* Romans 5:5.

*“For sin shall not have dominion over you:  
for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”* Romans 6:14.

*“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”*  
Romans 10:4

*“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another:  
for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”* Romans 13:8.

*“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this;  
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”* Galatians 5:14.

*“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”* Romans 5:5.

1. Does God require Christians to keep OT law after we get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How do we know, Christians don't have to keep OT law? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How do Christians fulfill the law, Romans 13:8, Galatians 5:14? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where does our ability to love others come from? \_\_\_\_\_

**who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.** - Why does Paul use this qualifier twice, in Romans 8:1 and 8:4? What does it mean, to *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*? Is that difficult to figure out or is it pretty easy? \_\_\_\_\_

**who walk not after the flesh** - Walking after the flesh is living for the flesh. It means focusing on the desires of your unsaved flesh instead of, on the Spirit. It means putting Christ last instead of putting Him first in your life. A life lived for the flesh is characteristic of unsaved people. All too often, it is also characteristic of saved people. It may mean hedonism and it may mean public service because you receive acclaim and fame, to sooth your proud human spirit.

**If it brings more glory to you than it brings to God,  
you're walking after the flesh.**

If people are talking about how great you are instead of, how great God is, that's walking after the flesh. The problem with walking after the flesh is, God never

leads you to walk after the flesh and never blesses you for walking after the flesh. You could be the most famous Christian celebrity on earth and be walking after the flesh, instead of, after the Spirit. Millions of carnal Christians may think you're a spiritual giant but you and God know the truth. When you walk after the flesh, you only fool the unwise and the undiscerning.

**but after the Spirit.** - Walking after the Spirit is walking, *in the Spirit*, Galatians 5:16, 25. Walking after the Spirit is being, led by the Spirit, Romans 8:14, submitting and surrendering to the Spirit, Romans 12:1-2. Walking after the Spirit is not going your own way, doing your own thing, following the religious crowd or becoming a disciple of the latest, faux spiritual, Christian guru. Walking after the Spirit is following Jesus, moment by moment, day by day.

You can only follow Jesus because the Spirit has taken up residence in your fleshly body, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Paul is talking about our daily walk as Christians and contrasting: walking after the flesh with, walking after the Spirit. As long as we are in this body of flesh, we are looking for the Uppertaker, not the Undertaker. The Uppertaker will change our vile body, Philippians 3:20-21, and that is precisely what we need.

1. What is the difference between walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why does Paul make such an issue of this? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is the flesh really that bad? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Since I am saved, why does it really matter if I walk after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh;** - Paul seems to be echoing the words of Jesus to Nicodemus in John 3. "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" John 3:6.

Paul provides two lists of some of the works of the flesh, in Galatians 5:19-21 and Colossians 3:5, 8. **List 1.** "*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 also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" Galatians 5:19-21.

**List 2.** *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry... But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”* Colossians 3:5, 8.

Some people believe that Paul is contrasting the unsaved and the saved in this Romans 8:5-6 passage. They say: *they that are after the flesh*, are unsaved and *they that are after the Spirit*, are saved. Paul disposes of that belief in Romans 8:6, when he says: *to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*. Paul has already told us, *I am carnal*, in Romans 7:14. He wasn't saying, I'm not saved in 7:14 and he's not saying, one who is carnally minded is unsaved, in Romans 8:6. Paul is describing Christians.

He is pointing out the problem we face as Christians. Our flesh didn't get saved and that causes a lifelong conflict between our born again spirit and our unsaved flesh, between our old man and our new man, between our old, fallen nature and our new, born again nature, between the outward man and the inward man, between flesh and Spirit. The indwelling Spirit of Christ is God's brilliant solution to our problem. Give God the benefit of the doubt. He did the right thing by saving us and then indwelling us. God's elegant solution works.

**but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.** - There is, here in Romans, an echo of Jesus talking to Nicodemus. *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* John 3:6. Paul provides a check list of some of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 and another list in Colossians 3:12-15. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”* Galatians 5:22-23.

*“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”* Colossians 3:12-15.

It is easy to use those contrasting lists from Paul, to the Galatians and the Colossians, to see how we're doing spiritually. If you are, after the flesh, that is easy to discern. If you are, after the Spirit, that is equally easy to discern. But why is that important? Since we're saved forever, why should we worry about what we do and how we live? \_\_\_\_\_

It is important to God that we live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, Galatians 5:16, 25, (or, *after the Spirit*), because Christ intends us to live by the faith of the Son of God, Galatians 2:20. Everyone needs to understand that, after we get saved by faith, God expects us to live by faith for the rest of our lives. What do you think of this Christian truth in Galatians 2:20? \_\_\_\_\_

*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20.*

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

**For to be carnally minded is death;** - In Romans 7:14, Paul used the Greek word, σαρκικός sarkikos, pronounced sär-kē-koss, which we translate, carnally. Sarkikos is an adjective. Paul uses the same Greek word, σάρξ sarx, pronounced sārks, as a feminine noun, 27 times in Romans, including 14 times in Romans chapter 8. It refers to the flesh or the body or, in this case, in Romans 8:6, to the mind. In Romans 1:3, it refers to the sinless body of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;”* Romans 1:3.

This is the same carnal mind Paul wrote about in Romans 7:14. He struggled with the flesh and every Christian who ever lived has also struggled with the flesh. The church at Corinth was one of the most carnal, fleshly churches in the NT. They were messed up in every way imaginable. Paul pointed out their carnality in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4. They couldn't even get the Lord's Supper right and Paul warned them in 1 Corinthians 11:28-30, that God had killed some of them because they weren't judging their sins and getting right with God, before taking communion.

God and Paul warn against a carnal mind because a carnal mind leads to a carnal life, to a life walking after the flesh or a life that is not, spiritually minded. A carnal mind is the opposite of a spiritual mind. Many Christians have shipwrecked themselves in this area. They get saved and decide they don't need to believe what the Bible teaches and Christians believe, and so, they walk after the flesh. That is a mistake, with negative, life changing consequences.

**Romans 8:6 explains why God doesn't admire carnality in Christians and God doesn't admire false religions and unsaved religious leaders,** 1 Kings 18:17-40. The real Jesus of the Bible is never ecumenical. Ecumenical Jesus is a religious, fake, made up Jesus. Christians shouldn't follow fake Jesus anywhere.

God never makes common cause with false religions and false teachers. Lukewarm, wishy washy religionists make God sick, Revelation 3:14-16.

Do carnally minded, backslidden, flesh oriented, saved people die early? Is this a warning from God and Paul, for fleshly Christians to get right with God or face the consequence of an early death? \_\_\_\_\_ "*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*" Romans 8:14. Does Paul mean what he says? \_\_\_\_\_

**Jesus was not a builder of religious bridges.** If the Jesus you follow is an interfaith kind of guy, you're following the wrong Jesus. The real, biblical Jesus never tried to build religious coalitions with other faiths, 2 Corinthians 6:14-17. The real Jesus of the Bible will send you to hell for eternity before He will accept your interfaith and other-faith, religious views. Satan is a great interfaith, religious coalition builder and he counterfeits religion and spirituality, to fool the unwary. Jesus told us, "*I am the door of the sheep,*" John 10:1-10. Anyone who tries to come in, any other way than Jesus as the door, is a thief and a robber.

### **What is wrong with interfaith activity?**

1. Jewish believers in the Old Testament did NOT practice interfaith.
2. God in the Old Testament did NOT practice interfaith.
3. Prophets in the Old Testament did NOT practice interfaith.
4. No human author of scripture practiced interfaith.
5. The apostles in the New Testament did NOT practice interfaith.
6. Jesus in the New Testament did NOT practice interfaith.
7. Interfaith is unscriptural, unGodly and unChristian.

*"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3.*

- a. Interfaith activity denies the teaching of Jesus.
- b. Interfaith activity denies the teaching of the Bible.
- c. Interfaith activity denies the truth of the glorious gospel of Christ.
- d. Interfaith activity denies the need for evangelizing the lost.
- e. Interfaith activity tacitly endorses the false interfaith belief that we all worship the same God.
- f. Interfaith activity grieves the Holy Spirit because it compromises biblical truth and Christian discipleship.
- g. Interfaith activity harms the Christian mission to win lost, hell-bound sinners to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- h. Interfaith activity asserts a false equivalence between the truth of Christianity and the false teaching of every other religion.

i. Interfaith activity sounds loving but is really unloving because, in interfaith services, Christians always cut their message and the content of their prayers.

1. Should Christians join interfaith groups? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did Jesus build interfaith bridges to other religions? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Should Christians build interfaith bridges to other religions? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why is interfaith activity wrong? \_\_\_\_\_

**The Jesus of the Bible never made affinity with religious fakirs, bilkers, cheats, cheaters, chisellers, confidence men, defrauders, dodgers, finaglers, fraudsters, hoaxers, inter-faithers, scammers, swindlers and false teachers.** If your idea of Jesus causes you to support religious fakirs and false teachers and interfaith activities, you are not following the biblical Jesus and you need to stop supporting them and start following the real Jesus of the Bible.

**Christians should never support false churches,** interfaith activities, false religions and religious false teachers with their influence, their money and their talents. Read Deuteronomy 28 and Matthew 23 to discover how OT believers and the real, historical Jesus dealt with false religions and false teachers. If you follow Jesus, you cannot support what Jesus condemned. If you support what Jesus condemned, you are not following Jesus, as His disciple.

**to be carnally minded is death** - Could God and Paul make it any more plain? What precisely does this phrase mean, *to be carnally minded is death*? In the OT, it meant that Adam and Eve, followed the flesh instead of obeying God and they died spiritually, when they ate the forbidden fruit, Genesis 3:5. In the OT, Leviticus 18:24ff., it meant that religious Jews who tried to add worship of false gods to their Judaism, died for their sinful disobedience and rebellion against God. In the OT, it meant that 3000 Jews died, after dancing naked around the golden calf, Exodus 32:15-35, Deuteronomy 9:16-17, 19, 24, while Moses was on Mount Sinai, receiving the Ten Commandments direct from the hand of God. God hates it when His followers live like pagans.

1. Is it carnally minded to obey what the Bible says, in context? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is it carnally minded to rebel against what God says? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is being carnally minded a healthy way to live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. *Carnally minded* means: **a.** Walking after the Spirit, **b.** Walking after the flesh, **c.** Ignoring what the Bible says and following my unsaved flesh.

For a Christian to be saved by grace and then, live a carnal life, is death. Don't try that at home because it won't turn out well for you. Being a flesh oriented Christian begins in the mind. That's why we need to monitor what we feed our

mind, what we watch, what we listen to, what we read. Filth in, filth out; unbelief in, unbelief out. When you read Romans 8:6, do you get the idea that God and Paul are joking around? \_\_\_\_\_

*“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,  
but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 14:12*

*“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are  
now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.” Romans 6:21*

**but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** - *Spiritually minded* is a consistent concept in the Christianity Paul lives and teaches. He makes the point that what you believe in your heart, must impact your daily life. Your Christianity shouldn't be theoretical; it should be practical, something you live every day. Biblical Christianity is not a Sunday go to meeting, religious cloak, which you put on and take off. If your Christianity doesn't affect the way you live seven days a week, you need to reexamine your faith.

1. Is God serious about Christians living faithful, honest lives? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is it possible for Christians to walk after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is it God's plan for Christians to walk after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is God's plan for Christians, Romans 8:4? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Name a consequence, for walking after the flesh, Romans 8:6? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What does it mean to be spiritually minded? \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Because the carnal mind** -
1. What is, the carnal mind? \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Is the carnal mind pleasing or displeasing to God? \_\_\_\_\_
  3. What has God given, to provide us victory over the carnal mind? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. What do you view as the danger of having a carnal mind? \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Can a Christian with a carnal mind please God? \_\_\_\_\_

**Because the carnal mind is enmity against God:** - Calvinists use this verse as a proof text for Total Depravity or Total Inability. When they read it, they see it this way. “Because the unsaved mind is enmity against God: for it cannot believe the gospel of God, neither indeed, can it want to.” Calvinists interpret the carnal mind as the unsaved mind. They view unsaved people as utterly incapable of believing the gospel and getting saved, thus, their doctrine of Total Depravity. Of course, that is not the context or the meaning or the teaching of Romans 8:7 or the rest of the Bible.

## **A proof text that ignores context is a pretext for false teaching.**

**enmity against God** - Enmity means, actively opposed and hostile to God. Enmity is antagonism to and contention with, God and what He is doing. The carnal mind is the flesh focused mind. Instead of being led by the Spirit, the carnal mind is led by the flesh. The carnal mind, even of a Christian, is enmity against God. Getting saved and then, continuing to be led by the carnal mind or, the flesh, is a sure-fire way to wreck your spiritual life. God gave us the indwelling Holy Spirit so that we no longer need to give in to the carnal mind. An unsaved man doesn't have the indwelling Holy Spirit. The indwelling Spirit is the key to victory for every Christian.

What does, *enmity against God*, mean? \_\_\_\_\_

The entire Bible can be boiled down to one important question. **Who is going to run things?** God or Satan, good men or wicked men? Your born again spirit or your flesh? The carnal, fleshly mind wants to run things. The carnal mind wants to go its own way and do its own thing, instead of following Jesus. Paul addresses the same theme here. Who is going to run your life as a Christian, you or the Spirit? God didn't save you so you can be in charge, Ephesians 2:10.

**for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.** - The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God because it is in rebellion against God. The carnal mind is the flesh focused, rebellious, worldly mind, which is linked to your flesh. The carnal mind is conformed to this world, Romans 12:2. That's why Paul tells us, *Be not conformed to this world*, Romans 12:1-2. The carnal mind says: "Me first and after that, me, and if there's anything left, then you." Carnal Christians are, by definition, shallow, immature Christians. The fleshly mind will never follow Christ, will never be led by the Spirit.

A saved man's flesh:

1. Still Natural - Unsaved - 2 Cor 2:14
2. Still Carnal - Flesh focused - Rom 8:6
3. Still Enmity against God - Rom 8:7
4. Still Cannot please God - Rom 7:18
5. Still the outward man - 2 Cor 4:16

The carnal mind, no matter its selfish intentions, always rebels and goes against God. The carnal mind never makes you a better Christian, never makes you more spiritual, never makes you a better witness for Jesus. God doesn't bless or love, anything about the carnal mind. God's intention is that you never follow your carnal mind. You will be a genuine disciple of Jesus or, you will follow your own fleshly path or the path of someone who leads you away from Jesus.

## **Christians already have renewed minds, Romans 12:1-2.**

The renewing of our mind happened at regeneration, when the Holy Spirit made us born again and spiritually baptized us into the body of Christ, Romans 12:1-2, Titus 3:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13. That is when He renewed our mind. The indwelling Spirit gives us authority and power to live and make God honoring decisions because of our renewed mind. For us as Christians, a large part of using our renewed mind is, reading the Bible, saturating our minds with the word of God and then, being led by the Spirit so we can walk in the Spirit. We ought to do that and yet, so many professing Christians these days do not read the word of God and refuse to be led by the Spirit.

**8 - So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.** - Why can someone in the flesh, not please God? \_\_\_\_\_  
If you really want to please God, what must you do? \_\_\_\_\_

**So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.** - Nothing about your flesh pleases God. Did you get that? Nothing about your flesh pleases God. It doesn't matter how beautiful or handsome you are. It doesn't matter how pure and organic is your diet or how many hours a week you work out. Nothing about your flesh pleases God. You might want to jot that down somewhere. Your flesh doesn't impress God, Psalm 147:10 and your fleshly mind doesn't impress God.

Think about this. No one can tell, just by looking at you, whether or not you are saved. The only evidence anyone has that you are saved is, your behavior. That's why Paul makes such a point about, not walking after the flesh and not being carnal or fleshly, and being led by the Spirit. God intends to use you as a soul-winning witness for Jesus. He cannot do that if you're living after the flesh and walking after the flesh. Have you decided to follow Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

Calvinists use Romans 8:8 as a proof text for Total Depravity or Total Inability. Calvinists read it this way. "So then they that are unsaved cannot believe the gospel, or, cannot obey the gospel and get saved, because they are Totally Depraved." Calvinists interpret, pleasing God, to mean, believing the gospel and getting saved. Of course, that is not the context or the meaning or the teaching of Romans 8:8 or the rest of the Bible.

### **A proof text that ignores context is a pretext for false teaching.**

Romans 8:8 is not about whether or not a lost man can get saved. Paul isn't saying, A lost man cannot get saved. Any unsaved man can believe the gospel because, Paul has already told us in Romans 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the*

*gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”* The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes it. The gospel contains power to help a lost man believe it. Belief is God’s unchangeable condition for salvation, not Unconditional Election and not Irresistible Grace. God doesn’t save you until you believe on Him.

Your unsaved flesh should never control your giving, your heart, your mind, your love life, your music, your preaching, your teaching, your theology, your witnessing or your worship. You have freewill so you have a choice. You don’t have to live for the flesh or walk after the flesh or live in sin.

There is a difference between walking after the flesh and being in the flesh. Saved people sometimes walk after the flesh but saved people are no longer in the flesh. Unsaved people are in the flesh and they walk after the flesh. In the flesh, is a doctrinal term, like being, in Christ. In the flesh, is the opposite of being, in Christ. Why can’t fleshly people please God? Because it takes faith to please God and fleshly people don’t have faith. That is why we witness for Jesus. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, Romans 10:17.*

*“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.”* 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

*“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”*

1 Corinthians 1:21.

*“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

Hebrews 11:6.

**1.** Without faith, it is difficult to please God. T or F. **2.** Without faith, you can still please God if you try really hard. T or F. No one who is, doctrinally, in the flesh, meaning, a lost man, can please God. By the same token, no one who walks after the flesh, meaning a saved man, can please God. This is a warning to unsaved people (in the flesh), who view themselves as spiritual and think, erroneously, that they are pleasing God. It is also a warning to saved people (walk after the flesh), who want to live like a lost man and think that they can, somehow, still please God. A fleshly life is a wasted life, for lost folks and saved folks alike.

1. An unsaved man is: **a.** in the flesh, **b.** not in the flesh, **c.** in Christ.

2. According to Romans 8:8, can an unsaved man please God? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
4. A saved man is: **a.** in the flesh, **b.** in Christ, **c.** in the world.

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

**But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,** - Paul is talking to Christians about our Standing in Christ. Doctrinally speaking, in the flesh, means a man is unsaved. After we get saved, we are still living in our body of flesh but our Standing with God is: we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit and in Christ. God calls, *those things which be not*, as though they were, Romans 4:17. Romans 8:9 describes standing, not state. Paul has described carnal Christians in vs. 7-8. Now he encourages people who are already saved, to remember their Standing in Christ.

1. What is a carnal Christian? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your Standing with God? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your State in this world? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does it mean to be, in the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What does it mean to, walk after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is someone, in the flesh, saved or lost? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is someone who, walks after the flesh, saved or lost? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the difference between being in the flesh and walking after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

Some Christians have been taught, they have to earn their salvation by the works of the law, by keeping the law. They've been taught, they have to measure up or they will lose their salvation. Paul never teaches that in the Bible. Christian life is easier when we believe what God says about us in the Bible and base our faith on Bible truth.

**if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.** - Paul isn't suggesting that the Spirit of God doesn't dwell in some Christians. He is simply pointing out the biblical reality, that the Spirit of God does indwell all believers in Christ. God has particular reasons for giving us the indwelling Holy Spirit. Here in Romans 8, the reason Paul is focused on is, the Spirit giving us victory over sin, giving us power to stop being carnal, to stop walking after the flesh.

This is fundamental because, when we have victory over sin, we become fruitful Christians and we can minister effectively, to the glory of God. Beyond fruit bearing, God knows we will have testings, trials and tribulations. The Spirit is

God's provision of all our needs in advance, so that we are prepared, by the grace of God, for anything life throws at us. Do you desire the power of the Spirit in your life? \_\_\_\_\_ If you are saved, you have the Holy Spirit, living in your body as His temple. The indwelling Spirit is the key to victory over the flesh.

*“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;”* Colossians 1:11.

*“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;”* Ephesians 3:16.

The Christian life is about more than having victory over sin. Victory over sin is a means to an end. Among other things, we are ambassadors for Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:20. Our purpose is to witness for Jesus by proclaiming reconciliation. That means: preaching the gospel, Romans 1:16, so that others can get saved. We are partners with God in evangelizing the world. You probably didn't know that when you first got saved but it's true. God wants you to work with Him in the worldwide, soul winning harvest.

**Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.** - If you don't have the indwelling Spirit, then you are not saved. When you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit moved in and took up residence in your body. The Spirit indwelt your fleshly body, making it His temple for as long as you live or until the rapture, Ephesians 1:13-14. That means that, wherever you go, whatever you do, the Holy Spirit is always with you, and so is the indwelling Christ. Note carefully what Paul says in Ephesians 1:13-14.

The Holy Spirit is God's earnest, God's guarantee to you, that He will eventually redeem the purchased possession, meaning, God will, eventually, give you your glorified body. You have God's guarantee, the Holy Spirit, walking around with you, inside you, 24/7. Do you have enough spiritual common sense, to trust God on this? \_\_\_\_\_ You can never be lost. Once you're saved, you're saved forever. That's eternal security, guaranteed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Those Bible truths ought to comfort and challenge you, to live up to the spiritual blessings you have from God. Many Christians take God to strange and sinful places, as if they've forgotten to whom they belong, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. Make a note of it. The Corinthian Christians had spiritual gifts and could put on a good religious show but they were still, so carnal, 1 Corinthians 3:1-4, they didn't even know that their bodies were the temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Many Christians live as if their body is not the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

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

**And if Christ be in you,** - When Paul says, if, here, he uses, if, to mean, because. If Christ be in you, = Because Christ is in you. He isn't saying, some Christians may not have Christ in them. Are you saved? If you are saved, then you are indwelt by the living Christ because all Christians have Christ in them, Colossians 1:27. Because you are indwelt by the living Christ, your body is dead because of sin and you're no longer a slave to sin.

That's another way of saying, you are freed from sin and therefore, you are no longer a slave to sin. You're still living in a body of unsaved flesh but you're no longer a servant or a slave to the flesh. You are free in Christ. Freedom in Christ means freedom from bondage to sin and freedom to joyfully serve God.

1. Are you using your freedom from sin, to serve Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does sin control your life or does Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you know God's will for your life? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you experience the life of the Spirit, now that you are saved? \_\_\_\_\_

**the body is dead because of sin;** - Paul is restating what he said in Romans 6:2, 7, 10, 11, 7:4-6, 9. He taught us those truths and in chapter 8, Paul restates his inspired truths and ties it all together. Every Christian has experienced a dramatic, eternity altering change in his life. He has passed from darkness to light, from death to life. He was once alive unto sin and dead to the Spirit. Now he dead to sin and the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

*"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts 26:18.*

**but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.** - What is in view here is the imputed righteousness of Christ. There is deep and profound thought behind what Paul writes. The new Christian has the indwelling Holy Spirit and the imputed righteousness of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul says the man who gets, in Christ, has become a new creature. Romans 8:10 describes it from God's viewpoint. When you get in Christ, Christ gets in you. He indwells your heart by faith, Colossians 1:27, and that makes all the difference.

You are dead to sin, you are freed from sin; sin shall not have dominion over you. And with all of that, you are permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit and *the Spirit is life because of righteousness*. God didn't make you righteous; He simply

declared you to be righteous. God did everything necessary to pay for your sins, to save you from hell, to kill the power of the flesh so He can indwell your physical body as His holy temple and bring you everlasting life as well as, new life and productive service for God, right now, all by the power of God.

1. Is a Christian in the flesh or in the Spirit, Rom 8:9? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The Spirit of God dwells in: **a.** some Christians, **b.** all Christians.
3. Why does God want us to have victory over sin? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Can a man be saved and not have the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is every human being the temple of the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Rom 8:10 - The body is dead - Is that literally true? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Spirit is life because of righteousness? What does that mean? \_\_\_\_\_
8. If you're saved, are you set free from sin? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, -** Him is God the Father. The Spirit is the Holy Ghost or the Holy Spirit. He does more than convict you of sin, John 16:9. He does more than baptize you into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13. He quickens your mortal bodies so that you can have victory over sin in your body of flesh. He also renews your mind, Titus 3:5. Make sure you understand this. The indwelling Spirit doesn't make you into Superman. You will not leap tall buildings in a single bound. You will not fly through the sky and stop meteors, but you can definitely live for Jesus.

**he that raised up Christ from the dead** - The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead now dwells in your body of flesh and makes it His temple. It is the Spirit who gives you power to subdue the flesh, mortify the flesh, put down the flesh, so you can live peaceful and victorious in Christ. The Spirit's job is to sanctify you, moment by moment, day by day. That process lasts your entire life, from the time you get saved to the time you die or go home to heaven in the pre-tribulation rapture. That's what Paul means when he writes: *shall also quicken your mortal bodies*.

**shall also quicken your mortal bodies** - What does Paul mean when he says: *quicken your mortal bodies*? We gain insight from Romans 8:13. It appears to be a contradiction or a paradox but the job of the indwelling Holy Spirit is to help us mortify the deeds of the body Colossians 3:1-10. Mortify means to kill, to destroy, to render harmless. Kill the deeds of the body means to have daily

victory over sin. The Holy Spirit quickens our mortal bodies so we can mortify the deeds of the body, so we can have daily victory over sin.

Before we were saved, we had deep rooted sin habits. Many saved people, because they walk after the flesh, have also developed deep rooted sin habits. The way to fix that problem is to start where you are and walk after the Spirit. The job of the indwelling Holy Spirit is to mortify the deeds of the body. He does that with you, more than for you. In plainer words, your freewill is involved. You need to make up your mind to be led by the Spirit. It should be a conscious daily decision on your part. That's why Paul tells us in Galatians 5:16 - *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

1. Who helps you break your deep rooted sin habits? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is God's purpose in quickening your mortal body? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why is your body the temple of the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the key to having daily victory over sin? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is the Spirit of God leading you every day? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you following the Spirit's leading every day? \_\_\_\_\_

**Quicken your mortal bodies** - The Spirit dwells in the temple of your fleshly body on purpose, for a purpose. Paul is saying that the Holy Spirit will give you victory over your carnal nature, your flesh nature, over the sinful proclivities and habits of the old man. He isn't saying, the Holy Spirit will make you into Superman physically or spiritually. He is saying: the key to victory over sin and the key to living a victorious Christian life is, the Holy Spirit who dwells in you. It's His power, not your power, that gives you victory over sin.

The same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead now dwells in our mortal body. If the Spirit was powerful enough to raise Jesus from the dead, He is powerful enough to give you victory over your fleshly lusts and sins and make you successful in evangelizing the lost. That startling Bible truth ought to change the way all of us live and act and think.

Are you beginning to understand God's plan for your victorious Christian life? \_\_\_\_\_ You salvation comes from God. Your victory over sin comes from God. The power source dwells in your heart and in your body of flesh. That's God's solution to your flesh problem.

*"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:*

*Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*" Colossians 1:28-29.

*“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Corinthians 4:16.*

Have you ever asked yourself this question? Since the Holy Spirit indwells my body, to give me victory over sin, where is my victory? Why do I still struggle? Victory over sin is not a one time event, like justification by faith. Remember what we taught in chapter 6, that sanctification is an ongoing process in the life of a Christian. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us moment by moment, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, for as long as we live.

Think of it this way. If you expect the Holy Spirit to completely sanctify you in a few months or a few years, you don't understand how wicked and corrupt the flesh really is. The truth is, the flesh doesn't get better over time. And the flesh nature is more than just your flesh. It includes your mind, which must also be surrendered to Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Romans 12:1-2. And beyond that, perhaps you haven't grasped yet, that God is teaching you to depend on Him for your victory, instead of trying to live life on your own terms, in your own power.

When Christ saved you, He didn't make you an independent contractor, running your life as you see fit and occasionally, working for Jesus. Before salvation, you were a servant of sin. After salvation, you are a servant of Christ. No Christian should ever be anything but a born again son and servant of Christ. If you're always trying to do things your way, you are not living as a servant of Christ, you are not living by faith and you are not experiencing much victory over sin.

1. What is God's purpose in quickening *your mortal bodies*? **a.** to help you live longer, **b.** to give you victory over sin, **c.** to make sure you get rich quick.
2. Is the Spirit who resurrected Jesus the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is the Spirit who resurrected Jesus the same Spirit who indwells your body as His temple? \_\_\_\_\_
4. That's a huge amount of power dwelling in your mortal body. Is that enough power to give you victory over the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does the flesh get better over time or does it get worse? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Should we yield to the Spirit and be led by the Spirit every day of our lives or is that a one time thing? **a.** Yep, it's a one time thing. **b.** Nope, it's a moment by moment, day by day thing, **c.** Yielding and being led by the Spirit is optional; no one has to do it, **d.** That "being led by the Spirit" stuff is only for fanatics.
7. Is it okay to use my freedom in Christ to go my own way? \_\_\_\_\_

**by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.** - Have you grasped the incredible truth that Paul so casually states here? The truth is, we tend to go for days without ever thinking about the Spirit who dwells in us. That lack of thought needs attention.

We should have notes posted on the bathroom mirror and throughout the house to remind us of this incredible truth - the Holy Spirit of God dwells IN me, in my fleshly, physical body! We need to appropriate the Spirit's strength all day, every day. The Spirit gives us power to witness for Jesus, Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8.

Three cross references: John 2:18-21, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 6:19-20. Please list three things you learn about the Indwelling, from these cross references.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors,** - Paul sees the concept of debt as a practical, easy to understand example he can apply to the Christian life. Paul is a debtor, Romans 1:14, in the sense that he owed it to Greeks and Barbarians, wise and unwise, to preach the gospel to them. A debt is an obligation or duty which must be fulfilled. A debt must be paid. Do you view yourself as a debtor, someone marvelously blessed, who has the gospel and therefore, the responsibility, to share it with others? \_\_\_\_\_

### **What are some ways to share the gospel?**

1. Share the gospel by telling others, by word of mouth.
2. Share the gospel by passing out gospel tracts.
3. Share the gospel by leaving gospel tracts in public places.
4. Share the gospel by supporting home and foreign missionaries.
5. Share the gospel by praying for the lost to get saved.
6. Share the gospel by praying for missionaries who witness for Jesus.
7. Share the gospel by witnessing on social media.
8. Share the gospel by wearing scripture tee shirts.
9. Share the gospel by putting a tract in bills you pay by mail.
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

**not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.** - No Christian is a debtor to the flesh, to live after the flesh, although some Christians live like they are debtors. We all struggle with the flesh and we all have freewill to make godly decisions. It may be food or snacks; it may be sex or alcohol. It may be drugs, it may be fame, it may be pride. Paul says, as a Christian, you are no longer a debtor to the flesh.

If you are saved, then, because of what Jesus did on Calvary, propitiating or appeasing the wrath of God against your sins, you have been set free and you are no longer a debtor to the flesh. There is no biblical reason, no logical reason, no spiritual reason for a Christian to live after the flesh. So, why do some saved people live after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die:** - There's nothing deep, dark or mysterious about that. Paul flat out says: *if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.* God saved you for a purpose and He doesn't want you to live after the flesh, or chase the flesh, or feed the flesh, or please the flesh, for the rest of your life. If that's the way you intend to squander your life as a Christian, God will have something to say about it.

*“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,  
but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 14:12.*

**ye shall die** - You may die sooner rather than later. Or, God may give you years in which to repent of your fleshly life and get right with God. The Spirit knows your heart, your motivations, your inclinations, your weaknesses, your pain, your fear, your heartache. God is always and only, gracious toward you as a Christian. You can always count on God's loving, forgiving, merciful grace but it's also good to remember this. As a general rule, before He kills you for your sinfully wicked life, God chastens you, Hebrews 12:5ff.

When Paul writes, *ye shall die*, he may have in mind, sins unto death. The apostle John mentions, *a sin unto death*, 1 John 5:16, that Christians can commit, although, that particular verse wasn't written down as scripture unto about thirty years after Paul died.

**but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body,** - Part of our responsibility as Christians is to mortify the deeds of the body. You don't need to mortify the deeds of someone else's body. Stay in your own lane and run your own race. No one else needs to mortify the deeds of your body. Mortifying the deeds of the body is the responsibility of the individual Christian before God.

God has not left you alone in this responsibility. The only way you can mortify the deeds of the body is through the Spirit. When you got saved, did anyone teach you that Romans 8:13 is a big part of your responsibility as a Christian?

How does the Spirit help you mortify the deeds of the body? Romans 8:14 tells us the truth about this crucial teaching.

**How does a Christian mortify the deeds of the body?** We all need to live as pro-active Christians. No one should be a neutral Christian or a passive Christian. **1.** Read, believe and obey the Bible. **2.** Walk in the Spirit, Galatians 5:16. **3.** Stay away from people who tend to pull you back into the old, sinful life, unless you're keeping in touch to witness to them. **4.** Fellowship with other Christians who want to serve God. **5.** Control your thoughts and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. **6.** Be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit; expect Him to lead you and when He does, follow His leading. **7.** Form the habit of being obedient to the Spirit when He leads you, not three days later. **8.** Ask Jesus for help. Call upon His name for help..

**ye shall live.** - This is God's plan for your life. God intends you to live for Him, not to live after the flesh. He did, after all, set you free from being a servant to the flesh. The reason He did that is so you would not live your Christian life as a servant to the flesh. I wonder sometimes, if we would see more of the Spirit working in our life in tangible ways, if we focused more on living for Jesus. What we think of as living for Jesus, is kind of laid back and easy going. WWJD? How many times have we pursued the Christian life full-throttle? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does God care if Christians live after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is God's view of living after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does God ever kill Christians for living after the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
4. *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.* Does God really mean that or is He being melodramatic? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Explain what it means to mortify the deeds of the body. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Can we use the power of the Holy Spirit to say, No, to sin and temptation and lust? \_\_\_\_\_
7. We gave you 8 ways to mortify the deeds of the body. Name two ways that you believe will work for you. \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,** - Just as *the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* was automatic, so, being led by the Spirit of God is automatic. You have to intentionally rebel against the Spirit, in order not to be led by the Spirit. The Spirit naturally leads us and we, as Christians, should naturally follow. Many Christians live lives of intentional rebellion against the Spirit. They obey their flesh instead of obeying the Spirit and their lives never amount to much for God.

There's an easy way to change that. Start reading your Bible and start being led by the Spirit, following the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, Galatians 5:16.

Romans 8:14-39, is all about the guaranteed future God has for saved people. Nowhere in Romans chapter 8 does the Bible say that, unsaved people are predestinated to get saved. If you disagree with that statement, simply write down the Bible verse(s) which say that, unsaved people are predestinated to get saved. \_\_\_\_\_

One outstanding characteristic of a saved man is: he is *led by the Spirit*. If that leading of the Spirit and walking after the Spirit, isn't a big deal in your life, you should make that a matter of daily prayer. Ask God why being led by the Spirit isn't a priority in your life. Ask God to give you understanding on this issue so you can be led by the Spirit. Being led by the Spirit should be true about every Christian because every Christian is already permanently indwelt by the Spirit.

**Weekly Action Plan** - **I.** Read Romans chapter 8 once a day, every day, for a week. **II.** Keep a notebook handy and write down what the Spirit impresses on your heart each time you read. **III.** Share with another Christian, what the Spirit showed you. **IV.** Review and obey what the Spirit showed you in the word.

The Spirit is ready to lead you. Are you willing to be led? \_\_\_\_\_ Being led by the Spirit isn't something reserved only for super Christians; it is for every born again believer. One serious purpose of being led by the Spirit is to have victory over sin, yet that is not the only purpose.

Life is full of sin, sorrow, suffering and struggle. Remember Romans 5:3, where Paul said: we glory in tribulations? In the midst of those things, the Spirit still leads us and still gives *songs in the night*, Job 35:10, Psalm 77:6, Acts 16:25. Part of God's sanctifying process in our lives is being led by the Spirit in the midst of difficulty, Romans 8:36-37. Do you trust the Holy Spirit enough to follow His leading? \_\_\_\_\_

Being led by the Spirit is not something about which we should feel proud or exalted, since being led by the Spirit is God's design and intention for every Christian. Being led by the Spirit, indicates a humble, obedient, submissive heart toward God, that you are willing to be led. Never be too proud to be led by the Spirit of God. As difficult as it may be to believe, God designed you to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Being led by the Spirit is not a reward for spirituality. It is God's condition and requirement for spirituality. The Spirit working in us to conform us to the image

of Christ is God's grand plan. This is known as progressive sanctification. It is the ongoing plan of God for our lives, teaching us practical holiness, until we die or go home to heaven in the pre-tribulation rapture.

God's purpose in leading us by His Spirit is to give us victory over sin and to continue the process of sanctification - making us holy, teaching us to be holy in our thoughts, words and deeds. Victory over sin is God's sanctifying purpose in making our fleshly body His temple. Causing us to bear fruit for God and making us holy and fruitful are the results of setting us free from sin and giving us victory over sin, as we are led by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit leads us. We need to develop the grace of following where and when the Spirit leads us. In the gospels, disciples followed Jesus. After the resurrection of Christ, disciples follow Paul, as he followed Jesus, 1 Corinthians 11:1, and, we follow the leading of the Spirit. Whatever we need, to mortify the deeds of the body, is supplied to us through the Holy Spirit who leads us. That implies that we are willing to be led and that we are actively, obediently, following the Spirit. 1. Will you pray about being led by the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. What is the purpose of being led by the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

### **When does the Spirit lead us?**

1. Does He only lead us for twenty minutes, every other Tuesday morning? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is the leading of the Spirit sporadic, confused and hard to notice? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is the leading of the Spirit continuous, moment by moment and day by day? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do we fail to hear and follow the Spirit because we are too focused on the world and the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do we fail to hear and follow the Spirit because we are not listening for His still, small voice, 1 Kings 19:12? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do we fail to be led by the Spirit because we rarely read the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What can you do today, to be led by the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What are you doing that hinders the Spirit leading you? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Which is better, a Christian life led by the Spirit of God or a rebellious life, in which the Spirit is a stranger to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Modern Christians sometimes understand the leading of the Spirit to be loud music, sensuous swaying, explosive emotions, waving the hands, jumping up and down, praying in tongues, singing in tongues or speaking in tongues. Some profess that the Spirit makes them laugh or shake uncontrollably or bark like a dog, during the church service. They attribute their emotional frenzies and erratic behavior to the leading of the Spirit. That is definitely not what the Bible associates with, *being led by the Spirit*.

## God promises to lead and guide us.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shall go:  
I will guide thee with my eye." -Psalm 32:8, KJV

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things,  
which thou knowest not." -Jeremiah 33:3, KJV

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."  
-Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD:  
and he delighteth in his way." -Psalms 37:23, KJV

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally,  
and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." -James 1:5, KJV

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way." -  
Psalm 25:9, KJV

"What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach  
in the way that he shall choose." -Psalm 25:12, KJV

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." -  
Psalm 73:24, KJV

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."  
-Psalm 119:105, KJV - Are you reading the Bible?

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk thee  
in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."  
-Isaiah 30:21, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD  
your God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee  
by the way that thou shouldest go." -Isaiah 48:17, KJV

"Then spake Jesus again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that  
followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."  
-John 8:12, KJV

## How does the Spirit lead us?

**1. The Spirit leads us through the written word of God**, as we read, believe and obey what the Bible says, in context. That's why Christians should read the Bible daily, so that we get to know the Bible, so that the Spirit can use scripture to lead us. We are not supposed to forge a new path by ignoring the written instructions God gave us in scripture. God gave the Bible to us, to use, Acts 17:11.

**2. The Spirit leads us through events and circumstances in our lives.** An example of this can be found in Acts 13, where Paul dealt with an unsaved man who tried to stop him witnessing to Sergius Paulus, the Roman official. Another example is Acts 9:23-25, 2 Corinthians 11:32-33, where Paul was let down the city wall in a basket, to escape an assassination attempt. In Acts 19:28-30, the stadium riot in Ephesus is another example of the Spirit leading His people.

**3. The Spirit leads us through His inner witness to our human spirit** as our Holy Spirit indweller. Elijah the prophet, in 1 Kings 18 and 19, illustrates how the Spirit deals with an OT believer who is walking in the flesh. Acts 21:4-13 illustrates how the Spirit deals with a NT believer who is walking in the flesh. Have you heard of, *a still, small voice*, 1 Kings 19:12? \_\_\_\_\_

That is how God led Elijah the prophet, by, *a still small voice*. The leading of the Holy Spirit is like "*a still small voice*" as we seek to walk obedient to His will.

**4. The Spirit used to lead through dreams and visions**, although, because we now have the entire Bible (which they didn't have in Bible times), leading us through dreams and visions is no longer the normal way the Spirit leads us. An early example of this leading is found in Acts 10, where God led Peter to witness to Cornelius. Another example is found in Acts 16, where Paul and his evangelistic team received the Macedonian call. We should note that the NT was being written at that time but was not completed and was not in wide circulation.

**5. The Spirit leads us in many other ways**, by opening doors of opportunity, through circumstances, through His providence in having us in a particular place at a particular time, through the wisdom and advice He may lead others to give, through the written scriptures of the Bible, through placing a burden on our heart to go in a certain direction, through bearing witness in our spirit that something is or is not, His will.

The leading of the Holy Spirit can sometimes seem like a premonition or an inner urge, an impulse to go somewhere or not go somewhere, yet every inner urge or premonition is not necessarily the Spirit leading you. If you're not sure, pray about it and read the Bible until you are sure. The Spirit's leading can feel like a warning to shy away from something, someone or someplace or it can feel like a drawing to a particular person or place.

**6. The leading of the Spirit will always be in line with what the Bible says**, in context, and rightly divided, 2 Timothy 2:15. For example, God is not leading anyone, by a dream or vision, to rise up and kill people. We must always distinguish between crazy people who say God told them to commit horrific acts and the genuine leading of the Holy Spirit, who never leads a Christian or anyone else, to commit horrific acts. Remember, we are not on the law side of Calvary. We're on the grace side. None of our marching orders come from Mt. Sinai and OT law. All of our marching orders come from Mt. Calvary and NT grace. God led people in the OT and NT in slightly different ways than He leads us, because they didn't have a copy of the Bible, to read for themselves.

### **Biblical examples of God leading people**

1. Abraham, about how he knew to leave Ur and journey to Canaan, Genesis 12:1ff.
2. Abraham's servant, about how he found a bride for Isaac, Genesis 24:27.
3. Elijah, about going where God told him to go, 1 Kings 17:3-4.
4. Naaman the Syrian general, whom God spoke to through his Israelite servant girl, 2 Kings 5:1-4.
5. Jeremiah, about how he knew to go to the potter's house, Jeremiah 18:2.
6. Joseph, stepfather of Jesus, being warned by God, in a dream, to leave Bethlehem, because Herod would try to kill the baby Jesus, Matthew 2:13-15.
7. Paul, being directed by God to go into Macedonia (modern Europe) with the gospel, Acts 16:9-10.

**they are the sons of God.** - Do you see what Paul is doing in Romans 8:14? He makes being led by the Spirit of God the vitally important factor in the Christian

life. There is no victory over sin without the leading of the Spirit and the power of the Spirit. Paul seems to be saying, this is what separates real Christians from professing Christians, and mere church members from born again Christians.

Let's be careful to understand what Paul is not saying in Romans 8:14. He is not saying that the way of salvation is being led by the Spirit. He isn't setting up a new plan of salvation. Instead, he is giving practical advice about living the Christian life, in a way that pleases God. One of the ways you know you are saved is by the witness of the Spirit and your obedient response to His leading.

What is the Spirit doing in your life? \_\_\_\_\_  
Does the Spirit speak to you when you read the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;** - Which Spirit did you receive when you got saved? \_\_\_\_\_ Paul reminds his readers that the Spirit they received is a fearless Spirit, not the spirit of bondage but the Spirit of adoption. Christians should not have the attitude or mentality of slaves. We are set free from slavery to sin. "*Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*" Galatians 4:7. There is nothing to fear in being a son of God, filled with and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. "*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*" 2 Timothy 1:7.

**but ye have received the Spirit of adoption,** - When you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, one of the things that happens is, you receive the Spirit of adoption. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of adoption. He came to dwell in your body, which is now His temple, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. What does the Spirit of adoption do? He seals you until the day of redemption, Ephesians 1:13-14. That sealing by the Spirit, guarantees that you will receive, *redemption of the body*, Romans 8:23, because the holy Spirit seals you "*until the redemption of the purchased possession.*" Your adoption is official now but it will not be completed until you get your glorified body, what Paul refers to in Romans 8:23 as, *the redemption of the body*.

Romans 8:15 is the first time the word, adoption, occurs in the Bible. The Greek word which we translate, adoption, is υιοθεσία huiiothesia, a five syllable word in the Greek, pronounced: hwee-oth-es-see'-ah. It is found five times in five verses in the New Testament, used only by Paul, Romans 8:15, 23, 9:4, Galatians 4:5, Ephesians 1:5. Adoption is a blessing that starts at salvation, when we are

adopted into the family of God and receive the Spirit of adoption but, our adoption blessing is not finished until we get our new body, Romans 8:23, sometime in the future, at the rapture or the resurrection. Our adoption is real but it is not yet completed, because adoption includes us getting our new glorified body and we don't have it yet.

Our adoption into the family of God is not salvation, Galatians 4:1-7. Our adoption is a result of salvation, meaning, something that happened after salvation. We are redeemed first - that is salvation. Then, as a result of being redeemed or saved, we are adopted. Part of the adoption, the redemption of our body, is yet future. For that reason, we say that adoption is not salvation. Adoption and salvation are two different things. Adoption as children of God means, we are released from being servants to sin and the OT law. Adoption, placing us as children of God, means we are now heirs of God because of our standing in Christ. God now regards us as sons, not slaves or servants, Galatians 4:7.

*"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."* Romans 8:15.

*"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."* Galatians 4:5-7.

Do you understand what Paul is saying? \_\_\_\_\_ No one in the OT was adopted. Adoption is a new thing, not mentioned in the OT. Adoption is only possible after the resurrection of Christ, because adoption as sons was never part of the OT law covenant. Adoption never happened before the resurrection of Christ. Being redeemed from being under the law is a separate event from receiving the adoption of sons. That's why we teach that our adoption into the family of God is not salvation. Adoption as sons is something that happens after salvation.

Paul tells the Galatians that Christians are redeemed from the law so they may receive adoption as sons. As a result, the Spirit comes into the believer's heart, crying, "Abba, Father." Galatians 4:5. The intimacy of a NT, Father/son relationship with God, stands in vivid contrast to the relationship the children of Israel had with God in the OT. Saved and born again people being adopted into God's family is a NT reality on the grace side of Calvary. It was never an OT truth on the law side of Calvary.

**whereby we cry, Abba, Father.** - OT Jews and even the disciples of Jesus, when they prayed, said, Our Father, Matthew 6:9. They didn't have that sweet, close, personal relationship with God or the indwelling Holy Spirit which would allow them to Cry, *Abba, Father*. Saying, Abba, Father, is not something any unsaved person does naturally, because, unsaved people have no familial relationship with God as their Father.

Some people, including first century Jews, thought they knew God as Father but Jesus was quick to disabuse the Jews of that notion when they brought it up, John 8:36-44. There is no Fatherhood of God and universal brotherhood of man, in the Bible. Paul makes that clear in Galatians 3:26. "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*" Everyone can make a freewill choice to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, Acts 16:30-31, Romans 10:9-10, 13. Once you've done that and you are saved, you can address God as, *Abba, Father*.

*Abba* is a Chaldean Aramaic word for father, such as a child would use in addressing his daddy. It indicates the closeness of the relationship, the complete love and trust a child has for his daddy. Daddy, in English, is equivalent to, *Abba*, in Chaldean Aramaic. *Abba* is not the word a servant would use to speak to his Master. Jesus prayed to His, *Abba*, when He prayed to His Father in the garden of Gethsemane, the night before He was crucified. Mark alone, of the gospel writers, records Jesus saying, *Abba, Father*, in Mark 14:36.

We noted at the beginning of Romans chapter 7, that Paul, and Mark, the author of the Gospel of Mark, were co-workers. We pointed out that Paul asks the same question, in Romans 7:1, *Know ye not?*, that Jesus asked, in Mark 4:13. Now again, in Romans 8:15, Paul uses the Chaldean Aramaic word, *Abba*, used by only one other NT author, Mark, in Mark 14:36.

Why is that? Put yourself in Paul's shoes. He never personally met the Lord Jesus while Jesus was in his earthly ministry. But Paul did meet Peter, the source of information for much of what Mark writes, and Paul met and worked with Mark, Peter's disciple, and had opportunity to ask them questions about Jesus.

What was it like to be around Jesus? What did He look like? How did His voice sound? Did He have a sense of humor? What did He say about the law? How did He pray? What did he say about the last days? When Paul writes the word, *Abba*, in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6, he is probably quoting information he personally received from Peter and Mark. Do you know Jesus or God as your Abba? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that personal closeness to Him in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name two ways the Spirit leads us. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is adoption the same as getting saved? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does your adoption happen before or after you get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is getting your glorified body the final part of adoption? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the link between adoption and saying, *Abba*? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the difference between getting adopted and getting saved? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which gospel is Paul's possible source for the word, *Abba*? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What does being adopted into the family of God mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Is the intimacy Jesus shared with His Father, an intimacy you can also share with God, as your heavenly *Abba*? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,** - Some Christians imagine a problem here and also, in Romans 8:26 with the use of, *itself*. The Greek word for Spirit is: πνεῦμα *pneuma*, pronounced, neu-mah. *Pneuma* means: spirit, from the root word, πνέω *pneō*, pronounced nay-oh, meaning: breath or breathe or breeze or blow (as in moving air), (Strong's G4151 and G4154). When referring to the Holy Spirit, as in Romans 8:16, 26, *pneuma* means Spirit.

In the Greek language, every word is either, masculine or feminine or neuter. The Greek word for Spirit, *pneuma*, is a neuter word (not masculine or feminine) so it is perfectly correct to translate the pronoun as, *itself*, instead of himself. *Pneuma* means spirit or breathe and in John 3:6-8, Jesus compares the Spirit to the wind. Wind is a breeze; air blowing or air moving, so we use the word, *pneumatic*, to describe tools that are air operated.

Some Christians quibble over using the neuter pronoun, *itself*, to describe the Spirit. We answer, that, other human authors of the Bible also use the neuter pronoun with the word, spirit or Spirit. Luke refers to a spirit as, *it*, in Luke 8:29 and then, in Luke 8:30, refers to the same spirit as, *him*, and, *he*. John the apostle uses, *it*, to refer to the Spirit in John 1:32, and the apostle Peter uses, *it*, to refer to the Spirit, in 1 Peter 1:11. How should we understand and sort out, this alleged problem?

The Holy Spirit, by definition, is a Spirit and therefore, is not human. Humans have natural gender (they are male or female) but a spirit does not have natural gender. A spirit is an *it* but can sometimes be personified as male, by using

masculine or feminine pronouns, depending on the preference and intention of the author or speaker. For that reason, it is grammatically correct to refer to the Spirit as, *it*, as Paul does in Romans 8:16, 26, or as, *he, him* or *himself*, as Jesus does twelve times, in John 16:7-14, and as Paul does twice, in 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Context is important. The only reason we can cry, *Abba, Father*, is because we are saved and we have the witness of the Spirit within ourselves, that we are the children of God, Galatians 4:7. The same Spirit who bears witness with our Spirit that we are children of God, and who prays for us, also permanently indwells our physical body. Before we were saved, there was no inner witness of the Spirit, because we had a dead human spirit and the Holy Spirit did not dwell in us. When we believed on Christ as our Savior, our dead spirit, Genesis 2:17, Ephesians 2:1, was born again, John 3:3-7, 1 Peter 1:3, and we were quickened and made alive in Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit who spiritually baptized us into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13, no water involved. It is the Holy Spirit, who, after He made us spiritually alive in Christ, came to dwell in our body of flesh, making our body, His temple, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. One of the wonderful things the Holy Spirit does is, remind us, *we are the children of God*. This is part of His personal ministry in us, so that we can live victorious over sin.

**that we are the children of God:** - The Holy Spirit doesn't bear witness that, we will be, the children of God. He bears witness that, *we are the children of God*, present tense, right now, even in the midst of all the kerfluffle of life. Many professing Christians believe, you can't know for sure you are saved. According to them, you can hope so but you can't know so. That is not the teaching of the Bible. Read Romans 8:16 again. When we believe in Christ as our Savior, we have, a know so, salvation. We are the children of God. How do we know that? Because the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, bears witness with our human spirit, that we are the children of God.

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

**And if children, then heirs;** - We went from being lost and headed for hell, to saved and headed for heaven. We went from being paupers to being children of the KING. Because we are saved, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. That doesn't mean we are waiting for God to die, so we can inherit everything that is now God's. God will never die.

Citing our adoption and calling us, heirs of God, is a way of describing the completeness of our new relationship to God as our Father and His recognition of us as His genuine children. NT salvation brings us rights and privileges only genuine children can receive, 1 John 3:1. This is a brand new, NT doctrine, revealed to Paul and written by him, that saved individuals are, personally, the children of God. That was not true of saved people in the OT.

### **What does it really mean, that we are heirs of God?**

1. We have a brand new Father, and our new Father is God.
2. Our old father, Satan, is no longer our father, John 8:38, 44.
3. No saved man lovingly calls Satan, Abba, Father.
4. We are now temples of God, not temples of Satan.
5. The Holy Spirit is in us, not an unholy spirit from Satan.
6. We have already received all spiritual blessings, Ephesians 1:3.
7. We are already seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father, Eph 2:6.
8. Our entire future eternity is absolutely assured, Ephesians 1:13-14.
9. We will be conformed to and made like Jesus, Romans 8:29.
10. We will be glorified, like Jesus, Romans 8:30.
11. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God, Romans 8:39.

**heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;** - Jesus is the natural heir of God, while we as Christians, are the adoptive children, or heirs via legal adoption. We are written into the will and are heirs but not natural heirs, like Christ. Our biblical position as Christians is, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. That isn't a truth preached by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. That isn't something the apostles preached to the Jews during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The only way anyone can be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ, is through Calvary and the resurrection of Christ.

Before Calvary, OT Jews had Mount Sinai but Sinai represented the OT law and that didn't make anyone an heir of anything, and certainly not, an heir of God. On Mount Calvary, God poured out, upon Jesus, His holy wrath against our sins. On Mount Calvary, Jesus suffered the wrath of God and appeased or, propitiated all of God's wrath. So great was the satisfaction, Isaiah 53:11, of God, with the sacrifice of Jesus, that God, as a direct result, reconciled the entire world to Himself. *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ*, and the biblical truth of propitiation and reconciliation as accomplished fact, is the glorious gospel message we preach, to a lost and dying world, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Do you view yourself as an ambassador for Christ, in your day to day life? \_\_\_\_\_ How do you live as an ambassador for Christ in your daily life as a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_

**if so be that we suffer with him,** - Paul is not setting up a cause and effect here. He is not changing his mind and teaching salvation by works. He is not saying, If you don't suffer with Christ, you won't be glorified with Him. Paul is the NT author who gives us the most information about Christians and suffering. Suffering is a Bible truth that most Christians prefer not to talk about. We love the joy of our salvation but we don't like the idea of suffering.

We love being forgiven of all our sins and we love being loved by God but we didn't really expect suffering to be part of our Christian life. We tend to view suffering as something other Christians do. It happens to them and we feel sorry for them but we don't expect suffering with Christ to be our lot in life. We never really believed suffering would be something we endured, once Jesus saved us. Paul and Peter seem to have a different view than our view.

*"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."* 1 Peter 4:12-19.

**we suffer with him** - When we think of Christians and suffering, we are not talking about suffering for careless things we have done, like drunk driving or an uncontrolled temper. We not talking about embezzling from our employer, getting caught and going to prison and suffering in that scenario. That is not at all the kind of suffering Paul has in mind here. The suffering Paul has in mind is, suffering with Christ, and by the way, that is the kind of suffering Peter is talking about in 1 Peter 4:12-19.

Both apostles are talking about suffering because you are a Christian, who faithfully witnesses and faithfully serves Christ. When we suffer with Him, we are never alone in our suffering. Since Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Christ walks through all of our suffering with us. He is our constant companion, our unending strength, our grateful song, Acts 16:19-25.

Our Lord Himself, in a conversation with Ananias, said that Paul would suffer great things, for Christ, Acts 9:16. Suffering was part of Paul's ministry as the apostle to the Gentiles, Acts 26:17, Romans 11:13, 15:16. After he got saved, Paul endured more suffering as a Christian than he ever endured as an unsaved, religious Jew. Getting saved doesn't necessarily mean your life will get easier.

Living an authentic Christian life often results in some kind of suffering for Christ. Do not jump into suffering on your own, as if that will make you a better Christian. Christians should never seek suffering. Live for Jesus but don't look for ways to make yourself suffer. No one in the Bible crawled on bloody knees, up the steps of the cathedral, to get closer to God or, so God would heal him. No one in the Bible beat his back bloody with a whip or let himself be nailed to a

cross, like some religious people do in the Philippines. The great Bible commentator, Matthew Henry, 1662-1714, sagely wrote:

**“It is a sin to go one step out of the path of duty,  
either to meet or to miss, a cross.”**

Wise Christians will take the wisdom of the apostle Paul and Matthew Henry, to heart. Speaking of suffering; Paul was never a prosperity gospel preacher. Instead of preaching, “Jesus wants you rich!” Paul taught that suffering is a normal part of the life of an authentic Christian. Paul’s life and ministry were full of suffering, as he testifies in 2 Corinthians 6:3-10, 11:18-33. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (most of us were Gentiles), believed that suffering is normal for Christians who follow Jesus. Here are eight important verses Paul wrote about suffering. What do these verses mean to your Christian life?

### **Paul, on Suffering and Christians**

1. *“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”* Romans 8:17.
2. *“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”* 1 Corinthians 12:26.
3. *“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;”* Philipians 1:29.
4. *“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:”* Colossians 1:24.
5. *“For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.”* 1 Thessalonians 3:4.
6. *“Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:”*  
2 Thessalonians 1:5
7. *“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:”*  
2 Timothy 2:12.
8. *“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”*  
2 Timothy 3:12.

1. Have you given much thought to suffering? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What do you think of those verses? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How should those verses impact the life of a modern Christian? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have any experience in suffering with Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Will Jesus walk with you through suffering? \_\_\_\_\_

Suffering is a normal part of life in our fallen, sin cursed world. Disease, natural disasters, famine and war are direct results of the fall of Adam. Starting in Romans 8:19, Paul will point out that, beyond the human race, creation itself is fallen. Suffering is one of the results of the fall and even Christians do not escape suffering by getting saved.

**that we may be also glorified together.** - The idea Paul has in mind is that the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit will get us safely through whatever suffering we experience. Our suffering for Christ or with Christ, is prelude to being glorified together. Because we are already justified by faith, Paul is not saying that, you have to suffer with Christ in order to be glorified later on. How can we be sure that's not what Paul is saying? Romans 8:30 tells us, "*whom he justified, them he also glorified.*"

Because God has already justified you, He will also glorify you. Suffering with Christ isn't necessary to earn your salvation. It's simply one of the things that happens when saved people walk in the Spirit and live for the Lord. Some Christians suffer more and some suffer less. That situation is one of the mysteries of life. God doesn't explain it to us. He simply expects us to trust Him and joyfully serve God, instead of trying to figure it out.

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

**For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time** - Paul is getting ready to do something important, here in v. 18 He is going to contrast the coming glory for Christians, with their present suffering. Paul will then conclude that the glory far excels the suffering. If you live long enough as a Christian, you will, by practical experience, reach the same conclusion Paul reached. Of course, you can also learn from Paul, without going through all that he went through.

Paul wasn't the only Christian in the first century AD, who suffered with Christ. We can read the Acts of the Apostles, starting in chapter 4, and all the way to chapter 28, and 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, 6:3-10, 11:18-33, to get some idea of what Paul is talking about when he says, *the sufferings of this present time*. Notice how closely 2 Corinthians 4:7-17, fits with Romans chapter 8.

When Paul wrote Romans, *this present time*, was the winter of AD 57 to the spring of AD 58. Within about 25 years of the resurrection of Christ, the church was growing, all across the Roman Empire and Christians were suffering with Christ. Part of that suffering was Saul, persecuting the church, Acts 26:9-11. If someone persecutes you for being a Christian, take heart from the example of Paul. The persecutor got saved and became a great soul-winner, Acts 26:12ff.

According to what Paul wrote in Colossians 1:24, "Who now rejoice in *my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.*" Paul's sufferings in the flesh had something to do with the afflictions of Christ, and the body of Christ, which is the church. In the sense of Romans 8:28, the sufferings Paul endured helped the church grow because, for Christians, God makes *all things work together for good*. If you are suffering with Christ, there is probably more going on than you know. God may be using you to bless and encourage others, in your suffering with Christ, and by your suffering with Christ.

That is to say, Paul's sufferings were not in vain and therefore, our sufferings, are not in vain. God has a wise purpose for the sufferings we endure for Christ, and we have the privilege of being part of what God is doing in the world. In ways we will never fully understand down here, our sufferings with Christ help grow the body of Christ, meaning, the church.

Suffering with Christ may take the form of persecution for the Christian faith, as it does in China and North Korea and in Muslim countries. Persecution of Christians is still a rare thing in the USA but it does sometimes happen. Sufferings for Christ can also include emotional suffering, financial suffering and physical suffering. Can you think of other kinds of *suffering with Christ*, which may result from being witnesses for Jesus or living a godly Christian life?

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**are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

- It is all too easy and completely human, to chafe at suffering. No one wants to suffer so we tend to fret at suffering with Christ. It takes the grace of God to endure suffering. Name two sources from which any Christian can quickly access the grace of God. A hint, for those two sources, is the word, Indwelling.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

The story is told of an American platoon in World War II, who came under heavy fire from German troops, dug in on the hillside above. Most of the Americans were bleeding after being hit with bullets or shrapnel. To rally his troops, their sergeant practiced a bit of tough love and barked. "Don't worry. You're getting paid for this!" Paul is practicing a bit of tough love here in Romans 8:18.

Don't worry about the suffering you're enduring. You're getting paid for this! God will repay all our suffering *with the glory which shall be revealed in us*. Some day in eternity, we'll look back at our trials and tribulations, our sufferings with Christ, and wonder why any of that upset us. Do you know any Christians who are suffering? \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Do you pray for them in their suffering? \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Do you encourage them? \_\_\_\_\_

**the glory which shall be revealed in us.** - Even though we are saved now, God's full plan for us is not yet realized. *The glory which shall be revealed in us* refers to us getting our glorified body, at some point in the future. When we get our glorified body, that is called, *the manifestation of the sons of God*, Romans 9:19. Manifest means, to make known or, to clearly show something. We are the sons of God right now, according to 1 John 3:1-2, but we don't look any different than lost people.

We haven't been manifested or revealed or made known or clearly shown yet, so, the apostle John says: *It doth not yet appear what we shall be*. That manifestation of us, as the sons of God, will become apparent in the future, at the pre-tribulation rapture or the resurrection. When we get our glorified bodies and we are like Jesus, we will be able to walk through walls, John 20:19, 26, and move anywhere in time or space, at the speed of thought, John 20:17, Matthew 28:9.

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

**For the earnest expectation of the creature** - This is said to be one of the most difficult verses in the NT. In this passage of scripture, Paul intends to demonstrate the sustaining power of the gospel in the midst of suffering, by pointing out that, no matter what we go through as Christians, we have a wonderful hope awaiting us in the future, our *manifestation* as the sons of God. That manifestation is also called, *the redemption of our body*, Romans 8:23, and, *the redemption of the purchased possession*, Ephesians 1:13-14.

Paul tells us that the creature, meaning creation, is expectantly waiting for us to be glorified, to be manifested as the sons of God. That doesn't mean the planet Mars is looking at its watch and wondering when the sons of God will be manifested. Paul uses a figure of speech in Romans 8:19 called, *prosopopoeia*, which is a Greek rhetorical term for personifying a non-human thing. It is Paul's poetic way of personifying creation, a way of saying, that the creation we see around us is fallen from what God originally created it to be, but God will not leave creation fallen forever.

Creation's *earnest expectation* is, to be made right. Creation expects God to fix what went wrong when Adam fell and creation fell with him, Genesis 3:17. That restoration of creation has not happened yet but it will happen, because God promised it. *The creature, or creation, will be delivered*, Romans 8:21. When God makes a promise, God keeps His word; does exactly what He said He would do.

**waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.** - *The manifestation of the sons of God* refers to us Christians, getting our glorified bodies. Ephesians 1:13-14 describes it as *the redemption of the purchased possession*. We didn't get a brand new, saved body when we got saved down here on earth. We will get a new body eventually but that is a future event.

In Romans 8, Paul has described saved folks as, children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, yet, with all those blessings, Christians are a suffering lot. We don't look like what we really are, in Christ, in part, because we do not yet have our glorified bodies. Down here, our true state as Christians is manifested by the fact that we suffer with Christ.

In heaven, our true state will be made known, revealed, unveiled, manifested, by us receiving our glorified bodies, and by our joyful return, Revelation 19:13ff., in the presence of the glorified Christ. We will be with Him and we will be like Him, returning in our glorified bodies, riding white horses, eternally triumphant.

When we understand what Paul is teaching in Romans 8:19, we discover an incredible blessing that God has in store for us in the future. Let's run the references and see what the Bible says about this thing Paul describes as, *the manifestation of the sons of God*.

**First, we who are saved, are, right now, the sons of God.**

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 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." 1 John 3:1-2.

1. What do you think about this great promise? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you a son of God, right now, 1 John 3:2? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do Christians have to wait til they die, to find out if they are saved? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do Christians have: a hope so salvation or a know so salvation? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you know for sure that you are saved, right now? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Who and what are you trusting for your salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

**Second, Jesus is coming back to straighten out the mess down here.**

*“29 - Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 - And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:29-30.*

*“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.” Revelation 1:7.*

*“11 - And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 - His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 - And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 - And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 - And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 - And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” Revelation 19:11-16.*

1. Does Jesus come back, alone, or with armies? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does Jesus come back before or after the tribulation? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does Jesus come back secretly or in full view of the public? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does Jesus come back to surrender or to smite the nations? \_\_\_\_\_

**Third, when Jesus comes back, we come back with Him.**

*“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:4.*

*“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” 1 Thessalonians 4:14.*

1. Does Jesus come back alone or with others? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who is in the heavenly armies who follow Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who are, *them which sleep in Jesus*? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you witnessing for Jesus so others can get saved? \_\_\_\_\_

**Fourth, we come back in a glorious new body, manifested as sons.**

“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Philippians 3:21.

1. When we get our glorified body, that is when we are manifested or revealed or made known, as the sons of God. T or F
2. Who gets a glorified body; saved people or unsaved people? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What do you think about God’s promise to us? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For the creature was made subject to vanity,** - *The creature* refers to God’s creation, which we see all around us: earth, sky, sun, moon and stars and the farthest reaches of the universe. Moses remarks on part of this in Genesis 3:17.

The word, *creature*, is the Greek word, κτίσις ktisis, pronounced, ka-tē’-sēs. Here, *creature* refers to the fallen creation. Who knows what incredible abilities the original creation contained and was capable of, to make a perfect world for Adam and Eve? Imagine a native from the jungle, walking into a modern American home. The owner would speak to Alexa and lights and music would come on. The owner would tell Alexa, Open the garage door, and it would happen.

The native from the jungle would think it’s magic but it’s really just modern technology. The creature (fallen creation) was made subject to vanity. That was a penalty of the fall. What possibilities did God build into His original creation, that are now lost, due to the fall of Adam? Why would creation groan and wait expectantly unless God’s creation was capable, before the fall, of far more than it is now capable?

**made subject to vanity** - Vanity refers to moral perversity or depravity such as is exhibited by unsaved, pagan Gentiles. Paul defines the term in Ephesians 4:17-19. At the fall of Adam, God’s creation was made subject to vanity, meaning, creation became estranged from God, itself also fallen and in need of being restored.

**not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,** - God allowed Adam’s sin to affect more than the human race. Adam’s sin caused all of God’s creation to fall. That fall wasn’t willingly, according to Paul. God

subjected all creation to the fall, because of Adam's sin. God subjected the same in hope. In plainer words, God allowed Adam to sin (He could have stopped him) and God allowed creation to fall, due to Adam's sin but God does not intend the fall to be permanent or to go unfixed. God has not given up and walked away.

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

**Because the creature itself also shall be delivered** - At some time in the future, God will make right, everything Adam made wrong. God's plan of salvation and the blood Jesus shed on the cross of Calvary covers far more than just saving all who call upon the name of the Lord. The reason we can personally be saved and delivered, and the reason the creature, meaning creation, can be delivered, is the resurrection of Christ.

Jesus accomplished everything God intended when He propitiated (appeased) the wrath of God against sin. The triune Godhead has already done everything necessary to set the human race and creation right. Now it's just a matter of God following His prophetic timetable to make it happen. No matter what we struggle with down here, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Colossians 1:27. Beyond that, *the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*

Jesus spoke of this deliverance in Matthew 19:28 and called it, *the regeneration*. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That is the regeneration of the earth, also called, *the restitution of all things*, in Acts 3:19-21. Peter's message to the men of Israel, Acts 3:12, about fifty days after the resurrection of Christ, was that God was planning *the restitution of all things*. God was focused on Israel and would have restored Israel then, if Israel had received Jesus as her Messiah. The creature/creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, in the future, on God's time table.

**from the bondage of corruption** - Paul probably has in mind Genesis 3:17 and the historical truth that, at the fall of Adam, the ground was cursed. Adam's sin not only caused Adam and Eve to die spiritually, it also cursed the rest of creation, including the soil on planet earth. *Bondage of corruption* is how God views His fallen creation. Self-will leads to more bondage so that, our desire to go our own way in rebellion against God, leads us deeper and deeper into the

tangled mess of our bondage to the flesh and sin. God's remedy for our bondage to sin and the flesh, is the glorious gospel of Christ, Romans 1:16, John 8:36, 1 Timothy 1:11. Can God trust you to preach and share His glorious gospel, 2 Corinthians 4:4? \_\_\_\_\_

**into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** - The glorious gospel of Christ brings glorious liberty! That means, liberty for the rest of God's fallen creation. Don't those words have a marvelous ring? Before Paul wrote Romans, James twice used the Greek word for liberty, in the NT. The Holy Spirit led James to write about the law of liberty, a concept not entirely unknown in the OT. The word, liberty, **occurs 9 times in the OT and 18 times** in the NT.

In the OT, liberty was not something every follower of God possessed. In the NT, on the grace side of Calvary, every believer in Christ has glorious liberty as a free gift from God. We have deliverance now, and liberty now, but the creature, meaning, the rest of God's creation, doesn't yet have deliverance. The creature shall be delivered but that is a future event, also called, the regeneration and, the restitution of all things.

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

**For we know that the whole creation** - Like Romans 8:20, this verse refers to the fallen creation but here, the Greek word, κτίσις ktisis, pronounced, ka-tē'-sēs, is translated, *creation*. Creation groans because of the curse, first, as God's response to Adam's sin in Genesis 3:14, 17. Second, that curse was greatly expanded in Deuteronomy 27 and 28, where there are 18 curses, pronounced because of Israel's wicked rebellion. Jeremiah the prophet pronounces six additional curses upon idol worshiping Israel, Jeremiah 11:3, 17:5, 20:14, 15, 48:10. No wonder the whole creation groaneth and travaileth.

How do we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain? Paul received that truth about creation through direct revelation from God, as part of the process of inspiration, 2 Timothy 3:16-18. Paul's revelation about creation being delivered, is in the same category of revelation he describes in Ephesians 3:1-6. He may have received this truth about creation when he was caught up to the third heaven, 2 Corinthians 12:1-7. Notice v. 7 - "*through the abundance of the revelations.*" God revealed multiple truths to Paul on that journey to heaven.

**groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.** - As beautiful as it is, there is something radically wrong with creation. The creature / creation which God

originally made, is only an empty shell of what it was before the fall. That's why it groans and travails in pain since the fall.

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

**And not only they, but ourselves also, - *And not only they*** - In some sense, *the creature*, refers, not just to the earth and the cosmos around us but also to lost humanity, those who are not redeemed. The whole mess is fallen and living under the curse of Adam's sin. The Bible does not indicate that God will save everyone, even those who have rejected Jesus Christ. Scripture is clear that the lost go to hell, yet the Bible does say that unsaved people and beasts groan too.

*"Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them."* Job 24:12.

*"Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan."*  
Jeremiah 51:52.

*"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.

Isn't it true that the human race is always looking for utopia? We want more peace, more prosperity, more passion, more power, more perfection. With everything we have, we are not satisfied and we want more. That is the human race, groaning within ourselves. As a Christian, have you ever said: "There must be more than what I have as a Christian? There must be more than I've experienced since I got saved." That is us, knowing intuitively, that God has more for us. That is us, groaning within ourselves, *waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body*, Romans 8:23.

Please don't miss this important Bible truth. Our adoption, Romans 8:15, is good and legal before God but our adoption isn't finished yet, Romans 8:23. The first stage of our adoption is, receiving the Spirit of adoption, Romans 8:15. That happened when we got saved. The final stage of our adoption is, the redemption of our body, Romans 8:23. That will happen at some point in the future. We will get a new, glorified body and we will be rid of this old, weak and willful, fleshly body. 1. Is our adoption finished now or is there more to come? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Is receiving the Spirit of adoption, Romans 8:15, the same as the redemption of the body, in Romans 8:23? \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What is the difference? \_\_\_\_\_

**which have the firstfruits of the Spirit**, - What are the firstfruits of the Spirit, that we have? **1.** Being born again is the first fruits of the Spirit. No one in the OT was born again or regenerated. **2.** Included in the firstfruits of the Spirit is the truth that, when you are born again, you are permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. No one in the OT was permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Because Paul, before he became a Christian, was both a Jew and a Pharisee, he approaches spiritual things from a Jewish perspective. Firstfruits occurs 32 times in 30 verses, in the Bible. Firstfruit occurs an additional 2 times in two more verses.

There are seven, yearly, Jewish feasts, called, *the feasts of the LORD*, according to Leviticus 23:1-2. The first four on the list are spring feasts, celebrated in the springtime. The last three are fall feasts, celebrated in the fall of the year. The Feast of Weeks, aka, the Feast of Firstfruits, is the Jewish feast associated with firstfruits. It is the third feast on the list and happens 49 days after Passover.

1. Passover - Leviticus 23:5 - represents Salvation
2. Unleavened Bread - Leviticus 23:6 - represents Sanctification
- 3. Firstfruits - Leviticus 23:11** - seven weeks after Passover.
4. Pentecost - Leviticus 23:16 -
5. Trumpets - Leviticus 23:24
6. Atonement - Leviticus 23:27
7. Tabernacles - Leviticus 23:34

**Firstfruits** - In ancient Israel, the first sheaf of the ripening grain crop was to be brought, Leviticus 23:10, 11, 17, as an offering to God, Leviticus 23:14. Deuteronomy 26:1-9 expands this to, *the first of all the fruit of the earth*, meaning, whatever food crops they grew in the land of Israel. This firstfruits offering from ancient Israel is the analogy God gave to Paul, for God's great redemption harvest of souls. Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection, then *they that are Christ's at His coming*, 1 Corinthians 15:23. All the redeemed from the church age are who Paul means when he says, *they that are Christ's at His coming*.

Ancient Israel was a farm based economy; they grew crops. In the OT, firstfruits are linked to the harvest. *Firstfruits* means exactly what it says - first fruits. The first ripe grain of the harvest was given as an offering to the Lord. If you've ever grown a garden, you know the joy of picking that first ripe tomato off the vine and those first ripe ears of corn off the stalk. For most of us who are not Jewish, it never occurs to us to offer the firstfruits of our garden, as an offering to God. In ancient Israel, firstfruits were offered to God, to thank Him for blessing their

fields and flocks with abundance. These verses provide biblical insight into firstfruits in the Bible: Exodus 23:19, Leviticus 23:10, Proverbs 3:9, Ezekiel 48:14, Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23, James 1:18, Revelation 14:4.

**ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit**, - In the OT, on the law side of Calvary, the ministry of the Holy Spirit was different than it is in the NT, on the grace side of Calvary. OT believers were not born again or regenerated and didn't have the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit. Being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, being the temple of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, is a radical new truth, which only became known after the resurrection of Christ.

When Paul wrote Romans, in AD 57-58, the magnificent Jewish temple in Jerusalem was still standing, with the huge, thick veil, which once hid the holy of holies, hanging torn, and defiled by the hand of God, Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45, Hebrews 10:14-22. At the point in time that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, God stopped accepting blood sacrifices in the Jewish temple.

The animal sacrifices which had been offered in the temple for 1000 years, were accepted by God because they looked forward and pointed to, the true sacrifice of Christ, of which they were the types. Once Christ was offered up in fulfillment of Isaiah 53, animal sacrifices ceased to be accepted by God. That is why Paul says about himself as an unsaved Jew: "*Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*" Philippians 3:6.

Paul was blameless, as far as keeping *the righteousness which is in the law* but he was still not saved, because, from the time of Jesus' death on Calvary, God was no longer accepting blood sacrifices from the Jews. That's why Paul, as a law-keeping, OT Jew, was not saved in the OT or NT way. Paul got saved as an adult, on the Damascus road, in Acts 9:1-16. In AD 70, the besieging Roman army captured Jerusalem and utterly destroyed the Jewish temple, even going so far as to haul off the stones so that: **a.** the prophesy in Micah 3:12 could be fulfilled, Jeremiah 26:18, and **b.** the temple could not be easily rebuilt.

After the resurrection of Christ, Christians are born again by the Spirit and now have the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit and our bodies are the temple. Christians don't need a temple in Jerusalem, to worship God. First century believers in the Lord Jesus Christ had the firstfruits of the Spirit, meaning, they were **1.** the first people to be born again and **2.** the first people to have the permanent, indwelling Holy Spirit. That was their blessing and privilege because they lived in the first century AD, within about 25 years of the resurrection of

Christ. They were the the first fruits of the Spirit in the sense that, they were the first believers to experience the twin truths of being born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, permanently.

Explain *firstfruits*, as Paul uses it here. \_\_\_\_\_

At His resurrection, Christ was the firstfruits, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, of a great harvest to come, meaning, over the span of the two thousand years that make up the church age. That spiritual harvest of souls, includes everyone saved during the church age, from the resurrection of Christ to the Rapture of the church. We modern Christians are not firstfruits ourselves but we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, Romans 8:23, meaning, we are born again and we have the permanent indwelling.

When we say we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we mean two things: being born again and being permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who keeps us until the redemption of the purchased possession. The truth that we are sealed and kept by the Spirit is an excellent biblical argument for eternal security or, Once Saved, Always Saved, or Once Sealed, Always Safe, sometimes called OSAS. The blessed Holy Spirit will complete our adoption, Romans 8:15, 23, by keeping us until the day of redemption of our body, Ephesians 1:13-14.

**even we ourselves groan within ourselves**, - Paul uses the words, groaneth, groan and groanings, three times in Romans chapter 8:22, 23, 26. All of the groaning is the result of the curse, because of the sinful rebellion and fall of Adam. The groaning Paul describes is an inward sighing. Groaning indicates emotional distress, a burdened heart. *We groan within ourselves*. Groaning is not always an outwardly observable phenomenon. Something inside us causes us to groan. That something is probably the Holy Spirit, who also groans with groanings which cannot be uttered, when He prays for us. Notice how Paul carefully explains, in 2 Corinthians 5:2-4, why Christians groan. We groan for our adoption to be completed, when God gives us our glorified body.

*“For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” 2 Corinthians 5:2, 4.*

**waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body**. - There is no in-between salvation in the Bible. You're either saved or lost. Our salvation is full and complete because we are, *in Christ*. Indeed, as born-again Christians, we are complete in Him, Colossians 2:10. And yet, we are *waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body*. There is nothing we can do to speed up

God's timetable for giving us our glorified body. We work and we wait and we serve God faithfully, while we wait.

**to wit** - To wit is an old term, meaning, to know. It is also a legal term, meaning: to know or to clarify or, in plainer words, or, here is more information. It is a term, currently used in law courts and law offices. In the Bible, it is used ten times, in the first person singular, as *wot*, Genesis 21:26, 44:15, Exodus 32:1 and seven other places. *Wist*, the past participle form of, *to wit*, is used 13 times in the Bible, Exodus 16:15, 34:29 and eleven other places. It is also used one time in the Bible as a present participle, *wittingly*, in Genesis 48:14. Do you have your wits about you? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you know what you're doing? \_\_\_\_\_

This part of Romans 8 is about glory and groaning. If you've been saved for a while, you may have already learned that glory and groaning go together. Sometimes life as a Christian is glorious and other times, life as a Christian is a vale of tears. We long for our heavenly home and yet, we still have work to do down here. God is not finished with us yet.

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

**For we are saved by hope:** - Paul's normal way of describing salvation is, we are saved by faith or justified by faith or justified by grace or justified by his blood. Paul says here, *we are saved by hope*, because he is not describing our salvation from sin, hell and the wrath of God. Instead, he is referencing the redemption of our body, Romans 8:23, which happens at the rapture or the resurrection but has not happened yet.

Every vexing problem Christians face in life can be solved by death, Philippians 1:21, or the rapture, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. Paul says, There is more to being a Christian than the suffering and trials you're enduring, Romans 5:3-4. Regardless of the sufferings of this present time, you have a guaranteed hope to look forward to, the redemption of your body.

*"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body,  
and to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8.*

*"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ;  
which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."  
Philippians 1:23-24.*

The worst thing that can happen to a Christian is, you die and go immediately to heaven. You close your eyes on earth and open them in heaven. When God is ready to call us home, nothing on earth can prevent us from going. As Christians, we need to focus on the things that matter to God for all eternity, Matthew 6:19-21. We should not be worldly because this world will pass away. We should trust God and allow Him to work His will in us.

Someone said, about Christians: We should hold the world's treasures with loose fingers. She meant that we shouldn't get too attached to this world, with its lusts and its luxuries, because we are strangers and pilgrims here, and we have a job to do for Jesus. Are you living as a stranger and a pilgrim here? \_\_\_\_\_

“Hold everything in your hands lightly; otherwise, it hurts when God pries your fingers open.” - Corrie Ten Boom

*“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Hebrews 11:13.*

*“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;” 1 Peter 2:11.*

1. Do you hold your possessions with loose fingers? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you permanent here, or a stranger and pilgrim? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you live like you love Jesus or the world? \_\_\_\_\_

**but hope that is seen is not hope:** - It is not normal to hope for something we can already see. The context is Romans 8:23, *the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body*. That is what we hope for but we haven't seen it yet because it hasn't happened yet. Getting our glorified body is a future event and so, we hope for it, long for it, look forward to it.

**for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?** - This is Paul being practical about spiritual truth. If we already had our glorified body, we wouldn't be hoping for it any longer. That's just common sense. When we eventually get our glorified body, we will stop hoping for it because then, we will already have it.

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

**But if we hope for that we see not,** - We have not yet seen our new body, our glorified body. Therefore, we are still hoping for it, anticipating receiving it, looking forward to it, excited about receiving it.

**then do we with patience wait for it.** - As the creature waits expectantly for God to remake the universe and restore what was lost in the fall of Adam, so, we also wait, *with patience*, for God to give us our new, glorified body. Imagine what it will be like to be rid of the flesh, with all its sins and temptations. Imagine the joy of never again having wicked thoughts, wicked desires, selfish motives. One of these days, when we get our glorified body, that will be our reality. At that time, we will have our born again spirit, our saved soul and our sinless, glorified body. We will be like Christ, 1 John 3:1-2, in a body like His, which can walk through walls, John 20:19, 26, and move anywhere in time or space, at the speed of thought, Luke 24:36-39, John 20:17.

**26 - Likewise 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.**

**Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:** - Paul is laying the groundwork, in vs. 26-27, for what he writes in Romans 8:28. God is completely aware of our fleshly infirmities. He made us and He knows us better than we know ourselves. The only way we can have victory in our Christian lives is by the power of the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Spirit. Does that comfort you, to know that, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities?* \_\_\_\_\_ In what ways does the Spirit help our infirmities? \_\_\_\_\_

**for we know not what we should pray for as we ought:** - We are often unaware of the spiritual battles we face, the foes we face and the spiritual warfare going on all around us. We don't have enough wisdom and experience to know what we should pray for as we ought, so the Spirit prays for us *with groanings which cannot be uttered*. Much of the time, we haven't a clue about what God is doing in our lives. We tend to focus on the war in our mind or physical things, instead of spiritual things. Certainly we ought to pray, because God tells us to pray. Yet, when we are unable to pray intelligently, the Spirit still intercedes for us.

**but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us** - This is a Bible truth we need to understand. The reason we can live victorious in Christ is because, *the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us*. Many professing Christians live their lives as if they are not indwelt by the Spirit. They feel no need to read the Bible, no need to pray, no need to get the leading of the Spirit. Being led by the Spirit is unfamiliar territory to them, Romans 8:14.

Some Christians see a problem here and in Romans 8:16. The Greek word for Spirit is: πνεῦμα pneuma, pronounced, neu-mah. Pneuma means: spirit, from

the root word, πνέω pneō, pronounced nay-oh, meaning: breath or breathe or breeze or blow, (Strong's G4151 and G4154). When referring to the Holy Spirit, as in Romans 8:16, 26, pneuma means Spirit.

In the Greek language, every word is either: masculine, or feminine, or neuter. The Greek word for Spirit is pneuma, a neuter word (not masculine or feminine) so it is perfectly correct to translate the pronoun as, *itself*, instead of himself. Pneuma means spirit or breathe and in John 3:6-8, Jesus compares the Spirit to the wind. Wind is a breeze; air blowing or air moving, so we use the word, pneumatic, to describe tools that are air operated.

Some Christians quibble over using the neuter pronoun, *itself*, to describe the Spirit. We answer, that, other human authors of the Bible also use the neuter pronoun with the word, spirit or Spirit. Luke refers to a spirit as, *it*, in Luke 8:29 and then, in Luke 8:30, refers to the same spirit as, *him* and, *he*. John the apostle uses, *it*, to refer to the Spirit in John 1:32, and the apostle Peter uses, *it*, to refer to the Spirit, in 1 Peter 1:11. How should we understand and sort out, this alleged problem?

The Holy Spirit, by definition, is a Spirit and therefore, is not human. Humans have natural gender (they are male or female) but a spirit does not have natural gender. A spirit is an *it* but can sometimes be personified as male, by using male pronouns, depending on the preference and intention of the author or speaker. For that reason, it is grammatically correct to refer to the Spirit as, *it*, as Paul does in Romans 8:16, 26, or as, *he*, *him* or *himself*, as Jesus does twelve times, in John 16:7-14, and as Paul does twice, in 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

**with groanings which cannot be uttered.** - Charismatic Christians sometimes use this verse as a proof text for praying in tongues. There are six problems with that. **1.** It isn't the Christian who is praying; it's the Spirit. **2.** The groanings cannot be uttered. If we believe what the verse says, then it cannot possibly be any human being, praying in tongues. **3.** This verse, in context, is not talking about the gifts of the Spirit. **4.** This verse has nothing to do with praying in tongues. **5.** It is eisegesis (reading into the text, something the text does not say, or, reading your presuppositions into the text), to read tongues into a verse where tongues are not mentioned and are not even part of the surrounding context. **6.** Romans 12:6ff, deals with spiritual gifts and never mentions tongues.

**cannot be uttered** - Have you ever experienced the heaviness of oppression or the burden of sin, to such an extent that you cannot pray? We groan, v. 23, and the Spirit groans, v. 26, perhaps over the tragedy of our sin nature and our individual sins as Christians. We have been set free in Christ, so that, we are no

longer slaves to sin, yet we are still in our body of flesh and so, sin still dogs our steps. Do you have a deep longing to know and do the will of God? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you struggle to understand God's purpose and will, in your life as a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_

One of the things Christians agonize over is, What is God's will for my life? When we do not know God's will for our lives, we should remind ourselves that God knows, Ephesians 2:10, and God is intent on doing what achieves His will in our lives. Our inability to know or understand or appreciate God's will, does not keep Him from working His will in our lives.

There are aspects of God's will, which every Christian knows or should know, which are clearly revealed, in the Bible. And yet, many Christians keep seeking areas of God's will that are not revealed to them, while ignoring and refusing to do the part of God's will, which is clearly revealed to them in the Bible.

Some Christians shy away from the list below because they have a sneaking suspicion that, if they surrender, God will ask them to do something they are unwilling to do. If we commit to doing these Christian basics, knowing God's will in other areas becomes less of a problem.

### **Here is God's will for each of us, according to the Bible.**

1. That everyone get saved, 2 Peter 3:9, 2 Timothy 2:4. Saved.
2. Present your body a living sacrifice to God, Romans 12:1-2. Surrendered.
3. Love one another, John 13:34, Romans 13:8, Galatians 5:14. Sweet.
4. Abstain from fornication, 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Sanctified.
5. Search the scriptures daily, Acts 17:11. Searching.
6. Follow Paul as he followed Christ, 1 Corinthians 4:15-16, 11:1. Servant/Son
7. In everything give thanks, 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Satisfied.
8. Be filled with the Spirit, not with yourself, Ephesians 5:17-18. Saturated.

One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit to us is, the ministry of intercession. The Spirit prays for us. Consider also, that, when the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, that gives us insight into how rebellious and wicked our flesh is, even though we are saved, and how serious the Spirit is, about helping us, when we cannot even figure out what we should be praying for. Does knowing these truths create a desire in your heart to be led by the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

## **He Maketh No Mistake**

My Father's way may twist and turn,  
My heart may throb and ache,  
But in my soul I'm glad I know,  
**He maketh no mistake.**

My cherished plans may go astray,  
My hopes may fade away,  
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead  
For He doth know the way.

Though night be dark and it may seem  
That day will never break;  
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,  
**He maketh no mistake.**

There's so much now I cannot see,  
My eyesight's far too dim;  
But come what may, I'll simply trust  
And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift  
And plain it all He'll make,  
Through all the way, though dark to me,  
**He made not one mistake.**

**-Pastor A. M. Overton, 1932**

Do you trust Jesus enough to walk with Him through life's troubles and trials?

**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.**

**And he that searcheth the hearts** - He that searcheth the hearts is not the Holy Spirit, in this verse. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 8:34. Paul presents both the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus, as our Indwellers and Intercessors. Hebrews 7:25, Isaiah 53:12, 1 John 2:1-2, Hebrews 4:12, 9:24, 10:22,

1. Who searches the hearts in Romans 8:27? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who are your Indwellers and Intercessors? \_\_\_\_\_

**Search me, O God, and know my heart today,**

Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray;  
See if there be some wicked way in me;  
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free.

I praise Thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin;  
Fulfill Thy word and make me pure within;  
Fill me with fire, where once I burned with shame;  
Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.

Lord, take my life, and make it wholly Thine;  
Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine;  
Take all my will, my passion, self and pride;  
I now surrender, Lord, in me abide.

O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee;  
Send a revival, start the work in me;  
Thy Word declares Thou wilt supply our need;  
For blessings now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

**-James M. Orr, 1936, 1912-1987**

**And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, -**

There is an eternal kinship in the Trinitarian Godhead, such that, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are on the same page with God the Father. They work together to achieve God's will in our lives. Can you imagine a circumstance in which their prayers will not be answered? God will get you through your Christian life, with whatever amount of suffering you endure, to His glory, and He will get you safely home to heaven, where He will give you your glorified body. That is an absolute certainty.

**because he maketh intercession for the saints** - This is talking about Jesus as our intercessor, not the Spirit, Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25-27, 9:24. In plainer words, we have two intercessors. It's not talking about Mary as Co-Intercessor or Co-Mediatrix or Co-Redemptrix with Christ. Christ as our intercessor, is what Paul describes in Romans 8:27.

**intercession for the saints** - Christ prays for the saints. Saints, as Paul uses it here, refers to anyone who is saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. This is not a reference to Mormons, who are called Latter Day Saints. This is not a reference to Roman Catholic saints or Greek Orthodox saints or Russian Orthodox saints. Paul uses the word, saints, to describe normal, everyday

Christians, who have believed on Christ as their Savior. In Paul's parlance, every Christian is a saint.

1. Did you know that the Holy Spirit prays for you? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you know that Jesus prays for you? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your reaction to knowing that you have two members of the Trinity praying for you? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does knowing that give you peace in your heart? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Were you aware of, how aware God is, of you? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does this make you want to be prayer partners with God? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you ever thanked Jesus and the Spirit for praying for you? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Biblically speaking, are you a saint? \_\_\_\_\_

**according to the will of God.** - These verses about the Spirit making intercession for us and Christ making intercession for us, are Paul's lead up to one of the two great promises in the Bible, one in 2 Corinthians 9:8, and one in the next verse, Romans 8:28. The reason Romans 8:28 is a great promise is because it is unconditional. The great promise in 2 Corinthians 9:8 is conditional, based on your cheerful giving to the Lord's work. The reason Romans 8:28 works is because of Romans 8:26-27.

Those of us who are saved are indwelt by two members of the Trinity and we also have two members of the Trinity praying for us. Think about that! How can we ever fail, with that kind of support? "The Spirit knows me! Jesus knows me! Christ dwells in my heart by faith! The Spirit indwells my fleshly body as His temple! Every problem I struggle with and pray about, is on God's to do list." If you really believe that, it should make your day go a bit more smoothly and it should relieve some of the stress you feel.

What do you think of this great promise from God? \_\_\_\_\_

Does knowing those Bible truths mean, I'll get everything I want, everything I'm praying for, since Jesus is also praying for me? No, because the Spirit and the Christ make intercession for us, *according to the will of God*. Jesus isn't a genie in a bottle, who gives us three wishes every time we rub the bottle. God answers prayers when they are according to His will. His will is the best possible outcome for us. It should comfort you as a Christian, to know that. God's will in your life is the absolute best thing that can happen to you and for you.

*"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."*

1 John 5:14-15.

1. Is that a conditional or an unconditional promise? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please explain the difference between the two. \_\_\_\_\_

**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.**

**And we know that all things work together for good** - This is a reference to the past, the present and the future. At every point in time and then, forever in eternity, *all things work together for good to them that love God*. In the OT, *them that love God*, were saved Jews and some believing, saved, Gentiles. This is one of the greatest promises in the Bible for Christians to claim. Yet, Romans 8:28 also has application to Israel, if she receives Messiah Jesus. Paul reminds his Jewish and Gentile readers of God's goodness and God's power.

OT Jews were God's elect, Isaiah 45:4, 65:9 and in Isaiah 42:1, Jesus is God's elect. In Romans, Paul mentions Jew or Jews 11 times and Israel or Israelites 11 times. Israel and Israelites are not mentioned in the first eight chapters of Romans, where all but one of Paul's mentions of Jew and Jews, is found. Paul mentions the Jew one time in Romans 10:12. Israel and Israelites are mentioned only in chapters 9, 10 and 11, because Paul's focus in Romans 9, 10 and 11 is the nation of Israel and the grave danger she faces by rejecting her Messiah, Jesus.

Romans 8:28 is one of the hooks we mentioned at the beginning of our comments on chapter 8. Paul wants to make the Jews jealous of the saved Gentiles and the blessings they've received from God. That jealousy, Paul hopes, will cause the Jews to believe on Messiah Jesus and get saved.

God exists outside of time as well as, in time, therefore He is not bound by time, as we are. We tend to focus on the here and now. Am I comfortable? Am I happy? Are my needs met? We tend to have short memories, so we forget what God did for us two thousand years ago on Calvary or even two years ago or two weeks ago. For those reasons, it is difficult for us to get our mind around how all things could possibly work together for good. All things has to include bad things and evil things, things that hurt us and scare us and break our hearts.

How does a young mother getting cancer and dying, work together for good? The Bible doesn't explain how. God simply assures us of the absolute truth that, *all things work together for good*. Romans 8:28 may be the greatest promise in the Bible, for Christians. It can be a great promise for the unsaved too, if they will get saved. Are you willing to trust God when you do not understand what He is doing? \_\_\_\_\_

**to them that love God,** - Paul aims this promise at saved people and that includes Jews who were saved in OT Israel. Romans 8:28 was true before Paul wrote it down on parchment in the winter of AD 57 - spring of AD 58. It is important to make a distinction here. Romans 8:28 is not a promise for anyone who is unsaved, whether unsaved Jews or unsaved Gentiles. For Christians, because we are eternally born again and permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:28 applies to us in ways it didn't apply to anyone in the OT.

Do you love God enough to trust Him and claim the promise of Romans 8:28 in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

In the OT, Israel was God's beloved, Deuteronomy 4:37, 7:7-8, 10:15, 33:3, 12, Hosea 11:1, 1 Kings 10:9, Psalm 47:4, Romans 9:13, 11:28. Israel was commanded to love God, Deuteronomy 6:5. This was necessary because no one in the OT was born again or regenerated and no one in the OT had the permanently indwelling Holy Spirit. So, they had to exercise their will, in order to love God. Those great blessings from God only became available after the resurrection of Christ, for people who are in Christ, Ephesians 1:3. They are part of what God dispenses to us in *the dispensation of the grace of God*, Ephesians 3:2, through the apostle Paul.

**To them that love God** - doesn't mean: If you are saved but don't love God, this promise isn't for you. Paul assumes that everyone who is saved, loves God for saving him. *To them that love God*, is another way of describing Christians, meaning, anyone who is saved. Romans 8:28 does not apply to and cannot be claimed by, unsaved people. If unsaved people loved God, they would obey God and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Romans 8:28 is a promise to saved people. Of course, anyone can get saved and claim this incredible promise from God.

**to them who are the called** - The people Paul addresses in Romans 8:28 have already answered the gospel call, Romans 1:16, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. They are already saved. Romans 8:28 is for saved people, not unsaved people. Unsaved people can access the promise in Romans 8:28, by getting saved. Remember, in the context, Paul is talking to saved people. He isn't talking about unsaved people whom God is calling to salvation. Always mind the context when you read and study the Bible. When you factor in context, you avoid some of the pitfalls of false teaching.

*Called*, as Paul uses it here, doesn't refer to anyone being called to salvation. Saved people are already saved. *Called*, here, is the vocational call, *called according to His purpose*, Romans 8:28. Paul says: *walk worthy of the vocation*

*wherewith ye are called*, Ephesians 4:1. In the Bible, what is an example of a vocational call? Acts 9:15-16 is an example of a vocational call. What was Paul's vocational call? \_\_\_\_\_

Calvinists talk about the inward call and the outward call, the effectual call and the ineffectual call or the general call and the particular call. Those calls are part of Calvinist lingo. They are not found in the Bible. In the Bible, we have the gospel call and the vocational call. If God has saved you, He intends to use you as a saved boy or girl, man or woman. Do you see the difference between the gospel call to salvation, and the vocational call, to serve God, after salvation? \_\_\_\_\_ What does, *called*, mean, here in Romans 8:28? \_\_\_\_\_

**according to his purpose.** - God is able to make things which we view as bad or evil, work together for good, to us, because we are saved. God has a purpose and a plan, for everyone He saves, Ephesians 2:10. Along every winding, hard to follow path of our lives, God leads us and works His will, to get us where He wants us to be, without canceling our freewill. If God's plan for you is different than your hopes and dreams, it's best to fit into God's plan for you. Many saved people fight God's will for their life. They pursue their own will and do their best to ignore God's will. Is God dealing with you about obedience to His will? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you willing to surrender your will to His will now? \_\_\_\_\_

Perhaps we could compare God's leading and working in our lives to GPS. When you take wrong turns while using GPS, the GPS will reroute, so you can find your way from wherever you are, in spite of the wrong turns. God does the same thing for us. The closer we follow His leading, the less correction we need. Yet, if we take more wrong turns, God still faithfully reroutes us, as many times as necessary, to get us where He wants us, in His will, faithfully serving Him.

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

### **Seven Things Romans 8:29 Does Not Say**

1. God predestinated the elect to get saved.
2. God predestinated unsaved people to get saved.
3. God predestinated only a few to become believers.
4. God chose only an elect few people to believe in Jesus.
5. God chose some to get saved and most to stay lost.
6. God elected some to get saved and most to stay lost.
7. God's foreknowledge caused Him to predestinate some to get saved.

If you believe that Romans 8:29-30 says any of the things on that list, you are misreading it, or, you are reading your false presuppositions into the verse. Romans 8:29-30 is not foretelling the election of unsaved people to salvation. The issue here is not anyone being chosen or elected to get saved. Calvinists read Romans 8:29 that way but that is not what the text of scripture says. The issue here is: What precisely, does Romans 8:29 say that predestination is to?

*“he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.”*

Being *conformed to the image of his Son* is not the same as getting saved. They are not synonymous. Getting saved is different than, being *conformed to the image of his Son*. You have to get saved before you can ever be *conformed to the image of his Son*, but being *conformed to the image of His Son* happens a long time after you get saved, not when you get saved.

Therefore, getting saved is a different thing than being conformed to the image of his Son. Please do not confuse or conflate those two. They are not the same thing and they do not happen at the same time. Think about when any Christian is conformed to the image of his Son. That doesn't happen at salvation, for anyone.

1. How does someone get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
  2. When does someone get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
  3. How does someone get conformed to the image of his Son? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. When does someone get conformed to the image of his Son? \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Explain the difference between getting saved and being conformed to the image of his Son. \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Are getting saved and, being conformed to the image of his Son, simultaneous events in the Bible, meaning, they happen at the same time?
- 

With so much false teaching about Romans 8:29-30 and so much false teaching about election and foreknowledge and predestination, what should we believe?

### **What should we believe about Romans 8:29-30?**

**The first option: Here is how Romans 8:29-30, is often taught by non-Calvinists.** I call this view the Arminius Compromise. Calvinists call it the Prescient View. Prescient means: having knowledge of events before they take place. Jacobus Arminius, 1560-1609, was a Dutch Calvinist but he knew that many things about Calvinism were off, theologically, so he came up with this view. Here's the summary. "God knows who will get saved by obeying the

gospel call and believing on Jesus. Based on His foreknowledge of who will get saved, God predestinates people who will believe on Jesus, to get saved.”

He calls them to salvation and He justifies them when they get saved. He will eventually glorify them, i.e., give them a new body, at the rapture or the resurrection. Romans 8:29-30 doesn't say that at all, but still, that is basically the teaching of Arminius and many Baptists, some Bible churches and many independent, nondenominational churches.

1. Why doesn't the Arminius Compromise work? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the fatal flaw in the Arminius Compromise? \_\_\_\_\_

**The second option: Here is how Romans 8:29-30, is often taught by Calvinists.** God predestinated (elected or chose), in eternity past, a few people to get saved, without referencing any good in them, without considering if they would believe on Jesus. God chose whom He would save without exercising any foreknowledge about the people He chose.

Since everyone is fallen and Totally Depraved, and fallen people only have freewill to sin (they have no freewill to believe on Jesus, according to Calvinism), no one can get under conviction for his sins, no one can respond affirmatively to a gospel tract or to gospel preaching or to gospel witnessing, and so, no one can use their freewill to make a decision to believe on the Lord Jesus as Savior. In the philosophy of Calvinism, the unsaved are incapable of responding affirmatively to the gospel.

So, in order for people to get saved, according to Calvinism, God must sovereignly, monergistically (meaning, God working alone, mono, or by Himself, without man's will being involved), overpower their fallen, depraved, incapable will and save them against their will:

**a.** without them repenting of their sins, **b.** without them believing the gospel, **c.** without them believing what the Bible says about salvation, **d.** without them believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, **e.** without them receiving Christ as their Savior, **f.** without them having faith in Jesus, **g.** without them making a freewill decision to receive the gift of God which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. Does the Bible say any of those things, **a - g?** \_\_\_\_\_

According to Calvinism, people can only believe the gospel AFTER they get saved/regenerated, not before they get saved. People can only believe on the

Lord Jesus AFTER they get saved/regenerated, not before they get saved. They can only have faith AFTER they get saved/regenerated, not before they get saved.

2. Does the Bible say any of those “after” things? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which should we believe, the Bible or Calvinism? \_\_\_\_\_

The problem with the Calvinist view is that, it is, by definition, unbiblical and unChristian, because, those Calvinist views are never affirmed, mentioned, recommended or taught in the Bible. That is what makes Calvinism unbiblical. Since the Bible doesn't say or teach it, on that basis, Calvinism is not biblical truth. Since Calvinism is not biblical truth, it is not Christian to teach that people get saved by Irresistible Grace, without repenting of their sins and without believing on Christ as their Savior. If we are Bible believing Christians, we cannot believe or teach Calvinism. Because we are Bible believing Christians, we believe what the Bible says, in context, and reject Calvinism.

Explain why the Calvinist view is unbiblical. \_\_\_\_\_

Explain why the Calvinist view is unChristian. \_\_\_\_\_

### **This is what John Calvin wrote.**

“By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which He determined with Himself whatever He wished to happen with regard to every man. All men are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of those ends, we say that he has been predestined to life or death.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, iii, xxi, sec. 5, p. 1030-1031

“...Since the arrangement of all things is in the hand of God, since to Him belongs the disposal of life and death, He arranges all things by His sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify Him by their destruction.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, iii, xxiii, sec. 6, p. 231

“There is no random power, or agency, or motion in the creatures, who are so governed by the secret counsel of God, that nothing happens but what He has knowingly and willingly decreed... the counsels and wills of men are so governed as to move exactly in the course which He has destined.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, iii, xxiii, secs. 3 & 8, p. 175 & 179

Should Christians believe the false teaching of John Calvin? \_\_\_\_\_

“God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and in him the ruin of his posterity; but also at His own pleasure arranged it.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, iii, xxiii, sec. 7, p. 1063

Obviously, the Bible never says what Calvin wrote. Calvinism redefines the word, predestination, away from its biblical meaning (*to be conformed to the image of his Son*, Romans 8:29), to fit Augustine’s view and Calvin’s view, that God chose only a few people to be saved. In the Bible, *predestinate* and *predestinated*, never mean that God chose, elected and preordained some to eternal life and others, to eternal damnation. Don’t be so foolish as to fall for Calvinism’s unbiblical and false, redefinition of predestination.

### **The false teaching of Calvinism or Reformed Theology In the words of famous Calvinists**

“The reformed view of predestination teaches that before a person can choose Christ his heart must be changed. He must be born again... one does not first believe, then become reborn... In regeneration, God changes our hearts. He gives us a new disposition, a new inclination. He plants a desire for Christ in our hearts. We can never trust Christ for our salvation unless we first desire Him. This is why we said earlier that regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, Chosen By God, pp. 72, 118.

“In historic Reformation thought, the notion is this: regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, August 25, 2017, Article, TULIP and Reformed Theology: Irresistible Grace.

“We can say, first, that regeneration is the cause of faith... Having been born of God results in our believing. Our believing is the immediate evidence of God’s begetting.” John Piper, March 2, 2008, Online sermon.

“A man is not regenerated because he has first believed in Christ, but he believes in Christ because he has been regenerated.” A.W. Pink, 1886-1952, The Sovereignty of God.

According to Reformed and Calvinist teaching, only after God regenerates you by irresistible grace, apart from repentance, apart from faith in Christ, apart from belief on Christ and apart from believing the gospel, then and only then are you capable of having faith to believe on Christ. In plainer words, they teach that you have to get saved and regenerated before you can believe on Christ as your Savior.

Does the Bible ever say that? \_\_\_\_\_

Calvinist false teaching isn't even close to being biblical or Christian. Read Hebrews 3:18-19. "*And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*" Hebrews 3:18-19

**In the Bible, belief always comes before salvation.**

Calvinism says you must get saved before you can believe on Jesus. The Bible says if you don't believe, you cannot enter in. *Entering in* pictures salvation. You couldn't enter into God's rest unless and until you believed. God never promised to save "them that believed not." He swore that if they didn't believe, they would not enter into his rest. Do you see that, biblically speaking, belief must come before salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

Calvinism says the opposite of what the Bible says. According to Reformed or Calvinist teaching: **1.** You get saved or regenerated without having faith in Christ, **2.** you get saved or regenerated without repenting of your sins, **3.** you get saved or regenerated without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, **4.** you get saved or regenerated without receiving Christ as your Savior, **5.** you get saved or regenerated without believing the gospel, **6.** you get saved or regenerated without calling upon the name of the Lord.

That is the Irresistible Grace or, Monergism view, that God saves you against your will, by Himself, alone, mono, meaning, one, without you being involved in your own salvation decision. That is the false view, believed and taught by Calvinists. By definition, that Calvinist belief is neither biblical, because the Bible never says it, nor Christian because, in the Bible, Christians are never taught that they get saved before they believe on Jesus or by not believing on Jesus.

Calvinists interpret Romans 8:29 to mean that, God saves everyone He calls, so, for Calvinists, the gospel call here is only for the elect, the people God has already chosen to get saved but the gospel is not for the non-elect. In plainer words, the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ is NOT good news for most people because, according to Calvinism: **a.** God didn't elect most people to salvation, **b.** God didn't predestinate most people to salvation and, **c.** Christ didn't die for most people.

Calvinists say, God saves everyone He calls to salvation and justifies everyone He saves. Eventually, God will glorify (give a new body to) everyone He justified. Romans 8:29-30 doesn't say what Calvinism teaches but still, that Calvinistic view is basically the teaching of Presbyterians, Reformed churches and some Calvinistic Baptists.

Romans 8:29-30, is understood by some, to be a great proof text for Calvinism. For that reason, we will examine these verses carefully, in context. As we begin that examination, we remind ourselves that Calvinism is not Christian theology (the study of God and the Bible). Calvinism is philosophy (the study of knowledge). Calvinists claim to have hidden or secret knowledge, which most people don't have. Calvinism originated with the followers of Mani (Persian name) or Manes (Latin name) the founder of Manichean Gnosticism, who lived from AD 216-274.

Here is what Jesus said about secret knowledge. "*Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.*" John 18:20.

We begin by pointing out that none of the five points of Calvinism's TULIP, are biblical. They are not mentioned in the Bible, by any human author of the Bible. They are not taught in the Bible by any prophet or apostle or pastor or evangelist. Jesus never mentions, affirms or recommends any of the five points of the Calvinist TULIP. Beyond that, Jesus and Paul never teach what Calvinism teaches, about Romans 8:29-30.

**Christian Theology** is defined as: the study of God and His revelation to mankind, in the Bible, in context, rightly divided, 2 Timothy 2:15.

**Philosophy** is defined as: the study of knowledge or the search for knowledge. Christians are warned against philosophy, Colossians 2:8.

Calvinism is presuppositional philosophy, a faulty lens through which some people misread and misinterpret the Bible. As we shall see, when we approach the Bible without false Calvinist presuppositions about the meaning of words, and false Calvinist presuppositions about the alleged decrees of God in eternity past, we are set free from drawing false conclusions based on those false Calvinist presuppositions. In that freedom, we can rightly divide the word of truth and understand the scriptures in context, as God intended. Here is the Calvinist TULIP.

**T**otal Depravity or Total Inability  
**U**nconditional Election  
**L**imited atonement  
**I**rresistible Grace  
**P**erseverance of the saints

1. Romans 8:29-30 is not about the salvation of unsaved people.
2. Romans 8:29-30 is about the guaranteed future of saved people.

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

**The third, and best option: Here is how Romans 8:29-30, is taught by some Baptist churches and some independent churches**, which reject Calvinism and also reject false Calvinist presuppositions and false Calvinist redefinitions of words, which, nevertheless, some non-Calvinists still bring to the Bible.

**For whom he did foreknow**, - In Romans 8:29, predestination is based on God's foreknowledge, *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*. Is that clear to you? \_\_\_\_\_ Predestination (and election) then, are not Unconditional, since they are based on God's foreknowledge. God's foreknowledge is a condition. Is that clear to you in Romans 8:29? \_\_\_\_\_ God foreknows everything that's going to happen, without Himself, causing those things to happen, without Himself, making those things happen.

For God to foreknow you, is like being foreknown by God or, *known of God*, Galatians 4:8-9. Knowing God and being known of God are prerequisites to being predestinated. Those must be in place before God predestinates you. Saved people are predestinated *to be conformed to the image of his Son*. Predestination is never about unsaved people being predestinated to get saved. Do you understand that? \_\_\_\_\_

In plainer words, God's foreknowledge is not causative. God can know in advance that something is going to happen without causing it to happen. Calvinists disagree with that view, insisting that God foreknows it because He caused it. Bible believers disagree, and say that God foreknows who will get saved, without God forcing them to get saved, without saving them against their will. God also foreknows that He Himself will glorify everyone He justifies, without losing a single one of them.

In the context of Paul's letter to the Romans, *foreknow*, is linked to Paul's knowledge of Isaiah (which Paul quotes 19 times in Romans), where Paul read about Israel being God's *elect*. God's foreknowledge of his chosen people, Israel, Romans 11:2, is in Paul's mind as he writes Romans chapter 8. Israel was God's *elect*, Isaiah 45:4, 65:9, Romans 9:27, 11:5. Jesus spends His earthly ministry in Israel, preaching to Jews (God's elect), who were living in the land of Israel, under the law of Moses, offering sacrifices and worshiping in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem.

Who is God's elect in Isaiah 45:4? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus preaches in a Jewish context, not a Gentile context, Matthew 10:5-6. Therefore, when Jesus uses the word, *elect*, He uses it in a distinctly Jewish context, Matthew 24:22, 24, 31. Paul, the Jewish Pharisee, personally tutored by Gamaliel, the great Jewish teacher of the first century AD, Acts 5:34, 22:3, who got saved and became a Jew for Jesus, is intensely focused on Israel receiving her Messiah and getting saved. Paul is the Jewish apostle to the Gentiles, Romans 11:13. God revealed to Paul, not to any of the other Jewish apostles, that Jews and Gentiles would be one body in Christ, Ephesians 2:13-19, 3:1-11.

As he writes Romans, in the midst of his vibrant missionary work, Paul sees God's plan being thwarted by the Jewish leaders of the synagogues where he teaches and by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. Paul encounters the same spiritual wickedness and rebellion against God, that Isaiah and Jeremiah and other OT prophets encountered.

Paul pleads with the Jews, Acts 9:15-16, because, as God's apostle to the Gentiles, he knows the Jew's time to receive Messiah is running out. If the Jews as a nation, don't act soon, to receive Jesus as their Messiah, God will turn from the Jews and remove them from the place of blessing, Romans 11:25, and graft in the Gentiles. Remember, we're in AD 58, as Paul finishes writing Romans. The Jews have already rejected Jesus as their Messiah in Acts 4:1-18, 5:24-33, 7:52-60, 13:44-50, 18:4-6. Despite Paul's preaching and teaching and writing and personal pleading, the Jews will also reject Jesus in Rome, in AD 60-62, in Acts 28:17-31.

1. Do you see God's gradual turning away from Israel, in Acts? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you see Paul's strategy to provoke Israel to jealousy? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Paul's Evangelistic Strategy - Provoke Israel To Jealousy**

Here then, is Paul's strategy in Romans 8:29-30. He intends to make Israel jealous of God's blessings upon the saved Gentiles, so that Israel will believe on Jesus as their Messiah and get saved. Paul hopes that Israel, who has been without blood sacrifices in the temple for 25 years, since Christ died on the cross, Matthew 27:50-51, will want the blessings of God upon them again, the same blessings God has already given to saved Gentiles, Ephesians 1:3. God said it would happen and Paul is trying to make it happen, before God removes Israel from the place of blessing, Romans 11:25-32.

*"They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."*  
Deuteronomy 32:21.

*“But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.”*  
Romans 10:19.

*“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy.”* Romans 11:11.

*“If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.”* Romans 11:14.

That is the historical and spiritual setting in which Paul presents the ideas of, foreknow, predestinate and elect. That is also the strategy Paul employs in Romans chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11 - provoking Israel to jealousy of saved Gentiles and jealousy of the spiritual blessings God has given saved Gentiles, so that Israel too, will get saved, 1 Corinthians 9:19-22. Wise students of the Bible will keep this in mind as we study Romans chapter 8. The Epistle to the Romans is not, in any way, affirming, promoting or teaching Calvinism.

One of the most fundamental beliefs of Calvinism is that predestination is never based on foreknowledge. They have to deny that foreknowledge is the basis of election and predestination; otherwise, the Unconditional Election part of their philosophical flower, TULIP, withers and dies. If predestination and election are based on foreknowledge, as they are in the Bible, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:2, then election cannot be Unconditional. If election is not Unconditional (but is based on foreknowledge), then the Calvinist TULIP is exposed as a lie. Do you understand that? \_\_\_\_\_

Remember, Romans 8:29, about predestination, is crystal clear: *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate.* In the Bible, foreknowledge comes before election and predestination. Election and predestination are always based on foreknowledge but, in the Bible, no one is ever elected or predestinated to salvation. Do you understand that? \_\_\_\_\_

There is more involved here than God foreknowing who will get saved. In the biblical context of Romans 8:29-30, God is foreknowing His own, already saved children and His own actions and blessings in the lives of His already saved children, who are already justified by faith, already seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 2:6.

Consider this Bible truth. Spiritually speaking, we are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, while, physically speaking, we are still down here on earth.

Spiritually speaking, Jesus dwells in our hearts by faith, while, physically speaking, Jesus is still seated at the right hand of the Father, in heaven.

In Romans 8:29, Paul's emphasis is not, God foreknowing who will get saved and is not, God arbitrarily electing or predestinating anyone to get saved. God is foreknowing Christians (people who are already saved), *whom he did foreknow*, and His intentions in predestinating them to receive, the blessings which guarantee their eventual glorification (them receiving their glorified body), Romans 8:30. Ephesians 1:3-14 provides more detail about that.

We approach Romans 8:29-30, without the false presuppositions and false word definitions of Calvinism. When we do that, we are free to interpret the text, in context, without trying to validate the false, Gnostic philosophy of Calvinism.

What we read in the Bible in context, is a lot different than what we read in Calvinist philosophical teaching. A Calvinist reads a Bible verse and concludes that the verse means the opposite of what it says.

So, John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Calvinism says: No, Jesus didn't die for the world. He only died for the elect (the world of the elect) and only the elect can get saved, not whosoever.

In 1 Timothy 2:4, the Bible says God "*will have all men to be saved*" and Calvinism says: No, Jesus intends to save only a small group called the elect." In Romans 8:29, the Bible says "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*" and Calvinism says: No, predestination is never based on foreknowledge.

**A proof text that ignores context is a pretext  
for teaching something that isn't true.**

**he also did predestinate** - Calvinists use this verse to prove that God predestinated the elect to get saved. Of course, this verse says no such thing. Romans 8:29 is the first time the word, *predestinate*, occurs in the Bible. This word is misdefined and misunderstood by John Calvin, and his followers, causing many Christians, who are not Calvinists, to also have a false understanding of its meaning. We will define the word, *predestinate*, here, in its biblical context and biblical meaning, instead of using the false, unbiblical, Calvinist redefinition.

Does Romans 8:29 say that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved?

**Predestinate**, is from the Greek word, προορίζω proorizō, pronounced, pra-o-rēed'-zō, Strong's **G4309**. It means: to predetermine, to determine before, to appoint beforehand, to decide beforehand. A secondary definition is: God decreeing from eternity. That secondary meaning comes from Calvinist influence, not from biblical usage.

No biblical usage of predestinate or predestinated in the NT, carries the meaning Calvinism assigns to it, which is: God decreeing in eternity past, to choose, elect and save a few people, not many, and leave everyone else to go to hell. Predestinate or predestinated occurs only four times in the NT, always and only, used by the apostle Paul, in Romans 8:29, 30, Ephesians 1:5, 11.

### **Here is John Calvin's false teaching**

“Did all promiscuously bend the knee to Christ, election would be common; whereas now in the small number of believers a manifest diversity appears.... Hence it is that the whole world no longer belongs to its Creator, except in so far as grace rescues from malediction, divine wrath, and eternal death, some, not many, who would otherwise perish, while he leaves the world to the destruction to which it is doomed.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Volume 3, 7.

Calvinism uses Matthew 7:14, out of context, and John Calvin used the Gospel of John, chapter six, to prove that Jesus only died for a few (not many) whom God elected to save while leaving everyone else unalterably predestinated to destruction and eternity in the lake of fire with never a chance of getting saved simply because, according to Calvinism, God could have saved them but made a conscious choice not to elect and save them.

### **Here is John MacArthur's false teaching**

“**for the whole world.** This is a generic term, referring not to every single individual, but to mankind in general. Christ actually paid the penalty only for those who would repent and believe. A number of scriptures indicate that Christ died for the world (John 1:29; 3:16; 6:51; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:9). Most of the world will be eternally condemned to hell to pay for their own sins, so they could not have been paid for by Christ.” John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible, Note on 1 John 2:2.

Do any of the verses MacArthur used say what we've underlined above? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is it okay for us to believe the false teaching of Calvinism, if John MacArthur believes it? \_\_\_\_\_

## Limited or Unlimited Atonement?

By His marvelous grace, God has, in Christ, reconciled the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. The Bible doesn't say, the world of the elect. It says, the world. That is a done deal. Nothing anyone thinks about it now, matters. The Trinity planned it, Jesus accomplished it and that's that. And yet, Christ's atonement and God's reconciliation did not automatically save anyone. What reconciliation did is make possible the preaching of the glorious gospel of Christ, with sincerity, to all men everywhere so that they can obey God's command to all men everywhere to repent when they hear and believe the gospel.

Five other times in the NT, a Greek word similar to predestination, προγινώσκω *proginōskō*, pronounced: pra-ghee-nōs'-skō, Strong's **G4267**, is used and translated as follows. None of the verses about predestination says that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved. None of these other verses with a similar Greek word, says that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved.

1. *Which knew me from the beginning, Acts 26:5.*
2. *whom he did foreknow, Romans 8:29.*
3. *his people which he foreknew, Romans 11:2.*
4. *foreordained before the foundation of the world, 1 Peter 1:20.*
5. *ye know these things before, 2 Peter 3:17.*

Nowhere in the Bible will you ever find unsaved people being predestinated to get saved. What you find in the Bible is, God predestinating people who are already saved, to a purpose other than getting saved. You have to get in Christ, before you can be predestinated. No one is predestinated until they get in Christ. Once they are in Christ, they are predestinated to be *conformed to the image of his Son*, but, no one is predestinated to be *conformed to the image of his Son* until they are in Christ. That fits perfectly with what the Bible says.

1. Did John Calvin believe many people would get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did John MacArthur believe Jesus died for all? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is predestination about God choosing people to get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do people have to get, in Christ, before they can be predestinated? \_\_\_\_\_
5. In the Bible, is anyone predestinated before they are saved? \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you answered Yes, please give the verses which support your view.  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was John Calvin right, in his teaching that only a small number of people would be saved? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Does Matthew 7:14 say that only a few will be saved? \_\_\_\_\_
9. In context, to whom is Matthew 7:14 referring? \_\_\_\_\_

**The only 4 times, predestinate(d), is used in the Bible.**

1. "For whom *he did foreknow*, he also did *proorizō **predestinate*** G4309 to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29.
2. "Moreover whom he did *proorizō **predestinate***, G4309 them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Romans 8:30.
3. "Having *proorizō **predestinated*** G4309 us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," Ephesians 1:5.
4. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being *proorizō **predestinated*** G4309 according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:" Ephesians 1:11.

The same Greek word which is translated, predestinate or predestinated, in the above verses, is found in two more verses, where it is translated as follows.

"For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel *proorizō **determined before*** G4309 to be done." Acts 4:28.

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God *proorizō **ordained*** G4309 *before* the world unto our glory:" 1 Corinthians 2:7.

**to be conformed to the image of his Son**, - In biblical usage, predestination is never to salvation. *Conformed to the image of his Son* describes already saved people getting their new body, their glorified body, Romans 8:23. That doesn't happen at salvation and that is different than getting saved. Please don't make the error of assuming that, getting saved and being *conformed to the image of his Son* are the same thing. Being *conformed to the image of his Son*, happens in the future, either at the Rapture or the Resurrection but not at salvation. Is it clear that getting saved, and being conformed to the image of his son, are not the same thing? \_\_\_\_\_

*Predestinate*, as Paul uses it, has nothing to do with God, in eternity past, choosing or electing a few people, whom He would save. *Predestinate*, as Paul uses the word, describes people who are already saved. God predestinated

already saved people, *to be conformed to the image of his Son*. Do you understand that? \_\_\_\_\_

Predestination, in the Bible, always and only, applies to people who are already saved. God doesn't predestinate lost, hell-bound, unsaved people to salvation. That statement can be disproved by citing verses, which say that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved. Can you cite any verses which say that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved? \_\_\_\_\_

What God does is, predestinate people who are already saved, to the blessings He has promised them, including getting a glorified body, also referred to as, *the redemption of our body*, Romans 8:23. We're in Romans chapter 8. Paul is addressing himself to Christians, people who are already saved, according to Romans 8:1, 9, 11, 14. Predestination is never about unsaved people getting saved. If Calvinism says the contrary in 900 books and on 10,000 websites, that doesn't make Calvinism true. It is still as unbiblical as it has always been.

Paul is the only human author of the Bible who uses the words, *predestinate* or *predestinated*. Paul and the Bible never say, that God predestinated unsaved people to get saved. Calvinism says that but the Bible never says that. The Bible teaches that, God predestinated people who are already saved, *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, meaning, God will keep His promise to complete their adoption and give them a glorified body, Romans 8:15, 23, at some point in the future. That is God's promise that He will do, for already saved people, all of the things He has promised to do for them.

### **In the Bible, what are people predestinated to?**

1. Predestinated to: be conformed to the image of his Son, Romans 8:29.
2. Predestinated to: conformed, Romans 8:30, same as Romans 8:29.
3. Predestinated to: the adoption of children, Romans 8:23, Eph 1:5.
4. Predestinated to: to obtain an inheritance, Ephesians 1:11.

In the Bible, no one is ever predestinated to get saved. In the Bible, predestination is never about the conversion of the unsaved. It's never about God choosing to save a few and choosing not to save the rest. Instead, in the Bible, predestination is always about future blessings, guaranteed by God, for people who are already saved. How do we know that? We know that because we believe what we read in the Bible, in context. We reject Calvinist false definitions of words, because the Bible doesn't teach Calvinism.

Does the Bible ever say that people are predestinated to get saved? \_\_\_\_\_

## Bible believers ask observational questions

1. Who is being predestinated, saved people or unsaved people? \_\_\_\_\_
2. To what are they being predestinated? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is it clear to you, that no one is predestinated to get saved? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you see God's grand truth of biblical predestination, not Calvinistic predestination, in Romans 8:29-30? \_\_\_\_\_
5. To what are people predestinated in Romans 8:29? \_\_\_\_\_

We have listed and read, the only four verses in the Bible, where *predestinate* or *predestinated*, occurs. None of the verses where predestinate is used, says that God, in eternity past, elected to save a few people and left all the rest to go to hell, without Jesus dying for them and without any hope of salvation.

You may want to read that underlined sentence several times, until its truth lodges in your heart. Jesus and Paul were not Calvinists and you shouldn't be a Calvinist. No one in the Bible ever taught any part of TULIP Calvinism. What should Christians do? We should follow the apostle Paul, as he followed Jesus, instead of following John Calvin.

Paul - "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*"  
1 Corinthians 11:1.

**that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.** - *He* is Jesus. *Firstborn* indicates that God wants a large, flourishing family, not just a few people out of earth's large population. *The firstborn* son is important because, to him goes the inheritance. He is expected to be the leader, to wisely husband the inheritance so it can be passed on to the next generation, improved and increased.

In the OT, Israel was God's firstborn. "*And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn.*" Exodus 4:22. God's plan was for Israel to evangelize the Gentiles. Because Messiah Jesus would come from Israel, Israel, as God's elect nation, was expected to herald His coming. When the Jews rejected God's election and rejected their Messiah, God removed them from the place of blessing, Romans 11:25-32, and grafted or grafted in the Gentiles, Romans 11:17-23. If Israel starts believing on Jesus as her Messiah, God can graft or graft them in again.

**many brethren** - Among other strange things, Calvinists believe that only a relatively few people, out of the population of the earth, will be saved yet Paul says here, *many brethren*. There is a huge difference between many and few. Can you recognize the difference? \_\_\_\_\_ Paul says, *many brethren*. Calvinists teach that only a relatively few will be saved and that, by God's

personal choice. He could have saved all but He decided to save only a few, Calvinists tell us, because it pleased God to do it that way. Someone once described Calvinism with this English, Particular Baptist hymn, from the 1600s.

“We are the Lord’s elected few,  
Let all the rest be damned;  
There’s room enough in hell for you,  
We won’t have heaven crammed!”

Those few are referred to, by Calvinists, as God’s elect. Oddly enough, Calvinists always believe they are included in the small group called the elect, instead of the large group that is damned. Isn’t that an interesting brand of humility? \_\_\_\_\_

Calvinists arrive at their false conclusion by taking Matthew 7:14 out of context and misapplying that verse to the entire human race. In context, Matthew 7:14 is Jesus, the Jewish Messiah to Israel, teaching His Jewish disciples, who lived under the law of Moses, in the land of Israel, before the crucifixion and resurrection, Matthew 5:1-2. Jesus is describing the situation of first century AD Jews, who rejected Him as their Messiah, who refused to believe on Him as their Messiah, Luke 13:28, 34-35.

*“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way,  
which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:14.*

Jesus says, few of them will get saved because, to get saved, they have to stop rejecting Him and believe on and receive Him as their Messiah, John 1:11-12. Paul, God and the Bible, disagree with the Calvinist teaching that only a few will be saved.

1. How many will be saved accd. to Paul in Romans 5:15, 8:29? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many will be saved according to Jesus in Matthew 8:11? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many will be saved according to Jesus in Matt 9:37? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many will be saved according to John in Rev 5:9? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many will be saved according to John in Rev 7:9? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many will be saved according to John in Rev 19:1? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many will be saved according to John in Rev 19:6? \_\_\_\_\_

In Matthew 7:14, is Jesus saying that only a few people will ever be saved? \_\_\_\_\_  
In Romans 8:29, is Paul saying that only a few people will be saved? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called:** - The Greek word for called, is: καλέω kaleō, pronounced, kä-lay-ō. Jesus used this same word in Matthew 9:13.

*“But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*  
Matthew 9:13.

Is Jesus only talking about calling “elect” sinners or is He talking about all sinners? \_\_\_\_\_ If everyone is a sinner, Romans 3:23, and Jesus came to call sinners to repentance, then, by definition, Jesus came to call everyone to repentance. If Jesus didn’t use the word, *call*, with the Calvinist meaning of the elect few, and Limited Atonement, then we can safely conclude that Paul is not using the word, *called*, with a Calvinist meaning of the elect few, and Limited Atonement. Jesus again, used the Greek word, call, in Matthew 22:9.

*“Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid (call) to the marriage.”* Matthew 22:9.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is completely out of step with Calvinism and its teaching of Total Inability and Unconditional Election of a few, and its teaching of Limited Atonement or Particular Redemption. Jesus says, *as many as ye shall find*, call to the marriage or bid to the marriage. Jesus says nothing about Total Inability, nothing about Limited Atonement and Unconditional Election. See also Luke 14:13ff., which clearly, is not about Limited Atonement and only calling “the elect.”

The point is, this is the same word Paul used in Romans 8:28 and 30. Jesus didn’t use the word, *called*, in a Calvinist sense and neither does Paul. It is a serious doctrinal error to read Romans 8:28-30, as if it teaches Calvinism. Jesus never taught Calvinism and Paul, who told us to follow him as he followed Christ, 1 Corinthians 11:1, never taught Calvinism. That being true, Romans 8:28-30, is not teaching the false philosophy of Calvinism.

Paul uses the word, *called*, in Romans 8:28 and 30, the same way he uses it in 1 Timothy 6:12, the call to eternal life, i.e., with a view toward the redemption of the body, receiving our glorified body, not the call to salvation, Romans 8:23.

*“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”*  
1 Timothy 6:12.

There are several ways to read Romans 8:30. A popular, yet false way, is to read it as a doctrinal statement supporting Calvinism. A second false way is to deny Calvinism while still defining predestination as meaning, predestinated to get saved.

### **Three ways to read Romans 8:30**

**I. Calvinism says:** **1.** God predestinated, in eternity past, (not based on any foreknowledge of the people He predestinated), an elect few whom He intends to save (and leaves everyone else to damnation by not choosing them). **2.** God calls to salvation, those He chose, elected and predestinated, for whom alone, Jesus died, and all of those He calls, He regenerates or saves, before they believe on Him. **3.** God justified all those He called and regenerated/saved, before they believed on Him, without them believing on Him. **4.** God will glorify those for whom Jesus died.

No one else (meaning the non-elect), has a snowball’s chance of getting saved and that’s how God shows His amazing love to all men, even the non-elect, whom He didn’t call and didn’t die for and will not save, because He willed not to call them and die for them and save them. Instead, He created them to punish, so He can show His glory, by punishing them for eternity, in hell. These are the eternal decrees of God, according to the false philosophy of Calvinism.

**II. Non-Calvinists say:** Paul is speaking in general terms here, not in any way, intending a Calvinist interpretation. This view says, Paul is talking about the call to salvation but not in a Calvinist way. This view doesn’t accept Calvinism but asserts that God *foreknew* who would get saved. Then, based on God’s foreknowledge that they would get saved when they heard the gospel, God predestinated those people whom he foreknew, to get saved. He then saved them, when they believed on Jesus, also justified them and will eventually glorify them. This view rejects Calvinism but then accepts the false Calvinist redefinition of predestination. There is no biblical or logical reason to accept the false Calvinist redefinition because Romans 8:29-30 does not say that.

**III. Bible believing Christians who believe the Bible in context, say:** There is a more biblical way to understand Romans 8, a way which fits the context of Romans 8 better than the Calvinist, unbiblical way. We have already pointed out that the Bible doesn’t state or teach any of the five points of Calvinism. That

being true, we can dispense with all of the false, philosophical, Calvinist presuppositions and false Calvinist word definitions, as we study Romans chapter 8. We have further pointed out that Paul addresses himself, in Romans 8, to people who are already saved, yet Paul also has another wise purpose in mind here. He intends to provoke Israel to jealousy, of the saved Gentiles, to fulfill the scripture in Deuteronomy 32:21.

*“They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”*  
Deuteronomy 32:21.

To that end, Paul writes a list of blessings, Romans 8:28-30, to which the Jews would have been privileged, IF they had believed on Messiah Jesus. The list is designed to make the Jews jealous, so they will start thinking about what they're missing, and will want to emulate, meaning equal or excel the saved Gentiles. The list in Romans 8:28-30, isn't intended to teach Calvinism. The blessings Paul lists were originally intended for the Jews, because the Jews were God's elect, not the Gentiles. The only reason the nation of Israel didn't get those blessings is because they were stubborn sinners, who, in spite of being God's elect, refused to believe on Jesus. Israel as God's elect nation, rejected Jesus, her Messiah, Matthew 23:37-39, Luke 23:13-25, John 18:28-40.

**Israel, God's Elect, Rejected God's Election!**  
**Isaiah 45:4, 65:9, John 19:6**

**Who knew that, Israel, the people God elected, could reject God's election?**  
Isn't that a resounding smack in the face for Calvinism? \_\_\_\_\_ Doesn't that completely cut the rug out from under Calvinism? \_\_\_\_\_

The Jews Paul so fervently wants to win to Christ, were God's elect, yet they rejected Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. God's elect, rejecting the God who elected them, doesn't bode well for Calvinism and the Calvinist TULIP. Paul knows Israel's time is running out. For twenty five years, God has been in the process of offering the resurrected Messiah Jesus, to the Jews, beginning with the great evangelistic service, Acts 2:41-47, on the day of Pentecost.

Israel as a nation, is having none of it. Unconditional Election is out the window and down the drain, IF Israel, God's elect, can reject the God who elected them. If God's elect, the nation of Israel, can reject their Messiah, then their election and God's grace, weren't Irresistible. If there's no Irresistible Grace, then Calvinism is wrong and the entire Calvinist house of cards falls down. Is that clear to everyone? \_\_\_\_\_

Does that help make it clear that Paul is not affirming or recommending or teaching Calvinism in Romans 8:29-30, when he mentions predestination? \_\_\_\_\_  
What are we to make of that astonishing Bible truth? \_\_\_\_\_

Paul doesn't intend to teach Calvinism or to prop up the biblically false, five points of Calvinism. Paul isn't teaching Unconditional Election to salvation or Irresistible Grace, in this or any other passage in the Bible.

We have pointed out that, *predestinate*, in the Bible, is never about God choosing or electing anyone to get saved. *Predestinate* refers to God guaranteeing future blessings to people who are already saved. Why do we believe that? Because that is what the Bible says each of the four times the word, *predestinate*, is used in the Bible. When Paul writes, *them he also called*, he is not talking about God calling anyone to salvation. The call that Paul has in mind is the vocational call, Ephesians 4:1, to live for the Lord and to someday, in the future, receive a glorified body, as the final step in our adoption as sons.

Does the Bible or Paul, ever use the word, *called*, to mean something other than the call to salvation? Yes, indeed, both the Bible and Paul do that. Romans 1:1, 8:28, Acts 13:2, 16:10, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 7:20, 15:9, Ephesians 4:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Thessalonians 2:14, 2 Timothy 1:9, Hebrews 5:4, 1 Peter 2:20-21, 3:9, 5:10, 2 Peter 1:3, Jude 1, Revelation 17:14, 19:9.

*Them he also called*, refers to the call to Christians to serve God, to live for Jesus and to eventually receive a glorified body, like Jesus, 1 John 3:1-2, so they can lawfully attend the marriage supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:9, Matthew 22:1-14. All are called by the gospel. The *whosoever will* call is for everyone. That's what, *whosoever will* means.

**and whom he called, them he also justified:** - Remember, this is not the call to salvation. This call is to Christians, people who are already saved. If God calls you to salvation, by the gospel, 2 Thessalonians 2:14, Romans 1:16, not by Unconditional Election in eternity past, and you respond to the gospel call and get saved, God also justifies you. Once you are saved, God calls you to be an heir of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Beyond that, God adopts you into His family, by giving you the Spirit of adoption, now (when you get saved), and that adoption includes you, eventually getting a glorified body, later, Romans 8:23, at the Rapture or the Resurrection. You haven't got that glorified body yet. It's something God has promised, something you hope for and look forward to, something God definitely will do for you, because that is what He called you to, but that part of your adoption has not happened yet.

Those wonderful things that happen, after you get saved, are what Paul is referring to when he says, *and whom he called*, in Romans 8:30. From the resurrection of Christ on, no one is saved without being justified. To state it differently, after the resurrection of Christ, everyone who is saved is justified by faith alone. We learned about justification by faith in Romans chapter 5.

**and whom he justified, them he also glorified.** - Everyone who is justified will also be glorified, eventually. God exists outside of time and in time, so He views those of us who are saved, as having already received our glorified bodies. That's why the best translation, the old King James Bible, (not the NKJV), has it in the past tense, *them he also glorified*. A glorified body is a body like Christ's resurrection body, 1 John 3:1-2. We get our glorified body at the rapture or the resurrection, whichever comes first, but if you're reading this, you haven't yet received your glorified body.

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

**What shall we then say to these things?** - Paul begins a series of questions and answers, to illustrate the absolute eternal security of believers in Christ. Remember, the Jews as a nation did not have eternal security in the OT. They had a long and gruesome track record of forsaking God and chasing after false gods. However, scores of thousands of first century Jews found Messiah and His message attractive and truthful and exercised their freewill and got saved. Unfortunately, Israel, as a nation, rejected Jesus as their Messiah.

This passage, Romans 8:31-39, is viewed, by many commentators, as Paul's hymn of triumph. What can we conclude from the truth that: Christ has saved us, justified us and will eventually glorify us? Paul asks: *What shall we then say to these things?* and then, he starts saying the things we should say. What follows is Paul's summary of the benefits and blessings of being, in Christ, what saved Gentiles have, because they are, in Christ. Remember, Paul's evangelistic purpose or tactic is to provoke the unsaved Jews to jealousy of God's blessings, given to saved Gentiles, so the Jews will get saved, Acts 9:15-16.

**If God be for us, who can be against us?** - With the fervent joy of a cantor, (a music leader who sings Psalms and leads prayers in a synagogue), Paul sings the praises of Messiah Jesus. God, in the OT, used to be for Israel but the wicked sins of idolatrous Israel caused God to divorce Israel and leave her in her sins. That was the situation in the OT. Now, 25 years after the resurrection of Christ, when Paul writes Romans, God is for saved Jews and Gentiles but He is no longer for unsaved Israel.

**who can be against us?** - Well, many people can be against us but this is a rhetorical question. The unsaved Jews of Israel can be against the saved Gentiles and saved Jews. The Jewish Sanhedrin can be against the saved Jews and Gentiles. The wicked Romans can be against us. Mean spirited Christians can be against us. Ignorant Christians can be against us.

Paul asks the rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can prevail against us, by defeating God's plans for us. In your life as a Christian, who has been against you in your walk with Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you deal with spiritual opposition? \_\_\_\_\_

Paul isn't teaching that, once you get saved, no one will ever be against you. He is saying that: nothing men do and nothing Satan does, can prevent God from fulfilling His will in your life, by giving you a glorified body and bringing you safely to heaven. Why does Paul keep emphasizing our glorified body? Because the Holy Spirit does the work of sealing us, Ephesians 1:13-14, and keeping us unto the day of redemption of our body, Romans 8:23. Giving us a glorified body is a promise God will definitely keep. As a Christian, you will experience trouble and testing, tribulation and trial. Life will not always be easy but no matter what you face, God will walk through it with you.

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

**He that spared not his own Son,** - Paul's heart is never far from Calvary and that's an excellent place to be in our thinking and evangelism. When witnessing, we should try, when possible, to take people to Calvary because Calvary is where Jesus paid for the sins of the world. Calvary is the best illustration of: **1.** our sinful condition, **2.** the horror and misery of our sins, **3.** our need of a Savior, and, because of the resurrection of Christ, **4.** the absolute saving power of our loving God.

Always in Paul's mind is, *the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*, John 1:29. The Lamb of God is how Paul got saved, 1 Corinthians 5:7, and that is what Paul preached, all over the Roman Empire, 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. Paul calls it, *my gospel*, Romans 2:16, 16:25, 2 Timothy 2:8. The glorious gospel Paul preached is the gospel we should preach, to all men, everywhere. Jesus Christ is Savior of all who believe on Him. Do you believe? \_\_\_\_\_

**Spared not his own son,** - God didn't spare Jesus the agony of Calvary's cross and bearing the sins of the world. Jesus prayed about that very thing, Matthew

26:36-42, Mark 14:32-41, Luke 22:39-46, and, having prayed, yielded to His Father's will.

**but delivered him up for us all**, - The salvation of God is only possible because God delivered Jesus up for us all. In this particular verse, Paul has in mind, Jesus as Savior of the saved. In 1 Timothy 2:4-6, Paul extols Jesus as, the Savior *who will have all men to be saved, who gave himself a ransom for all*, and the living God, who is the Savior of all men, *specially of them which believe*, 1 Timothy 4:10.

Jesus is, prospectively, the Savior of all men, because He died for all but He is actually, the Savior of them which believe. Paul never teaches Universalism, the false teaching that, since Jesus died for all, all must be saved or, all will be saved. Jesus kicks the false teaching of Universalism to the curb in Revelation 20:11-15, where the apostle John writes down what Jesus taught him, Revelation 1:1-2, about the end times.

**A. Who delivered Jesus?** Since Jesus was delivered up, common sense tells us someone delivered Him. The answer to that question goes all the way back to an event that happened 4000 years ago in Genesis chapter 22.

1. Abraham delivered up Isaac, a type of Jesus Christ, Genesis 22:1-8.
2. Judas delivered Jesus to chief priests, Matt 17:22, 20:18, 26:25, 47ff.
3. The chief priests delivered Jesus to Pilate, Matt 20:19, 27:1-2.
4. Pilate delivered Jesus to Herod. Luke 23:6-12.
5. Herod delivered Jesus back to Pilate. Luke 23:11.
6. Pilate delivered Jesus to the Roman soldiers, Matt 27:26, Mk 15:15
7. The Roman soldiers delivered Jesus to Calvary's cross, Matt 27:27ff.
8. God the Father delivered Jesus to die, Acts 2:23, Romans 8:32.
9. My sins delivered Jesus to suffer on the cross, 1 Cor 15:3ff.
10. Jesus delivered up His Spirit to God the Father, Luke 23:46.
11. God the Father delivered-raised Jesus from the dead, Romans 8:11

**B. To what was Jesus delivered?** 1. Jesus, the Creator of the Universe, John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16, was delivered like a common criminal, to suffer the public shame and agony of execution or capital punishment on the cross. The cross was a Roman, Gentile punishment, not an Israelite, Jewish punishment.

Jesus was delivered openly, publicly. His arrest, Luke 22:43-54, and trial, Luke 22:63-66, 23:13, and death by crucifixion, Luke 23:33-35, were all public. Paul describes it this way. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith

*in his blood.*” Romans 3:25. *Set forth* refers to the public aspect of the crucifixion. And again Paul says: “*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*” Colossians 2:15. **2.** Jesus was delivered to suffer the justice of God by publicly bearing the unsheated wrath of God against all our sins.

**C. Why was Jesus delivered?** Jesus was delivered to the justice of God, to appease the wrath of God. Let’s state it clearly. He “*was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*” Romans 4:25. “*Him, (Jesus) being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*” Acts 2:23. Jesus dying on Calvary was God’s plan all along, to remedy the sin problem of the human race so that we would have a way to get saved and be made right with God.

**D. What happened when Jesus was delivered?** Jesus was delivered to the justice of God, as God’s passover lamb. It isn’t explicitly stated in Romans 4:25 or 8:32 but Jesus was delivered to die for our offences, our crimes, our sins, our transgressions, our guilt - *who was delivered for*, meaning, because of, *our offences*. Jesus was God’s passover lamb, Exodus 12:21, John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7, Revelation 13:8 and the blood of the passover lamb had to be shed. The passover lamb always died.

The passover lamb always had to be without blemish or spot, a perfect specimen. The perfect, unblemished lamb was killed for a blood sacrifice. The perfection of God’s passover lamb speaks of the sinlessness of Christ. For Jesus, the cost of being God’s passover lamb and bearing our sins was the death penalty and the shedding of His innocent blood. Salvation is free for us but it isn’t cheap. It cost the Son of God His life. Modern Christians think of the cross as a piece of jewelry but in the first century AD, the cross was an instrument of capital punishment.

**E. Delivered also conveys the sense of betrayal and condemnation.** Delivered conveys the idea of surrender as well as, being betrayed and delivered to one’s fate, to deliver up to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, put to death. In modern terms it would signify being delivered to the death chamber or the gas chamber or the electric chair. The Greek word for *delivered* is *paradidōmi*. It is the same Greek word Paul used three times to describe idolaters in Romans 1:24, 26, 28, when he says: *God gave them up, God gave them up, God gave them over.*

Giving them up and giving them over, is the same as delivering them up to their punishment or giving them what they deserve. God gave Jesus up to be punished in our place, as our substitute. He took upon Himself the punishment we deserved but Jesus, as God's sinless, innocent Lamb, did not deserve to be punished. He suffered on the cross of Calvary out of love for us.

Meditate on this. God delivered up His Son to die on Calvary to rescue poor lost sinners like you and me and the people in Romans 1. God imposed, upon His own Son, the punishment He imposed upon idolatrous sinners in Romans 1:24, 26, 28. Idolatrous sinners need not suffer the wrath of God against their sins because God has already imposed the death penalty of their sin upon His own beloved Son. Because of Calvary's cross, God is reconciled unto the world and offers peace, pardon and salvation, only through His Son, 2 Corinthians 5:19-21.

Calvary was not a sadistic plan that God the Father imposed upon God the Son, against the will of the Son. Nor was Calvary a social experiment gone wrong or a plan that started well and went off the rails. Calvary was an intentional collaborative event involving the wisdom, will, planning and acquiescence of the entire Godhead. Calvary was for you and for me, so that we could be right with God and spend eternity with Him in heaven.

**Romans 8:32** - *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"*

**Galatians 2:20** - *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

**Ephesians 5:2** - *"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."*

1. Who delivered up Jesus to Calvary, Romans 8:32? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who gave Himself for me, Galatians 2:20? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the Bible contradict itself when it asserts that Romans 8:32 and Galatians 2:20 and Ephesians 5:2 are all true? \_\_\_\_\_

**delivered him up for us all** - reminds us of, *delivered for our offences*, Romans 4:25 - Jesus was delivered up, for our offences, so that He could atone for them, propitiate or appease God's wrath against them, make restitution for them, bring reconciliation for them. That seems so simple and yet many Christians miss it

entirely. The only way God could forgive our sins and save us from the judgment of God, and eternity in hell, is for Jesus to die on the cross for our offences.

That's why Jesus is the only way to heaven, John 14:6, Acts 4:12. The proper view is the personal view. On Calvary, Jesus suffered the wrath of God for my offences, my crimes, my foolishness, my sins, my wickedness. On Calvary, God the Father poured out His wrath upon Christ, as if He was punishing me. On that old rugged cross, God the Son endured His Father's wrath to pay for my sins. That is the truth of the gospel which every Christian should believe.

**how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?** - In Ephesians, Paul provides a list of some of the things God has given us, in Christ. That is the key to understanding this. Everything God does for us, He does for us, in Christ. If anyone wants God's blessings, he needs to get in Christ. God made provision for all of us, in Christ. God didn't make provision for any of us, outside of Christ, so if you want God's salvation and God's blessings and God's guidance and God's provision, you need to get, in Christ. Being a sincere Baptist, Buddhist, Catholic, Methodist, Mormon, Muslim or a Holy Methabapterian is not enough to cleanse your sins or get you to heaven. Since the resurrection of Christ, everyone has to get in Christ, to be saved and go to heaven.

**freely give us all things** - Prosperity preacher pimps like to tell people that God has promised to give them everything. Because they are unsaved charlatans or saved but flesh-oriented false teachers, prosperity pimp preachers always focus on material things like, money, flashy cars, big houses, expensive suits, Rolex watches, private jets and luxurious hotel suites. *Freely give us all things*, is in the context of Calvary, Romans 8:32, and God's vocational call, Romans 8:28, 30, upon our lives, to be witnesses unto Him, Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Romans 9:1-5, 10:1. Romans 8:32 has nothing to do with God saving you and then feeding your flesh by making you rich, arrogant and selfish.

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

Has God justified you by faith alone, in Christ alone? \_\_\_\_\_

**Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?** - *Elect*, as Paul uses it here, refers to people who are already saved; not to unsaved people whom God chose in eternity past, that He would eventually save. Paul is writing to Christians, people who are already saved. People who are already saved are God's elect, as Paul uses the word, *elect*, here.

We have noted that, in the OT, Israel was God's elect, Isaiah 45:4. Because Israel was God's *elect*, in the OT, God's foreknowledge of his chosen people, Israel, Romans 11:2, is on Paul's heart and mind, as he writes Romans chapter 8. Paul wants to provoke Israel to jealousy, to make Israel jealous of God's blessing upon saved Gentiles. Israel in the OT, was God's *elect*, Isaiah 45:4, 65:9, Romans 9:27, 11:5. Jesus spent His earthly ministry in Israel, preaching to Jews, living in the land of Israel, under the law of Moses, offering sacrifices and worshiping in the Jewish temple.

Do you understand Paul's evangelistic plan, is to make Israel jealous? \_\_\_\_\_

### **How and when did saved Gentiles become part of God's elect?**

We have pointed out that, at the resurrection of Christ, saved Jews and saved Gentiles, became, one body in Christ, Ephesians 2:13-22. That is what Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, taught us. Saved Jews and saved Gentiles were not one body before the resurrection of Christ. For that reason, from the resurrection of Christ on, when they became one body in Christ, *God's elect*, people who are already saved, now includes saved Gentiles. The body of Christ is made up of saved Jews and saved Gentiles, not unsaved people whom Calvinists mistakenly view as Unconditionally Elected.

1. In the NT, no one is elect until he gets in Christ, Ephesians 1:4.
2. No one is in Christ until he receives Christ, John 1:11-12.
3. No one's adopted until he receives the Spirit of adoption, Romans 8:15.
4. No one is predestinated until after he is saved, Romans 8:29.

**It is God that justifieth.** - Because God has justified us, in Christ, we are good to go. The judge of all the earth, Genesis 18:25, has justified us, meaning, has declared us righteous. He didn't make us righteous. He declared us righteous because He gave us the righteousness of Christ when we believed on Jesus. Because we have been given the righteousness of Christ, we are eternally saved, absolutely eternally secure in Christ and kept by the Spirit.

1. How many times are the words, *predestinate* or *predestinated*, used in the Bible? **a.** 17 times, **b.** 4 times, **c.** 26 times, **d.** more than 80 times.
2. How many times are the words, *predestinate* or *predestinated*, used in the OT? **a.** They're never used in the OT, **b.** They're used 12 times in the OT.
3. Israel was God's elect, yet Israel rejected Jesus as her Messiah. How does that cut the rug out from under Calvinism? \_\_\_\_\_
4. *Called*, in Romans 8:28 and 8:30, refers to: **a.** the call of God to unsaved people to get saved, or, **b.** the vocational call to someone who is already saved.

5. According to 1 Corinthians 11:1, we should follow: **a.** Moses, **b.** Peter, **c.** Paul, **d.** John Calvin, **e.** any Pope who sits in the chair, **f.** any famous TV evangelist.
6. According to Deuteronomy 32:21, did God say He would provoke Israel to jealousy? Yes. No.
7. What does that mean in Romans chapter 8? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is Paul trying to make unsaved Jews jealous of saved Gentiles? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Is that Paul's evangelistic tactic, to win the Jews to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Is Paul's evangelistic tactic based on Deuteronomy 32:21? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Who is he that condemneth?** - Satan is the accuser of the brethren, Revelation 12:10. In the OT, Satan did the same thing, Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7, that he does in Revelation 12:10. He accuses and condemns and slanders the brethren. We do not live in the OT, before the law of Moses, like Job or under the law of Moses, like King David, and we do not live in the time of tribulation which is described in the book of Revelation.

We are blessed to live in the church age, during *the dispensation of the grace of God*, 1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:10, 3:2, when God is dispensing (distributing, passing out, sharing) His grace to all who will receive it. Satan is still the accuser of the brethren but, in the church age, during the dispensation of the grace of God, Paul points out that we are justified by faith. We have the righteousness of Christ and the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit, therefore, no one, including Satan, can condemn us. John the apostle points out that Jesus is our advocate, 1 John 2:2. This is absolutely, the best time to live and be saved and serve God.

**It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again,** - We are not trusting our own, human righteousness or our blood sacrifices, like Job or like Jews living under the law of Moses in the OT. We are trusting by grace alone, through faith alone, in the sacrifice of Christ alone, and His physical, bodily resurrection. When Paul says: *It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again*, he makes that gospel truth, the basis of our eternally secure relationship with God.

**who is even at the right hand of God,** - To emphasize that Christ did indeed, resurrect bodily, Paul reminds us where Jesus is, at the right hand of God, and by implication, where we are, spiritually speaking, since we are, in Christ, Ephesians 2:6. Write down where you are, in Christ. \_\_\_\_\_

**who also maketh intercession for us.** - The Spirit makes intercession for us, Romans 8:26, and Christ also maketh intercession for us. Two members of the Trinitarian Godhead, are praying for us to the third member of the Godhead. Can you understand why Paul was so fearless in his preaching and teaching and missionary ministry? \_\_\_\_\_ Knowing where we stand with God ought to encourage us to live for Jesus and be ambassadors for Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:20. We're already seated in heaven, just waiting on our glorified body to be.

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

**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** - Paul asks, *Who shall separate us*, and then lists things that might. Why does he do that? Because we have an adversary, the devil, who *walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Peter 5:8. Satan is behind some of the tribulation, persecution and trouble that afflict Christians. Paul lists nineteen difficulties, so that we will know that God can and will, deal with each of them for us and get us safely through them.

**shall tribulation,** - The same Greek word, θλίψις *thlipsis*, *tha-leap-sēss*, is used in Matthew 13:21 - *tribulation*, 24:9 - *afflicted*, 21 and 29 - *tribulation*. In John 16:21, it is translated, *anguish*, in Acts 11:19, it is translated, *persecution*, and in 1 Corinthians 7:28, it is translated, *trouble*. The Greek word carries all of those meanings.

Tribulation is a negative word and a negative situation, and yet, Paul is persuaded that *tribulation* cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Christ is the Greek word which means, Messiah. Even here, Paul appeals to Jewish sensibilities, calling them to believe on Jesus as their Messiah. Paul personally experienced *tribulation* in his life and ministry, Acts 14:22, 20:23, Romans 5:3, 12:12, 2 Corinthians 1:4. Paul is not theorizing here in Romans chapter 8. He is speaking from difficult personal experience.

**or distress,** - The same Greek word is translated, *anguish*, in Romans 2:9, and *distresses*, in 2 Corinthians 6:4. It is used only four times in the NT, always by Paul. It means: extreme distress, anguish and trouble. Most Western Christians have little to no experience of this kind of tribulation and distress, unless they have lived on the mission field or grew up in countries where Christians are persecuted. For some first century Christians, what Paul describes was just part of everyday life as a believer in Christ. Paul personally experienced *distress* in his life and ministry, 2 Corinthians 6:4, 12:10.

**or persecution,** - Persecution means hostility and ill-treatment, including abuse, punishment and torture. Jesus used this word when He preached to the Jews in Matthew 13:21. Luke uses it in Acts 8:1, to describe the persecution that was part of Saul's war on Christians, and after Saul's conversion, was part of the Jew's war on Paul, Acts 13:50. This kind of persecution isn't someone refusing to take a gospel tract or frowning when you mention Jesus. This was active, angry, malevolent opposition and violent persecution. Paul personally experienced *persecution* in his life and ministry, 2 Corinthians 12:10, 2 Timothy 3:11.

**or famine,** - Famine means: the hunger that results from a scarcity of food due to a failed harvest. Jesus used this Greek word in Matthew 24:7 and Luke 4:25, 15:14, 17. Stephen used this Greek word in Acts 7:11. John uses this Greek word in Revelation 6:8. Famine is God's judgment upon unbelief and upon people who reject God's truth. Paul personally experienced famine in his life and ministry, 2 Corinthians 11:27.

**or nakedness,** - This Greek word can refer to physical nakedness or to someone inadequately clothed. It describes someone who is too poor to buy clothing or someone unable to acquire clothing because of persecution. Paul personally experienced this kind of *nakedness* in his personal life and ministry, 2 Corinthians 11:27, 2 Timothy 4:13.

**or peril,** - This is a general purpose Greek word, which describes any kind of danger and difficulty a Christian might face. Paul is the only human author of the Bible to use this word in scripture. He explains the meaning of this word, in 2 Corinthians 11:26. Paul experienced *peril* in his personal life and ministry. He is not speaking theoretically when he writes Romans chapter 8.

**or sword?** - This is a general Greek word for any kind of dagger or sword. Jesus used this word in Matthew 10:34 and three times in Matthew 26:52. Matthew used this word to describe the swords carried by the men who took Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, Matthew 26:47. Herod's executioner used a sword to kill the apostle James, Acts 12:2.

Ancient Rome practiced decollation (an archaic word for decapitate), beheading with a sword, instead of decapitation with an ax. Paul recognized, in Romans 13:4, that rulers do not bear the sword in vain. Perhaps Paul had an inkling from the Lord, of the manner of his death. It is likely that Paul personally experienced the *sword* as an instrument of capital punishment, in his personal life and ministry, within ten years of writing Romans chapter 8. The Bible does not say

that Paul was beheaded with a sword. [Tertullian Scorpiace, 15.4](#), around AD 203, is the first Christian we have on record, saying that: Paul was beheaded.

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

**As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long;** - Paul testifies to [the reality of persecution](#), which many Christians experienced in the first century AD and centuries following. Paul quotes Psalm 44:22, which is the prayer of Israel in the tribulation. Is Romans 8:36 a subtle warning to unsaved Jews who read Romans, that they will be temporarily (for about 2000 years), replaced by saved Jews and Gentiles, Romans 11:25-27. In Psalm 44, this is applicable only to saved Jews (we are killed all the day long). In Romans 8:36, Paul applies it to saved Jews and saved Gentiles.

**For thy sake we are killed all the day long** - Doctrinally, that will be true of saved Jews in the tribulation, Psalm 44:22, Revelation 6:9-11, when they are persecuted and beheaded, Revelation 20:4, by the forces of Antichrist and the forces of Satan. Here in Romans 8, it is true of Christians (saved Jews and saved Gentiles), who were [persecuted for Christ](#), in many parts of the Roman Empire.

Christians in the Roman Empire experienced persecution on a grand scale. The persecution began in Acts 4:1ff., continued in Acts 5:17-28, 40-41, and continued with the stoning of Stephen in Acts chapter 7. It continued with Saul's campaign against followers of Christ, until he was converted in Acts 9. Persecution by Emperor Nero began in AD 64, about six years after Paul wrote Romans. Peter spoke to the experience of persecution and encouraged believers not to be ashamed because they were suffering as Christians.

*“12 - Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

*13 - But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

*14 - If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

*15 - But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.*

*16 - Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.” 1 Peter 4:12-16.*

**we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.** - This describes the brutality of the people who were persecuting Christians. Paul understands, *sheep for the slaughter*, in the Jewish sense. That is why he quotes Psalm 44:22. *Sheep for the slaughter* refers to the passover lambs, and other lambs which were slaughtered, offered and eaten, Exodus 12:3-13, a practice which dates back to the exodus of the nation of Israel, from Egypt, around 1450 BC.

Beyond the passover lambs, 120,000 sheep were slaughtered at the dedication of Solomon's temple, 1 Kings 8:63-66, 2 Chronicles 5:6, 7:4-5. The phrase, *sheep for the slaughter*, may also be a reference, to cannibalism, which occurred in the OT, as part of God's judgment, Leviticus 26:29, Isaiah 6:13, Lamentations 2:20, 4:10, Jeremiah 19:9, Zechariah 11:4-11, *the flock of slaughter*.

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

**Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors** - Paul's song of triumph slowly swells in an adagio of praise. Through all our tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, *we are more than conquerors*. How on earth can Paul say that? \_\_\_\_\_

What has Paul taught us in Romans? **1.** We are justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. **2.** We are sanctified by faith. **3.** We are Identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. **4.** We are indwelt by the living Christ (*that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith*, Colossians 1:27), and by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. **5.** It is because our mortal bodies are quickened, made alive by the Spirit, Romans 8:11, that *we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*. Paul never acts like a super-Christian and he never treats us like lesser Christians. He includes us as *more than conquerors* because the same power that dwelt in Paul dwells in us.

**through him that loved us.** - *Him that loved us* is Jesus. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32. Regardless of what happens to us in this life, Paul exalts that: *we are more than conquerors*. Why does Paul say: *we are more than conquerors*? \_\_\_\_\_

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

**For I am persuaded, that neither death,** - What persuaded Paul? There are many religious people who are not persuaded. There are atheists and

intellectuals who are not persuaded. There are professing Christians who are persuaded that the Bible is nothing but the writings of men, full of errors and not to be trusted. I believe it's a fair question to ask.

What persuaded Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

What persuades you? \_\_\_\_\_

In whom does your faith rest? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you read to strengthen your faith? \_\_\_\_\_

This is not a promise about death, that any unsaved person can claim, unless or until that unsaved person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and gets saved.

*“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Corinthians 15:55-56.

Why can death not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? The answer is: Jesus has saved us and the Holy Spirit has placed us, in Christ. Paul is persuaded that, as an end game, we are beyond the reach of death. The sting of death is gone, swallowed up in victory by the awesome power of Christ, so that death cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Because we are in Christ, we are beyond the reach of death, in the sense that, death can never separate us from the love of God, for us who are in Christ.

1. Are you facing troubles and trials in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who walks with you through those difficulties? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you resting in God's promise to get you through them? \_\_\_\_\_

**Safe in the arms of Jesus,**  
Safe on His gentle breast;  
There by His love o'ershaded,  
Sweetly my soul shall rest.

Hark! 'tis the voice of angels  
Borne in a song to me,  
Over the fields of glory,  
Over the jasper sea.

Refrain: Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on His gentle breast;  
There by His love o'ershaded,  
Sweetly my soul shall rest.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe from corroding care,  
Safe from the world's temptations;  
Sin cannot harm me there.

Free from the blight of sorrow,  
Free from my doubts and fears;  
Only a few more trials,  
Only a few more tears!

Jesus, my heart's dear Refuge,  
Jesus has died for me;  
Firm on the Rock of Ages  
Ever my trust shall be.

Here let me wait with patience,  
Wait till the night is o'er;  
Wait till I see the morning  
Break on the golden shore.  
- Fanny J. Crosby, 1868, 1820-1915

**nor life,** - Paul begins by comparison and contrast; death vs. life. Nothing in death can dull the joy of a Christian and nothing in life should be able to dull our joy. This is a great promise, based on the truth that Paul is persuaded, given what He knows by experience, about God's great love and provision and power, that nothing in life can separate us from the love of God in Christ. What will it take, for you to be persuaded, like Paul is persuaded? \_\_\_\_\_

Notice what Paul does not say. He does not say, Nothing in life will hurt us and nothing in life will cause us heartache. He is far too compassionate and experienced to say something so thoughtless. Instead, Paul is persuaded that life, with all its difficulties and potential horrors, cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Are you persuaded? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor angels,** - On the testimony of the apostle Paul, we stand assured that angels cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Why is that important to know? \_\_\_\_\_ Aren't angels

always good and friendly beings? \_\_\_\_\_ The Bible tells us that there are angels who are not good angels.

**a. Beware of Satan.** “*And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.*” 2 Corinthians 11:14. It doesn’t say, Satan is an angel. It says, *Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.* Satan’s purpose is to deceive us so he doesn’t always approach us in his real character. As an angel of light, Satan asks us to believe his positive spin on whatever God views as negative.

**b. Beware of the messenger of Satan.** “*And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger (angel) of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*” 2 Corinthians 12:7.

1. Do you believe the lie, that all angels, are good angels? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you believe the biblical truth that some angels are bad? \_\_\_\_\_

**c. Beware of an angel from heaven.** “*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*” Galatians 1:18.

**d. Beware of angels from the Lord, in the OT,** who killed so many of the firstborn of Egypt, Psalm 78:43-52. You need God’s passover lamb, 1 Corinthians 5:7. Who is God’s passover lamb? \_\_\_\_\_

**e. Beware of the Angel of the LORD,** who killed 185,000 Assyrian warriors, in one night, 2 Kings 19:35.

Angels were important to Jews, because of their importance in the OT narrative of scripture, where angel or angels are mentioned 117 times. Paul is persuaded that, angels, good, bad or indifferent, cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Are you persuaded of this Bible truth?

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**nor principalities,** - Principalities are the demonic forces of Satan, the unseen, wicked, spiritual powers; *the rulers of the darkness of this world.* Paul mentions them in connection to the triumph of Jesus on Calvary. Were you aware that, when Jesus was dying on the cross, there was a great, unseen spiritual battle being fought at the same time? \_\_\_\_\_

“*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*” Colossians 2:15, Psalm 22:11-20.

*“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ephesians 6:12.*

That is what Christians are up against, yet Paul strikes a victorious note. As the wicked forces of Satan opposed Christ, so the wicked forces of Satan oppose us, because we are in Christ. Paul is persuaded that the demonic forces of Satan cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Are you persuaded? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor powers,** - This is a general Greek word for power and often, has a good meaning in the NT. Its meaning depends on the context in which it is used. Paul uses it here, the same way Jesus used it, to refer to the power of the enemy, meaning, the power of Satan, in Luke 10:19. In Luke 21:24, Jesus said that *the powers of heaven shall be shaken*. This is a reference to principalities and powers, meaning, the wicked works and plans and powers of Satan.

Paul uses it with that meaning in his letter to the Corinthians. *“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”* 1 Corinthians 15:24.

The power of God defeats the power of Satan, both in our present life and in the life which is to come. *“For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.”* 2 Corinthians 13:4.

Paul is persuaded that the powers of Satan cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Are you persuaded? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor things present,** - This Greek word means, whatever you see around you right now; your present circumstances. Whatever those circumstances are, whatever troubles you are facing, God is with you. However bad it seems, Paul is persuaded that *things present* cannot separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”* Hebrews 13:5. Paul was persuaded that things present cannot separate us from the love of God in Christ. Are you also persuaded of that Bible truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor things to come,** - This phrase, *things to come*, carries the idea of worried expectation, meaning, that we fear the possibility or probability of bad things

happening. This phrase, *things to come*, encompasses all of our worries and fears about what may happen in the future. John the Baptist used this word in Matthew 3:7, where it is written: “*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*”

Some Christians are chronic worriers, yet Paul is persuaded that, *things to come*, cannot separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Christians should not be chronic worriers. Christians should not fret about the future and we should not be chronic worriers. We can claim the promises of God, including the promises in Romans chapter 8. Are you persuaded about this Bible truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**39 - Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**Nor height,** - This Greek word occurs only twice in the NT, both times used by the apostle Paul. Paul’s usage in 2 Corinthians 10:5 defines its meaning. “*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*”

The word translated, height, and, every high thing, refers to: high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. This is a word with wide semantic range. It could refer to being lifted up with pride and it could also refer to the dominion of darkness, against which we wrestle. That height and those high things cannot separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Are you persuaded of this truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor depth,** - This Greek word occurs 9 times in the NT. Because Paul is listing things that cannot separate us from the love of God, the best cross reference for determining Paul’s meaning here is, Revelation 2:24. “*But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.*” Satan’s depths cannot separate us from the love of God in Christ. Are you persuaded of this truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**nor any other creature,** - *The creature* refers to God’s fallen creation, which we see all around us: living beings, including humans; spirits, angels, devils, which we cannot see, as well as the earth, sky, sun, moon and stars and the farthest reaches of the universe. The word, *creature*, κτίσις ktisis, ka-tē’-sēs, refers to something created by God.

Here, Paul is saying that, nothing God created, can separate us from the love of God. That promise, the word of our Creator, carries great weight. Paul uses this Greek word, creature, five times in Romans chapter 8. Nothing God created shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Are you persuaded about this great Bible truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**shall be able to separate us from the love of God,** - Imagine that you are a Jew in the mid-first century AD. You have rejected your Messiah and feel estranged from the God of Abraham and your fathers. Imagine that your temple sacrifices have ceased to be offered, because, rumor has it, the 3 inch thick veil which covered the holy of holies, has been torn asunder, from top to bottom, Matthew 27:51, exposing the holy of holies in the inner sanctum of the temple.

In the reality of first century Judaism, no animal blood has sprinkled the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant, since before that special sabbath, twenty five years ago (from the time Paul wrote Romans), when the one they called Jesus, was crucified and buried. Imagine your Jewish mind, at the time Paul wrote Romans, haunted at the memory of the appalling darkness of that awful crucifixion day. Would Paul's promise that, *nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, reach your truth seeking, Jewish heart back then? Today, nearly 2000 years later, are you persuaded of this incredible Bible truth? \_\_\_\_\_

**which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** - Paul's final appeal in Romans chapter 8 is to the sufficiency of Christ. Are you persuaded of the sufficiency of Christ, for all your needs? \_\_\_\_\_ Paul makes no appeal to religion, whether Jewish or pagan or Christian. Paul makes no appeal to ceremony or ritual. Christ alone is in view here. Take Him or leave Him, Paul has nothing else to offer, we have nothing else to offer and the Bible has nothing else to offer. Either, Christ Jesus is your Savior or you reject Him and cling to your religion and Christ is your Judge, John 5:22, Acts 10:42, 17:31, Romans 2:16, 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

This is Paul's offer to all who read Romans chapter 8. Pagans can forsake their pagan religion and believe on Christ Jesus our Lord. Jews can forsake their empty, expired Judaism and believe on Christ Jesus our Lord, Acts 13:38-39. Individual Jews remain unsaved and out of the place of blessing, by their own will. They can believe if they choose to, by the power of God in the gospel, Romans 1:16.

God has made many valid offers to Israel, to receive their Messiah, as recorded by Dr. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. Many thousands of individual Jews got saved but, as a nation, Israel has rejected God's offers of salvation. In Romans,

we are about 25 years after the resurrection of Christ. God will not wait forever. Paul is God's apostle to the Gentiles yet, God has also been using Paul to invite Israel to salvation, to receive their Messiah, while at the same time, using Paul in the gradual process of turning away from Israel, over the span of Acts 13-28, each time the Jews reject Christ. That happened in Antioch of Pisidia, Acts 13:45-46, in Corinth, Acts 18:5-6, and in Rome, Acts 28:23-28. In view of the multitude of blessings God has poured out upon saved Gentiles, the question for Israel and for individual, unsaved Jews, now is: What will **you** do with Jesus?

### **What will you do with Jesus?**

Jesus is standing in Pilate's hall,  
Friendless, forsaken, betrayed by all;  
Hearken! what meaneth the sudden call?

### **What will you do with Jesus?**

Refrain: What will you do with Jesus?  
Neutral you cannot be;  
Someday your heart will be asking,  
"What will He do with me?"

Jesus is standing on trial still,  
You can be false to Him if you will,  
You can be faithful through good or ill:

### **What will you do with Jesus?**

Will you evade Him as Pilate tried?  
Or will you choose Him, whate'er betide?  
Vainly you struggle from Him to hide:

### **What will you do with Jesus?**

Will you, like Peter, your Lord deny?  
Or will you scorn from His foes to fly,  
Daring for Jesus to live or die?

### **What will you do with Jesus?**

"Jesus, I give Thee my heart today!  
Jesus, I'll follow Thee all the way,  
Gladly obeying Thee!" will you say:  
"This I will do with Jesus!"

-A.B. Simpson, 1905, 1843-1919

## Review Questions for Romans chapter 8

1. The key word in Romans 8 is: **a.** sin, **b.** flesh, **c.** adoption, **d.** Spirit.
2. Romans 8:1 means no Christian will ever be condemned for anything. T or F
3. Romans 8:1 means there is no condemnation for Christians: **a.** from the law of sin and death, **b.** from U.S. law, **c.** from the law of the World Court in the Hague.
4. Romans 8:1 - Can Christians be condemned for *walking after the flesh*? **a.** No, never. **b.** Yes, of course. **c.** Only if they are Jewish, **d.** Only if they are not Jewish.
5. Is there lots of manuscript evidence that the last ten words of Romans 8:1 should be in the Bible? **a.** Yes, **b.** No, **c.** I don't remember.
6. Romans 8:2 - *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* - is that a law you have to keep or is it an automatic law, like the law of gravity? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What did *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* do, for you? **a.** It made me a Christian, **b.** It made me free from the law of sin and death, **c.** It made me a 32nd degree Mason, **d.** It gave me spiritual superpowers.
8. Romans 8:3 - Name three things the law could not do. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Romans 8:3 - What does, in the likeness of sinful flesh, mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Romans 8:3 - How did Jesus condemn sin in the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Romans 8:4 - How is *the righteousness of the law* fulfilled in us? **a.** By us keeping the law, **b.** By us doing good works for the church, **c.** By the indwelling Spirit giving us power over sin, **d.** By the indwelling Christ living His life through us, Galatians 2:20.
12. Romans 8:4 - What does it mean to, *walk after the Spirit*? **a.** Being careful to maintain good works, **b.** Propping up my own will power, **c.** Practicing eastern meditation to draw closer to God, **d.** Be led by the Spirit, obey the leading of the Spirit, walk in the Spirit.
13. Romans 8:5 - How can you tell when someone is, *walking after the flesh*? **a.** They will be flesh oriented, **b.** They will be selfish, **c.** They will exhibit fake spirituality, **d.** They will talk the talk but not walk the walk, **e.** All of the above.
14. Romans 8:6 - What does, *For to be carnally minded is death*, mean? **a.** It not important enough to bother with, **b.** It means exactly what it says - if you keep living carnal or fleshly, you'll die, **c.** It means God is serious about Christians living for Jesus, **d.** It means God expects you to follow the leading of the Spirit and reject the flesh, so you have victory over sin.
15. Was Jesus a builder of religious bridges to other faiths? No. Yes.
16. Was Jesus an interfaith, I'm okay, you're okay, kind of guy? Yes. No.
17. In the interest of spiritual unity, should Christians support other faiths and false teachers? **a.** Yes, of course. **b.** No, of course not.

18. Romans 8:8 - What does, *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, mean? **a.** It means it's difficult to please God if you're in the flesh, **b.** It means you have to work harder to please God if you're in the flesh, **c.** It means, if you're in the flesh, you need to join holy mother church, to be able to please God, **d.** It means, if you're in the flesh (unsaved), you cannot please God.
19. Romans 8:9 - Are saved people, in the flesh, or, in the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
20. What is a carnal Christian. **a.** Someone who gives in to his flesh instead of being led by the Spirit, **b.** Someone who ignores the leading of the Spirit, **c.** Someone who is saved but doesn't follow Jesus, **d.** Someone who doesn't read and obey the Bible, **e.** all of the above.
21. Romans 8:9 - If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, are you saved? No. Yes.
22. Romans 8:10 - If you're saved, the Spirit: **a.** Dwells in heaven, **b.** Dwells in your body as His temple, **c.** Comes and goes as He pleases, **d.** Meets you at the cathedral every Sunday morning.
23. Romans 8:11 - The Spirit quickens: **a.** Your ability with math, **b.** Your workout routine, **c.** Your singing voice, **d.** Your mortal body.
24. Romans 8:13 - What does it mean, to *mortify the deeds of the body*? **a.** Be a Taliban Christian and report people for not living right, **b.** Make sure everyone at church does things your way, **c.** Follow Roberts Rules of Order, **d.** Put to death the sins of the flesh and fight your fleshly sins by the power of the Spirit.
25. Romans 8:14 - What is one indication that you are genuinely saved and born again? **a.** Speaking in tongues, even if you don't have an interpreter, **b.** Listening to positive thinking and motivational speakers, **c.** Having everyone praise you, **d.** Being led by the Spirit.
26. From Pages 37 and 38, this chapter, please list two ways the Spirit leads us.
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27. Romans 8:15 - The Spirit we received, helps us cry: **a.** For more money and influence, **b.** For others to agree with us, **c.** For help in our career, **d.** Abba, Father.
28. Romans 8:15 - What is the Spirit of adoption? \_\_\_\_\_
29. Romans 8:16 - The Spirit bears witness that we are: **a.** Lutherans, **b.** Baptists, **c.** Catholics, **d.** Better than everyone else, **e.** The children of God.
30. Romans 8:17 - Since we are heirs of God, does that mean God will die someday and we will inherit everything that now belongs to God? Yes. No.
31. From page 44, please list two things that it means, to be *heirs of God*.
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32. Is suffering part of God's plan, to teach us to trust God and to help us grow spiritually, to make us more like Jesus? Yes. No. \_\_\_\_\_
33. In Romans 8:22, why does the whole creation groan and travail?
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34. Romans 8:23 - What are *the firstfruits of the Spirit*? **a.** Being born again, since no one in the OT was born again, **b.** Getting an orange farm in Florida where you can grow fruit, **c.** Getting the best and newest spiritual fruit, whenever a new one is released on iTunes.

35. Is our adoption complete right now, since we already have the Spirit of adoption, Romans 8:15, or is there more to come, Romans 8:23? **a.** There is more to come, meaning, the redemption of our body, **b.** We've got all there is to get, right now, **c.** We get gold-plated cards at the rapture, so we can access everything in heaven, for free.

36. *Firstfruits of the Spirit* means two things: We are born again by the Spirit, and, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit. T or F

37. The Bible says we have two intercessors, who pray for us. Who are these intercessors? **a.** The Virgin Mary, **b.** The Holy Spirit, **c.** King David, **d.** The Lord Jesus Christ, **e.** Father Abraham, **f.** the apostle Paul, **g.** King James himself.

38. Romans 8:28 - Is that promise only for Christians only or is it for everyone?

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39. Romans 8:29 - God's foreknowledge - Does God know the future because He causes everything that happens? \_\_\_\_\_

40. Romans 8:29 - Can God know what will happen in the future without Himself, causing it to happen? \_\_\_\_\_

41. How many times do the words, predestinate or predestinated, occur in the Bible? **a.** 11 times, **b.** 4 times, **c.** 15 times, **d.** 73 times.

42. Do the words, predestinate or predestinated, ever occur in the OT? Yes. No.

43. Does the Bible ever say that God predestinated people to get saved? \_\_\_\_\_ If you answered Yes, please list the verses where the Bible says that. \_\_\_\_\_

44. God foreknows everything that's going to happen, without Himself, causing it to happen, without Himself, making it happen. T or F

45. Paul had a strategy, based on Deuteronomy 32:21, to provoke the Jews to jealousy of the saved Gentiles, because of the blessings God was giving to the Gentiles, so Jews would get saved. Did Paul's strategy work? \_\_\_\_\_

46. A proof text that ignores context is a pretext for teaching something that isn't true. T or F

47. When God predestinated people in the Bible, did He predestinate unsaved people to get saved, Yes. No. Or, did He predestinate saved people to receive a new, glorified body, at some point in the future, Romans 8:23? \_\_\_\_\_

48. Romans 8:29 - What does the Bible say God predestinated people to? **a.** To get saved, **b.** To be conformed to the image of His Son, Romans 8:29, **c.** To the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, Ephesians 1:5, **d.** To obtain an inheritance, Ephesians 1:11, **e.** to get a new, custom built mansion, next door to Jesus.

49. Romans 8:30 - Does, *called*, mean the call to salvation or does it mean the vocational call, to receive more blessings from God at a time in the future?

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50. When we believe what the Bible says, in context, does that annoy some Christians? \_\_\_\_\_

51. Romans 8:31 - What does it mean, *If God be for us, who can be against us?*

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52. Romans 8:32 - Who delivered up Jesus to die? \_\_\_\_\_

53. Was Jesus dying for His own sins? \_\_\_\_\_

54. How did saved Gentiles become part of God's elect? **a.** Because, on the cross, Jesus died for Gentiles too, **b.** Because Caesar decreed that Gentiles were the elect, **c.** Because Augustine and Calvin agreed on it, **d.** Because modern churches voted it into their bylaws.

55. When did saved Gentiles become part of God's elect? **a.** During the ministry of Isaiah the prophet, **b.** During the ministry of John the Baptist, **c.** Around the time Paul got saved, **d.** When Jesus died on the cross and the NT went into effect, Hebrews 9:15-16, **e.** Right after the end of World War II.

56. Romans 8:33 - Who justifies us? **a.** Holy Mother Church, **b.** Our own works, mixed with our faith, **c.** Our water baptism, **d.** Our catechism and confirmation, **e.** It is God that justifieth.

57. Romans 8:35 - *Who shall separate us from the love of God?* \_\_\_\_\_

58. Romans 8:36 - *We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter*, describes the brutality of the persecution early Christians faced. T or F

59. Romans 8:38 - Paul is persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Why are you persuaded of that glorious gospel truth? \_\_\_\_\_

60. What was the most interesting thing, to you, about Romans 8?

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61. What is your favorite teaching or truth, that you learned from Romans 8?

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62. What verses did you struggle to understand, as we studied Romans 8?

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63. What was the most difficult thing to get your mind around in Romans 8?

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64. What do you want to do more study on, in Romans 8, to increase your understanding? \_\_\_\_\_