

Verse 15. The brethren at Rome heard of Paul's voyage toward their city and came to meet him. According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, *Appi forum* was 43 miles from Rome and *Three taverns* was 33. The same information is given in Thayer's lexicon under the word *TABERNACULUM*. Paul was heartened by seeing this brotherly welcome from those who were willing to brave the uncertainties of the sea to meet this "prisoner of Jesus Christ."

Verse 16. Thayer says the *captain of the guard* was the "captain of the Roman emperor's body-guard." To this officer the centurion delivered his prisoners, thus discharging the duty that was imposed upon him at Caesarea. But Paul was not placed in the soldiers' camp; instead, he was permitted to dwell separately with a single soldier as his guard. This would give him opportunity for seeing persons in whom he was interested.

Verse 17. Paul called these Jews *men and brethren* because of their common blood, not that they were brethren in Christ. He related how he was made a prisoner of the Romans by the Jews, though he was not guilty of wrong-doing against any laws.

Verse 18. *Who* means the Romans into whose hands Paul had been delivered. Finding nothing wrong in him, they were disposed to discharge him from all accusations.

Verse 19. Paul appealed unto Caesar as a defendant, and not as a complainant against his nation. That is, he merely wished to clear his own good name, not that he wanted to cause his Jewish brethren any trouble.

Verse 20. Lest he might be misjudged by his Jewish brethren, however, he thought it well to explain the presence of the chain that was attached to him. *Hope of Israel* refers to the hope of a resurrection through Christ. That was the reason why he called them to him three days after arriving in their city.

Verse 21. These Jews had heard the report about the disciples in general, but had not received any news of accusations against Paul personally.

Verse 22. Because of the unfavorable report these Jews had heard about the disciples, they wished to have Paul's personal story. *Sect* is from *HAIRESIS*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "a sect or party."

Verse 23. These Jews professed to believe the Old Testament, hence Paul

used it as a basis for his speeches. He showed them that their own religious literature had foretold the coming of the kingdom of God, the institution referred to as a "sect."

Verse 24. As usual, the hearers disagreed among themselves over what they heard.

Verse 25. Because of the disagreement between themselves the Jews departed. Before they left Paul spoke *one word*, meaning one quotation from Esaias (Isaiah).

Verse 26. *Go unto this people* denotes that Isaiah was to carry a message to this people, the Jews. Hear . . . *not understand . . . see . . . not perceive*. This all means the Jews would refuse to make the proper use of their mental faculties.

Verse 27. *Waxed gross* denotes they had become stupid through their own prejudice. Their motive for such an attitude was to reject the reformation of life that the teaching of the Gospel might work in them.

Verse 28. This announcement to the Jews was on the same basis as set forth in such passages as chapter 13: 46. The Jews were given the first opportunity of hearing the Gospel. When the Gentiles had the divine truth offered to them, they showed a greater readiness to receive it.

Verse 29. *Had great reasoning*. The Jews did not agree among themselves upon the teaching of Paul, hence they got into dispute over it. They were familiar with the law as Paul quoted it, but their prejudice prevented them from accepting his teaching.

Verse 30. *Hired house* means a rented building which Paul used at his own expense. He was still in custody, hence could preach only to those who came in unto him.

Verse 31. *No man forbidding him* all comes from *AKOLUTOS* which Thayer defines, "without hindrance." We know that men objected to the preaching of Paul, but God sustained him so that the preaching of the cause of Jesus Christ continued with great zeal.

ROMANS 1

Verse 1. Paul first mentions his relation as a servant of Christ, which means "one who gives himself up wholly to another's will." He next refers to his position as apostle, and says he was *called* to that office. The word is from *KLETOS* which Thayer

defines at this place, "called to some office," which he explains to mean "divinely selected and appointed." *Separated unto the Gospel* means he was appointed to the work.

Verse 2. *Which* has reference to the Gospel which had been predicted in old time. This fact is referred to in Galatians 3: 8 and 1 Peter 1: 10. When God told Abraham (Genesis 12: 3) that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him, He was meaning the Gospel that was to be given to the world through Christ.

Verse 3. The promise was first given to Abraham, but it was to be fulfilled through the lineage of one of his great descendants, David. *Made* is from *GINOMAI* which means "caused to be." This part of the great promise pertained to the fleshly nature of Christ.

Verse 4. It became generally known that Jesus was a descendant of David as to his fleshly or human relationship, but some special event was necessary to *declare* or prove him to be also the Son of God. That was accomplished by his resurrection from the dead, for God would not have raised him had he been an impostor.

Verse 5. By *we* Paul includes himself with the other apostles, and he regards the appointment as *grace* or divine favor. *For* is from *EIS*, and it means the apostleship was in order to call men of all nations to believe on the name of Jesus.

Verse 6. *Ye* means the brethren to whom the apostle was writing this epistle.

Verse 7. *To all that be in Rome* applies to all the disciples of Christ, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The church in that city was composed of both, and that must be remembered throughout the study of this epistle, in order to grasp the purpose of much of the apostle's reasoning. The Jewish brethren admitted that the Gentiles were their equals as far as the chances of salvation were concerned, yet they still had a feeling of superiority because of having been God's special people for so long. On the other hand, the Gentile brethren had the attitude of persons who had been underestimated, but whose real merits had finally been recognized by the Lord so that He had admitted them to the benefits of the Gospel because of those merits. Paul will show in various passages that God had never favored either Jews or Gentiles by reason of

their inherent virtues (since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God), but that it was through the abundant mercy of the Lord that any man in the world could be saved at all. This is a fundamental key to many passages of this book, and the reader should note the passage for reference, as the notes will not be repeated in full.

Saints is from *HAGIOS*, and means a person "set apart for God, to be, as it were, exclusively his."—Thayer. This setting apart is accomplished by obedience to the Gospel. In the New Testament the terms Christians, disciples, saints, brethren and children of God, are used interchangeably, and are applied thus to the same people because they possess the qualifications that are denoted by the terms. They are called saints for the reason just stated; disciples means learners or followers; brethren means they have a common relation to the Father; children because they have been begotten of Him, and Christians because they wear the name of Christ.

Verse 8. *World* is from *KOSMOS* and means the people of the earth. Rome was a center of population, being the capital of the Roman Empire. People coming and going to and from this capital would learn of the church and would carry the information back home.

Verse 9. *God is my witness*. Since God knows the hearts of all, He knew that Paul's service was from the heart, and for that reason the prayers of the apostle would be heard.

Verse 10. Having been faithful to the service of Christ elsewhere, Paul prayed trustingly for the opportunity of preaching the Gospel in Rome.

Verse 11. No one but an apostle could impart spiritual gifts (Acts 8: 18), hence Paul's wish to do that for the brethren at Rome denotes that no apostle had ever been in that city. We have no direct information as to how the church was started in Rome, but we know (from the above) that no apostle did it. This refutes the claim of the Romanists that Peter established it and that he was its first bishop.

Verse 12. The motive for this wish of Paul was not far the sake of glory, but he longed for the comfort that comes from association with those of like faith.

Verse 13. *Let* is an old word that

means to hinder. For some reason which he does not state, he had been hindered from coming to Rome. *Other Gentiles* shows that the church in Rome had Gentiles in it as well as Jews.

Verse 14. *Debtor* means one who is under obligation to another, and Paul means he has the obligation to preach the Gospel to these classes mentioned. A barbarian is one who speaks a foreign language, and the word is used in contrast with the Greeks because they were the native people of Greece and also recognized the people of Italy as their equals socially. The *wise* refers to those skilled in the philosophy of the time in contrast with those who were not.

Verse 15. The foregoing considerations made Paul feel obligated to preach the Gospel to the people of Rome to the extent of his ability.

Verse 16. Paul had been persecuted for the sake of the Gospel, yet he was not ashamed of it. The reason for his attitude was the great truth that it is the power of God unto salvation. *Power* is from *DUNAMIS*, which is one of the strongest words in the Greek New Testament for the thought of what may bring about a desired result. But it has such an effect only on those who believe it. *Jew first . . . Greek*. That denotes the Gospel was offered to the Jews before it was to the Greeks (or Gentiles).

Verse 17. *Righteousness of God* means the system of life that will produce a state of righteousness acceptable to God. That system is revealed in the Gospel (not in the law of works in the Mosaic system). The original for *from* is *ἐκ* which denotes the source of something or the means by which it is accomplished. Hence the thought is that the system of God's righteousness is revealed by means of the faith (in Jesus), and not by the works of the law. *To faith*. The first word is from *ἐἰς* and is defined "in order to," and as applied here it means that this system of God's righteousness is revealed "in order to" produce faith in the hearer. *The just shall live by (the) faith in Christ*, and not by the works of the law. The Judaizers were trying to force the Christians into observing the works of the law as the proper system of righteousness.

Verse 18. The Gospel not only reveals God's system of righteousness, but it also tells of the divine wrath

against all ungodliness. *Hold* means to hold back or restrain. The unrighteousness of men is a hindrance to the spread and reception of the truth.

Verse 19. From here to the close of the chapter the apostle deals with the corruptions of the heathen or Gentile world. Those people did not have the law of Moses, but they did have the principles of righteousness that nature offered them, and they refused to abide by them. *In them* means the evidences of God's goodness were visible to them.

Verse 20. This verse corresponds in thought with Psalms 19: 1, meaning the evidences in nature of the existence of a Supreme Being. The *invisible things of him* are *His eternal power and Godhead*. Though invisible to man, yet the evidences of them are *clearly seen* in the world that was created and whose objects "declare the glory of God" (Psalms 19: 1). This leaves the heathen *without excuse* for their unbelief.

Verse 21. The heathen did not live up to the information offered them by the things in creation. They did not respect God as he deserved, but estimated Him on the basis of their foolish imaginations, which are described in verse 23.

Verse 22. When a man professes to be wiser than a Being who can create the universe, he becomes the most deplorable of fools.

Verse 23. This verse outlines the idolatry of the heathen, and shows why Paul applied the term "fools" to them. They were bound to know that the brute creatures of the earth could not originate anything, yet they pretended to represent the Creator by making images of these dumb animals and calling them gods.

Verse 24. The original Greek for *gave them up* is defined by Thayer, "To give over into (one's) power or use." Robinson's definition is virtually the same. When men persist in going contrary to the light and information in their reach, He will abandon them and suffer them to go full length into their preferred practices. They dishonored their own bodies by the unnatural immoral practices to be considered at verses 26, 27.

Verse 25. The truth of God cannot actually be changed into a lie, for divine truth is eternal. The definitions of Robinson and Thayer of the word for *changed* are the same in thought, but the former is more direct which

is, "To exchange one thing for another." The heathen gave up the truth of God and accepted the lie of idolatry in exchange. *Served the creature more* [marginal "rather"] *than the Creator*. See verse 23.

Verse 26. *Gave them up* is explained at verse 24. *Vile affections* is defined "depraved passion" by Thayer. *Change* means the same as in verse 25. The iniquity of which these women were guilty is called "homosexuality" in Webster's Dictionary. Liddell and Scott's Greek lexicon defines such a woman as one "who practices lewdness with herself or with other women."

Verse 27. The common name for the iniquity referred to in this verse is sodomy. It is the sin meant in 1 Corinthians 6: 9, last sentence. A case of it is that predicted in Daniel 11: 37, and the man was a Syrian king by the name of Antiochus Epiphanes. The historical fulfillment of that prediction is recorded in Pridemore's *Connection*, year 175. *Recompence of their error*. This is not described in any work that I have seen, but the circumstances indicate it refers to some physical derangement of the organs involved in the shameless act. We know that the promiscuous intimacies between the sexes has produced the well-known "social disease," and in a similar manner some terrible disorder was the result of the horrible practice of sodomy, which is the unnatural immorality between men and men.

Verse 28. This is the same as verse 24.

Verse 29. The "reprobate mind" in the preceding verse would crave and secure the evils named here, many of which are general in their meaning and do not require extended comments. *Fornication* is unlawful intimacy between the sexes. *Covetousness* is the unlawful desire for the belongings of another. *Maliciousness* is a desire and determination to do injury to another. *Envy* is a feeling that regrets seeing someone enjoying a favor. *Debate* as used here means wrangling or quarreling. *Deceit* is an effort to mislead another to his injury. *Malignity* is virtually the same as maliciousness. *Whisperers* are "secret slanderers" according to Thayer.

Verse 30. *Backbiters* means about the same as "whisperers" in the preceding verse; those who would slander you "behind your back." *Haters of God* is proved by their worship of false gods. *Despiseful* is similar to mali-

cious, and such characters also will show their pride. *Boasters* are those who love to practice those evils and want others to know about it. *Inventors of evil things*. They not only follow in the steps of wicked persons, but also devise evil ways of their own. *Disobedient to parents* means they have repudiated the rightful authority of their father and mother.

Verse 31. *Without understanding* denotes they are too stupid to recognize their folly. *Covenantbreakers* are those who disregard their promises. *Without natural affection* explains why they are "disobedient to parents" in the preceding verse. *Implacable* is defined by Thayer, "That cannot be persuaded to enter into a covenant"; not willing even to talk of "terms" of agreement. It is no wonder that such persons would be *unmerciful* in their dealings with others.

Verse 32. *The judgment of God* is that all who do such things are worthy of death. But that is not all; that same judgment will be meted out to them who have pleasure in those who practice them. It is as bad to rejoice in iniquity as it is to practice it.

ROMANS 2

Verse 1. Before reading further into this chapter, I shall insist that the reader see the comments on chapter 1: 7, then come back to this place. The closing verses of that chapter pertain to the evil practices of the Gentiles. The Jews were free in their condemnation of the Gentiles, yet they were just as guilty, in principle, as were the Gentiles; therefore this chapter will be directed against them. In condemning the Gentiles for their iniquities, they condemned themselves for things as bad in principle.

Verse 2. *We* means Paul and all others who were acquainted with the ways of God. His judgments are always in harmony with the truth, whether against Jews or Gentiles.

Verse 3. *O man* means the Jew who was condemning the Gentile. He thought that his being a Jew would exempt him from the judgment of God.

Verse 4. *Despise* means to belittle or disregard, and the Jew did that with reference to the goodness of God. It was the quality of goodness and longsuffering of God that caused him to put up with the unrighteousness of both Gentile and Jew. The goodness of God would lead the self-righteous Jew

to repentance if he did not "despise" or overlook it.

Verse 5. A hard and impenitent heart is one that stubbornly persists in a course of wrongdoing. *Treasurest up* means that such a life is sure to make a record that will bring the wrath of God upon it in the day of wrath; that will be the day of judgment spoken of by Paul in Acts 17: 31.

Verse 6. *According to his deeds* does not teach "degrees of reward or punishment," but only whether they are good or evil. (See 2 Corinthians 5: 10.)

Verse 7. *Eternal life* will be rendered to one class of persons. They are the ones who *seek for glory, honor and immortality*. They are to do this seeking by *patient continuance in well doing*.

Verses 8, 9. These verses designate the other class as those who are *contentious* (resort to trickery), resist the truth and obey unrighteous instructions. To this class God will render *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*. The apostle gives additional reasons why they will receive such from God; it is because they are souls that do evil. *Jew first and also of the Gentile* again suggests comments at chapter 1: 7.

Verse 10. This verse is for emphasis on verse 7.

Verse 11. *Respect of persons* all comes from one Greek word, and it is defined "partiality" by Thayer. It means God will not favor the Jew any more than the Gentile.

Verse 12. All sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles, will be punished for their sins. The word *law* in this verse means the law of Moses; the Jews will be judged for their sins under that law. The Gentiles will be judged for their sins, but it will be *without law*; that is, not by the law of Moses, for they did not live under that. The law by which they will be judged is stated in verses 14, 15.

Verses 13. The principle set forth in this verse applies to whatever law the people lived under, whether they were Jews or Gentiles.

Verse 14. The Gentiles *have not the law* (of Moses), yet they do have the law and evidences of nature (creation, chapter 1: 20). If they make use of such law it will serve as a rule of action for themselves. Many of the requirements stipulated in the law of Moses were in line with natural prin-

ciples (such as love of parents and children, and respect for a neighbor's wife, etc.) The Gentile was expected to respect these natural laws, and he will be condemned if he does not. It must be remembered that all of the aforesaid comments about the two laws apply to the years before the giving of the Gospel of Christ. After that, all persons everywhere were commanded to be subject to that universal law. (See Acts 10:35 and 17: 31.)

Verse 15. Another part of the law in nature for the Gentile was his conscience. That is a part of every human being and he was born with it. For an extended definition of the word see the comments at Acts 24: 16. The conscience may be erroneously informed, hence a man might follow it and still be wrong. But no man can go contrary to his conscience without being guilty of wrong. The Gentile was required never to do anything for which his conscience would condemn him.

Verse 16. This verse states the day on which the judging will be done; it is the one Paul mentions in Acts 17: 31. *My Gospel* does not denote origin or ownership, but the one that Paul was preaching; the Gospel that was the subject of his preaching.

Verse 17. This and the following three verses set forth the claims (which were true) of the Jew. He could boast (glory) because God had given the law to his nation.

Verse 18. God's will was made known in the law, hence the Jew could have knowledge of it. *Approvest* means to decide between right and wrong, and the Jew could do that by the instruction the law provided him.

Verse 19. The knowledge furnished by the law, enabled the Jew to feel that he could extend guidance and enlightenment to others less fortunate.

Verse 20. Even persons without ordinary discernment could be instructed by one who had the law for his own support. Teacher of babes is figurative, meaning the Jew could give information to the most unlearned, because he had the background of the inspired law. The Jew was not restricted to the mere principles of right doing, but he had the *form* or ritual in which they were to be carried out.

Verse 21. With all of the forementioned advantages, the Jew had no reason for coming short of the proper conduct in his own life. However, many of them were satisfied to rest on their

knowledge of what was right, without setting an example of the things they told others to do. They would steal to enrich their own purse, yet condemn the Gentiles for the sin of theft.

Verse 22. An adulterer would be condemning himself when he told another not to commit that wrong. Commit sacrilege means to rob a temple. The Jews would profess a horror for idols, yet would not hesitate to enter the idols' temple to steal the metals.

Verse 23. It is wrong to commit any lawlessness; it is worse to break the very law that one has praised as being the law of God.

Verse 24. The Gentiles could see the disorderly conduct of the Jews, and it led them to speak against the God whom they professed to serve. *As it is written*, "My name continually every day is blasphemed" Isaiah 52: 5.

Verse 25. Circumcision was one of the rites required by the law. These Jews were insisting that it be attended to, yet were indifferent about the many practical duties that the same law required. (See Matthew 23: 23.)

Verse 26. *The uncircumcision* is used figuratively, meaning the Gentiles to whom the rite was never given. *Keep the righteousness of the law* means the same as doing them by nature as set forth in verse 14.

Verse 27. *Uncircumcision* and *circumcision* are used to mean the Gentiles and Jews. *By nature* (see verse 14) means the Gentile did by nature what the Jew did not do, though he had the written law that showed him plainly what his duty was. By this better example of the Gentile, he *judged* (condemned) the Jew in his transgression of the law that had been given to him by *letter* (had been written in words).

Verse 28. The word *Jew* is used to designate a real servant of God, not one who merely professes to be one just because he wears the national name. On the same principle, fleshly circumcision has ceased to count favorably for anyone whose general life does not harmonize with the spiritual significance of the rite, namely, the cutting off of the sins of his life.

Verse 29. The real Jew in God's sight is one whose circumcision has been of a spiritual character, cutting off from the heart that which is evil. Such circumcision is not *in the letter* (is not literal), but is spiritual. And such a rite will obtain the *praise* (ap-

proval) of God, although the Jew with his love of rituals will not approve. This circumcision is stated in Colossians 2: 11.

ROMANS 3

Verse 1. *Advantage* means "pre-eminence or superiority," and not some special favor that would give him any more assurance of salvation. After all that Paul had just written about the equality of the Jews and Gentiles as far as it concerned their spiritual worth, they might feel grieved and think that no other kind of superiority was acknowledged for them, hence the question the apostle asks.

Verse 2. Paul answers the question of the preceding verse, stating that unto the Jews were committed the *oracles* (words) of God. With the exception of one writer (Job), every writer of the Old Testament was a Jew. That shows the great affection of God for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the founders of the Jewish race.

Verse 3. The Jews were not to be blamed if some refused to believe the oracles. They would be shown to be true and a basis of faith in God in spite of the unbelief of many.

Verse 4. *God forbid* is the same as saying "by no means." Even if every man in the world should reject the oracles of God, it would not prove them to be untrue, for man cannot be compared with God, who "cannot lie" (Titus 1: 2). Instead, the rejection by man of the oracles of God will prove man to be a liar. Unless this principle is recognized, we would have to conclude that God could not justly condemn those who reject His word. *As it is written* is a citation to Psalms 51: 4.

Verse 5. Paul does not agree with the complaints of men, but uses some of them to show the greatness of God. For instance, the unrighteousness of man emphasizes the righteousness of God by contrast. *I speak as a man* means he was using the arguments of men to show that they were wrong.

Verse 6. Men argued that since the unrighteousness of mankind *commended* or emphasized the righteousness of God, then He should not punish man for his wrongdoing. The apostle is here showing that on that principle God could not rightfully judge the world, although it was admitted (even by these objectors) that a general judgment was necessary.

Verse 7. Paul makes the same point with *lie* and *truth* that he makes with unrighteousness and righteousness in the preceding verse.

Verse 8. *And not* is a contrast with the closing words of the preceding verse. Taken together it means that instead of the liar being judged as a sinner, he should be encouraged to do evil that good might come. Paul had even been accused (slanderingly) of teaching such a theory. Then in his own direct language, the apostle says that all such slanderers will be justly condemned.

Verse 9. *We* means the Jews and *they the Gentiles*. After the exposure that Paul just made against unrighteous men, the Jews were disposed to apply it all to the Gentiles. He is denying that and declaring that both Jews and Gentiles are alike under sin.

Verse 10-12. This paragraph describes the character of both Jews and Gentiles as nations and not as individuals. We know that the word *one* does not mean an individual, for that would contradict some facts of sacred history. The scripture plainly teaches that Abel and Job were righteous individuals (Hebrews 11: 4; Job 1: 8), and they were Gentiles. And the righteousness of Daniel and many other individuals of the Jewish nation is too well known to need references. So the paragraph means that there was *not one* nation as a whole that was righteous. That is, neither one of the nations was so righteous that God chose it in preference to the other as the Jews pretended.

Verse 13. Through several verses Paul is describing the evil conduct of many persons in both Jewish and Gentile nations. When a sepulchre is opened, the corruptions in it are manifest. These characters were so bold in their sinful utterances that Paul compares their throats to the sepulchre. Deceitful language is as dangerous as the poison of asps, a very venomous kind of snake.

Verse 14. *Cursing and bitterness* shows their hateful attitude toward others.

Verse 15. *Swift to shed blood* means they are ever ready and anxious to do so.

Verse 16. *In their ways* denotes that the ways of these characters leave such results behind them. They destroy the lives of others, or otherwise make them miserable.

Verse 17. *Not known* in the sense of having a practical knowledge of it. They seek not the peace of others, but prefer to heap trouble upon them.

Verse 18. They have *no fear*, which would mean that they have no respect for God, nor do they act as if they were afraid of His righteous judgments.

Verse 19. The law has jurisdiction over those only who are under it, and that is the Jews. *Every mouth may be stopped*. The mouth of the Jew was stopped in the sense that he had no excuse to make for his sins. All the world (the people of the Jewish nation) was *become guilty* (made subject) to the judgment of God.

Verse 20. *Be justified* is used in the sense of being declared personally meritorious. The very law that requires certain deeds implies the unworthiness of the subject to whom the command is given. Therefore the doing of the deeds of the law only brings the sinner to a state of having done what he was obligated to do, so that he does not deserve any special praise (or justification) for it. The Jew would not have had even any *knowledge of sin* had it not been for the law, therefore the complying with its requirements only gave him credit for having "done that which was his duty to do."

Verse 21. *Righteousness of God without the law* means that system of God's righteousness explained at chapter 1: 17. That system was predicted by the Old Testament writers, the very men whose writings the Jews in Rome professed to respect. Yet these Judaizers were speaking as if the righteousness taught in the Gospel was not sufficient, but that both Jew and Gentile should go to the old law for justification.

Verse 22. *Righteousness . . . of Jesus Christ* means the Gospel, the same as set forth in chapter 1: 17. *There is no difference* between Jew and Gentile before the Gospel.

Verse 23. See the comments covering verses 9-12.

Verse 24. *His grace* means the grace of God that was offered the world through Christ. The deeds of man could not save upon their virtue, but the favor made possible by the sacrifice of God's Son brought free justification to all who accepted the terms.

Verse 25. *Propitiation* means something that satisfies a demand made by one person of another, or that was justly due another whether it had been

demanded or not. A man might be in debt to another to the amount of one million dollars, which it would be impossible for him to pay. The creditor, having a son who wished to receive the services of a faithful attendant, would agree to consider the debt "settled" if the debtor would become such an attendant. That is what God proposes to man, if he will become a faithful servant of his Son. *Sins that are past* is represented in the illustration by the million dollars for which the debtor had become indebted but could not pay.

Verse 26. *Might be just, and the justifier*. The word *and* is the key to this profound proposition. The justice of God demanded payment of the million dollars, which man was unable to meet. But God cannot be anything but just, for that is a part of His eternal personality. The blood of Christ was offered in payment of that great debt on condition that the debtor believe on this divine blood Donor. By that arrangement it was possible for God to show mercy to the debtor (the sinner), and at the same time retain the eternal attribute of justice.

Verse 27. The works of the law could not pay that huge debt, neither could the regretful poverty of the debtor satisfy his creditor. But the service to the creditor's son satisfied the creditors just as the blood of Christ atones for those who will do or have done what the great Creditor requires. In view of such a plan, neither the doer of the works of the law nor the servant of Christ has anything of which to boast.

Verse 28. Paul now draws his conclusion from the foregoing premises. A man is justified by *faith* (the Gospel of Christ), and not by virtue of the deeds of the law of Moses.

Verse 29. Another conclusion logically following upon the aforesaid truths, is that God is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. It also explains how He can accept the services of the Gentiles who did not have any benefit of the law.

Verse 30. *Circumcision* and *uncircumcision* means the Jews and the Gentile. The first *faith* does not have the definite article before it, and it denotes the simple act of faith shown by the Jew individually when he performed the rites of the law of Moses. Even those services had to be accompanied with *faith* or the Jew would

not receive the favor of God in that age. (Read the entire 11th chapter of Hebrews, especially verse 6.) The second *faith* is preceded by *the*, which makes it mean the Gospel which is often termed "the faith." And the benefits thus received by both the Jew under the law, and the Gentile under the Gospel, are bestowed by the *one God*.

Verse 31. In this verse the word *faith* is also preceded by the article "the" in the original. Paul is saying that the law was not made void nor disrespected by the *faith* or the Gospel, but rather it is given a high recommendation for being true (is established), because it had predicted the coming in of the Gospel and the new prophet. (See Deuteronomy 18: 18-20.)

ROMANS 4

Verse 1. Paul's question is to introduce his remarks about the works of Abraham and what they meant to him. The Jews not only claimed that God chose them over the Gentiles because of their better qualities, but that they and their law were good enough to be continued in authority for the sake of righteousness before God. That was the reason the Judaizers in Rome (and elsewhere) were so persistent in disturbing the Gentile Christians with their notions. And in defence of their position, they referred to Abraham who was said to be righteous on the ground that he was justified by works (James 2: 21), jumping from the works of the law to those practiced by Abraham centuries before the law.

Verse 2. Abraham did not have to rely on his works to have something of which to glory in God's sight. The Jews were boasting of Abraham's works, for his sake, but there was no need for the patriarch to boast on that ground.

Verse 3. God had already given Abraham the favor of justification for being righteous, on the ground that he believed on Him (Genesis 15: 6). Why, then, should Abraham look to works for justification when God had already counted him righteous without them?

Verse 4. *To him that worketh* means the man who depends on the merits of his works for justification. In that case, if he receives that reward, it will be *reckoned* (considered) on the basis of debt, something actually delivered to him because he had earned it. But that would exclude any credit to the idea of *grace* or favor.

Verse 5. This is just the opposite to the preceding verse.

Verse 6. The principle of receiving favor from the Lord as a gift, and not on the basis of meritorious work, was even taught by David in old time. (Psalms 32: 1, 2.)

Verse 7. If a man's debts are forgiven, that is not the same as actually paying them. (See Matthew 18: 27, 32, 34.) When God forgives a man of his sins, it is not because he has actually paid the debt with meritorious works, for that cannot be done. Instead, it is because the debt has been covered by the blood of Christ (chapter 3: 26, 27).

Verse 8. *Not impute sin* means to forgive them. (See the preceding verse.)

Verse 9. *This blessedness* refers to the grace of God bestowed because of *faith* and not on the virtue of works. Paul asks if it was bestowed on the *circumcision* (Jews) only, or on the *uncircumcision* (Gentiles) also. He then cites the fact that such *blessedness* was given to Abraham. The Jew would reply that he had a point in that very case, for Abraham was the first man to be circumcised. The apostle expected that reply, and he met it in the next verse.

Verse 10. Abraham was reckoned righteous while he was uncircumcised, hence the favor could not have been by virtue of circumcision as the Jews claimed.

Verse 11. Circumcision was given to Abraham as a *sign* or *seal* of the righteousness which he already had displayed. An inspector does not put his stamp of approval on an article of food to make it pure, but to indicate that it was already pure. Circumcision did not make Abraham righteous, but it was given to him because he was that kind of man previously. He had been declared righteous 24 years before the rite of circumcision was given him. (See Genesis 12: 4; 15: 6; 17: 24.) This fact has an important bearing on the world in general. By attributing the quality of righteousness to Abraham because of his faith before he even knew anything about circumcision, it would be made possible for others to become the spiritual descendants of the patriarch, even though they were the ones who did not have circumcision, namely, the Gentiles. This great argument of Paul was especially directed against the Jews in Rome, who made more ado over cir-

cumcision than over the other requirements of the law.

Verse 12. That would make Abraham the spiritual father (ancestor) of *circumcision* (spiritual, chapter 2: 28, 29), to those who are not of the fleshly circumcision. That refers to the Gentiles who, though not circumcised fleshly, yet imitate the faith that Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Verse 13. To be an *heir* of anything means to receive that possession by allotment or gracious gift. Abraham and *his seed* which means his spiritual descendants by faith, became heirs or possessors of the grace of God's favor. That favor was connected with the promise of Christ who was to *bless the world*. But that favor was not bestowed on the merits of law (of works), but *through the righteousness of faith*.

Verse 14. If the promise made to Abraham and his seed was to be fulfilled by the works of the law, then the *faith* (the Gospel) would be made of no avail.

Verse 15. Transgression means going beyond a law, therefore where there is no law there could be no transgression, though there could be other forms of sin.

Verse 16. The words *it is* are not in the original as separate words. The thought of the verse is that the favor of God is the most important subject and the thing that should be the most desired. That is why the divine plan was to bestow such a favor on the basis of grace to the faithful of all nations, not only to the adherents of the law.

Verse 17. Such a grand scheme opened up the way for all to become the spiritual descendants of Abraham, who was set forth as a model of righteousness by faith long before there was any law of Moses. That also made it possible for him to have the promise of being the *father of many nations*, which would include both Gentiles and Jews. *Things which be not as though they were* refers to the apparent impossibility for Abraham to be a father at all when the promise was made.

Verse 18. *Against hope believed in* means the same as the last clause in the preceding verse, concerning the improbability of Abraham's parent-hood.

Verse 19. This verse comes down to the time when the son of promise was

soon to be born. Such a son had been promised a number of times, but the exact time of it had not been set. When Abraham was 99 years old God set the time for the birth of this son (Genesis 17: 1, 21). *Own body now dead* is figurative as Abraham was of such advanced age. *Deadness of Sarah's womb* is literal as far as reproduction function is concerned. She was barren to begin with (Genesis 11: 30), and she also had passed the child-bearing period (Genesis 18: 11). In spite of all these natural impediments, Abraham believed that God was able to give him and his wife a son who would be the joint offspring of their bodies, by overcoming the defects that nature had placed in the way.

Verse 20. *Staggered not* denotes that he did not waver in the least in his faith concerning the promise of God, but he was firm and absolute in that faith.

Verse 21. Such a faith not only means that God is able to perform what he had promised, but that He would not have promised it had he not known he could do it.

Verse 22. *Imputed to him* denotes that he was considered as a righteous man.

Verse 23. Abraham would have rejoiced at the simple assurance that he was considered righteous, but the fact was written also for the sake of others besides himself.

Verse 24. It was written as an encouragement for *us* (all people of our day, whether Jew or Gentile), to the intent that we believe on God who raised up his Son, the great Seed that was promised to Abraham.

Verse 25. *Was delivered* refers to Jesus being turned over into the hands of his enemies, to be slain because of the offences of the world, that by his sacrifice they might be atoned for. Had Jesus not been raised from the dead, he could not have perfected that system of faith by which man could be justified before God.

ROMANS 5

Verse 1. The principle of individual faith has been required from the days of Abel on down (Hebrews 11: 4, 6), therefore the word in this verse means "the faith" or the Gospel of Christ. That brings to us justification through Jesus Christ and not the law of Moses. The reader should constantly keep in mind that the predominating thought

of the book of Romans, is the virtue of faith in Christ as against the works of the law, which the Judaizers were urging upon Christians, and which was causing much confusion especially among those of the Gentile nation.

Verse 2. *By whom* means by Christ, and *this grace* means the favor of justification before God. Such justification could not have been obtained by virtue of the works of the law, therefore *we* (Christians) stand and rejoice in the hope of partaking of the glory of God. Of course that glory is to come at the end of the world (Colossians 3: 4).

Verse 3. Since the glory is to be received in the future, we welcome the experience of tribulations. It is not the pleasure of tribulations in which we glory, but it is the good fruit of patience produced thereby.

Verse 4. Patience results in experience, because it can come only by persistent practice, and we would not do that if we were not patient. All of this results in hope, because, having adhered to a course of righteousness in spite of tribulations, we have reason to look for final victory.

Verse 5. The hope we have of a life with Christ when this present period of tribulation is over, keeps us from being ashamed of that which we have endured for His sake (Acts 5: 41). The Holy Ghost (or Spirit) was given to the early Christians in miraculous measure (Acts 2: 38; 8: 14-18). After the complete New Testament was produced, the Spirit dwelled in the church which is the "temple of God" (1 Corinthians 3: 16, 17). However, this indwelling is not in miraculous measure, because that form of it was to cease after the complete rule of faith in Christ was given (Ephesians 4: 8-16).

Verse 6. *Without strength* means we were powerless to save ourselves, or to devise any system by which mankind could be saved. Of necessity, then, we were ungodly as to our spiritual standing, and hence when Christ died his death was *for the ungodly*.

Verse 7. For all practical purposes the words *righteous* and *good* mean the same, and they are generally so used in the New Testament. But when used in distinction from each other, the first means a man who does what is right because the law under which he is living requires it. The second means a man who is naturally of an agreeable disposition so that "every-

body likes him," although he may not be living in obedience to any laws. There are people who would die for such a person if the circumstances called for it.

Verse 8. God and Christ went beyond all these conditions and showed their love for us while we were sinners—neither righteous nor good—by having Christ to die for our sins.

Verse 9. *Justified by his blood* is explained at chapter 3: 25, 26. Through such a complete satisfaction offered by the blood of Christ, the wrath of God against sin will be turned away from us.

Verse 10. Jesus found us in sin and reconciled us to his Father through his blood, which denotes that He put us into the position of praying terms with God. In that relation with God, we could "work out our salvation" by following the example that Jesus set by his own life.

Verse 11. There is a considerable amount of repetition of thought in several verses. Reconciliation is the same as *atonement*, and Paul adds it for the sake of emphasis.

Verse 12. *The one man* by whom sin entered into the world was Adam. He is the only one who is regarded as a personal sinner in this verse. However, it was his sin that caused the separation from the tree of life with its consequent death of the body for all his descendants, we must regard the phrase *all have sinned* as meaning only that all human beings regardless of age or mental or moral qualification, are physical partakers of the results of Adam's sin. We know it cannot mean that infants were thereby forced to become sinners as to their character, for they are represented by Jesus as already possessing the character that adults are required to develop before they can enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18: 3).

Verse 13. *Sin* in this verse is in the ordinary sense, pertaining to the personal conduct of human beings. Adam introduced the knowledge of it, but a person must be old enough to possess knowledge before he can actually perform it responsibly. *Not imputed* means it is not taken into account, and the particular form of sin meant in this verse is that which is the transgression of law. (See the comments on this at chapter 4: 15.) In view of this, before there was any law given, men could not be counted as

sinners by transgression since there was no law to transgress.

Verse 14. It might be (erroneously) concluded from the foregoing, that since men were not adjudged as sinners before the law was given, therefore nobody died before that. Yet the apostle affirms that death did reign through all that period, even over those who had not sinned after the *similitude*—after the manner—of Adam's transgression. This shows that sin in this verse as applied to all mankind is used in the same sense as it is in verse 12. That is, they had to suffer the physical death that resulted from Adam's sin, because it caused them to be born outside the garden of Eden and away from the tree of life. The last clause, *who is the figure of him that was to come*, is introduced to prepare the reader for the comparison a little later on, that deals with the principle of sharing in the *results* of one man's righteousness in the same sense as sharing in the *results* of one man's sin.

Verse 15. An illustration may be used either by comparison or contrast, or by both, and the present one is used in the last sense. The comparison is in the fact that all mankind will have to partake of the physical results of Adam's sin which means death of the body. Likewise, all will partake of the physical resurrection from death as a result of the resurrection of Christ. The contrast is in the fact that the *grace of God*, which means justification from personal sin, is offered to all mankind through Christ, in addition to the resurrection of the body.

Verse 16. This verse means virtually the same as the preceding one, but expressed in slightly different language.

Verse 17. The comparison and contrast are again repeated. The phrase *much more* denotes that the opportunity to receive *abundance of grace* is of more value than the mere resurrection of the body which also will be effected through that of Christ.

Verse 18. This is virtually the same in thought as the preceding verses, but the subject is so vital to the happiness of mankind, that the apostle regarded the repetition of it as necessary. *Offence of one* refers to the sin of Adam, and the *condemnation* means the physical death that resulted upon all mankind. *Even so* again includes both the resurrection of the body, and

also the *justification of life*, which means the offer of forgiveness of personal sins to all who will accept it on the Lord's terms.

Verse 19. *Many were made sinners* is explained at verse 12. *Obedience of one* refers to the great deed of Christ in providing a sacrifice that could cleanse all from sin who would avail themselves of it by their own individual obedience.

Verse 20. The word *law* does not have the definite article before it in the original, so it is used with reference to law in general. That is, man has always had some form of law by which he could live and then be judged. With the Gentile it was the law of conscience and nature (chapter 1: 19, 20; 2: 14, 15), and with the Jew it was the law of Moses. *Offence might abound* denotes that no man was with "excuse" for his sins, since he had a law that taught him to do better. This condition of responsibility made it all the more necessary for the grace or favor of God to be used so that sin could be atoned for.

Verse 21. This verse is the grand conclusion of Paul's argument. The sin of Adam brought physical death upon all mankind, and bringing in a law of conduct brought spiritual death upon all who failed to obey that law. Then the great work of Christ brought physical life to all mankind unconditionally, and spiritual life to all who avail themselves of the "unspeakable gift" of this human-divine sacrifice of the Son of God.

ROMANS 6

Verse 1. Paul was a master in logic, and he refuted beforehand an erroneous conclusion that some would draw from what he had said. They would argue that if there was more grace where more sin abounded, then it would be well to sin so as to bring that grace.

Verse 2. Even without the statement of the apostle, we can see that such was false reasoning. It would be like arguing that, since doctors have more opportunity for doing the good deed of curing the sick wherever there is more sickness, therefore let us do something to cause more sickness. *God forbid* is Paul's way of saying "by no means," and he then shows the logical objection to the reasoning. Christians claim to have died to sin by repentance, which would preclude the living in or practicing sin.

Verse 3. Death means separation regardless of when or how the word is used. The body and spirit of Christ were separated at his death, and it was done for the sins of man. He died for sin, but in order for it to benefit a man, he likewise must die—must die to sin, which means that he is to be separated from the practice of sin by repentance. In order for this figurative death of a man to be benefited by the literal death of Christ, it is necessary for him to get into that death. Divine wisdom has decreed that such an experience is to be accomplished by baptism.

Verse 4. This verse incidentally shows how baptism is performed—by a burial and rising—but it was not written for that purpose. In truth, no passage was written to show the form or "mode" of baptism, for the word itself shows that. Whenever a person goes to quibbling about the "mode" of baptism, he is not ready for the ordinance anyway. What he needs but lacks is a sincere belief in Jesus Christ. It is not an arbitrary declaration that baptism is necessary for the new life with Christ. The principle has already been shown in the preceding verse that it is in baptism that we get into the death of Christ. Well, all people should know that Jesus was dead when he shed his blood (John 19: 33, 34), and it is his blood that saves, therefore a man has to be baptized in order to come in contact with the blood. The comparison of death and burial is continued. When Christ came from the grave alive, he was never to die again (verse 9); likewise, when a man has died to sin and has been buried with Christ in baptism, he is thereby made alive spiritually, and when he comes out of that watery grave, he too is expected to live a new life in Christ, and not again become dead in sins.

Verse 5. The word *planted* means to be united with, and likeness denotes only a comparison. Sinners who die to sin and are baptized, will be in spiritual likeness to Him.

Verse 6. *Old man* is a figurative name for our life of sin. To *crucify* figuratively means to have the life of sin put to death as regards general practice.

Verses 7, 8. *He that is dead to sin* by repentance is freed from the bondage of sin, and becomes alive through Christ with whom he has been buried by baptism.

Verses 9, 10. Christ arose never to die again, and likewise it is expected that sinners who die to sin and are buried with Christ, will follow a life of righteousness.

Verse 11. The *death and life* of this verse both have a spiritual sense.

Verse 12. All Christians will make mistakes and sin incidentally (1 John 1: 8), but that is not the same as to permit sin to *reign* in the body.

Verse 13. *Yield ye your members* denotes to consent or give one's body over to a life of unrighteousness, and not sinning incidentally according to 1 John 1: 8.

Verse 14. For sin to have dominion over us is equivalent to making a practice of sinning. *Under grace* means that the New Testament system is one made possible by merciful favor of God, so that one's mistakes are atoned for constantly by the blood stream of Christ. (See 1 John 1: 7; 2: 1.)

Verse 15. This is the same in thought as that set forth in verse 1.

Verse 16. Again the key to the passage is *yield yourselves*, which means a deliberate surrender to some ruler, and not the incidental event of sin due to weakness.

Verse 17. *God be thanked* cannot be understood until the entire verse is considered. That will show that the rescue from a sinful service is the fact for which Paul thanked God. *Form* is from *rupos* and one of Thayer's definitions is, "A pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made." The "pattern" is the example that Jesus set when he died for sin, then was raised from the grave to die no more. The sinner must die to sin, be buried with Christ by baptism, then arise to walk in a new life.

Verse 18. This is the same in thought as verse 11.

Verse 19. *After the manner of men* is all from one Greek word, and means that Paul uses human language because he is speaking to human beings. *Infirmity* is explained by Thayer to mean inability to understand another language due to the frailty of the flesh. Had Paul used the "tongue of angels" man could not have grasped its meaning. Therefore, their natural reasoning would show them that when they formerly yielded themselves servants of uncleanness, the result of it was *iniquity*. So now, by yielding themselves to righteousness, the result will be holiness.

Verse 20. This means that a man cannot be a servant of sin and still be a servant of righteousness; that would be like serving two masters. (See Matthew 6: 24.)

Verse 21. What *fruit* does not imply they had no fruit, but it asks, "what kind of fruit was it," and then Paul answers it by saying, *the end* [fruit] . . . is *death*.

Verse 22. Verses 17, 18 tell when one is made free from sin and hence when he begins to bear holy fruit. The final reward for such sowing and reaping is *everlasting life*.

Verse 23. *Wages* is from *opsonion* which Thayer defines, "a soldier's pay, allowance." It denotes, therefore, that a life devoted to the service of sin will earn or merit the wages of *death*. Not physical death, for all have to go through that, but the second death, designated in Revelation 21: 8. *Eternal life* is a gift, because it is impossible for any man to earn such a treasure by his own service.

ROMANS 7

Verse 1. The fact that his brethren understood the working principles of law as it pertained to marriage, prompted Paul to draw comparison between Christ and Moses.

Verse 2. A woman cannot be lawfully bound to more than one man at a time, neither can a person be subject to more than one religious law at the same time.

Verse 3. Jesus taught in Matthew 19: 9 that fornication of a married person is the only lawful ground for the remarriage of the innocent one. Such a sin virtually causes the guilty one to be *dead* to the other. *Adulteress* is used by some to support the notion of "living in adultery," something the Bible does not teach, since the single act of adultery unites the two permanently. (See the comments at Matthew 19: 9.) The word italicized is defined by Thayer as a person with "eyes from which adulterous desire beams forth." It means a frame of mind rather than any physical performance.

Verse 4. As physical death breaks the union of persons in marriage, so when Jewish penitent believers died with Christ, that broke the bond between them and the law of Moses. Being free from the law they could become married to Christ, and the off-

spring of such a union would be *fruit unto God*.

Verses 5, 6. The outstanding difference between the law of Moses and that of Christ, is that the former was ritualistic and its penalty was physical death in extreme cases. The latter is spiritual in its character, and makes provision for the weakness of the human fleshly nature through the grace of God.

Verse 7. The foregoing does not blame the law for the existence of sin; it only revealed it and thus made man responsible. But it could not clear man of guilt by its virtue, hence it was necessary for the law of Christ to come in, to accomplish that which "the law could not do" (chapter 8: 3).

Verse 8. The purpose of this verse is to defend the law against unjust criticism. The revelation of sin by the law seemed to increase it, whereas it was the carnal disposition of man to crave that which he was forbidden to have, that brought about the apparent increase of sin.

Verse 9. *I was alive*. Paul is speaking of humanity in general. While man was ignorant of his sin he was not responsible for it—it was not imputed (chapter 5: 13). As sin was dead at that time, it follows that the conscience was alive—was free from the sting of guilt. The law brought sin to life and then man became "dead in sin."

Verse 10. The commandment that would bring spiritual life to the man if he obeyed it, would result in death "in trespass and sins," until he repented.

Verse 11. This is virtually the same as verse 9.

Verse 12. See the comments on verse 10.

Verse 13. The law (which would mean good to man if he obeyed it), was not responsible for the spiritual death of the human being. No, the law only revealed the existence of sin and decreed a penalty. It was the sin itself, springing into life or action, that brought on the condition of spiritual death. The law served to show how *exceeding sinful* such a life is.

Verse 14. This is explained at verse 10.

Verses 15-21. In the foregoing verses of this chapter, Paul has said much of the carnal or fleshly part of man's personality. He has shown that its

tendencies were responsible for the difficulties with the law of Moses, which was not adapted to the needs of man on its own merits, therefore leaving it necessary to bring in the spiritual law of Christ. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a description of these two parts of man's being, which I shall refer to by the terms, "inner man" and "outer man." I shall quote the verses of this paragraph, substituting these terms for the pronouns, and making such other changes as the grammatical rules require.

"For that which the outer man does, the inner man allows [endorses] not. For what the inner man would, the outer man does not. What the inner man hates, that does the outer man. If then the outer man does that which the inner man would not, the inner man consents unto the law [against sin] that it is good. Now then it is no more the inner man that does it, but sin that dwells in the outer man. For the inner man knows that in the flesh dwells no good thing. For to will is present with the inner man, but how to perform that which is good the outer man will not do; but the evil which the inner man would not do, the outer man does. Now if the outer man does what the inner man would not, it is no more the inner man that does it, but sin that dwells in the outer man. The inner man finds a law, that, when he would do good, evil is present with the outer man." The reader should understand that both parts of a man are not operating at the same time. The paragraph shows only the tendencies of each, and whichever is in the lead at any given time, will determine whether the person is a servant of Christ or Satan.

Verse 22. This is direct proof of the foregoing description of the "inner man."

Verse 23. This verse should be understood in the light of the paragraph of verses 15-21. *Members* means all the parts that go to make up a human being. The conflict between the fleshly law (rule) of sin and that of the mind or spirit or better part of said being, is the subject of this verse.

Verse 24. Roman convicts were sometimes chained to a dead body as a means of punishment. Paul likens the carnal man whose tendencies lead to spiritual death, to the dead body thus chained to the inner man. Only the proper officer can release a convict from the chain, and Paul asks who

can release one from the control of the fleshly man.

Verse 25. Paul answers his question by saying it is Christ who can give the sinner such release, for which he thanks God. The chapter closes with the proposition running through several verses, namely, the conflict between the mind and the flesh.

ROMANS 8

Verse 1. *No condemnation* refers to the deliverance from the dead body in chapter 7: 24. However, to continue in the freedom, one must continue to walk according to the inclinations of the "inner man," instructed and guided by the law of the Spirit.

Verse 2. *Law of the Spirit* is the Gospel, and it is called of *life* because it will guide one into a spiritual life in this world, and prepare him for eternal life in the next. *Sin and death* is explained at chapter 7: 5, 6.

Verse 3. The law was not adapted to meet (through its own merits) the needs of fleshly weakness. Jesus came in the flesh, the same kind of body that sinful men have. While in that body He condemned sin by living free from it, then offering that body as a sacrifice for sin.

Verse 4. *Righteousness of the law* means that required by it, but unattained on account of the weakness of the flesh as explained in the preceding verse.

Verse 5. See the paragraph of verses 15-21, of chapter 7.

Verse 6. *Carnally minded* denotes a yearning for fleshly pleasure.

Verses 7, 8. See paragraph of chapter 7: 5, 6.

Verse 9. *Not in the flesh* is explained at verse 1. *Spirit of Christ* is equivalent to "Christ be in you" in the following verse.

Verse 10. *The body* means the "old man" of chapter 6: 6. It died to sin by repentance, and the *spirit* (inner man) came to life through the righteousness of Christ.

Verse 11. The good and bad will all be raised through Christ, but the good only will be raised to life everlasting. (See John 11: 26; 1 Corinthians 15: 49-53.)

Verse 12. *Are debtors*. Are obligated, but not to the flesh to live after it.

Verse 13. This is the same as verse 6.

Verse 14. The Spirit of God operates

through the Gospel (John 14: 16, 17). Being willing to be led by that instruction shows one to have been begotten of God.

Verse 15. This verse makes a comparison of the difference between a servant and an heir. (See Galatians 4: 1-7.) These Jewish Christians had been made free from the law through Christ, which entitled them to recognize God as their Father.

Verse 16. *Beareth witness* with all comes from one Greek word, *summartureo*, which Thayer defines, "To bear witness with, bear joint witness." Hence the phrase does not indicate any communication between these two witnesses, but that each one gives the same testimony on the subject, namely, that the persons are children of God. That is, the Spirit states through the Gospel what it takes to make one a child of God, and the spirit (mind) of a man knows whether he has done that. If he has, the conclusion is that he is a child of God.

Verse 17. This relationship makes one an heir of God, since only his children can inherit the divine riches. Such a man is a joint-heir with Christ in that He too is the Son of God. *If so be* is virtually the same proviso mentioned in verse 1.

Verse 18. Following Christ includes suffering persecutions with him if need be. Such sufferings are nothing in comparison with the glorious reward to be received.

Verse 19. *The creature* signifies human beings in general. Every man (though some unconsciously) wants something better than he is enjoying in his frail, decaying body. Paul calls the state that is thus yearned for the *manifestation of the sons of God*, and that is the same as *the redemption of our body* in verse 23.

Verse 20. *Vanity* is from *mataiotes* which Thayer defines in this place, "Frailty, want of vigor." It means the human creature was made subject to decay of the body, and that took place when he was driven from the tree of life. *Not willingly*. No, he had to be driven out (Genesis 3: 24). *Him* means God, who subjected man to an existence that would end in death of the body, but at the same time gave him hope of a deathless body in another world. (See verse 23.)

Verse 21. The promise in this verse is for those only who are faithful *children of God*. The corruption and

incorruption are explained by 1 Corinthians 15: 52-54.

Verse 22. This is the same as verse 19.

Verse 23. *Not only they* means not only the human family in general. *Firstfruits* of the Spirit means the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that is the possession of all who come into the body of Christ. (See the comments on Acts 5: 32.) To *groan* means to sigh or earnestly to long for the redemption of the body, which means the resurrection.

Verses 24, 25. *Saved by hope* denotes that our hope for everlasting life prompts us to persevere in the kind of conduct that is necessary to receive everlasting life.

Verse 26. A safe rule is to let one passage help us understand another, when both are on the same subject, and one seems more difficult than the other. A companion passage for our present one is Ephesians 3: 20, which the reader should see at once. We know that no communication is given to man today on spiritual matters except what can be read in the Bible. Therefore, that which the Spirit does for Christians is a part of the plan of God and Christ for taking care of the Christians' prayers. The Spirit (which can read our minds) forms our prayers as to the wording, so that they are in presentable form to offer before the throne, doing it with *groanings* (sighing) which *cannot be uttered* (by us).

Verse 27. This verse verifies the comments on the preceding one. *He* means the Lord, who not only can read the mind of the saints (Christians), but also knows the mind of the Spirit, since he is the third member of the Godhead, and is subject to the Father and the Son. Therefore, when the Spirit presents the intercessions of the saints to the throne, in groanings that man cannot utter, that form of the prayer virtually becomes the petition of the Christian, addressed to God through Christ who is the official or authoritative Advocate.

Verse 28. This verse does not teach "special providence" as some believe. It means that if a man loves the Lord, he will make "stepping-stones" out of his "stumbling-stones." He will so work on the conditions of life (even his sufferings, verse 18), that they will assure him the good reward that God has promised to the faithful. *The called* refers to the men and women who have heard and accepted the call

through the Gospel to serve the Lord. The final reward for such service will be to receive a body that can never die, fashioned after that of Christ (Philippians 3: 21); and as an evidence that God can do such a marvelous work, He decreed to bestow that very favor on some of the saints before the general resurrection, which is the subject of verses 29, 30.

Verses 29, 30. Of course the Lord will not grant the glorious resurrection to any but faithful saints, hence Paul begins his account of this particular group with the event of their entrance into His service. That was when they were *called* by the law in force in their day. Those who accepted the call were justified or made free from their past sins. It was required, also, that these persons be faithful till death, which would constitute them "saints that slept." God never predestinates any certain person as to his character, but He did predetermine what kind of conduct would receive certain favors. The Lord foresaw some who were going to develop such a character, and among them He predestinated a group to come out of their graves to die no more, giving them the same form or bodily image that the Son received, so that he (the Son) could be the *firstborn* (from the grave to die no more) among many brethren. To be among them would mean to be associated with them in the same event. Hence we read (Matthew 27: 52, 53) about these saints that arose after the resurrection of Jesus. They are the *glorified* ones of verse 30 here, who were given bodies to die no more. As such, they would not remain on earth, hence when Jesus ascended to Heaven he took them with him. This is what Paul means in Ephesians 4: 8 where he says Christ "led captivity captive." (Marginal, "led a multitude of captives.") These had been captives in the unseen state, but were now made free forever and taken along with their Lord in a *glorified* state. When Jesus comes again he will bring them back with him to witness the execution of judgment upon the ungodly (Jude 14, 15).

Verse 31. If God can thus give glorified life to thousands of his saints so long before the general resurrection, He certainly can do the same for all others who will be faithful until death. No wonder the apostle said as to these things that since God is for us, *no one can be against us*.

Verse 32. Paul reasons that God will freely give us all these things, since He did not spare his Son to make the provision on our behalf, who also led the way by being faithful to God, and then going triumphant through the unseen world.

Verse 33. *God's elect* means those who are chosen of God, and such are the ones who obey God's law. It also means those whom God *justifieth* or declares freed from sin. What reason, then, would anyone have to charge anything to such persons?

Verse 34. This question is similar to the one in the preceding verse. Since Christ died for these chosen ones, and took his place by the Father's right hand after his resurrection, He will intercede for them when enemies condemn them.

Verse 35. This question implies a similar answer to the foregoing. When Christ loves us, these hardships cannot separate us from Him.

Verse 36. *Killed all the day long* denotes that the Lord's disciples were threatened with death constantly, as if they were fit only for slaughter.

Verse 37. *More than conquerors* is defined in the lexicon as, "a surpassing victory." A man might win in a physical combat with another athlete, which would be a simple victory only. But if it was a struggle to repossess a treasure that the other contestant had taken from him, the success would be more than a simple victory. Our combat with Satan is to redeem our soul which he had caused to be endangered.

Verses 38, 39. Note that none of these things can rob us of the love of God. But that does not say that we ourselves could not forfeit it by becoming unfaithful to Him.

ROMANS 9

Verses 1, 2. See the comments at Acts 24: 16 for the meaning of *conscience*. *Witness in the Holy Ghost* means his conscience had the testimony of the Holy Ghost (or Spirit), recorded in the scripture. The *great heaviness* refers to his great concern.

Verse 3. Paul had said so much in criticism of his Jewish brethren that some might think it was prompted by a personal grudge against them. To offset such an impression, he refers to evidences of the past that showed his personal love for them. *I could wish* is all from EUCROMAI. The Englishman's Greek New Testament translates

it, "I was wishing," thus putting it in the past tense as it should be. It is just another expression in Paul's effort to show his Jewish kinsmen how devoted he had been to their interests. (See the comments on the preceding paragraph, also the passage in Acts 26: 9, 10.) *Accursed* means to be separated from Christ—having nothing to do with him except to oppose him as shown in the passage cited in Acts.

Verse 4. This is virtually the same as chapter 3: 1, 2.

Verse 5. *Whose are the fathers* means the Israelites descended from the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Christ came from them as regards his fleshly ancestry.

Verse 6. *Word . . . taken none effect* is explained at chapter 3: 3. *Not all Israel . . . of Israel*. There are two Israels being considered, the fleshly and the spiritual.

Verse 7. Not all of Abraham's descendants were *children* or in the line coming down to Christ; only those who descended from Abraham through Isaac.

Verse 8. *Flesh and promise* refers to Ishmael and Isaac. The regular law of fleshly reproduction was all that was necessary to produce Ishmael (Genesis 16: 1-3). But Sarah was barren and a miracle was needed to produce Isaac, which God *promised* to do for her.

Verse 9. *At this time*. God worked a miracle to enable Sarah to conceive, then let nature go through the usual time of expectancy for the forming of the child.

Verse 10. We learned at chapter 3: 9-18 that God did not choose any particular nation because of its personal goodness, for all were corrupt as nations. His choice, then, was solely because He so willed it, as he certainly had the right to do. Paul is making the same argument in several verses, beginning with our present one.

Verse 11. As an illustration of God's practice of making official selections regardless of personal merit, Paul cites the case of the twin brothers where God made the choice before they were born and before they could have done anything, good or evil.

Verse 12. *Elder and younger* are changed to "greater" and "lesser" in the margin. That is proper, for while Esau was elder in the order of their births and thus of *greater* age, yet God

decreed that he and his descendants should give place to Jacob in His plans.

Verse 13. The original word for *hated* is defined by Thayer in this place, "to love less," hence it does not mean a feeling against Esau as if He detested him.

Verse 14. Since no personal injury was done to Esau by this choice, there was no unrighteousness on the part of God in making this official selection.

Verse 15. The *mercy* and *compassion* of this verse does not refer to the personal treatment of the individuals, but to selecting them for national or official purposes.

Verse 16. The selection is not left to the person to do his own choosing, since it was not for personal advantage, but to God whose will is supreme.

Verse 17. In some cases the selection did result in the personal welfare or fate of the one selected, and then God selected one who was already fitted by character for the place. Pharaoh was brought to the throne of Egypt by the Lord at the right time to go through the humiliating experiences related in Exodus, but he was a wicked character to begin with (Exodus 1:8), so the experience did him no injustice.

Verse 18. Verses 15 and 17 should be considered with this one.

Verses 19, 20. To criticize God for using his divine right of choice would be like a vessel complaining against the one who formed it. It would be similar to the foolish argument about deliberately sinning in chapter 6:1, 15.

Verse 21. A potter is the one to decide what kind of vessel is to be made out of a lump of clay. The facts that determine it are such as the case of Pharaoh.

Verses 22, 23. A potter might delay his decision about a vessel, when an onlooker would think it very clear as to which vessel deserved to be retained and which discarded. Yet he would not know the mind of the potter, neither would it be his affair.

Verse 24. The apparent unwise action of the potter in the preceding paragraph refers to the Jews and Gentiles. Each of these nations thought the other should have been discarded as an undesirable vessel. (See the comments at chapter 3:9-12.)

Verses 25, 26. *Osee* means Hosea, and it is a prediction that the Gentiles

were to become God's people, even though the Jews thought them unworthy of it.

Verse 27. *Esaias* is Isaiah, whose prophecy was concerning the Jews also. But this prediction was not so complimentary for this nation, although it was the vessel at first selected by the Potter. Notwithstanding its number was as the sand of the sea, a remnant only was to be salvaged because of unbelief of the majority.

Verse 28. The first application of this verse as well as the preceding one, is that only a remnant of the Jewish nation was to return from the Babylonian captivity. The context of the passage cited in Isaiah 10:22, 23 shows clearly that such is the meaning. Then later the nation was reduced still more by the wars with the Romans.

Verse 29. *Lord of Sabaoth* means Lord of hosts. *Left us a seed* applies to the remnant of verse 27, and to the "elect" for whose sake the days of the siege of Jerusalem were to be shortened according to Matthew 24:22. The reference to Sodom and Gomorrah is to show how complete the destruction of Israel would have been had it not been for the mercy of God.

Verse 30, 31. *Followed not after righteousness*. The Gentiles were not under the law of Moses and did not profess to follow the life of righteousness. The Gentiles were not under the law of Moses and did not profess to follow the life of righteousness that it prescribed. Yet when the righteousness set forth by *faith* (the Gospel) was offered to them, they were more ready to accept it than was Israel. (Chapter 8:4 and Acts 13:42, 46.)

Verse 32. Paul explains that the failure of the Jews came because they did not seek to attain to righteousness by *faith* (the Gospel). Instead, while professing to accept the preaching of the apostles, they insisted on clinging to the merits of the works of the law. The apostle gives an additional explanation of their failure which is in the fact that they *stumbled at that stumbling-stone*.

Verse 33. The stumbling of the people of Israel had been predicted, and Paul cites it which is in Isaiah 8:14; 28:16. It is also in Psalms 118:22 and 1 Peter 2:6-8. The Jews' prejudice against Christ caused them to reject His system of righteousness.

ROMANS 10

Verse 1. Paul's personal interest in his Jewish kinsmen is still one of his main concerns. (See the comments at chapter 9: 3.) His wish *that they might be saved* proves they were in an unsaved state at that time.

Verse 2. The apostle freely gave them credit for what was commendable, but also disapproved of all that was wrong about them. A prominent phrase in Thayer's definition of the original word for *zeal* is, "ardor in embracing." Israel was not sluggish in religious activities on behalf of God. *Knowledge* is from *epignosis*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "Precise and correct knowledge." The Jews displayed a heated interest in their form of righteousness, without bothering to learn if it was the correct one.

Verse 3. *God's righteousness* is that performed "through the faith of Christ," and *own righteousness* is that "which is of the law" (Philippians 3: 9). Their lack of knowledge mentioned in the preceding verse, is here specified to consist of their being ignorant of *God's righteousness*.

Verse 4. *Righteousness* is from *dikaiosune*, and the part of Thayer's definition that is needed here is, "The state acceptable to God which becomes a sinner's possession." This definition shows the word to have a religious sense, meaning the kind of life necessary to salvation. Christ put an end to the law for that purpose, but He did not intend to interfere with the observance of its institutions as national customs. That is why Paul, though a Christian, did the things recorded in Acts 16: 3; 18: 21. See also the comments at Acts 21: 20-26. But none except Jews have the right to any of these things, even as customs (Galatians 2: 21; 5: 1-4).

Verse 5. All who served God acceptably, from Abel onward, were required to do their performances with faith. But the New Testament system is the only one that is designated as one of faith. In contrast with this, the Mosaic system was one of works, the predominant idea being that the "doing" of the works was what was acceptable to God.

Verse 6. *Righteousness which is of faith* still means the Gospel system. Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 30: 11-13, but adds some words to make it apply to the law of Christ, whose active principle is faith; "take God at

his word," without demanding why or how the divine truths and facts were accomplished. On this basis, one should not be concerned about "who" or "how" it was that Christ came down from above.

Verse 7. And by the same rule as the preceding verse, we need not be concerned about the "hows" of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. *Deep* is from *abussos*, and Thayer's definition of it is, "Bottomless, unbounded, the abyss." He then explains it to mean, "the common receptacle of the dead."

Verse 8. Our concern is not so far away as the foregoing inquiries would indicate, for all necessary information is nigh at hand in the divine Word.

Verse 9. The simple belief that the resurrection took place, and the confession on our part of such a belief, is sufficient to bring salvation within reach as far as what we must believe is concerned.

Verse 10. The *heart* is the mind and it must accept the divine testimony that Christ arose from the dead, then the believer must make a confession of this belief. Paul does not say that this belief and confession *alone* will bring one into a saved state. But they are a part of the terms that pertain to the "righteousness" discussed above, which leads one *unto* or in the direction of salvation. Other items will logically follow if this belief is "from the heart" (chapter 6: 17).

Verse 11. *Not be ashamed* means "not be disappointed." The emphasis should be on the word *whosoever*, in view of the self-importance felt by the Jews.

Verse 12. This verse shows why "whosoever" in the preceding one is emphasized. The Jews thought they occupied a place of superiority in the Lord's sight.

Verse 13. See Acts 22: 16 for the practical meaning of "calling on the name of the Lord." It denotes more than merely pronouncing the holy name.

Verse 14. If believing in the Lord is necessary to calling on him, it explains the comments in the preceding verse. Even unbelievers can say "Lord, Lord," but to no avail. Faith is not an emotion miraculously produced, but is the effect of something heard. Also, before the New Testament was written, someone had to preach the word so

that the sinner could hear it. (See 1 Corinthians 1: 21 and Titus 1: 3.)

Verse 15. *Except they be sent* also pertains especially to the time before the New Testament was written. The original for the last italicized word is *apostello*, and Thayer's first definition is, "To order one to go to a place appointed." That is why Christ "ordered" his apostles to "go" as recorded in Matthew 28: 19, 20, but told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24: 49). That was because they would not know what to preach without this "power," since the New Testament had not been written. This great work of the apostles was predicted in Isaiah 52: 7. *Beautiful are the feet* means their footsteps are beautiful because they bring the promise of peace and other good things.

Verse 16. This is similar in thought to chapter 3: 3.

Verse 17. This verse clearly shows that faith does not come to a sinner as a direct gift from God. It can be produced only by hearing the word of God. That accounts for the items set forth in verse 14, 15.

Verse 18. The pronoun *their* refers to the *preachers* of verses 14, 15, who were the inspired apostles. Paul affirms that their word had at that time gone *unto the ends of the world*. This same fact is declared in Colossians 1: 23. Therefore, when a man applies the "Great Commission" to preachers of today he is perverting the scripture.

Verse 19. *Did not Israel know* that the Gospel was to be preached throughout the world, to both Gentile and Jew? They did not, but they should have known had they "considered" (Isaiah 1: 3), for their own lawgiver Moses prophesied it in Deuteronomy 32: 21. Had the Jews "considered" it, they would have realized that *no people* and *foolish nation* meant the Gentiles.

Verse 20. *Very bold* means his language is very strong, sounding almost like a disagreement, such as a man finding something that he was not looking for. This, of course, has the same meaning as chapter 9: 30.

Verse 21. Here is a contrast to the foregoing. The Gentiles were not seeking God through any system of religion, yet they were offered one which they gladly accepted. Israel was constantly exhorted to hear and obey, yet they stubbornly disobeyed and were a *gainsaying* (calling in question) people.

ROMANS 11

Verse 1. The last verses in the preceding chapter indicates a dismal prospect for God's ancient people. Realizing such a possible conclusion being formed by his readers, Paul clarifies the subject in this chapter. The Jews were stubborn, and as a nation had alienated themselves from God; there were some exceptions such as the apostle Paul.

Verses 2, 3. While the nation had departed from God, he had not cast it off nor regarded its departure as final. *Which he foreknew* refers to the promise to Abraham to make of him "a great nation" (Genesis 12: 2). The apostle then cites a former time when *Elias* (Elijah) thought the whole nation was gone (1 Kings 19: 10).

Verse 4. God told the prophet that seven thousand men were still faithful to Him, although the majority had gone into idolatry.

Verse 5. The Jewish nation was chosen as the people to bring the Saviour into the world, and that is what Paul means by *the election of grace*. There has always been a sufficient portion of the nation (though small in number), to carry out the divine plan for the salvation of the world. The individuals of this "remnant" were good enough that God preserved them for the predestined purposes.

Verse 6. The leading thought in this verse is that *grace* and *works* cannot both be given the credit for the salvation of this "election" or "remnant." If the merits of the works of the law are to be given the credit, then grace (the Gospel) is excluded from consideration, and vice versa.

Verse 7. Paul concludes that *Israel* (as a whole) had not obtained what he sought for, namely, justification (because he thought to obtain it through the works of the law). But the *election* (verse 5) had obtained it through the faith of the Gospel. *Rest were blinded*. Israel as a whole was hardened by the national prejudice against Christ.

Verse 8. *God hath given them*. He abandoned them to their unbelief for the time, but expects them finally to change and recognize Christ (verse 26).

Verses 9, 10. The original for *table* is defined by Thayer at this place, "a banquet, feast." The passage is a prediction that even the feasts of the Jews would be used by their foes to *snare* or entrap them to their detri-

ment. The rest of the paragraph is a further prediction of the fate to come to the Jews for their stubborn unbelief. *Bow down their back* predicts the subject condition of Israel at the heathen's hands.

Verse 11. There is a vast difference between causing an event to happen for a certain purpose, and using the event for that purpose if it does happen. A man might not place his foot in the path of another in order to cause him to stumble and fall, yet he might have his foot where he had a perfect right to have it, and then another man, not "looking where he was going," might stumble and fall. God did not place his Son in the path of the Jews for the purpose of making them stumble and fall, yet He did put his Son in the world where He had every right to have him, then the Jews stumbled over him and fell through their blind unbelief. God then used the situation as an advantage for the Gentiles. *Provoke them to jealousy* means that the favored state of the Gentiles would cause the Jews to realize what they had lost, and finally come back to their former favor with God by recognizing his Son. (See verse 26.)

Verse 12. If such benefit came to mankind through the fall of the Jews, certainly more will come when they as a nation (the meaning of *their fulness*) come back.

Verse 13. *Magnify* means "to honor" according to Thayer. Since Paul was especially the apostle of the Gentiles (chapter 15: 16; Galatians 2: 9), he honored that office (work) by showing to them their favored standing with God.

Verse 14. *Emulation* means a stimulation into action by the good example of another. It is virtually the same in thought as that expressed at verse 11.

Verse 15. This is the same in thought as verse 12.

Verse 16. A great part of this chapter is for the information of the Gentile Christians who were disposed to make too much of their acceptance with God, over the Jews who had been the "chosen people" for so long. Paul wants them to know that the present alienated state of the nation of Israel was not to be permanent, but that when it gave up its stubborn unbelief and acknowledged Christ to be the promised Messiah, the nation would be as *holy* (acceptable) to God as it

always was. The subject is illustrated by a reference to the practice under the Mosaic system. (See Leviticus 23: 10; Numbers 15: 19, 20.) In the application it means that if the Jewish Christians who were first converted to Christ (Acts 13: 46) were *holy* (acceptable), then the whole nation would be when it also turned away from its unbelief (verse 26).

Verses 17, 18. The olive tree is used as an illustration of the subject. The branches being *broken off* is the same as the "stumbling and fall" of verses 11, 12. (See comments on those verses.) The Gentiles are compared to a wild olive tree.

Verses 19, 20. This is the same argument as in most of the preceding verses. The Gentiles were warned not to feel boastful of their favorable standing with God.

Verse 21. If God cast off the Jews because of their unbelief, He surely will not continue his favor to the Gentiles if they become unfaithful.

Verses 22, 23. The *goodness* and *severity* of God are applied to those only who deserve it, depending on whether men are believers or unbelievers. And this is true regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles. (See Acts 10: 34, 35.)

Verse 24. *Grafted contrary to nature*. In the grafting process when a graft from one tree is put into the limb of another, the fruit will be like the graft and not that of the tree into which it is inserted. Paul uses the illustration contrary to nature and represents the Gentiles (the wild olive) as being grafted into the tame olive (the Jewish stock). Yet, instead of being required to bear its own natural fruit (wild olive), God counteracts the rule of nature to enable this wild graft to bear tame fruit. That being the case, these Gentile Christians should realize that God would graft the natural branches (the Jews) back into their own stock. The point is the same as was made before, namely, the Gentiles should not be too boastful of their standing.

Verse 25. *Blindness* (or unbelief) in part proves that the condition of unbelief with Israel was not total, and the latter part of the verse shows that even that state of partial unbelief was not to be permanent. *Fulness of the Gentiles* means until they have had a full time with the Gospel all to themselves while the Jews are out. Just

when that fact will be accomplished the apostle does not say.

Verse 26. *All Israel shall be saved.* This cannot mean that every individual Jew will be saved, for that is not true of the Gentiles, and it was never true of any nation as such. It means that the Jews as a nation will give up its stand against Christ and acknowledge him to be the Messiah of the Scriptures. That will open the way for individual Jews to have *un-godliness turned away* from them, by themselves "turning from transgression" (Isaiah 59: 20). This is the only unfulfilled prophecy between now and the second coming of Christ.

Verse 27. When the Jews turn unto Christ and from their transgressions, God will fulfill his covenant unto them, namely, to *take away their sins*.

Verse 28. The nation as a whole had rejected the Gospel, and God regarded it as a group of enemies, then turned the situation in favor of the Gentiles (*for your sakes*); this is according to verse 11. *Touching the election* (verse 5). For the sake of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God still loves the nation in spite of its temporary state of unbelief, and is ready to receive it again when it gives up its unbelief.

Verse 29. *Gifts* means the favors of God, and the *calling* is the invitation of the Lord for all men, Jew and Gentile alike, to accept those favors on His terms. *Without repentance* denotes that God does not regret making those offers, and He will fulfill them whenever men comply with the terms.

Verses 30, 31. This is virtually the same as verses 11, 12. *Not believed that*. Note especially the comments on "stumbled that" in the verses cited.

Verse 32. *Concluded them all in unbelief* does not say God caused them to become unbelievers. The truths and facts disclosed to God that all nations were unbelievers, and for that reason He put them all in that class, which would make them all the subjects of divine mercy.

Verse 33. No wonder the apostle exclaims on the *depth of the riches* of God, in providing a way for the exercise of His mercy. *Unsearchable* means the judgments of God are beyond the full comprehension of man.

Verses 34, 35. Not knowing the infinite mind of the Lord, it would be foolish for man to think of advising

Him. Nor can man give any favors to God that would obligate Him to recompense them back to man.

Verse 36. The thought of this verse is that the Lord is infinite in wisdom and every other greatness, and man is entirely dependent upon Him.

ROMANS 12

Verse 1. *Beseech* or earnestly exhort, *by the mercies of God*, in view of the mercy shown in chapter 11: 32. *Present* means to offer willingly something to another, not to have it taken from us by force. *Living sacrifice* in contrast with the dead creatures that were offered on the brazen altar. *Holy, acceptable to God*. The Jews could offer only such animals as were not defective. Christians must have their bodies "washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10: 22), and also have the carnal thoughts and practices "mortified" (put to death, Colossians 3: 5). *Reasonable* is explained by Thayer to mean, "the worship which is rendered by the reason or soul." It is a contrast to the literal or fleshly sacrifices offered under the Mosaic system.

Verse 2. *Be not conformed* or be not like the things of this world. *Be transformed* means to be changed to a different form of living. *Renewing of your mind* denotes a "complete change for the better" in the desires and motives of the mind. *Prove* or demonstrate by living it out that the *will of God* is a good and acceptable way of living.

Verse 3. The *grace given unto Paul* was the favor of inspiration. That authorized him to make the following statements. To *think more highly* means esteeming oneself overmuch; being "vain and arrogant." *Think soberly* or moderately concerning one's talents or natural gifts. We know the apostle means such gifts for chapter 1: 11 shows this church did not then possess any miraculous or spiritual gifts. *Measure of faith* means that God-given natural capacity to absorb the instruction in the word of God (the source of faith, chapter 10: 17), thus becoming able to try out in practice the particular talent or talents that one has.

Verses 4, 5. The human body is used as an illustration of the body of Christ, because the members of the fleshly body each have a separate *office* or use. The various members of the body of

Christ have individual parts to perform in the spiritual life.

Verse 6. *Gifts* is from the same Greek word as "gift" in 1 Corinthians 7: 7, where the context shows it means a gift of nature and not a miraculous one. According to the *grace* is explained at verse 3. According to Thayer's lexicon, *to prophesy* means, "To break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or in praise of the divine counsels." In 1 Corinthians 14: 3, 4, Paul shows that one form of prophesying is to speak "to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Prophesying, then, does not necessarily mean to speak with a spiritual gift.

Verse 7. *Ministry* means that service to others that their condition requires. If a man has the ability to teach, let him attend to that as his personal work.

Verse 8. *To exhort* means to insist on the performance of known duties. *Giveth* is from METADIDOMI, and Thayer's first definition is, "To share a thing with any one." *Simplicity* is from HAPLOTES, and it has been rendered in the King James Version by, bountifulness, liberality, singleness. *He that ruleth* applies to the elders since they are the only rulers in the church. They are to be diligent and "watch" the conduct of the members to see that it is not such as to endanger their souls. (See Hebrews 13: 17.) When administering to the distress of another let it be done cheerfully, and not in the spirit of one who does it merely because it is a duty he has to perform.

Verse 9. *Dissimulation* means hypocrisy; do not merely pretend to love another. *Abhor* is from APOSTUGEO which Strong defines, "to detest utterly," and *cleave* is from KALLAO, which the same author defines, "to glue, i.e., to stick." The thought is that Christians should not be half-hearted in their opposition to evil or support of the good.

Verse 10. *Kindly affectioned* is defined in the lexicon, "loving affection, prone to love, loving tenderly." *Brotherly love* is from PHILADELPHIA, and Thayer's definition is, "in the New Testament the love which Christians cherish for each other as 'brethren.'" *Honor* means respect or esteem, and *preferring* is defined, "To go before and show the way." The thought is to be a leader and set an example in showing respect for others.

Verse 11. *Business* is from SPOUDE, which Thayer defines, "Haste, with haste; earnestness, diligence," and the original for *slothful* is defined, "sluggish, slothful, backward." The thought is that Christians should not be indifferent about the activities of the service for Christ. The remainder of the verse means virtually the same thing.

Verse 12. *Rejoicing in hope*. A Christian does not have to be in possession of the crown of life to rejoice, but he can rejoice over the hope of receiving it; that will cause him to be patient in tribulation, and continue to be a prayerful disciple.

Verse 13. *Necessity* is from a word that means a state of destitution that the Christian is here told to relieve. Thayer defines the original for *given*, "to seek after eagerly," and that for *hospitality*, "love to strangers" (Hebrews 13: 2).

Verse 14. *Bless* is from EULOGEIO and means "to invoke [wish for] blessings," while *curse* means to wish that some ill fortune will come upon our persecutors.

Verse 15. This verse means to share in the feelings of others over their condition, whether it be favorable or otherwise. This is taught also in 1 Corinthians 12: 26.

Verse 16. *Be of the same mind*. Be interested in the same things that concern our brother. (See preceding verse.) *Men* is not in the original; the sentence denotes an interest in common or lowly things rather than craving that which is lofty. *Own conceits* is from the original terms that mean "yourselves." The sentence means not to be conceited over one's individual wisdom, being like Job's friends to whom he said in irony, "Wisdom shall die with you" (Job 12: 2).

Verse 17. The first sentence means not to retaliate or do an enemy a wrong because he has done to us that way. *Provide things honest*. Live so that no one can reproach you.

Verse 18. James 3: 17 teaches that divine wisdom requires peace that is in harmony with the truth "from above." Our present verse requires peace on the same terms.

Verse 19. An evildoer deserves to be treated with revenge, but Christians are not the ones to inflict it. The Lord says *vengeance is mine*, therefore the passage means to give place unto [divine] wrath.

Verse 20. The first part of this verse is the same in thought as that in verse 14. *Coals of fire* is figurative, meaning that an act of kindness will bring a tortured conscience upon an enemy that will be like fire on top of his head.

Verse 21. In the conflict between *evil and good*, let the disciple of Christ so conduct himself that he will be the conqueror and win the battle for the good. This is virtually the same thought as that in the preceding verse.

ROMANS 13

Verses 1, 2. *Higher* is from *HUPERECHO*, which Thayer defines at this place, "to be above, be superior in rank, authority, power." *Power* is from *EXOUSIA* which the same author defines at this place, "one who possesses authority; a ruler, human magistrate." *Be subject* is from *HYPOTASSO*, and both Thayer and Strong define it in this passage, "to obey." The sentence, then, means that every person must obey the rulers of human governments. The same command is given in direct terms in Titus 3: 1 and 1 Peter 2: 13, 14. *Ordained* is from *TASSO*, which Thayer defines here, "to place in a certain order, to arrange, to assign a place, to appoint," and Paul says this is done of God. The Mosaic system was both religious and civil, or secular as a government. But when the New Testament age came in, the Lord dropped the civil use and ordered man to form his own government, with the understanding, of course, that he was not to pass any laws that would violate the religious principles of His law. That is why it is the same as resisting the ordinance of God for a man to disobey the laws of the land.

Verse 3. In most of the verses Paul is considering the penal parts of the law. To be afraid of these rulers means to respect their laws against wrongdoing. *Have praise of the same*. If a man does right he will be regarded as a good citizen.

Verse 4. *Minister of God* is explained in the first paragraph. *Beareth not the sword in vain*. There is only one use for a sword and that is to take life; in the hands of an officer it would mean capital punishment. Here we have the teaching that when an officer executes capital punishment, he is acting as a "minister of God."

Verse 5. A Christian will obey the laws with a twofold motive. He wishes

to avoid punishment, and he also desires to have a good conscience.

Verse 6. This *tribute* means tax on property. The rulers protect our property, which makes it necessary to support them while they are attending upon this very thing.

Verse 7. *Custom* is defined by Thayer, "toll, custom," and explains it to mean, "an indirect tax on goods." The two words, *tribute* and *custom* means "all taxes, personal and real." We should fear the penal officer (verse 3) and respect or honor the rulers.

Verse 8. A part of Thayer's explanation of *owe* is, "that which is due." It does not forbid honorable debts such as accounts, for Paul and Philemon conducted such transactions (Philemon 18), but a man should regard his debts and deal honestly. The debt of love can never be "paid in full," hence one may always owe that without criticism.

Verse 9. The Jews regretted giving up the law that contained what they thought were such important principles. Paul is showing that those principles are not lost by receiving the Gospel. It requires Christians to love their neighbors as themselves, and if they do, they will necessarily do all the things that are named in this verse.

Verse 10. Love (one of the requirements of the Gospel) fulfills the law by prompting one to do these neighborly acts specified by the law.

Verse 11. *Wake out of sleep* denotes arousing from indifference and becoming more active in the service of the Lord. *Salvation nearer*. If we are faithful until death or until Jesus comes—whichever occurs first—our salvation will be assured. Of necessity, then, the passing of the days brings us nearer to that reward.

Verse 12. *The night* is a figurative term for the period of waiting, and the *day* (of our salvation, verse 11) is at hand or nearer as stated in the preceding verse. Moralizing on these truths, the apostle exhorts us to cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor ("implements") of light, which means divine truth.

Verse 13. *Honestly* means "decently," and the *day* here means the condition of spiritual light. *Chambering* is from *KOITE* which Thayer defines "cohabitation," then explains it to mean, "whether lawful or unlawful." *Wantonness* is from *ASELEIA* and Thayer's

definition is more specific than on the preceding word: "Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness," etc. He then explains it at our passage to mean, "filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females." Such a life as the foregoing describes will not prepare one for salvation when the "day arrives."

Verse 14. Galatians 3: 27 tells us how we can "put on Christ." *Make no provision* means not to look forward to the lusts of the flesh, in order to have the opportunity for gratification.

ROMANS 14

Verse 1. This chapter deals with two subjects on which the Lord has made no legislation as to their being right or wrong. *Him that is weak in the faith* does not pertain to matters that are necessary to salvation, for on that subject all Christians are commanded to be "strong in the Lord" (Ephesians 6: 10). But it means one who is weak as to whether he should participate in the things others were doing. *Receive ye* denotes that we should accept him as a brother in Christ, but not with the idea of judging or condemning him on these unlegislated things on which he has some doubts.

Verse 2. *Who is weak* explains the weak person in verse 1. He is weak in that he thinks he should not eat any kind of food but herbs.

Verse 3. *Him that eateth* is the one who will eat all things in the preceding verse. To *despise* means to belittle or look down upon one, and Paul forbids the one man thus to treat a brother who restricts himself to vegetables. Likewise, this latter man has no right to condemn the one who eats all things, for *God hath received him* or recognized him as an acceptable servant.

Verse 4. The relation of master and slave, a common one in the Roman Empire, is used for the purpose of illustration. If a slave deserves correction, his own master is the one to administer it. Likewise the servant of God has to answer to Him only in regard to these unlegislated matters. In the present case He will hold up for his servant because he has not disobeyed any divine law.

Verse 5. Having dealt with one subject pertaining to the individual conscience, on which the Lord has not legislated, Paul introduces another which is the observance of days.

Thayer defines the original word for *esteemeth*, "to prefer." One man has some preference for a certain day while another has not. The Lord does not care which view a man takes, just so he is fully persuaded in his own mind, and does not try to force his views on another.

Verse 6. *Regardeth* is from *PHRONEO* which Thayer defines, "to direct one's mind to a thing," and he explains it at this place to mean, "to regard a day, observe it as sacred." Robinson's definition of the word is, "to regard, to keep." Both the lexicon definitions and the language of Paul show he is writing of men who prefer to "keep" some certain day in a religious way since he regards such a day as sacred. But that is his individual privilege, even as it is the privilege of another not to keep any day as sacred. The same privilege applies to eating or not eating certain foods.

Verses 7, 8. I have combined these verses to prevent a wrong conclusion. We are not under obligation to any man with regard to this liberty described in verse 6, but we are subject to the Lord, who forbids us to press our views on another in this matter.

Verses 9, 10. Even if there should be anything objectionable to Christ in the exercise of this liberty, it is between the individual and Him, and he will answer at the judgment.

Verse 11. Every tongue will confess, but those who wait till the judgment to do so will bestow glory on the Father only but will receive no reward (Philippians 2: 10, 11).

Verse 12. The word *himself* is the one to be emphasized in this verse.

Verse 13. The word *judge* is from *KRINO* which has several meanings, and two of them are "condemn" and "conclude." The verse means for one brother not to condemn another regarding these unlegislated matters. Rather he should conclude not to put a stumbling-block in his way by trying to force him to eat what he believes it is wrong to eat.

Verse 14. *I know* denotes that Paul is speaking by inspiration. No kind of food is unclean in fact (1 Timothy 4: 4), but it is unclean to the man who believes it is.

Verse 15. This is the first time in this chapter that the word *meat* is used. Had the word "herbs" not been used in contrast to it in verse 2, we would have no reason for saying it

means the flesh of animals, for the lexicon only defines it, "that which is eaten, food." Hence the principle Paul is discussing is that God does not care what kind of food one eats, as long as he has no conscientious objections to it. If a brother has such objections, another should not induce him to eat it, defiling his conscience.

Verse 16. *Your good* means the right for the "strong" to eat meat. If he tries to force that privilege on the weak brother, he will speak evil of this strong brother.

Verse 17. If salvation depended on eating or not eating certain foods, then it would be necessary to insist on one or the other. Since it does not, we should not disturb anyone on it, but give our attention to righteousness and peace.

Verses 18, 19. By observing this rule of respect for a weak brother's conscience, we not only serve God acceptably, but all good men will approve of it.

Verse 20. For the sake of meat, do not destroy the work of the Lord. *All things are pure*, etc., is explained by the comments on verse 14.

Verse 21. This verse is a generalization of the arguments of the chapter. We should not press our "rights" on a brother who is weak concerning these practices.

Verse 22. *Faith* here is upon the testimony of the conscience that it is right to *eat all things*; he should exercise that to himself. It is wrong to press it upon a weak brother, and if he does so the Lord will condemn him, for imposing upon another that thing that is *allowed* for a strong brother.

Verse 23. *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. This is the same *faith* that is described in verse 22, namely, that which is produced by the testimony of one's conscience. Since the Lord has not legislated for or against the observance of days or the eating of foods, a man's conscience must be his sole guide and basis of his faith.

ROMANS 15

Verse 1. This is virtually the same as chapter 14: 21.

Verse 2. *Please his neighbor* is to be accomplished by respecting his views on the matters discussed in the preceding chapter. This will have the effect of edifying him, or building him up in his service to the Lord. Such a

result would be the opposite to that set forth by the comments at verse 16 of that chapter.

Verse 3. None of the things Christ did for man brought Him any selfish pleasure. The quotation is from Psalms 69: 9. Many of the passages of David are worded as if they pertained to his own experiences. To some extent they do so apply, but the main thought is that they are prophecies to be fulfilled in his illustrious descendant, Jesus the Christ. *Thee and me* in our verse means God and Christ. The reproaches that were aimed at the Father were like arrows that missed their mark and struck the Son.

Verse 4. Paul had just quoted from the Psalms, therefore we know his word *aforetime* means the things written in the Old Testament. *Learning* is from DIDASKALIA, and Thayer defines it, "teaching, instruction." They were not written, then, as our law, for this whole book is in opposition to that. But by learning of God's dealing with his servants in old time, and observing how they came through their trials by the help of God, the disciples of Christ may be encouraged to press on in their own duties, even though unpleasant sometimes, in the hope of a life of joy and freedom from trial in the world to come. If God caused these Old Testament things to be recorded for *our learning*, it is our duty to study and learn them.

Verse 5. *Likeminded* is similar to the thought in chapter 12: 16. The brethren should be united in their care for each other, and to have that unity *according to Christ Jesus*. Such a mutual consideration for each other will cause them to suppress their personal preference and give their attention to the instructions of the Lord.

Verse 6. Being united in *mind* concerning the things of God and Christ, they will also be united in speech (*one mouth*) in their praise of the Lord.

Verse 7. This is the same as verse 5.

Verse 8. *The circumcision* is a term meaning the Mosaic system, Jesus was a Jew and his entire life on earth was under that dispensation. *To confirm the promises*. God promised Abraham that the person who was to bless all the families of the earth should be of his seed (Genesis 22: 18). Had Jesus come through the Gentile nation, it would not have fulfilled the promise to Abraham.

Verses 9-11. The Jewish birth of Jesus fulfilled the promise as to His being of Abraham's seed, and also the offering of the Gospel to the Gentiles fulfilled that part of the promise that "all nations" would be blessed through this seed.

Verse 12. This verse pertains to the same promise made to Abraham, but extends it on down to one of his great descendants; for David (the son of Jesse) was a lineal descendant of Abraham to whom the promise was first made. The quotation showing this promise is in *Isaiah* (Isaiah) 11: 10.

Verse 13. No apostle had been in Rome when this epistle was written, and hence no spiritual gifts were possessed by that church. The power of the Holy Ghost (or Spirit) was exerted through the word of God which is the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6: 17). By *believing* this word, the brethren could be filled with *joy* and *peace*, all of which would give them their *hope*.

Verse 14. Paul had much confidence in the brethren at Rome, and wrote this complimentary passage for their encouragement.

Verse 15. Notwithstanding his confidence in them, Paul thought it well to stir up their minds on the important matter. Being favored with the apostolic work under God, Paul was acting properly in thus writing to the brethren.

Verse 16. Paul's special mission was to the Gentiles (chapter 11: 13; Acts 9: 15), and most of the brethren in Rome were of that nation. *Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*. Acts 11: 15-18 records the giving of the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles, which was a public announcement from God that the Gentiles would be acceptable Gospel subjects.

Verse 17. Paul gloried (took great pleasure) in the work among the Gentiles, especially since that constituted the things pertaining to God.

Verse 18. *Not dare to speak . . . not wrought by me*. He would not take credit for work that had been done by others.

Verse 19. His own field of labor had furnished him much cause for rejoicing. That work had been performed under God through the aid of the Spirit of God, inspiring him. The territory Paul mentions had not been "covered" by other preachers, hence it

was virtually new territory where the apostle felt free to labor.

Verse 20. By working in new fields he would not be building on another man's foundation. This idea is also set forth in 2 Corinthians 10: 15, 16.

Verse 21. These new fields were predicted in *Isaiah* 52: 15.

Verse 22. *For which cause* refers to his plan to confine his labors to new fields, so that he did not have time to make the journey to Rome until the present.

Verse 23. *Having no more place in these parts* denotes the field had been "worked out," so he was free to go elsewhere in his labors.

Verse 24. This purpose of Paul was never accomplished that we have any substantial account of, nor any record of labors performed in that territory.

Verse 25. This ministering was to consist in taking some contributions from various brethren, and delivering them to the *saints* (disciples) at Jerusalem.

Verse 26. This verse tells who were making the contributions, namely, the disciples in Macedonia, and those in another Greek country called Achaia.

Verse 27. *Their debtors they* are means the brethren in the countries named are indebted (under obligation) to the *poor saints* at Jerusalem. The latter had supplied the former with spiritual things (the Gospel), now in turn they should help them with *carnal* (temporal) necessities of life. This is exactly the same as Galatians 6: 6.

Verse 28. See the comments at verse 24.

Verse 29. No fuller blessing could be brought to a community, than that provided by the Gospel of Christ that Paul was preaching.

Verse 30. Paul here teaches that the prayers of disciples in behalf of each other are one means of having a part in their labors for the Lord.

Verse 31. Paul expected to encounter some foes in Judea. He accounts for this opposition by the fact that they were unbelievers. He also desired to be understood and received by the saints in that region.

Verse 32. *By the will of God* denotes that he would be able to carry out the desire as to visiting the brethren in Rome "if the Lord will."

Verse 33. This is an expression of good will. There is only one God, so

the expression *God of peace* means that he is such a God.

ROMANS 16

Verse 1. *Servant* is from DIAKONOS which is usually translated "deacon." Having the feminine inflection in the composition at this place, it could be rendered "deaconess," and it is so defined by Thayer. He then explains it to mean "a woman to whom the care of either poor or sick women was entrusted." Robinson gives the same information; but neither the New Testament nor any secular authors that I have seen, say anything about official deaconesses. Phebe was a member of the church at Cenchrea, a harbor of Corinth, and she served there in the capacity described above.

Verse 2. *Business* is from PRAGMA, which Thayer defines at this place, "a matter of law, case, suit." Phebe needed to go to Rome on some legal affair, and in that big city she would naturally need some assistance. Paul tells the brethren to receive her as a saint (disciple of Christ), and to help her for her good example of assisting others, including himself.

Verses 3, 4. These worthy disciples had once been banished from Rome (Acts 18: 2), but had returned home after some time. While at Ephesus they did some important work just preceding that of the apostle (Acts 18: 24-26), and they otherwise rendered faithful service to him. *Laid down their own necks* is figurative, referring to the risks to their own lives they had run for him.

Verse 5. *The church that is in their house*. In the early years of the church, the disciples did not have church buildings in every place, hence they conducted their services in the homes of the brethren; the home of Priscilla and Aquila was one of such places. *Achaia* is another name for "Asia" at this place according to both Moffatt and the American Standard Version. 1 Corinthians 16: 15 says that the house of Stephanas was the first fruits of Achaia.

Verse 6. All we can know of this woman is what is said here. She had rendered some kind of service for Paul for which he wished her to be remembered.

Verse 7. In the King James Version, the terms "greet" and "salute" are used interchangeably as they well may be, since they both come from the

word ASPAZOMAI, which means a gesture of good will in whatever form it may be performed. *Who also were in Christ before me*. This statement is against the theory of unconditional predestination, which claims that God determined "from all eternity" just who was to be saved. If that were true, it would be impossible for any person to be in Christ before another, since all would have been placed in Him by divine decree at the same time.

Verses 8, 9. The persons named had helped the apostle in some way. I have no information as to the nature of their services.

Verse 10. There is no separate word in the Greek for *household*. The marginal reading is "friends," which is correct as the name Aristobulus is in the possessive form. Smith's Bible Dictionary says he is reputed by legend to have been a preacher.

Verses 11, 12. *Kinsman* is used in the sense of a fellow-countryman. All of the persons here are given "honorable mention" because they had *labored much in the Lord*.

Verse 13. *His mother and mine* is a term of tender appreciation for the favors Rufus' mother had shown to Paul; she had been like a mother to him.

Verses 14, 15. The works of reference that I have seen do not know much about these persons, other than to ascribe to them an active interest in the Lord's work.

Verse 16. *Holy kiss*. I have examined a number of dictionaries and histories, as well as four lexicons, and they all represent the kiss to have been a form of salute between persons of both sexes, the custom dating back to ancient times. The instruction of the apostle, then, was not to start any new form of salutation for the kiss was in use centuries before he was born. The point is in the word *holy*, and it means for the salutation to be sincere and not one of hypocrisy as was that of Judas. The word "church" in the King James Version of the New Testament is always from EKKLESIA, and its primary meaning according to Thayer is, "A gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly." Robinson gives the simple definition, "A convocation, assembly, congregation." The word has no religious significance unless it is associated with some other word. Hence our phrase means those who have been "called out" by Christ to

"assemble in His name." Any group of men and women thus called out would be one of the assemblies or congregations or churches of Christ.

Verse 17. To *mark* means to observe very carefully in order to discover the nature of the person's conduct. There is not much difference between *divisions* and *offences*, considering their results. The first means that which causes disunion in a body of people, and the second means that which causes someone to stumble along the pathway of life. These things are always wrong, hence the proviso *contrary to the doctrine which you have learned* is stated to signify that such theories have not been taught by any true teacher of the Gospel. To *avoid* is more than merely a refusal to accept, but Thayer defines it to "keep aloof from, one's society; to shun one." Christians should keep no company with such characters, but should shun them as they would Satan.

Verse 18. *Belly* is from *KOLIA*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "the gullet [throat, or what goes down it], and he explains it to mean, "to be given up to the pleasures of the palate, to gluttony." The motive of these divisive characters is to gain the confidence of their victims, in the hope of obtaining something from them to consume upon their appetite. *The simple* refers to those who do not suspect anything wrong in the workings of these teachers, and hence are easily deceived thereby.

Verse 19. *Obedience is come* denotes that the report of their obedience had become generally known, and for this the apostle was rejoicing. *Wise* and *simple* are used as contrasts, with the idea that no one can know too much about that which is good, but the less we have to do with things that are evil, the better will be our condition.

Verse 20. *Shortly* is a comparative term, for the final victory over Satan is not to be until the end. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2: 10). The endless life of happiness awaiting the faithful after death is so great that the span of life is "but for a moment" (2 Corinthians 4: 17).

Verse 21. *Timotheus* is the same as Timothy, and he is called the work-fellow of Paul because he was associated with him in his travels (Acts 16: 1-3), and also was a close friend in Christ in many of the trials of the apostle. He had good reason to join

in the salutations to the brethren at Rome, because he had been in contact with many of them in other places. Paul refers to *Lucius* among his *kingsmen*, and the Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary places him with the one mentioned in Acts 13: 1. Smith's Bible Dictionary says he was a fellow tribesman of Paul, and that tradition recognized him as a bishop of the church of Chenchrea. Jason was the man who entertained Paul and Silas in Acts 17: 5-9, for which he was persecuted by the mob. It is significant that he would join his salutation with others being sent by Paul. There is not much said about Sosipater, but he was of sufficient importance to have Paul include him with the group that was sending salutations to the brethren at Rome.

Verse 22. The Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary says the following of Tertius: "The amanuensis [secretary] who penned Paul's Epistle to the Romans and who sent his salutation, along with others' to the church at Rome." Paul usually had someone else to do the writing of the epistles as he dictated them, then he signed them which made them his epistles officially.

Verse 23. *Gaius mine host* means he was the one who provided headquarters for Paul when he was in Corinth. He was also the one whom the apostle baptized in that city (1 Corinthians 1: 14). He was said to be very hospitable, and that accounts for the fact that he entertained a whole congregation. *Erastus the chamberlain*. The third word is from *OKONOMOS* which Thayer defines as follows: "The superintendent of the city's finances, the treasurer of the city." It is important to know that a disciple of Christ would be entrusted with such an important position. This circumstance is also against the theory of some professed disciples today, who say that it is wrong for Christians to have anything to do with civil government, and who even go so far as to object to casting a vote. Yet we here have an instance of one of the brethren of Paul who did "take part in politics" to the extent that he held an important position as a servant of the government. What is commonly called "politics" is usually very corrupt, but that is because a good thing is being abused. Since civil governments exist by divine ordinance (chapter 13: 1-6), it is a serious error

to assert that Christians do wrong to have any part in their administration.

Verse 24. *Grace* is from *CHARIS* and it has been so rendered 129 times in the King James Version. It is rendered also by benefit 1 time, favor 6, liberality 1, thank 3, thanks 4. Thayer gives as its primary definition, "sweetness, charm, loveliness," and explains it to signify "that which affords joy, pleasure, delight." Other definitions are, "good-will, loving kindness, favor; kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved." *Amen* is from the Greek word *AMEN*; it occurs in the Greek New Testament 150 times, and has been rendered "amen" 50 times, and "verily" 100 times in the King James Version. Thayer says that at the beginning of a discourse it means "surely, of a truth, truly." He says a repetition of the word as John alone uses it, has the force of a superlative, "most assuredly," and at the close of a sentence it means, "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." Thayer further says historically, "it was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues into the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed had offered up a solemn pray to God, the others in attendance responded

Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own." With this short but impressive sentence, Paul begins the closing words of apostolic and brotherly interest in his brethren at Rome.

Verse 25. *My Gospel* means the Gospel that Paul was preaching, and that it was the power by which they were to be *stablished* (made firm), communicated to them by preaching. A *mystery* is anything not known, and such was the case regarding the great system of salvation through Christ.

Verse 26. It was then (in Paul's day) made manifest *by the scriptures of the prophets*, referring to the predictions in the Old Testament. *It was made known to all nations.* (See chapter 10: 18; Colossians 1: 23.) *For the obedience of faith* means it was revealed to all nations to the end that all might obey it from the motive of faith.

Verse 27. This is similar in sentiment to verse 24. *God only wise* means to give Him credit for the origin of all true wisdom. Such a Being is worthy of all glory, and it should be offered through the name of His only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ, and it should be attributed to him for all the coming ages. AMEN.