

## I. The Importance of Romans and Paul's Epistles

Last week, as you know, we came through the book of Acts. I showed you how the book of Acts, and I don't know any simpler way I could outline the book of Acts than what I did last week. If you're putting the Bible together in time, maybe you can't get it all right now, but in time, that breakdown will be invaluable to you in understanding how the book of Acts lays itself out.

Because, as I said last week, the book of Acts, without a doubt, is the key to breaking down the New Testament, and really breaking down the whole Bible. It's such a valuable bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament that you just can't learn the Bible without it. I don't know what else to tell you. If there's any book that, as far as putting the Bible together, and I'm going to say it again, I've said it a number of times last week, and I'm going to keep on saying it: if there's any book that is absolutely necessary for you to learn, to learn how to put your Bible together, it is the book of Acts.

But today, we're going to look at the book of Romans, and let me just say this about the book of Romans: if there's any book in the Bible that you need to know to help you put your life together as far as your relationship with Christ, it is the book of Romans. The book of Romans is equally as important, but for a different reason.

So, we're going to focus on the book of Romans today. At this point, as we've been coming through the Bible, we're going to stop for just a moment, and I want to—I've been waiting to do this until we got to this point, once we got the book of Acts out of the way. Now I want to just take a minute and talk to you about the books that Paul writes.

Last week, we got introduced to the Apostle Paul. We know now that the Apostle Paul is the Apostle to the church. We know that he has nothing to do with the nation of Israel. He's not one of the twelve. He is the thirteenth apostle that is designated to the Gentile nations. His life is so dedicated to that that when God gave him the gospel—and when you come through the book of Acts, you don't see this as you're coming through it—but when Paul gets saved in Acts chapter 9, you lose track of him for a while. Then he pops back up, and as you're looking at it, it just looks like it's kind of maybe one or two chapters, but in actuality, you've come through a few years here.

What Paul did is that Paul goes down to Arabia. We know he's in Arabia for three years. The book of Galatians tells us this. During that time in Arabia, he begins to get from God—he's obviously on Mount Sinai, the same place that all the great patriarchs in the Old Testament were—he gets revealed to him the body mystery.

Now I kind of underhandedly gave you a clue last week by talking about Romans chapter 16 and the last three or four verses, just hoping that some of you would, in your time this week, take a look at that verse. But the body mystery is something that God never revealed to anybody. The

body mystery, very simply, is the concept of the New Testament church. The New Testament church is a concept that God never told anybody about.

After the book of Acts is moving through and Paul gets saved, God takes Paul out of the way and reveals to him the gospel of the grace of God, or the body mystery. Paul carries this as such a burden that he refers to this as "my gospel," not because he's being arrogant or taking anything away from God, but because he understands that he is the only one that God gave this to. Paul made reference to this many, many times that his gospel didn't come from man; it came directly from God. He is the man who begins to establish the church. Therefore, the books that he writes, as well as the order of the books that he writes, are very important.

After the book of Acts, you have the book of Romans. Then you have the book of 1st and 2nd Corinthians. Then you have the book of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians. You'll find that when Paul writes these books, he writes these books to churches. Within these books, you're going to find the doctrine of the church, the things that are important to the church, the things the church needs to watch out for, everything the church needs to have to operate successfully is found in the books that Paul writes to the churches. It starts with the book of Romans. We're going to see that in just a moment.

Paul writes to seven churches. John writes to seven churches. You're going to find that Paul gives us great insight into the doctrines of the church. Then he writes some books to individuals. He writes 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Those are men. Those aren't churches. Those are New Testament Christian men. In those books, you're going to find personal instruction, personal doctrine for your life and my life, not as a church, but as an individual. In those books, you're going to find everything that you need. If you have a desire to be a pastor, you're going to find the requirements. You're going to find how, in those books, what the church is told to look for when it raises up leadership. You're going to find everything that you need about your attitude, your service, and the ministry on a personal level for an individual man or an individual woman in those books.

Then he writes the book of Hebrews. In the book of Hebrews, he lays out the doctrinal understanding to the nation of Israel. Those books are very important that you understand not only the books and how they divide out, but the order of the books that you find out.

## II. The Challenging Nature of Romans

Now, the book of Romans is a great book. I don't know of any book in the Bible that I dislike more than the book of Romans. You know what Martin Luther said one time? Martin Luther said one time, "I'd like to light my fire with the book of James." You know why he said that? Because the book of James has in it some things that when Martin Luther broke from the Roman Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Church were taking to throw in Martin Luther's face, and Martin Luther really didn't know how to deal with them on it because the book of James is a book that is a transitional book also, and they were driving him nuts with the book of James. So you know what he said? He said, someday in frustration, "I'd like to light my fire with the book of James." Now, he didn't mean that, but he's showing the frustration.

If there's any book that frustrates me in all of the Bible, it's the book of Romans. You know why? Because the book of Romans is the one book in the Bible that will show you exactly how spiritual you really are. That's the book of Romans. You know, we always see the... I've learned this over the years. I saw a commercial last week, it was a goofy commercial, but it's funny. It was the guy that goes in, you know, it's a picture in the world where the guy goes in and he's in a bar scene, you know, like the world, and he's in the bar scene there, and he goes in and he sees this beautiful woman. So he goes over to this beautiful woman and he says, "Hey," he says, "don't tell me your name's Angel. It has to be, because somebody as beautiful as you had to come down from heaven."

Is that what Jimmy used on in the first time you met? Was it? She looks up then and says, "Oh, are you trying to pick me up?" He looks back, "Honey, Angel, I ain't picking you up. I'm picking you out." I watched that and I thought to myself, "Is there really women out there that fall for those lines?" But you know what, put that in... oh, there is? Oh, she did? What was your line, Joe? What was your line? Okay.

But you know what I've learned over the years? A lot of God's people are pickup artists. They pick up a few cute quirks about the Bible. They pick up a few nice little spiritual sayings and they throw them around to want to impress people, like the pickup artist going out to the bar likes to do to impress ladies. Now, the truth of the matter is, a woman worth her salt knows that a guy operating that way hasn't got much substance to him. The truth of the matter is, a Christian that operates that way doesn't have much substance to him.

If you want a book that, anytime you're feeling spiritual, if you want a book to take the wind out of your sails and to keep you where you need to be, it's the book of Romans. The book of Romans is a hard book. It's a hard book. I guess that's why a lot of people don't like to read it. I think that's why so many people don't study it. I think that's why a lot of God's people, not most of God's people, don't know anything about it. I hope the book's a challenge to you. I hope the book brings you away today looking at it from the right attitude.

But I'm telling you, most Christians operate just like the world. They pick up a few key lines. They pick up some spiritual insight. They pick up the little cliches that they want to use, but they never really fully understand the content and weight of the Word of God. Now, the job of the church is to teach you that. That's why we have to deal with the book of Romans, just like we have to deal with every other book in the Bible. We see it as its importance.

That's why the book of Romans is the next book after the book of Acts, because in the book of Romans, the body mystery is revealed. Paul gets saved in Acts chapter 9, and by the time you get to the end of the book of Acts, he has written everything that he's going to write. The book of Romans is written around 58 AD. There's no way you can get an exact date on these, but it's certainly between Acts chapter 19 and Acts chapter 20 when Paul is doing his writings. It's an incredible book, because Romans is Paul's doctrinal statement to the church. That's why it's so crucial.

You know, I've told you this before, that all the Bible is written for you, but not all the Bible is written to you. Of course, there's no book in the Bible that lays that out clearer than the book of

Romans, because the Bible rule is simple: if any verse in the Bible, in either testament that you read, does not contradict or deny something found in the Paul line of epistles, then it can be applied to a New Testament Christian. There are hundreds of things in the Old Testament that line up to what Paul says. When you read them, and you know they line up to the doctrinal statement that you have got for the church, then you can apply them. This is the difference between rightly dividing the word of truth and not rightly dividing the word of truth. I'm telling you, when you take those things that don't line up and you put them into the church, that's where you're going to get into heresy. That's why the body of Christ has so much heresy.

I don't understand today why God's people insist—and I don't understand it. I don't understand it. It must be just the times that we live in right before Christ comes back—but I do not understand why God's people absolutely insist on trying to serve God without learning His word. I just don't understand that. I just don't comprehend that. I know the word of God takes labor, it takes patience, and it takes time. I know learning the word of God is something that doesn't just come overnight. I know there's a process to it, and that process is something that everybody has to go through. I know that we live in a generation now that has no patience. We want it right now. I know that once we get down the road in our Christian life, it's hard for us because of the pride factor to admit that we don't maybe know the Bible like we should. And yet, I also know that our old sin nature, that lazy streak we all have, it's easier to pretend.

It's easier to pick up the lines and go out and try to pick up a gal than it is to meet somebody and build a real working relationship with them. You know why? Because of your motive, your intent. You don't really want a commitment with somebody. You just want a one-night stand that will satisfy you temporarily, and then you'll go find another one. God's people are the same way. They don't want to take the time to build a lasting relationship with God, so they pick up a lot of one-liners that really don't have much substance to them.

When Paul writes the book of Romans, he sets the baseline for defining every New Testament doctrine that we need, and for us to understand why we need it. You know, I've said this for years: I don't really care what a person believes about the Bible. As long as you don't attack me for where I'm at, I'll never attack you for what you believe. But I'll tell you this, I don't care what a person believes, what always interests me is, do they know why they believe it? There's the real test between somebody who just uses the old pickup lines versus somebody who really studies the Scriptures.

That's why God's people today insist on trying to serve God. You know what? I gotta say that before I go any farther because I forgot to say this. I'm not talking to you young Christians. We've got a bunch of people here that have just gotten saved. When I talk to people generally about hard things about the Bible, I give somebody the first five years of their salvation. I don't even talk to them about that because I realize that it takes at least that long to really get your feet on the ground. So I understand going in that if you've been saved five years or less, or maybe you've been saved longer than that, but you've just started really getting into the Word of God in your life, I understand where you're at. I'm not even talking to you.

But let me tell you what, there's a lot of God's people out there today that believe a lot of things that if you throw an open Bible in front of their face, they'd fold up like a broken accordion. Why? Because they don't know why they believe what they believe. That's why the Romans is a tough book. That's why Romans beats me up. Boy, I tell you what, you can pretend to be spiritual, you can pretend to have it all together, and it only takes going through the Book of Romans to show you and I how shallow we really are. Because that is the doctrinal book. It is the book where Paul defines his doctrinal statement for what the church is supposed to believe. That's why it's found right after the Book of Acts. Because you've got all that stuff laid out, and the first book is the book of Romans. It's an incredible book.

### III. The Doctrinal Scope of Romans

Now, the Book of Romans has 16 chapters in it, and in those 16 chapters, you're going to find every doctrine that is given to the church defined for you. If you want to find the beginning of definitions—we've been talking a lot on Thursday night about definitive verses—Romans is a definitive book in one way, just as the Book of Acts is a definitive book in another way. Where the Book of Acts maybe will define for you the church as far as history is concerned, the Book of Romans for you will define every church doctrine that you're going to get into the rest of your life.

Don't forget, it's doctrine the Bible says in 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16, where it says,

*2 Timothy 3:16*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

And the first thing it's profitable for is doctrine. That is what is different between the old Philadelphia church and the Laodicean church. The old style Christians versus the new style. No doctrine. Romans is a book of doctrine. It's the Christian handbook on doctrine.

In those 16 chapters, you'll find:

1. The righteousness of God defined.
2. Faith defined.
3. The truth of God defined.
4. The gospel of God defined.
5. The power of God defined.
6. New Testament salvation defined.
7. The great doctrine of justification defined.

Ask the average Christian to explain to you the doctrine of justification. In most cases, I asked a preacher one time that, and his answer was, "Justification? It kind of means like, 'just as if I had never sinned.'" Now he thought he said something. To me, that's a great pickup line. It has nothing to do with the book of Romans. If that's all the depth, if you understand justification and the doctrine of it, we've got some problems here.

The book of Romans lays out the greatest subject in the Bible: the doctrine of justification.

- It lays out and defines the doctrine of your glorified body.
- It lays out the doctrine of, as a New Testament Christian, what our job is in eternity.
- It lays out the doctrine of eternal security.
- It lays out and defines the doctrine of biblical predestination. Predestination is not wrong. It's just defined wrong by everybody that uses it.
- It defines the doctrine of biblical election.
- It defines the doctrine of the new nature versus the old nature.
- It defines the doctrine for you parents raising your kids of the age of accountability, or the so-called fabled age of accountability. Blows that right out the window.
- It defines the doctrine of Christian service.
- It defines the doctrine of the church.
- The doctrine of ministry.
- The doctrine of separation.
- It defines the doctrine of the nation of Israel.
- It defines the doctrine of civil government.
- It defines the doctrine of the teaching of what it really means to be a real strong Christian and being used of God in the ministry, or defining the ministry for you and for I.

And 200 other things are in there.

## IV. Romans Addressed to "All That Be In Rome"

Now the next thing I want you to see is this, and this is very important. He called the book, "The Epistle to the Romans." Now a casual reader might think that he's talking to the church that exists in the city of Rome. Now I found this out, and I got looking at this, and I thought, and all of a sudden it was one of those things that just kind of where the lights come on. I don't know if you ever check this out or not.

When you go to the book of 1st Corinthians—and some of you may not be able to get this right now, that's okay, it'll hit you in time—you go to 1st Corinthians and 2nd Corinthians, and when Paul opens up that book, he says "to the church at Corinth." He goes to Galatians chapter 1 verse 2, he says "the church at Galatia." You go to Ephesians chapter 1 verse 1, he says "the saints at Ephesus." He says in Philippians chapter 1 verse 1, "the saints at Philippi." He says Colossians chapter 1 verse 2, "the saints at Colossa." And he says in 1st and 2nd Thessalonians 1:1, he says "the church at Thessalonica."

But you know what? Watch this. When it comes to Romans chapter 1, when he greets them, he doesn't say "the church at Rome." He doesn't say "the saints at Rome." He says "to all that be in Rome." You know why? Because Paul understood the great lesson in Daniel chapter 2 of Daniel's image that the last kingdom on this earth was going to be the Roman Empire. Paul understood something that the 20th century theologians and most Christians and 99.999% of all the preachers in the world could never get because they don't believe that book: that the last empire on this earth is going to be the Roman Empire.

He didn't write it to the church at Rome. He didn't write it to the saints at Rome. He wrote it to the saints that are in Rome because he knew that the Roman Empire was never going to cease. He wrote a book that is just as pertinent to you and me in 2005 AD as it was to the men he wrote it to in 58 AD. You know why? Because if you know anything about the Bible, you know that you are living in the Roman Empire today. If you know your Bible, you know that in 108 BC, Rome took over the world, and Rome never has given up control of the world. I don't care what communism does, the Muslims do, or who anybody else in this world. The real enemy we saw last week will always be, always has been Rome. Rome, according to Daniel chapter 2, has never lost power.

So when Paul wrote to the saints in Rome, he didn't say "at Rome." He's not talking about the city. He's talking about every born again child of God that wakes up every morning understanding from the Bible standpoint, you are under the domination of Rome, the devil's church, the devil's government, the devil's religion, and it permeates everything in our society. If you don't believe that, all you have to do is go back a few short weeks and look at the death of Paul Pepperoni, or whatever his name was, and see how this whole world catered to Rome. Baptist churches, Baptist churches, lowering their flags at half mast for the leader of the church of the antichrist. Boy, I'll tell you what, if Paul understood exactly what he said, so to me when I see the book of Romans, it's set apart from all the other books. It's not written at somebody, it's written to somebody that is in something up to their eyeballs. So that's you and me. If you know your Bible, I think the expression is, "all roads lead to Rome."

You know back in Job chapter 41, and I've told you before that the two greatest chapters in the Old Testament that lay out the devil are Job chapter 40, Job chapter 41. The two greatest chapters in the New Testament are Revelation chapter 12 and Revelation chapter 13. But the two greatest chapters in the Old Testament that lay out for you and for me and lay out the devil in the Old Testament is Job chapter 40 and Job chapter 41. In Job chapter 41 verse 13, he says this, he makes this statement, it says,

*Job 41:13*

*Who can discover the face of his garment?*

Talking about the devil. The answer to that is nobody without a King James 1611 authorized version. That's why the whole world today, Christian world. This is why Romans will eat your life. When I said earlier that Romans wasn't my favorite book, I was trying to make a point. It is my favorite book. It's my favorite book today. Usually whatever book I'm studying today is my favorite book. But I like getting beat up, you see. I've come to the point in my life that I love the Word of God so much that even the bitter things are sweet to me. I'll take it. I know that book will fly me out. That book will take me down to the line. Boy, I'm telling you it will. It will. It will.

I mean when I find a Christian, I meet a Christian that, you know, come to the place, been saved 15, 20, 30 years, you know, you meet them all the time. And in the course of talking to them, don't understand the Book of Romans. You know, I know what I got. You ever drive down the road on a nice hot afternoon and you're over there in the sky, you see those big hot air balloons?

That's what you got. You got a bunch of hot air, a big balloon. You know how those balloons get around? By being blown with the wind. The Bible says in the book of Ephesians that those kind of Christians get blown about by every wind of doctrine. That's why they don't have any stability in life. They don't know why they believe what they believe. They just exist. Wherever the current Christian temperature trade winds blow, that's where you go. That's what's happened to Christianity. You know why? Because nobody can discover the face of his garment. That's why. That's why the Book of Romans is so crucial. That's why the Book of Romans is a tough book. That's why sometime in your life you're going to have to learn it. But there'll be some blood in the process. That book will beat you up when it comes, I mean the whole Bible will in some cases, but there ain't no book in the world that lays you out flat, lays me out flat like the Book of Romans. I always give people the Romans test because Romans is the book. When I look for a young man or a young lady someplace, you know, they can really do some things. I watch, Romans is my decree. Romans is the book that I look for. I'll tell you what, we're going to come through this chapter by chapter and there's no way I'm going to be able to give you everything that's in it. But when I'm done, you'll understand it a lot better than you do.

## V. Romans Chapter by Chapter Overview

### ➤ Romans 1: The Gentile Mindset

Now let's talk about Romans chapter 1. I'm going to define these chapters for you. Romans chapter 1 is the greatest chapter in the Bible that tells you how Gentiles think. You know why Romans chapter 1 is the first chapter and he picked on the Gentiles? Because you and I are Gentiles and the body of Christ is a Gentile church. The church is a Gentile church. So the first thing he lays out is everything about the way you and I as Gentiles think.

There are two kinds of people in this world, three kinds of people. There's Jews, there's Gentiles, and then there's Christians. Now see, I'm a Gentile by birth. I'm a European. My heritage is English, Welsh. I'm from Europe. But once I got saved, I'm a new creature in Christ Jesus, all things are passed away. I ceased to be a Gentile. Now I'm a Christian. When I step out of being a Gentile, I don't care about Gentile things anymore. So I can look at all these nasty things written about Gentiles in here and just laugh. I don't take them personally. You know why? Because I ain't one of them anymore, only by birth. And I agree with it. I agree with what he says here.

The greatest commentary I ever read on Romans chapter 1 was not written by a saved man. I've read a lot of books on Romans. The greatest statement on Romans chapter 1 that I ever read in my life that rang so true to Romans chapter 1 was never written by a preacher. It was never written by a theologian. It was written by an unsaved man who right now, as we speak, is burning in hell. You know what his name was? Voltaire. Voltaire comes out of Europe during the Renaissance, after the Renaissance. He's one of the fathers of the German rationalist movement, the liberals today, the ACLU and all that, and all the stuff in America that is so terrible to Christianity starts there.

You know what Voltaire said? He said this, and boy, no truest statement was ever made. He said, "God made man in his own image. And then man returned to favor and made God in man's

image." I thought to myself, "Amen, brother." I don't think you knew you got the truth when you got that. I don't think you got that from going to Sunday school because Voltaire was an atheist. He hated God and hated the Bible. But you know what that proves to me? That proves to me it doesn't matter how godless you are and how much you hate God and the word of God. That book is the absolute standard and it runs the way it runs, and you can't get out from under it if you wanted to. So you go to hell hanging onto your bed posts, screaming that God made man his own image and then man returned to favor and made God in... and that's what Romans chapter one is about. That's what it says. That's exactly what it's about.

Romans chapter one is that when it talks about the Gentiles, it says,

*Romans 1:23*

*And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.*

There it is. Now Romans chapter one is a great chapter that answers a lot of questions for the child of God if you're learning. Now we live in our society today that Christians always have that puzzled look on their face or that surprised look on their face. I'm telling you the reason why that is because they don't know anything about Romans. Romans won't let you get caught unaware. Romans will always prepare. You expect Romans chapter one if you understand Romans chapter one, you understand all this thing today, you know, and I hear it all the time about homosexuality and lesbianism and all those things, you know, and the bottom line is, you know, the issue is, is it sin? Is it a sickness or is it an eternal lifestyle? Well Romans chapter one answers that question for you. There are 30 things in Romans chapter one that a homosexual becomes, and ain't good. I don't have to go get somebody's book on it. I don't have to meet a medical report on it. I don't have to go and get a book on an alternative lifestyles. I got a book that tells me this is the way Gentiles think and when Gentiles go through this process of debunking God and throwing him out and worshiping the creation more than a creator, this is where man goes.

In our schools today was a big debate again over the evolution issue. Last couple of months, Kansas has been getting kicked six ways from Sunday because there's some old-fashioned hayseed out of touch with reality people that just want to believe that God created and can't get out of the mud of Kansas and can't get out of the hayseed and can't get the hay out of their hair and out of their ears and out of their eyes to see the great big marvelous world that's out there. Well I don't have to go to Kansas to know that evolution is wrong and the Bible is right. I don't have to go to Kansas to understand this debate. Romans chapter 1 tells me why Gentiles go that way and by the way the concept of evolution came from a Gentile. It came from a Gentile. It didn't come from Shem. Shem's got his problems but believing something as stupid as evolution isn't one of them.

I look at my government. My government's in a mess. My government is absolutely upside down. I mean if there ever was a time in history when you needed to plow the whole thing under and start over again, it's now that ain't going to happen. But I'm not surprised for it because I understand how when Gentiles get in power, how they operate. The ACLU, the liberals, the news media, I'm not surprised at the way they do it. Why? Romans chapter 1 tells me exactly how

Gentiles operate. It tells me how Gentiles think. That's why I'm not surprised that the United States of America's all the Gentiles are four biggest holidays or Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Halloween. When do you get that? Did Romans 1? Do you ever wonder why all the rock groups in the world are all Gentile rock groups? You realize you couldn't find a namesake Jewish rock group or a Muslim rock group anywhere in the world. That would bother you why? Because that's what Gentiles do.

You ever notice in America, in the NFL, the NBA, or wherever you want to go, half the teams are called Bears, Bulls, Buzzards, Seahawks, Lions, Dolphins, Cougars, Eagles. I mean, you ever wonder why? That's Romans chapter 1. When you want to buy a Gentile car, you buy a Mustang, you buy a Marlin, you buy a Cougar, you buy a Firebird, you buy an Impala. Go over to Japan and watch what Shim builds with Toyota, Mushubishi, and all the other. You won't find any animal names there. That's Gentiles. And then when Gentiles want to produce a really superior hot car that dominates the scene, what do Gentiles do? They build the fastest, meanest, baddest car that can whip anybody and take on everybody, and then they put a logo on it that says, SS. Big smile, big smile. Where'd that concept come from? I know a Gentile one time that wanted to build the biggest, baddest nation in the world and whip everybody. And he did it with a SS logo. Gentiles just can't all get it together. I mean, you just can't.

It says here in Romans chapter 1, verse 18 and 21, it says,

*Romans 1:18-21*

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

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

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Three verses later it says this,

*Romans 1:25*

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

That's Gentiles. That's why you don't see the Jews and the Muslims having rock bands named after animals. That's why their football teams, that's why, you know, that's why Gentiles 2000 years ago in Rome, throughout Europe, they built big colosseums. Forerunners were in modern day football stadiums and the gladiators went out on the field. You know what those gladiators did? They hacked each other to death with the applause of everybody and the cheer of everybody. Some of those games went on for a month. When they ran out of gladiators, they got

Christians. They butchered Christians because Gentiles love to see blood guts and gore. That's why I'm telling you man, that's Gentiles mindset.

I was preaching one time in a youth rally. It must have been a thousand kids out there and it was at a theme park. They flew me out to preach at a theme park, you know, and I had to preach like at seven o'clock to them. They had all day to run around the park, you know, like World of Fun. And they got them together there and had supper, you know. Then they had a program. You know what the program was? Remember that guy, his name was Gallagher that used to smash the fruit all the time. Well this was when he was really big. So they had all the... and I got to preach after this. And I'm never without a message. My Bible says be instant, in season, out of season. I can have a message praying, know what I want. God can throw me to play from the side plate and I'm ready to go.

I'm sitting down there and I'm... coaches call it into play from the sidelines. Because I'm mad now. I'm mad at a number of people. First of all, myself for coming here. I traveled all wherever I went. I forget even where I was up in Boston someplace. I traveled all the way to get there. And here I am in the most ridiculous situation in my life. Then I'm mad at the guys who are putting this off because they ought to know better. They'll put some kind of fruit loop up there with a sledgehammer, killing other fruit loops. And then I'm going to get up and preach afterwards. So now I'm really mad. So I got... when he got done, cleaned up all the fruit. Introduce me. I walked up to the pulpit. Absolute silence. I said, "You know what? It just struck me strange. And maybe this is just my over imagination here, but I just do believe, last point if I meant you guys just screaming in the oven about somebody up here." I almost said some idiot up here, didn't know, I caught myself before I said that. "Somebody up here beating on fruit and killing it. You guys were screaming. Somebody comes up and opens the living word of God and the living God and it's just as shy on a turkey farm day after Thanksgiving."

Then I'm going to go to my message, my new message. I say, "You know what? Let me show you where the body of Christ is so screwed up today, kids. And we'll use this as an object lesson. Two thousand years ago, they put him in here and they all screamed in there like you did when they killed your forefathers. But we're more... we're much more in tune with things now. We just do it killing fruit." I said, "The concept's the same because Gentiles love that." They were so fired up by somebody smashing fruit, but when I stood up at the pulpit, opened up the living word of God from the living God, everybody went deaf and dumb. You know why? That's Gentiles. That's Gentiles. That's Gentiles. So I preached them a different message than the one I had. Mine worked, the one I preached worked better than the one I had anyhow. But I'm telling you, that's Romans chapter one.

Now when you come to Romans chapter two, you find the Jewish mindset. You understand why Gentiles operate the way they operate. There's a five point outline there in chapter one. It simply goes like this. It's so easy.

8. God is revealed, Romans 1:18-20.
9. God is rejected, Romans 1:21.
10. God gets replaced, Romans 1:23.

11. God gets reviled, that means they hate him, Romans 1:25.
12. God gives them a reprobate mind.

Five in your Bible is the number of death. You know why America got the problem they got? Because America's got a reprobate mind. Gentiles worship the creature, not the creator. That's where we're at.

### ➤ Romans 2: The Jewish Mindset

Now in chapter two, the Jews have the same mindset. You get how they think and what they do and how they think. In chapter one, you get to find the mind of the Gentile. In chapter two, you get to find the mind of the Jew. The chapter basically teaches this: the Jews look at the Gentiles as inferior to them and reject them and their Christian teachings and their worldly ways. But in their own blind, prideful attitude, they themselves have lost God, just not for the same reason.

The key in chapter two is verse 17 and 19. It says,

*Romans 2:17-19*

*Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,*

*And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;*

*And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,*

The Gentiles. And then he goes down and says, but you guys are basing everything on what you have outwardly and nothing inwardly. He says, "You think you're better than a Gentile because you've been circumcised on a part of your anatomy and they haven't." He said, "Don't you understand that circumcision on the outside means absolutely nothing if you haven't changed on the inside?" So chapter one, we see Gentiles are in a mess and the reason why they are and all the ramifications for our own country and our own society. In chapter two, you see why the Jews are in the mess that they're in because of their arrogant attitude that because the oracles of God were delivered to them, that they are superior and because they are outwardly Jews, that that makes them better than the Gentiles. And God simply says, "Your arrogance overwhelms you and your arrogance has brought you to the place where you're blinded because you think just being religious on the outside is the answer when in truth it's what's on the inside."

### ➤ Romans 3-4: Justification by Faith

Romans chapter three and Romans chapter four, the great chapter that begins to define for us the understanding of what it means to be justified by faith, by receiving God's righteousness. You see, he says in chapter one that the Gentiles follow their conscience. He tells you in chapter two that the Jews will follow the law. He tells you in chapter three and four that neither one of those will merit salvation because the only way you've got to get salvation is by getting God's righteousness and Romans chapter three and four shows you the model for getting God's righteousness by faith.

That's why you find down there in Romans chapter three verses 10, verses 23, the great verses that we use in winning somebody to Christ. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "All of our righteousness, filthy rags in the sight of God." Those are great verses that we use in winning people to Christ, but in the context it's showing that the Jew and the Gentile, one who follows his conscience, the other one who follows the law, it doesn't make any difference. All of their righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God and all have sinned and come short of God's glory. That's why you have to get justified through faith in the finished work of Christ on Calvary's cross. Of course, the great study there is Abraham. Great study is Abraham in the Old Testament getting God's righteousness. In Romans chapter four verse three, it simply says that he believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. That's why the great man to study, to study that along with Romans three and four is Abraham.

### ➤ Romans 5: Peace with God

All right, chapter five, the great chapter that defines for us justification by faith. Romans 5:1 says great verse, a verse you need to memorize at some point in your life. It says this,

*Romans 5:1*

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

Great verse, great verse. This is where you'll find the beginning of the great doctrine on your standing in state, the concept of standing for Christ versus your state. This is where you'll find the great concept of the term in the book of Romans, peace with God versus peace of God. In the Bible when you find the peace with God, it's always talking about salvation. When you find the peace of God is talking about your Christian walk. That's why when you get to Philippians chapter four verse seven, it says,

*Philippians 4:7*

*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

It runs it right back to Romans. When you made peace with God you got saved. After you get saved because you are saved you get the peace of God. Great concept.

### ➤ Romans 6: Dead in Christ

Chapter six defines the great doctrine of being dead in Christ after you're saved. It's incredible. It's an incredible thing. It explains how a saved man can't be a sinner anymore after he's saved even though he still sinned. Boy, if that isn't a conjuring in terms. But that's what the Bible teaches. There is a way in the Bible when you lay out the doctrines that once you get saved you can't sin anymore even though you're still a sinner and still do sin. Go try that one out for a while. You know what? That's why I don't like the book of Romans. The book of Romans beats me up.

Ask the average saved person, next person you meet. Give them the Romans test. Ask them how in the world after you get saved if you still sin, how in the world God can have fellowship with

you when God can't have fellowship with anything that's sinful. Let them try to explain the process. Well, let me tell you something. If you don't understand the process at this point in your life, if you're a young Christian that's my job. If you're an older Christian, I don't know what to tell you. You should have learned it by now.

Romans chapter 6 talks about what it means to be baptized into Jesus' death. We're not talking about water. Chapter 6 explains how a saved man as I said can't live in sin after he's saved even though he's still sinned. You chew on that one for a while. It defines the term dead in Christ. So when you read over in Colossians chapter 3 verse 3 that your dead in your life is hid with Christ, you'll know what it means. And it'll define those Bible doctrines that are so crucial to the church of you understanding not just the terminology of being saved, but what really happened to you when you got saved. And the answer to that question is how you can be a saved person, saved from your sins, yet still sin, yet not be accounted and judged for sin anymore in the judgment seat of Christ, how that works.

And the answer is what really got, the answer to that is this, not all of you got saved. I'm talking to everybody. The day you got saved, not all of you got saved yet. Oh, what new heresy is this? It's a trap play up the middle to see how stupid you really are if you really know your Bible. I'm saying this, when you got saved, all of you didn't get saved. Part of you got saved. That's why when you get to the next chapter, you'll find there's two adoptions and there's two resurrections. Now, before you have a conniption fit with that and you just think what heresy is this and what church am I in, you better go back home and get on your knees and pray over the book of Romans. But you don't know what you're talking about. How in the world can a holy God have anything to do with me when I still sin? Oh, I know you don't sin anymore. I forgot that. Yes, that's right. That's the answer. That'll work. It's all in the concept of being baptized into Jesus' death. It's all in the concept of being dead in Christ and your life is hid with Christ. It's all in the concept of what happens that day when you got saved and what took place inside your body that God separated, saved one part of you, didn't save the other part of you. And that's why you have an old nature and a new nature. And that's why the book of Romans is so vitally important. If you don't understand what happened to you the day you got saved, the devil is going to have a field day with you.

## ➤ Romans 7: The Law and the Believer

Romans chapter seven, probably one of the greatest defining chapters in all the Bible on how the Old Testament law doesn't affect me anymore. You read in Romans chapter seven, verse one, it says this,

*Romans 7:1-4*

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

*For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.*

*So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Now in this great chapter he starts out by explaining to the New Testament body of Christ, you and me, the problem we just talked about in the last chapter. How can somebody be saved, be saved from their sins, yet still sinned? And God fellowship with that who has no tolerance for sin. The answer begins not only in the last chapter, carries on in chapter seven, and gets all wound up in chapter eight and tells you the whole line. But here you see this, you see the death, you see the effect, you see the great defining chapter, now that I am a Christian, how does the Old Testament law affect me?

Here's how it goes briefly. When you come down through down here and you read about this woman being married to a husband, that woman is a picture of your soul. That husband is a picture of your flesh. In an unsaved scenario, in an unsaved man or unsaved woman, the soul and the flesh are stuck together just like that. Just like an unsaved man and an unsaved woman being married together. That's why she's bound by the law to that man in the Old Testament scenario as long as she lives, or as long as he lives. And if she leaves him and marries somebody else, she commits adultery. The only way that she can be free to marry somebody else is through the husband dying.

Here it comes. The day I got saved, remember now, remember, remember, remember, the woman is my soul, the husband is my flesh. The day I got saved, God separated my flesh from my soul, killed the husband, dead in trespasses and sins, separated him, and now I'm free from the law to marry somebody else. Who am I going to marry? Verse four.

*Romans 7:4*

*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

See how it works? That's the picture. You're not under the law anymore. Because you're not under the law anymore, it changed with the church. That's what he's trying to lay out. There's great doctrine of justification, sanctification, justification by faith. This is how God can fellowship with me, even though I'm still a sinner. My flesh is dead. It's freed from my soul through an operation made with God, by God made without hand. Now my soul is free to marry another Christ. The day I got saved, we got married. My flesh is dead. Now that's why, well, we'll see it when we get to the next chapter here.

Chapter seven is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible that shows you how to deal with your children at the time of salvation, this fabled concept of age of accountability. There ain't no fixed age of accountability. Every child is different. But Romans chapter seven shows you the intimate

detail, how the law affects your children before they hit that age, shows what happens when they come to that point that they understand and shows you how to deal with it. It is the greatest defining chapter anywhere in the Bible. When your parents want to know that thing, I don't have time this morning, I'll be glad to sit down to you and show you how to do it. Show you how you know. That ain't left to chance. Paul takes that thing in Romans chapter seven and shows every mom and dad exactly what to look for, what they should know, how that thing works. And know that that thing doesn't work on some magical age. He gives you exactly. It isn't about when your child knows right from wrong. Get that out of your mind. Romans chapter seven shows the doctrine for the church that not only affects you and your life but runs the life of your children. But Romans chapter seven will show you how much you don't know about the Bible.

Romans chapter seven is a great defining chapter in verses 14 through 25 on the old nature versus the new nature. You see that's what happens once you get married to another and your flesh gets separated from your soul. Now you have two natures. You have an old nature and a new nature. That's why we then become the Romans chapter eight.

### ➤ Romans 8: The Resurrection Body

Oh, Romans chapter eight is the greatest chapter in all the Bible that talks about your resurrection body. Now I know that I'm speaking over some of your heads here and I do that very confidently today because I know that in my relationship with you if you're serious about the Word of God you and I are going to work out everything you don't understand today. So I can say what I'm saying the rest of you that don't care. That's your problem. I told you before you want to learn the Bible. I'll give you every time ounce inch that you need to learn it. I'll work with you. However, if it doesn't work out for me I'll put somebody else with you that will. But the bottom line is here you can learn whatever you want to like by as much as you want as much as you want. So I'll be brash and I'll say some things over your head. You'll say what get all of that. No. But if you keep coming and you keep growing you will you never grow without stretching. And if I just bring you in here and let you be brain dead for the hour that I have you for and just give you everything and you don't have to think for yourself and I'm not going to do you any good. You have to think you have to stretch it. You have to ponder it. You have to wonder about it and then in the process you either dig it in yourself and you can't find it or you bring it to me on Thursday night. You bring it to me and our time together throughout the week and you say Bob I don't understand this. Can you break it down. When I break it down you walk out of there and suddenly somebody just turned on spotlights in your life and you understand it now. That's how it's supposed to be. That's supposed to be. That's why I don't give you everything all the time. I'm not going to just hand feed you all the time. I'm not going to treat you like a little baby that I give you a little spoon and put it into your mouth. I'm going to throw things out there just to see what you do with them. See what your attitude is about it. I'm a great attitude checker. I got a little attitude meter. I carry with me all the time.

When I come to Romans chapter 8, greatest chapter in the Bible to define your resurrection body. I'll tell you another thing I never figured out about Christians. This always bothered me. I know the answer but I just it just I don't understand why. Now we all went on vacation. Somebody got vacations planned. I know what it's like because we're going on vacation. Our whole family is

going to Disney World this summer and I'm looking forward to that. But you know what it is at my house and I know it's pretty much the same your house you've been on a really big vacation or whatever or even a small vacation. But I know it is at our house. We're going in July and we started planning before Christmas. I know what kind of plane I'm on. I got my seat number. I know where I'm staying. I know what restaurants are down there. I know how much it's going to cost. I know especially the bottled water. I tell you that joke. No I better not. Anyway we know where we know where to rent a car. We know we know what time we're going to get in. We know what we're going to do. We got they got that. We're not even there yet. We are at this point. We are two months out plus and yet we got the schedule down. We know what we're doing. We got the closed list already laid out. We know everything we're going. We got everything thought through laid out put out and all we're doing is going down to Orlando Florida and yet God's people do the same thing all the time. And yet you know what you're going on the greatest trip that you ever went on in your life. It's going to last you for all of eternity and God's people for some reason just don't give a flip about finding out about it. Now I don't understand that. You asked the average Christian what their glorified body is going to be like and they go oh I don't know I never thought of it. I guess I'm going to shine a lot. What are you going to do when you go to heaven. Well I'm going to you know gee you know it's a good question to ask that you know. I guess we get winged and you get our issue harp you know and you float around up there and somebody real spiritual say well brother I'm going to stand around the throne of God. We're just going to praise the Lord and thank God for all of eternity. Well that's going to get old after a while not to be disrespectful. But you know what if you think God couldn't think any farther than that. I mean God went through six thousand years of man's history went through the fight he had with the devil knocked the universe upside down did everything that he did and we finally get to heaven all God just said well I don't know what else we're going to do now why don't we just all stand around hold hands sing kumbaya. God's got a better plan that. And may I allow to say something to you maybe a spare little pain to jump to the strike shame on you for not knowing shame on you for knowing more about your vacation where you're going what you do in life and what God got planned for you return shame on you. I love you but shame on you shame on you. I mean God went to the expense of doing anything because he loved you have the greatest thing planned for you has got you a glorified body there's a reason why you've got to have one by the way. The reason why this one won't work anymore yet the average child of God if I told him what your glory by really by life they'd have a heart attack think I was a heretic that's the only thing that always bother me. You don't know what's going on up there because somebody does you think they're wrong and you're right we don't even know what's going on up there. I'm telling you man God's got a plan he's got something for you and there's a reason why he's got a glorified body there's a reason why it's called the body of you're called the body of Christ.

Well when you come to Romans chapter 8 you got the great chapter I can't help it you don't know where you're going what you're going to do. I think the most somebody said one time I appreciate one time he said well we get to heaven you know anything about church history probably the only most of the ones are going to be up there are going to be the Bible even Baptist line not that myself yeah and they're probably the most confused one for the longest time. I mean the rapture took place the staff most of God's people walking up around there not even figuring out you know what Romans chapter 8 teaches me it's a great thing boy I'll tell you this is a

terrible thing to say but it's true. When I read Romans chapter 8 frame especially the first eight verses it teaches me that the greatest one of the greatest unknown truths in all the Bible that most Christians are God's enemies according to Romans chapter 8. Most God's people who he died for and saved are God's enemies. You see you think it's God's you're a man's God there because he sins that shows how little you know about Romans. That Bible lays out that well you know what I am not going to get into it this morning I am not.

Romans chapter 8 there's two resurrections in Romans chapter 8 one spiritual one's physical. You've got saved one time you got your spiritual resurrection but your body's waiting for the physical one. That's what I meant a little while ago when I said you're not completely saved when you're saved you are but you're not. I mean you're already seated in heavenly places but you still got your flesh to contend with you see. The day you got saved God resurrected you spiritually but then he separated you out you still got your flesh to deal with your flesh ain't going to heaven I got news for you. Paul says in Romans chapter 7 when you put it all together in my flesh dwell is no good thing. We don't need that verse to understand that and then you find there's two adoptions in the Romans chapter 8. There's a spiritual adoption the day when you cry I'm a father and you get saved spiritually and a little bit later on there's another adoption to wit the redemption of your body. The day you got saved you got spiritually adopted and spiritually resurrected that's your new nature and your flesh now is dead and you're free to marry another but if you don't reckon that flesh dead it's going to give you problem because that flesh you're stuck with is going to give you all kinds of problems until you get your glorified body. Someday you're going to get a glorified body anybody know why? There's a reason why God gives it to you there's a reason why you got to have it it all fits into the plan of God. All Romans Romans will beat us up.

### ➤ Romans 9-11: Israel's Place

Then Romans chapter 9, Romans chapter 10 and Romans chapter 11. Paul's great doctrinal statements on the nation of Israel and how we as God's people the church in light of the Jews rejection of Christ in the book of Acts Matthew Mark Luke and John how we should view them. I'm going to break these three down for you real simply.

Chapter 9 shows Paul's burden and God's burden for the Jews. There's some great lessons in Romans chapter 9. One of the lessons is that God gets the glory even out of our failure. One of the greatest things comes out of Romans chapter 9 is that God's going to get honor and glory at everything in this world and you better learn that lesson. God's going to get honor and glory he demands it because he's holy and God will get honor and glory at everything on planet earth. You'll either give him honor and glory by going with him and letting him use you or he'll get honor and glory by you going against him and him busting you up alongside the head and everybody else saying wow watch out for God look what he does he'll get it and of course that's what Romans chapter 9 says he does with the Jew. Romans chapter 9 simply shows you that God's going to get honor and glory out of the nation of Israel at the end and yet even though that age of Israel has rejected God's still going to get honor and glory out of it because God gets honor and glory at everything and the practical lessons to you and me are quite extensive.

Then we get chapter 10. Chapter 10 lays out the Gentiles get in because you and I get in the church gets in because that you rejected so we're not to get too high-minded about that we realize that we get in because the Jews got out temporarily so we see how we get all this goes together chapter 9 chapter 10 and chapter 11 shows you the whole package chapter 9 shows you how the Jews rejected and God gets honor and glory chapter 10 shows you how the Gentiles come in that's why it's one of the greatest chapters in the Bible winning people to Christ chapter 9 and 10 uh 10 verse 9 and 10

*Romans 10:9-10*

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

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

We use that all the time but in the context is talking about the Gentiles getting in because the Jews rejected that in Romans chapter 11 we see how we get in we see the story of the natural branches Israel the root Christ and the wild olive tree being grafted into that tree the Gentiles and you see in the last part of that chapter the greatest passage in all of the Bible on the restoration of the nation of Israel and how we as the church should view it lest we be wise in our own conceit and many of God's people today have no clue what's going on with the nation of Israel the nation of Israel is to God as his wife the body of Christ is to Christ as his church his bride.

### ➤ Romans 12: Service and Ministry

Romans chapter 12, the great definitive chapter on our service for God versus our ministry for God.

*Romans 12:1-2*

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

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

Great chapter, great chapter. Shows you that Christian service has to do with your attitude. Christian ministry has to do with the job that you do. Most God's people never understand the difference. We're going to see the difference just a little bit here.

### ➤ Romans 13: Government and Higher Powers

Chapter 13, the great doctrinal statement on our government and higher powers. Basically chapter 13 tells you and I how to live as a godly Christian in an ungodly nation. Two or three nights ago on our Bible study I gave you the definitive verses that shows you God's view United States and all the other nations on planet earth. Romans chapter 13 shows you and I and gives us insight as a Christian and how you and I as a godly Christian loving the God and the word of

God get along in an ungodly United States of America anywhere else. One of the key references to that would be Psalms 9:17 which says,

*Psalms 9:17*

*The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

One thing you want to remember is this: God judges nations just as surely as he judges people. That is a great lesson in there. We'll go teach in time. My goal today is not to give you all the book of Romans but give you the outline of Romans that the rest of our time together till Jesus comes back and we're going to work some things right now. I got a group I'm working with every other Saturday and in basic discipleship and teaching we're going to come along with that for a while and then I'm going to I'm going to put a break on it and I'll take a couple weeks off and I'm going to take any all the leave the ladies out for a week and I'm going to take all the men and I'm going to talk about bring them over to my house that want to come anybody can come we're going to work on some hard line issues to bring this thing up in other words I'm not just giving you one line here I'm going to build multi-levels into your life as we're going I got a plan it'll work incredibly well and it'll work in a situation we're in and it'll work just fine and then I'm going to next week I'm going to take all the ladies that want to come and I want to work on that we're going to we're going to build into your life the things that you need to see and understand we're going to we're going to take a break from the natural things we're going to switch it up a lot we're going to we're going to look at hard line things that we're going to search through our church at this young age of where we're at and we're going to find the men and the women that have the ability and the wherewithal of service versus end ministry and we're going to fine tune those things for you as we build into your life the doctrinal concepts in the book of Romans is going to be a lot of it we have to deal with we'll have time and we will go through these things if not one-on-one if not on Thursday night with the questions and our other things that we're going to focus on I have a whole multi-concept that I want to put into the people that want to really learn chapter 14.

### ➤ Romans 14: Liberty in Christ

Great chapter on our liberty in Christ. 1 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 23 says,

*1 Corinthians 10:23*

*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

What's that mean? It simply says this: that as a New Testament Christian, we're not under the law. So basically, unless it's something that is clearly defined in the word of God as sin, there's a lot of latitude we have. But just because we have a lot of latitude doesn't mean we can do it. And there and boy this is a great chapter on shows you how that a child of God it begins to move into the area of of of service and understanding what it means to be a minister and dealing with people and these will be chapters that we will deal with very heavily as we go on and just because you're a Christian you know you doesn't mean you have the right to do whatever you

want to do and in this chapter it talks about the relationship and the responsibility we have to other Christians.

But oh I got to give you this, probably two of the greatest verses in all the Bible for a child of God, chapter 14 verse 7 and 8. Something that you always want to remember, so we always want to remember when you think about screwing up as a Christian. Every time I think about doing something stupid, this verse comes into my brain. Doesn't necessarily mean I don't do it, but I think about it.

*Romans 14:7-8*

*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

*For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

Great two verses, two of my favorite verses in all the Bible. Chapter 14, the great chapter on defining our liberty in Christ. Just because we're not under the law doesn't mean we can go all the while and do what we want to do. There's some restrictions there, we'll talk about that.

### ➤ Romans 15: The Strong Christian

Then chapter 15. Chapter 15 is probably the greatest defining chapter for me on what a child of God should be that's going to serve God. All down through here there's six things that a strong Christian needs to do and needs to be. Verse one is a key verse for me.

*Romans 15:1*

*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

That one verse to me is worth all the money in the world. That one verse is the litmus test for what I look for in a young man or young lady to serving God, working in the ministry. You know, I know there's a lot of you right there now that we're working with and you're coming up and you're growing and you're enjoying it, you're learning the Bible. I see an excitement in your lives that is quite incredible. But let me just say something to you, and this is what comes all the way through the Bible. It just is about how much you know the Bible. The Bible makes it very clear that the church at Corinth knew the Bible too, but knowledge puffeth up. There has to be a balance in your life and that balance is your attitude of taking the hits and enjoying the hits that you have to take. Romans chapter 15 verse one is the key verse. It is the thing that I look for in every young man, every young lady. It is the key as far as I'm concerned. It determines where you go in ministry.

"He then being strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." You know why? Because Christ was strong and we were weak. And when he came down on that cross, he bore my infirmities when he didn't have to. There are times in the ministry when you have to take the hit and you have to learn to like to take the hit. There's time that you're going to have to take, say it's your fault when it isn't. There's time that you're going for the cause of Christ, you're going to have to take the blast and for God's honor and glory. That is determined as far as I am concerned where

you're at. And I want you to understand it, every one of you. I want you to understand that is the key deciding verse that I look for. I don't care what you know about the Bible. I don't care how well you learn it. I don't care how well you learn it. To me, learning everything about the Bible and not having the ability to use it is like buying a sleek fast Corvette for a nine-year-old. The car's fast, it's hot, it'll move just like the word of God, but the kid don't have a mental ability and the spiritual maturity to drive it and take responsibility for it. Same thing. What I look for is your ability, your ability to do for others what God did for you. Take the hit. That's what I look for. That's what I look for. And I'm going to say that a hundred thousand times in everything that we do and everything that I'm going to temper that concept with everything because if you don't grow up in the word of God not just knowing it but understanding that there's young Christians out there that you have to be smarter than they are. They're going to do dumb things, they're going to say dumb things, they're going to be dumb things. You got to be smarter than they are. You've got to understand that you that are strong bear the infirmities of those that are weak. That is the mark of a strong Christian. That's why in this incredibly great chapter, first thing he says, first thing he says, and I'll tell you again, first thing I look for, I look for somebody looking to take the hit for Christ, putting your and it says "and not to please yourselves." You don't do it to please yourself. You don't do it to look good. You don't do it so people can look and see who you are. You do it because Christ did it for you. Now when you're a leader and you're in charge, you take the hit.

What you got to do, six things, six things, here they are:

13. Verse 1: You become strength for others.
14. Verse 2: You deny yourself to please others. That gets self out of the way.
15. Verse 7: You receive others. Doesn't matter what they look like, doesn't matter where they come from, doesn't matter how they dress, doesn't matter what they add, doesn't matter whatever, doesn't matter, doesn't matter. You receive them. The reason why you do that because you didn't look too hot first time God looked at you, nor did I.
16. Verse 4: He always admonishes others. Always admonish somebody, always help somebody, always edify somebody. If you can't say good something to somebody, don't say anything. Always lift them up, always look for the good even when they do something stupid. Realize it, understand it, that's part of it. How many times I've done something absolutely asinine and God has still encouraged me through it in spite of my stupidity. You know what? That's what we're here for. You look for somebody, you look for somebody trying to do what's right. You don't major on what they're doing wrong. You don't major on how they're dressed. You don't major on how to get their haircut. Major on what they're doing right, edify them and then God will take care of the rest. Romans will kill you man, Romans will kill you. Romans will just have you up about 5000 feet in your big Rheemax balloon and going around looking at the world thinking that's your kingdom and suddenly the air goes out and down you come.
17. Verse 27: He ministers to others. Now I want you to see this, not just spiritually, but carnally. What does that mean, carnally? What's that mean? That means you take care of them physically like you take care of them spiritually. Good example, the shoes. I don't know these people don't know the church is doing it but you know what bottom line is this my job is not just a minute spiritually my my job is a minute physically somebody has a tough time my job

to help I find out somebody struggling it's my job to help my job to get in there my job to do something behind the scenes that nobody nobody has to know about it it's just a matter you do it because that's the job you don't do it and then tell everybody about it you just do it because that's what a minister does spiritually and carnally.

18. Verse 28: He prays for others.

Prays for others. That's the thing that will destroy a church, fascinating this world because when you stop praying for me, I stop praying for you, we stop praying for each other. There's a danger in churches that are good churches. There's a danger in this church of course, you get so much good Bible. I don't know, I really don't understand the balance other than this, good hard flat preaching and telling you like it is, letting you like it or lump it. I don't know another way to do it. But there's a danger just like any kid when you spoil them and spoil them and give them all they got and give them this and don't deny them anything and just teach them and teach them and teach them if you don't have something to balance that thing out and the only thing I know how to do is good flat hard tearing your hide off sometime when you come on Sunday. You know what? Because that's what you need otherwise you get spoiled otherwise you get think you're something special otherwise you get thinking of the fact that you're above everybody else you don't have to do the other things that everybody else does you don't have to do this you don't have to do that and you're over here and you know what it ain't going to happen we're all in the same mud pit slime pit ugly pit together now we're all helping each other up we're all going to hang together we're all going to hang separately there isn't anybody in this room including me better than anybody else I don't care what your social class is I don't care where you come from I don't care if you if you have to wear two different covered shoes I don't make any difference to me well that's pretty popular thing now so that's a bad illustration well you know what I'm talking about we're in this together everybody everybody hangs together we have to we have to build and train people together everybody everybody gets on board everybody that want there should be nobody in this room that wants to learn God and have God and learn the word of God that cannot get to it that is our job but in the process oh I know how it is I know how when you get little kids and you give them everything pretty soon that they want it all themselves they don't want anybody else to play with it and it's one of those things that to whom much is given much is required.

## ➤ Romans 16: Final Greetings and Warnings

Then last thing, chapter 16. This is a freebie. Paul closes out his letter. One thing I want to note here is verse one, little Phebe down here. Little Phebe and all the modern guys today becomes our first deaconess. You're going to find in the NIV there a little footnote under Phebe and it says that Phebe was the first deaconess in the Bible. So now you got all these Baptist churches and all these idiot stick churches having female deacons. Of course, where do they go for it? They go to Romans chapter 16. Do you find the word deaconess in Romans chapter 16? No, you don't. But what that got to do? Don't confuse me with a lot of facts. The only thing it ever says about Phebe is that she was a servant. Now let me give you a little study here and then we're going to be done. In modern time, the first mention of this heresy is in 1958 in the Amplified Version of the New Testament. The footnote says that she was a deaconess. It doesn't matter that in the Bible there's

only three elected officers and they're all for males. But that's beside the point. Like I said, facts are the facts. The NIV follows this line of corruption in its text.