

Romans 1:1-16:27

Sunday 1/13/2008

I told you once we finished our child training—oh, that's what I want to announce, I forgot that. The book is finished! If you were here Thursday night, we looked through it, but the book is finished that we did on the manual of training up a child. We're going to be taking orders for it, and I'll have it again Thursday night so you can look at it. We're going to take it this week and find out what it costs to get it printed. Joe Christensen just did a great job putting that all together, and it is—I am half tempted to send it off to a publishing company someplace, make a million dollars off of it, and then build our church with it. But like most of my books, I'm sure it will sell well under a million copies. Boy, I'll tell you what, he did a great job with it, and I never saw anybody make me look so good in what I say. We'll have that next week where you can take a look at it. Did you bring it today? You didn't. Okay, we'll have it Thursday night and next week, and then we're going to start taking orders, and I'm going to try to get some prices this week on getting that all done.

We had talked about that once we finished child training, and we were going to—we took about three months, and we went back to some very practical things that we really wanted to focus on, coming into the end of the year and the beginning of the new year. We talked about growing spiritually. We talked about things that you needed to know that were really going to impact your life. Now I want to come back, and we had talked about either going through the book of Romans or going through the book of 2 Corinthians, and you guys voted to go through the book of Romans. I always like to balance it out. When you get into a study where you start going through a lot of practical stuff, it can kind of dull your senses if you don't get any good, hard preaching. So I like to balance it up and change it up like a good pitcher does in a ball game, where I don't throw you the same thing every week because you get used to my style, and you can hide on it, and I don't want that to ever happen. So we did that for about two or three months, and now we decided we're going to come through the book of Romans. I wanted to do Romans, but I'd have done whatever you wanted to do.

Many of you are coming to the place in your life now where, in the next year or so, you're really going to be effective in your life as far as the ministry is concerned. We've watched a number of you grow and really begin to take the Word of God seriously. I think the times that you and I, many of you, have spent one-on-one over the last two or three—some of you have been with me one-on-one every week or every other week for almost four years now. I think that's been a real catalyst in helping you get to the point where you really get a great foundation in your life and can build on from there. I think it's time now to come through the book of Romans, and this is going to be an introduction to Romans today, but it's stuff that you need to get down if you really want to understand the book of Romans.

Without a doubt, from my perspective anyhow, I used to think the book of Romans was the hardest book in the Bible, or in the New Testament anyhow. For years and years and years, I struggled with my own life. I could safely say this morning it took me 15 years to fully understand the book of Romans, and hopefully, it won't take you that long based on what we're going to talk about. I want to help you get it down. Looking back on it, and I thought about it this

week as I was trying to figure out how I wanted to bring this to you, looking back on it, I've now probably laid Romans out over the years five or six different ways. For me, that's what I had to do. I'm the kind of guy that I've got to know how something works. I don't care how complicated it is; for me to understand it, I have to break it down to the lowest common denominator. I was a kid when I grew up that I had to take everything apart. I could not always get it all back together, but I could take it apart. I wanted to see how it worked, and the fact when I tried to put it back together had a few parts left over only meant that my way of putting it back together was better than the guy who designed it because I didn't need all the parts. But that's the way I have to approach the Bible.

Let's face it, the Bible looks like it's a very complicated book. One day a thought struck me because I'd heard all my life how hard the Bible was. I heard all my life how you had to go to Bible college to spend four years and then three more years and really study two languages that nobody ever speaks anymore. I heard that all of my life, and then one day it just struck me. One day it struck me that why would God write a book that the common man could not grasp? Why would God write a book that would take the average person in this room could never get to? If right now I told you that you had to quit your job and you had to go off to a Bible college to really learn the Bible—and you don't find Bible colleges in the New Testament, you find New Testament local churches—but if I told you that's what you had to do and then spend the rest of your life studying two languages, Greek and Hebrew, for you to really unlock the scriptures, I guarantee you probably nobody in this room, including me, would finish that. That's almost an impossible task. And yet God wrote a book. God wrote a book, and someday He's going to judge me by that book, but He wrote a book that was so out of reach for the common, ordinary man that the common, ordinary man could never grasp it in his lifetime, and then God was still going to judge him by it.

When I thought about that and thought that thing through, that's when the Bible began to open up to me because I realized that God has His own design for studying the Bible. The churches today, the higher educated minds of scholars and most pastors follow that category. They have their style of learning the Bible that is: leave your local church, go to a Bible college someplace, talk to guys and let guys teach you that probably haven't won people to Christ for 25 years of their lives, and let them teach you all the things about the Bible, and then hopefully somewhere along the line you'll learn it and you'll really do something for God. Of course, we know the fallacy of that. God's program is a local New Testament church. That's God's program. Someday you're going to be held accountable not for what you know or what you don't know—you've heard me say this before—but you're going to be held accountable for what you could have found out about the Word of God but simply chose not to. That's the issue. We all have choices to make, and we all make those choices, and many of us make choices to put something else in our life more than the Word of God.

That's really determined when God wrote a book. God wrote a Bible that anybody on this planet could understand and grasp without any education whatsoever other than reading. God didn't write a book to the intellectuals. God wrote a Bible to the common man. Now that's been the issue all down through history. For years and years and years, the Roman Catholic Church in the

Dark Ages refused a common man to read the Bible. In fact, at one point, it was a capital offense punishable by death to even own a Bible and read a Bible within the Roman Catholic system. The axe that they've always had to grind against Protestants or Baptists, however you want to, has always been an issue on the Bible because the devil knows the most dangerous thing on this planet is a common man with a common Bible. When you grasp the Scriptures as a normal individual and begin to let God's plan unfold in your life, that's when you become valuable to God and dangerous to the devil. Of course, the devil has made sure that most of God's people have been educated beyond their intelligence, and by doing that, he has canceled them out.

Now I'm going to tell you that when you come to the Bible, there's a system to the Bible. Man has his system; God has His system. Your job and my job is to be able to find out the system by which God wants His Bible to be understood. Once you find that system, the Bible becomes an easy book to understand. I look back at Romans, and I thought to myself, looking back on it now, I understand why the book of Romans is viewed as such a hard book. We're going to start this from the very foundation level. We're going to talk about the things behind the scenes in Romans before we ever get into the key of the Romans book itself because that is crucial in your understanding. I'm going to tell you right now, if you're ever going to be meaningful in your relationship with God, you're going to have to get down to the book of Romans at some time in your life.

I told you the goal for your life—and I know some of you have only been saved four or five years, and you know where you're at, and I always exclude people that have been saved four or five years. My goodness, it takes that long for you just to figure out what's going on. But let me tell you something, the goal of your life as a Christian should be to know that Bible so well that you could teach any book of the Bible, verse by verse, chapter, however you want to do it, with 30 seconds notice or less. You ought to be so in touch with that Bible that if you were going to a Bible conference someplace and they told you that your job is going to be to preach the book of Romans, say. So you prepare because you want to do a good job, and you get there, and they're getting ready to introduce you on Sunday night, and you're going to lay out the book of Romans, and suddenly the pastor leans over to you and says, "Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you this earlier, we changed your preaching schedule. You're not doing Romans, you're doing the book of Job." You ought to be so in touch with the Word of God that you just said, "Well, I'm glad you told me, no problem," and turn over to the book of Job and be able to teach the book of Job.

Now the problem is that most of God's people know more about football, they know more about baseball, they know more about the weather, they know more about everything that they do in life than they do the book that saved their soul. This has become the problem. The problem is that you don't read it. The problem is that you don't love it. Once you love the Word of God and you see what it does for you and it opens itself up to you, then there's nothing in this world that can ever take the place of it ever again.

I. Understanding the Book of Romans

Now I want to talk to you about four or five things here first that we're going to go through in detail a little bit later on in the message. I don't know if we'll get through them all today or not,

but I want to begin to start because we've got to lay a good, solid background. I think the problem with Romans, as people viewing it—and I did for many years myself, until I really got it broken down where I could understand it—I think the problem is the book of Romans itself. I think the number one problem that people have when they view the book of Romans is they try to look at the book of Romans in the same light as they look at the rest of the books that Paul wrote. That's the first mistake you make. Every book in the Bible is going to have a design specifically for what it does in the Bible.

I believe that the—when I say I believe the Bible is the Word of God from cover to cover, including the cover, that's a literal statement for me. I believe that everything in there is designed by God. I believe when God gave man the Bible, the thing that sets it apart from every other book on the face of this planet, it is solely and completely God's book, and man had nothing to do with it other than maybe writing it or printing it as far as what God told him to do. A lot of people have a tough time with that. Let me tell you something. If God could preserve the sinless Son of God coming down through a virgin Mary and being born into this world and present Him as the living Word of God, where He was handled by man, where He came through a virgin, through her body, with all of the things that a natural baby has to go through, and after it was born, all the natural things—if God can bring His Son through that human process and keep Him from being tainted by this world under sin, what makes you think He can't do a Bible? The problem is today is we don't, when we come to the Bible, we don't look at it, we don't see each book as it fits into the Word of God in the overall concept.

There are several reasons that we want to talk about today, and most people never see these.

1. Once I went back and looked at this, I saw that the placement of the book of Romans in the New Testament, the placement where it's at—you got Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans—the placement, why the book of Romans is where it is at in your Bible, is absolutely crucial in seeing how this thing plays itself out through the rest of the Bible.
2. The second thing, I think getting a breakdown of the book of Romans itself is absolutely necessary. I think you have to take the book of Romans and break it down just like you do the overall Bible to the lowest common denominator of what you have.
3. I think not only do you need to break the book down as a book itself, but you need to break the chapters down, and the chapters have a pattern that they follow in the book of Romans, and we'll get into that a little bit later on. You know what Romans is like? I'm going to say this wrong, is it called a Rubik's Cube? A Rubik Cube. Did you ever see one of those little cubes that you twist and you get all the things lined up and it's all thought? There's a system by which you do the right thing, and when you turn the right thing, and you spend a lot of time, all the colors line up or whatever it is that how it works, and it's a brainteaser. Well, think of the book of Romans when you think of that because that's what the book of Romans is. You have to get it all laid out, and it takes some time getting all the colors to line up, all the chapters to line up, and all the things to line up as it's coming through, and once you do it, it becomes really one of the easiest books in the Bible.
4. I think the next thing is Paul, he has a different purpose for Romans than he has his other books, and we're going to talk about this in depth in a little bit.

5. I think the style by which he writes the book is very key to its comprehension and understanding it. There is a specific purpose behind every book in your Bible. There's a specific purpose by the placement of the books in your Bible, and we'll talk about this when we get a little bit later on, but I want to show you these five things, and then we're going to come back to them in a little bit.
6. Another thing I think it becomes an issue is people do not view who he's writing the book to, and I think this is really the key. When you look and see who he's writing this to with all the other things that are going on in the book of Romans, it gives you a dimension by which you can really understand how the book lays itself out.

II. Expediting Bible Learning

Now before we get into these areas here, there's a lot of other things that I want to give you about the book of Romans that I think that you need to have that's going to quicken your understanding. Remember I told you this when we came through the eight things a pastor has to do well a couple of months ago or a couple of weeks ago. One of the things is educate. Another one of the things was to excel you in learning, to expedite. If it took me 15 years to learn the book of Romans, then you ought to glean off what it took me 15 years to learn. You ought to learn it in less time than that, a lot less time than that, being around here. You have the advantage to come over and sit down with me one-on-one. You have the advantage of Thursday night to ask your question. There is no reason for you not to learn the Bible here unless you simply just don't want to. When you start to see how that my job is to take what we have and to accelerate your learning. Don't make it take as long for you as it did for me. That's what my job is. It is to educate you in a way, to preach to you and to teach you in such a way where you learn it faster than I did. Any good pastor is going to do that because that's his job. His job is to find ways to get you to learn the material that it takes you less time than it did him. When you get somebody down the line, and four or five years from now, maybe you're working with or just dealing with problems, you follow the same process. You help people get to where they need to get faster than they would on their own. That's your job. That's my job. That's the job of this church. When you find people who want to learn the Bible, it's your job to help them learn the Bible. When you find people that are struggling with areas in their life, that maybe they're fallen or they got some issues or they're struggling, it's not your job or my job to step on them. It's not your job and my job. The Bible says that we are to restore people. That's what this church is all about. It's to help the fallen get up and keep on going again. That's the job. In everything that we do, we are to expedite what's going on in people's lives. That's my job and that's your job.

But before we tackle these areas here, there's some concepts that we want to talk about that maybe will help you get a background because a background is so absolutely important. Let me just say this briefly. Basically, and some of you guys that are learning how to preach or are going to be pastors someday need to mark this down. Again, this next year I'm going to take a lot of time, and I'm not going to be in a hurry with anything that I do. I'm going to take time to instruct you, especially some of you young guys that are aspiring to be pastors or you want to preach. I want to try to help you.

Basically, there's three ways to teach and preach the Bible. When you listen to a man preach or teach or whatever he does, he's basically following one of three patterns.

7. The first pattern you have is what we call expository preaching. Most expository preaching has become suppository preaching, but that's another issue. We won't get into that. Expository preaching is basically going through something and uncovering everything you can, verse by verse. Down through the history of the church, at least in my life, there have been some great expository preachers. Not many anymore, but there were some great ones. I had the advantage of hearing some incredible guys that could take the Bible and exposit it in that way. So the first thing that you want to talk about, you want to know, is there's an expository preaching.
8. The next type of preaching you find is topical. Now, topical is about subjects. I'm going to do a character study. I'm going to teach you on the second coming of Christ, the rapture, tribulation. That's a topical.
9. The third type is where you go book by book. I don't mean verse by verse, but I mean you give an overview of a book and you lay it out in that form, in that manner. There are other variances of it, but the bottom line, there's three basic ways you preach.

At this stage of our church, the guys that are preaching right now, they're all topical. Maybe one of you may or so may have the ability to do expository, but 99.9999% of you are topical. That's okay, because that's where you've got to start. You've got to really have a handle on what you're doing with the Bible to do expository. You can't just get up and pretend you can lay out. I mean, there's a lot of things that have to be in place for that, but there's a process you're going through.

But I said all of that to say this. A good pastor, a good preacher, will use all three of those forms in and out when he does whatever he does whenever he's going to be. In other words, you have to be good at all three. You have to be to the point where in anything that you do, you can change back and forth from one to the other, and the people don't even know that you're doing it, but you use that as a tool to really help communicate the thoughts you're trying to get across.

My favorite ice cream? Neapolitan ice cream. If we ever go out and get ice cream together, I don't like vanilla. Now some people do. I'm not a racist on vanilla, I'm just telling you. I don't like vanilla by itself. If I can't get Neapolitan ice cream, I won't just get vanilla. I'll get chocolate. I like chocolate. But if I get the chance, I'll get chocolate and vanilla. Most places that have ice cream places we go to don't even have strawberry anymore. But if you really want a good ice cream, get Neapolitan because what you do then is you mix all three flavors together. You get the best of both worlds. When you get to heaven, we're going to eat Neapolitan ice cream. I told you, Neapolitan ice cream is for Christians: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Mixing all three of them together in your life is what you want to have. It works that way.

When it comes to preaching, every Christian that preaches, every good preacher, needs to be Neapolitan in his process. You need to be able to blend all three of those preaching things together to bring about the concept that you're trying to get out. A good preacher is like a good pitcher. He never pitches the same pitch twice. He has enough in his toolbox as far as pitching is concerned that he can always change it up because people will always kind of get you down and

get to the point where they try to second-guess you. You've got to stay ahead of them. A good pastor, a good preacher, is somebody that will use all three. He'll use expository, he'll use topical, and he'll use the aspect of being able to lay out the books. He'll put the whole thing together in a package that you're sitting down there getting a lot of information, but you're not seeing how he's changing it up. That's the key.

Now, when we come to the book of Romans, we're going to use all three of those. I want you to know that going in. There'll be times that we're going to—somebody, I forget who it was now, somebody asked me the other day, "Do you think when we go through Romans, we'll go through a chapter a week?" I said, "Well, in my preliminary outlines, I've got 18 sermons in the first chapter." Now, I may change that up, and we may not do as many of that, or maybe we'll do more, but no, we're not going through a chapter a week. Some of it will be expository because you need to understand that that's how you lift out information and you get information that you need. Some of it will be topical because there's a lot of topics in the book of Romans that are covered. You use the expository method to uncover the topical, and yes, we'll be talking about this book as a book unto itself. You'll see that we're going to talk about the chapters unto themselves. We're going to use all three in our process, all three in our process.

You're going to find that when I try to have an atmosphere for you to learn the Bible, I try to look at this thing from a standpoint of that everything, everybody, no matter where you're at on whatever level, you can get what you need.

- We have basic discipleship, and that's where you start. When you first get saved, somebody takes you, a couple of people take you, and they bring you through the basics.
- Then we have Sunday morning. We're always keying off of Sunday morning. Sunday morning is the watershed where everything runs downhill from here. This is where our focus will always be for the main body, and then we'll kind of move it out from there. This is where you motivate. This is where you accelerate. This is where you keep people accountable. This is the most important time of the week as far as everything else that we do.
- Then we have Thursday night. Thursday night is where we have a chance to come that we can get down on the grassroots level. Ask any question you want to ask. You have that opportunity to go from when we're studying something like Romans or whatever we're studying, that you can ask the question, which is something that maybe I didn't make clear this morning or you didn't fully understand. You have a place then where you can say, "Hey, can you run that by me again and show me where that's at or how that thing works?" Then you have that aspect of it.
- Then to me, the most vital part, I think, of building people—and you build churches one person at a time, one family at a time—is the one-on-one, and where you can really help somebody take what they've got and accelerate.

Those things are absolutely vital to me. I think whatever level you're at, and some people don't require the one-on-one. Some people get everything that they need from Sunday morning. There's no magic formula to any one thing. You can't just pick one of those and say, "Well, if I got this, I'll really be spiritual." You've got to find within the scheme of things where we're at what works for you. My job is to make myself available on whatever level you want. As long as

you stay accountable, I can help you get the information that you need and apply it in the right way. When that thing works and it's hitting all eight cylinders, you're going to find that that is the way that you really build the Word of God into people's lives.

III. Romans as the Foundation of Christian Doctrine

Now, Romans basically is the answer to all the heresies that you're going to find in the body of Christ. You're going to find that when you start dealing with Christians and churches, and Christianity in general, you're going to find heresies. Romans is the fundamental book that if you're paying attention—now just listen to what I'm going to say to you this morning because you'll see it so true. There's a lot of heresies that people have: Christians, bad teaching. We talk about them on Thursday night. People come in sometimes, and there's people out there that believe you speak in tongues. People out there that believe that you can lose your salvation. People believe out there that you can, in the concept of healing—people out there in not the biblical sense but the Charismatic sense. Water baptism. There's people out there that believe all kinds of stuff.

Now let me tell you something. Those people that believe that, and this is very important, the people that believe that kind of stuff, when they start to talk to you about it or they start to prove their point, they will never, never in the history of their world go to the book of Romans. You know why? Because the book of Romans is the fundamental book on Christian doctrine for the New Testament church. You don't find anybody speaking in tongues in Romans. You don't find any verses even remotely connected with losing your salvation in Romans. You don't find anybody getting healed in Romans. You don't find anybody being baptized in water in Romans. You'll never find, you'll never see a Charismatic when he wants to prove tongues where he's going to go to Romans or healing. He's never going to go to Romans. He's never going to go to those places. You know why? Because he's going to go to the places that are not directly doctrine to the church. He's going to go to Matthew, Acts, and Hebrews. He is never going to go to Romans. You know why? Because Romans is a book that shuts down the criteria of Bible doctrine for the New Testament local church from the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul. There's not one talk of tongues, not one talk of healing, not one suggestion of losing your salvation. It is pure Bible doctrine.

A Jehovah Witness will never go to Romans. A Roman Catholic will never go to Romans. In fact, when Martin Luther, who led the Reformation in the 1500s, who was a Roman Catholic priest, when Martin Luther, when he got saved, he got saved because he defied the Roman Catholic Church, who was telling him not to read the Bible, and he began to read in the book of Romans, and he didn't get 17 verses in Romans before he found what he was looking for. Martin Luther did everything the Catholic Church told him. He had whipped himself. He crawled up the cathedral stairs, some 400 cement slabs, on his knees with blood to get the inner peace that he was looking for. He did everything that they told him in the church to do, and he never found a lasting peace. He opened up the book of Romans one time to find the church, didn't read 17 verses until he found, "The just shall live by faith." And he got saved on that verse. Romans is the foundation for where you and I are at in our relationship as the Christians in the church.

Two other Christian heresies it destroys: another one, and we'll talk about these when we get in the book, we'll take a week and go through these, there's hyper-dispensationalism and the heresy of Calvinism, and Romans just dismantles both of those. So when you begin to see and understand how important this book is, there are some things that Romans does for you. One of the things it does, if you understand its direction and its purpose, all the heresies in the body of Christ and without the body of Christ are debunked in the book of Romans. You'll never find a person who wants to believe this kind of junk go into the book of Romans to prove it. Why? Because it's not in there.

IV. Christ Typified and Key Phrases in Romans

In the book of Romans, Christ is typified, and every book of the Bible typifies Christ in one way or the other. I confess to you when we started our coming through each book of the Bible in our little groups, I forgot to do that. So starting this week or this time, when we go through the book of Judges, I'll back up and I'll give you with the books that we've come through so far how Christ is typified. But every book in your Bible, and this is why I'm saying to you, every book in your Bible is multifaceted by design to what it does. Christ is portrayed in every book of your Bible. In every book of your Bible, Christ will be portrayed and laid out in some form, some fashion. In the book of Romans, Christ is typified as Christ our righteousness.

In the book of Romans, you begin to find these phrases and terms. You begin to find the faith of God, the salvation of God, the truth of God, the power of God. Also in the book of Romans, you begin to find a little phrase that switches back and forth that shows you the context. You'll find a little phrase in Romans where it talks about peace with God. Then you'll find another phrase in the book of Romans that talks about the peace of God. See, most people look at that, and this is part of understanding what he's doing. This is what makes the book of Romans so complicated as you view it. People will think, "Well, what's the difference? Peace with God versus peace of God." I'll tell you the difference. Anytime you find in the book of Romans where it talks about peace with God, the context will always be your salvation. The day you got saved, you made peace with God. You made peace with God by getting God's righteousness. So when you find in the book of Romans, you want to be careful when you find when it talks about the peace with God, it's talking about salvation. When you find the phrase peace of God, it's talking about after you're saved, the peace that passes all understanding. It keeps your hearts and mind. That's the peace that it's talking about in your daily fellowship and your daily walk. Those are two absolute keys to the book of Romans. And yet if you were to ask the average preacher, the average Christian in the world today, he would know anything about it. That's why he doesn't understand. The book of Romans is an enigma to him. It's a mystery. He'll never figure it out.

The book of Romans goes hand in hand with the book of Galatians. You're going to find the theme of Romans is justification by faith. But the two books that kind of go hand in hand together are the book of Romans and the book of Galatians. In the book of Romans, you're taught that a man is saved by grace through faith plus nothing. In the book of Galatians, you're found that a man is kept after he's saved by grace through faith plus nothing. Now we've talked about it on Thursday night many, many times, and over the years we've all dealt with it. How many times

you find somebody that believes they can lose their salvation? Or you have churches out there teaching today. I guarantee you there's more that are teaching you can than there are that are teaching you can't. How many people out there that buy into that and listen to that and get confused on it? The whole issue simply is if you understand the name of the book of Romans and then you understand the book of Galatians. And you understand it in just two little ways, and we'll talk about multiple ways of dividing this book when we get into it. When you look at the book of Romans, the book of Romans teaches that a man is saved by grace through faith plus absolutely nothing. That's what the whole book deals with in one aspect. The book of Galatians shows you that after a man is saved, that he's kept by grace through faith plus nothing. There's nothing you can do to get it, and after you got it, there's nothing you can do to lose it. That's the book of Romans and the book of Galatians. You show me somebody who believes they can lose their salvation, and I'll promise I'll give you somebody who you threw the book of Romans and Galatians in front of them, they wouldn't know if they had it right side up or upside down. That's the importance of learning the structure of the books. In 2008, this is going to be the year of the Bible for our church, and we're going to develop all the things that we're going to develop to get you to the next level. The book of Romans is absolutely essential.

V. Paul's Unique Apostleship and the Placement of Romans

Paul writes the book around 58 A.D., and that makes it somewhere around Acts chapter 21 and 22. Nobody knows for sure the dates that these books are written. There's no absolute date on it. They try to date them according to the book of Acts where he's at, but he certainly writes it before Acts chapter 25 when he goes down to Rome. Martin Luther used to call Galatians and Romans his Catherine. Catherine was his wife, and Galatians and Romans were—he called them after his wife because they were the first love of his wife, named after his wife. Galatians and Romans, because it was Romans that he found out that he was justified with God by faith, adversely to what the Roman Catholic Church had taught him, and it was Galatians that he found out that he was kept by grace through faith. So those two favorite books were his, and he called them "my Catherine" after his wife. Incredible.

Years ago, I was in a Bible conference as a young man. I'd just been saved for a short time, and I heard one of the greatest Bible preachers that probably ever existed. His name was David Allen. He was from Michigan. This was back about 1974, and every year in our church back in Ohio, we had a big church camp, and we had an adult Bible conference, and Dr. David Allen had been the featured speaker. We had other speakers too, but he was the main guy that came in, and he came in for about eight or nine years running for like eight or nine days in a row. Dr. David Allen did the same thing every year, not the same thing, but in the same line. He was teaching through the book of Romans. I'll never forget as long as I live, I wished I would have had it on tape. Never got it. But I remember as a young guy sitting down there, it's when I began to realize and understand, and I didn't know anything much about anything, but I began to pick up on the fact that I needed to learn the book of Romans. He was an expository preacher. He would take a verse in Romans, and he'd just go on forever talking about the concepts. He'd get stuff out of there that you wouldn't even know where he was getting it from, but it was all good. I don't remember everything he said, but I do remember this because I took it to heart. I don't remember what night

it was. It was somewhere. I don't even remember what year it was. It was either '74 or '73. I don't know, but he was talking about because we had a lot of young men there that were studying for the ministry. I mean, it was a—it was like an institute type program there where that's where I was trained and all of these things. He was speaking to—he knew that he was speaking to everybody, but he was—we'd all kind of sit together in a little crowd because we're all hanging out together, and I remember one night he said this, he says, "In the ministry, I have learned that you never totally trust a man with ministry until he knows and understands and learns how to apply the book of Romans." Now he said, "Don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying there's some things. I'm not saying a man is unfaithful. I'm not saying he's not trustworthy. I'm saying the most precious thing on the face of this planet given to man and entrusted to man outside the Word of God is the ministry." And his point was, the book of Romans is absolutely crucial in understanding it as far as the ministry is concerned. So, and this is what he said, he said, "I'll just read you the quote: Never totally trust a man with ministry till he knows and understands and can apply and lives the book of Romans." Then he went on and he said, "For it is the measure of New Testament Christianity, thereby it is the measure of the man." I never forgot that. I never forgot that. That was given back in 1972 or '73 or '74, and from that day, first, I don't remember a lot of things that he said, but I remembered that because I realized that night as a young Christian, I didn't have anything figured out yet, but I knew that the book of Romans was important, and I knew that here was a man who understood the Bible much better than me, and he just told me that the measure of me as a child of God and my success in ministry is what I understood about the book of Romans because Romans was the standard for the New Testament church as far as Bible doctrine is concerned.

So with all that in mind, with all that little bit of background there, let's now go back and look at these five absolute things that we've got to get down, and I don't know if we'll get through them all today, that's not—I'm not in any hurry, but we're going to begin to take these things apart. You have to see this. I'm going to say it again, if you're ever going to be profitable in the ministry—now there's a lot of things you can do without ever excelling to the point where you really, really, really can use the Bible. I wouldn't give two hoots in a wind for a child of God who just wants to go so far in Christianity and then not go any farther. For me, it's all the way or nothing, and you know there, but you find God's people that are just satisfied on whatever level they're at, and they'll get a little Bible, they'll do a little thing, they'll come to church, they'll give a little tithe, they'll do all the little things, and they're just comfortable sitting there. I could never be that person. I hope this church never—I don't think you could be comfortable in this church being there with the way this church is. I hope you can't, but I'm telling you that's the things that you've got to look at. You've got to realize that your goal is to at some day have the book of Romans in your grasp. That ought to be your number one priority. My number one priority is to help you understand it quicker than it took me to get it.

So let's look at these five areas. First of all, I remember I talked to you about the placement of this book in your Bible. Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles. You have your 12 apostles, and this is where a lot of guys make a mistake. Paul, and this is why Paul's writings are different, Paul is not one of the original 12. I think it's over there in Matthew around 19:28 someplace in there, and Jesus tells the 12 apostles that you're going to sit on 12 thrones judging Israel with me in the

millennium. Paul will never sit on 12 thrones judging Israel. Paul himself talks about it in Acts, in the book of Romans it is. He talks about how the fact that he is the apostle to the Gentiles. He says in 1 Corinthians 15:8 about himself that he was born out of due time. Paul is an apostle, but he's different from the other 12. That difference between the two groups, or the group over here in Paul, is everything when it comes to what he writes. Paul was not—the other 12 were all to Israel. They're called out in Matthew chapter 10. They're given their commission in the book of Matthew, and that commission runs all the way up to Acts chapter 7. When God gives them in Acts chapter or Matthew chapter 10 and calls them out, He specifically tells them, "You don't go to the Samaritans, you don't go to the Gentiles, you go to the house of Israel." Paul, when he got saved in Acts chapter 9, he is specifically told to go to the Gentiles. He deals with Jews, but he doesn't deal with Jews as the same 12 apostles did. He brings in the New Testament doctrine to the church.

In fact, I don't know what you know about the book of Acts, and that's another book we've got to get down at some point, but when you come there and you find Paul saved in Acts chapter 9, and his salvation, his conversion takes place in Acts chapter 9. You don't find Paul again until around the end of Acts chapter 10 or the beginning of 11. What happens is, you know, from 9 to 11 in your Bible is just one page, but it's about 9 to 14 years in the time frame. If you got an Usher's chronology in your Bible, some guys date it differently, I'm not sure you can get an exact time on it, but bottom line is the New Testament chronology is not as easy to figure out as the Old Testament is because you don't have the exact same dating system to work with. Besides that, he's gone, he's out of the picture. He got saved in Acts chapter 9, and then he disappears anywhere from 8 or 9 years to 12 years, and that's that little gap you got in the book of Acts. Now I don't know everything he did during that period of time, but he fills in some of the blanks. He tells us a little later on that he spends three years in Mount Arabia. Now, anybody want to raise your hand and tell me what's in Mount Arabia that's so important here in this scheme of things? What's in Arabia? Mount Sinai is in Arabia. What's so significant about Mount Sinai? Where God met Moses. God met Moses there in Mount Sinai, and you know what? When God wanted to start the nation of Israel, when God wanted to start the nation of Israel and give to the man that He chose to be the nation of Israel's leader, you know where He took him? He took him on Mount Sinai, and He appeared to him in a burning bush, and He gave Moses everything that he needed. Now I know you think Moses just got the 10 commandments, don't you? Well, that was in the movie, and I know you think that Charlton Heston really won the chariot race in Ben Hur. He did. He cheated. But there's more to what Moses gets from God than just the 10 commandments. You know what God gave Moses up there? He gave him everything. He gave him how to—he gave him how to build the tabernacle. He gave him every dimension. When he was on Mount Sinai, he gave him everything that he needed to start the nation of Israel in his worship, in his concept. When Moses came down after his meeting with God, he had everything that he needed. We just think he got the 10 commandments. He got everything. He got every point of the law. He got all the instructions and the pattern how to make the tabernacle. When he came down, he was loaded, man, with everything that God wanted him to do because God chose Moses on Mount Sinai to give him the instructions.

Well, what's the number one concept about the Bible we all remember? Consistency. That's the bottom line. So he's consistent in the Old Testament. So what he wants to bring about the start of the church and give all the instruction to the church. Paul goes back to the same spot Moses did on Mount Sinai in Arabia, and he spends three years there getting revealed to him the body mystery. Now we talked about this a little bit last week about the arrogance of some people, the ministers of all the details in churches, and I talked to you about how that Paul talked about the gospel being "my gospel," and how some people look at that and think that's egotistical. "You couldn't call that your gospel, that's God's gospel." No, no. Paul is talking in the sense that God gave it to him. It was his gospel. He got it directly from God. Everybody else got it indirectly from God through Paul. Paul got it directly from God and the commission to take it to the Gentiles, therefore Paul says, "It's my gospel." So he's out there for a period of time, and then I do know from this, he gives a little indication that in the process of that, he goes and finds Jesus's family, and he sits down with them, and he wants to find—because remember, Paul didn't follow him when he was walking on the earth. Paul was killing Christians then. It's only after the resurrection when he's no longer on earth that Paul gets the call, and now he's got to do a fast catch-up, so he goes back and gets Jesus's family, at least James anyhow, and he sits down with him and he says, "Tell me everything about him. You lived with him. You grew up with him. Tell me everything you remember." He wanted to balance both aspects of it, and then he shows back up at the end of chapter 10 or chapter 11, wherever it is there, and we have the first Christians called at Antioch, and in the first missionary trip, and off we go.

It's very, very crucial that you see how Paul fits into this book and Paul is his uniqueness to the other 12 apostles and the placement of this book in your Bible. You have five historical books that cover the history of the New Testament. You have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and Acts. Those are your historical books. Those books give you an actual historical concept of the birth of Christ, the life of Christ, the ministry of Christ, the death of Christ, the events of the apostles or the acts of the apostles after his death right up into, and then you have the conversion of Paul in Acts chapter 9. Then you have the gospel slowly moving, transitioning to the Gentiles to the end of the book of Acts, and then what happens? The next book, the church now has been revealed. It has been laid out. It has been talked about. It's all been detailed out, and now what's the next book? Romans. The placement of Romans in your New Testament order of books is absolutely crucial to figuring out what God is doing here. Romans is the first book in your New Testament order after five historical books at the start of the church age because Romans is the definitive statement on what the church is to believe and the doctrines exposed to follow. Romans is the baseline, the foundation of what Christianity is built on. Every other book in the New Testament and the Old Testament has to now line up to the book of Romans as far as you and I are concerned. Romans is the standard. You don't understand the book of Romans to the place where you can dream about it backwards and get it all right in your sleep. You're in danger of getting messed up.

A lot of you, bless your heart, and I know this is just the way it goes, but a lot of you right now, you're hitchhiking on my spirituality, and that's okay. That's the way it's supposed to be. I'm supposed to prop you up till you can stand up. I understand that. Somebody did that for me. That's not a criticism, but the bottom line is, at some point in your life, you're going to have to

stand up and understand this stuff. I can't always be there to answer your question. I can't always be there to take your phone call with what to do in this given situation. You're going to have to learn to stand on your feet and know why you believe what you believe, and Romans is the foundation book you've got to get down at some point in your life. There is no purpose, reality, rhyme or reason of going in an in-depth study of all the other books in the Bible till you understand the book of Romans. Now we've just been around with it throughout the last four years in a very good way. We learned a lot of stuff. We laid a lot of foundations. We began to do some things to help you, but now you're at a level where many of you, not all of you, but many of you are ready to grasp this, and now we've got to seize that opportunity.

Let me give you an example of this. There's lots of things out there in the Bible that people read that they get confused on. I'll give you an example. Matthew 25:1-10. Now there's a nice passage that proves you can lose your salvation. Let me read, let me just give it to you in a short way. It talks about 10 virgins. Five are wise, five are foolish. Five have oil and five don't. You know oil is a type of the Holy Spirit of God. So they're going down through there and the bridegroom comes. Christ comes back. Five of them that were unwise say, "We don't have any oil, Holy Spirit of God." So they go out to get some oil, and of course, while they're gone, the bridegroom comes, and now the standard teaching is, you see, if you want to get confused, the standard teaching is that's 10 Christians. Five of them lost their salvation, the oil. Five didn't, and that's how it's taught, and you've got Christians that hear that. I could give you 50 places right now, and we could just take the time, and I could rattle them off. Well, you could go in your Bible that looks like you could lose your salvation, and if you don't know your Bible, somebody will talk you out of your salvation in five minutes because you don't know how to defend yourself.

The bottom line is this, and this is what you've got to learn today. All the Bible is written for you, but not all the Bible is written directly to you. There's things that there's three groups of people addressed in the Bible. You got the Jews, you got the Gentiles, and you got the church, and you're going to find places where the Bible is—he's not directly speaking to you at all. He's talking to the Jew. Matthew 25:1-10 is one of those places. There's places that he's not talking to you as a Christian, and he's not talking to the Jew as a nation. He's talking to the Gentile nation. You'll find those back in the Old Testament about 40 places. Then there's places where he's not talking to the Jew, he's not talking to the Gentiles in context, he's talking to the church. Now your job and my job is to be able to find out by reading a passage who he's talking to. You know the easiest way to do it? Know the book of Romans. When I go to Matthew chapter 25 and I read that somebody says, "Well, gee, Bob, I think you can lose your salvation." No, you know how I know you can't? Because there's no place anywhere in the writings of Paul that goes along with that teaching. You see, don't make Matthew chapter 25 your standard. Make the writings of Paul your standard and judge everything else by it. Now why would you do that? Because he is the apostle to the Gentiles, and he recorded the doctrine for the church. He's your authority on church doctrine. Not Matthew, not Mark, not Luke, not John, not James. He is the absolute final authority. When you find something over here that you want to apply into your life, you have to run it through the Pauline writings to make sure it's in the church for the doctrine of the church and not written to the Jew or somebody else. It's just that simple. Now, but you see what that requires? That requires you understanding your Bible, and there lies the problem, and that's why

some of you five years from now will be just as confused and be able to be talked out of your salvation then as you are now. You won't pick up the challenge, and you won't do anything with it.

Romans is the first book in your New Testament after five historical books because Romans is the definitive statement. It's the foundation. It's the baseline from which all the other books in the Bible for you and for me as a Christian have to operate by. Every other book in the New Testament and the Old Testament has to line up with Romans. Romans is the definitive book.

VI. Key Definitions in Romans

Let me show you how this works. You think you're spiritual? You think you really got a handle on things? Let me show you what Romans does that most of us don't know anything about. Oh, we know the terms, but let me ask you a question. If I was to pass out blank pieces of paper today and I was to ask you to write out for me what the Bible defines as the righteousness of God, and don't just tell me, "Well, it's God's goodness." Don't just tell me, "Well, it's Jesus Christ." Go into the Bible and get defined for me. I mean, you all are you saved? Then you all have God's righteousness. You mean you got it but you couldn't go to the book and define it? What's up with that? Romans defines God's righteousness. Romans is the book that defines God's righteousness.

Then the second thing it defines is the truth of God. You think the truth of God is the Bible? Well, it is in one form, but Romans takes it much farther than that. If I was to pass out a piece of paper and I was to say to you, "Detail out for me." I mean, we always talk about the King James Bible. We stand up here and say, "Get the good new look from the old book." You know, the inward look, the outward look, the outward from the authorized book. All right, define for me. Don't just sing the song. Open up that book. Write it out for me. Define for me the truth of God out of Romans. That's a definitive book.

Romans defines the faith of God. Now we all, we all, we all trust God, don't we? Do we? Could you take up? Could you? You see, a lot of these things, we know the terminology. We just don't know anything about them in the Bible. What good is believing something if you don't even know where to go to find out what that—that's what's wrong with your witness. And I'm not saying you're not living a good Christian life. You just don't know why you are. You don't know what to do with these things. Now this is what Romans does for you. It opens up the whole concept that you not just talk about it, you understand it. These things are defined in Romans.

- The righteousness of God.
- The truth of God.
- The faith of God.
- In Romans, the salvation of God is defined. And I know the first thing you think, "Oh, I know what that's at, Romans chapter 10." That's not where it's defined. That's not where it's defined. But you see, that's the way our little minds work. Because that's what you've been taught. When you understand the book of Romans, you understand that it defines these things.

- It defines the righteousness of God.
- The truth of God.
- The faith of God.
- The salvation of God.
- Oh, here's one: the forgiveness of God. Now forgiveness is not one that you—that forgiveness is not one that you know. Forgiveness is one that you do. Romans defines when the Bible says that if a man be taken in a fault, you that are what? No. Well, I ain't gonna buy that. You that are what? That's 10 of you. You that are what? That's half of you. You that are what? Restore such a one. You see, we like that verse. We like restoring. We like forgiving people when it's somebody else's enemy. We just don't like forgiving them when they're our enemy. We talk about forgiveness. Define for me in the Bible the baseline of forgiveness. It's in Romans. Romans defined it. You don't have the right to forgive who you want to forgive. But that's what Christianity does. Seen it all my life. All my life I've seen it. I mean, you always have the Christians. You always have the Christians who use the terminology. They talk about it. Oh, they can—they can paint the word studies with it. But when it goes down to the baseline of understanding it, you know what they want to pretend they're in ministry. They want to pretend they're doing this. They want—hey, it isn't about all the flour and fluff you show out here. It's about when push comes to shove on the baseline and you're faced with it. What do you do? Don't tell me what you know. Don't tell me what your spirit you are when you're faced with these issues face to face. It's not what you know then, is it? It's what you do that separates you out. And my friend, I'm telling you that's what the book of Romans does. It defines for you. It puts in the context.
- The righteousness of God.
- The truth of God.
- The faith of God.
- The salvation of God.
- The forgiveness of God.
- The gospel of God. There's at least four gospels in your Bible, and I'm not talking about Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And you say that to the average pastor, the average Christian, they say, "Well, that's heresy." Really? Want to sit out and open up Bibles together? We'll find out who the heretic is. Romans defines for you. He defines for you what the gospel is. If I was going to ask you right now, write on a piece of paper, "Tell me what the gospel is." Don't tell me it's the good news. I know that. It's Paul in the book of Romans that lays down the fundamental structure.
- Talks about the power of God defining it. See, the power of God is not what you do. We like to think of that. We like to walk around like a peacock. If Christianity—I heard a preacher one time preached about Christianity's a zoo. Well, if it is, all the other animals died with the peacocks. We strut around showing our spiritual tail feathers. We strut around telling everybody how spiritual we are. And we don't even understand the baseline of what the power of God being defined in Romans is. Tell me about it. You never have the power of God unless you have the character of God. And the character of God is absolutely crucial. Understanding the things that we're talking about.
- Then he talks about the love of God. He defines the love of God.

- And then lastly, he defines the wrath of God.

Now when the Bible talks about rightly dividing the word of truth in 2 Timothy chapter 2, this is what he's talking about. The practical way. This is where you're coming from. You're defining and understanding the righteousness of God, the truth of God, the faith of God, the salvation of God, the forgiveness of God, the gospel of God, the power of God, the love of God, the wrath of God. There is nothing else in New Testament Bible Christianity that you can add to that list that isn't covered in those right there. And they are defined in Romans. Romans is Paul's doctrinal statement to me as a New Testament Christian of what I am to believe, how I am to operate, how I am to obey it, how I am to apply it to my life. So it's placed at the end of the historical books at the start of the church history to lay out what the church is not only to believe and to teach but how it's to operate.

VII. Structure and Breakdown of Romans

Now let me show you the whole thing here. Then after he writes that book, Romans, then the rest of his books fall into two formats. You see, I told you, you can't view the Book of Romans like you do all of these other books. You break Paul's writings down into three formats.

10. The first format is the Book of Romans itself. The Book of Romans is unique from everything else that he writes. It's found in the placement of your Bible after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in Acts in Romans. End of the historical books, end of the church age, but before he writes to the other writings. Paul knew a great concept. He knew that it was absolutely no reason, purpose, rhyme, or anything else. He knew there was absolutely no purpose, rhyme, or reasoning to deal with right to all the other churches till he dealt with Romans first.
11. The next set of books he writes are to churches. That'd be 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and all the rest of them.
12. The second group he writes to are New Testament Christian individuals: Titus, Timothy, Philemon. They're sometimes called pastoral epistles because they're all pastors.

But the bottom line is this. When you understand how this thing works, you see how it breaks down into that concept. You have to see that. It breaks down into the, after the historical books, he gives you the defined concept book of the Bible that defines everything else. And then he writes to churches and then he writes to individuals. And everything in the rest of your Bible is based on what he writes down in Romans.

Now I'm going to give you one more and then we're going to hold up today and we'll finish the rest of them next week. But here's the second thing you want to look at. You have to get the right breakdown of the book itself. Rule number one of your Bible is always look for the natural breakdown that God puts within every book. Every book in your Bible has a design by God breakdown that breaks down and lays itself out. Every book in the Bible, every book of the Bible breaks down unto itself. And your job and my job is to find how that thing works.

Now in your Bible, let's face it. You know why the Bible is intimidating? Because there's 31,176 verses in your Bible. If you have a King James Bible, if you have any other Bible than King

James Bible, you're without 40 verses. But that's all right. That's just 40. You didn't have to read anyhow. You got 31,176 verses. You got 1,189 chapters, 66 books. That's intimidating. That's intimidating. And yet when you come to the Bible, the Bible, and we're going to see this when we get into our group sessions, you're going to see how the Bible itself breaks itself down. That's easy to understand. The book of Romans is the same way. The key to Romans is to understand that it's not one book. It's five books or five sections in one book. See, that's another problem people try to take the whole book, don't break it down into the five sections, that are a natural dividing of God of how you understand the book. And when you get down those five sections, and we're going to study the book, when we lay out the book of Romans, we're going to take it section by section. And when we're done with the first section, you're going to understand everything about that section that's in it. When we're done with the second section, you're going to understand everything that's in it. When we're done with the third section, we're going to deal with everything that's in it. When we deal with the fourth section, we're going to understand everything and how it is. When we deal with the fifth section, you're going to understand how it works. And then you know what we're going to do? We're going to show you how to bolt the first section to the second section, bolt it to the third section, bolt it to the fourth section, bolt it to the fifth section, and have the book of Romans. Don't try to tackle the book in one big swallow. God never designed that. He systematically divided it in five.

All right, here they are:

13. In chapter 1 through chapter 5, you have the historical section. The historical section is very crucial to the book of Romans, because this is where he sets the stage for where he's going. You see, Paul understood that he was coming from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the Jew to the Gentile. And he knew that there was a lot of confusion going on. So what he does in the first five chapters, what he does in the first five chapters is he lays out a historical basis, not only for the Jew, but for the Gentile. And what he does at that particular point, he gives you the mindset of both the nation of Israel and how the Gentiles think. Absolutely crucial. We'll get into it when we get into it. Paul knew that Romans was going to be the textbook that you and I use to reach the world of Gentiles. So in the first historical section, he wanted you to understand how the Jews think and how the Gentiles think. Because you and I are going to have to deal with them. More specifically, the Japhethites and the Semites, Jews and the Gentiles. The funniest thing in the world is to watch a Christian try to witness to somebody and not understand how that concept works. If I was going to deal with a Jew or a Muslim, I would never deal with him the same way I would deal with a Gentile. Romans shows you what the Jew and the Muslim's problem is. Most of you, and I've watched it happen. I watched the night we were at New Year's and watched about, I was standing there listening to a couple of you, four or five of you, talked to some Muslim guy, and I kind of snickered to myself, never said anything. You watched your tail. You know why? Because you approached him like a Gentile, and he just shot you down in flames. You don't ever come out, you'll come out to a Muslim like a Gentile. You'll never go back to the Old Testament in Genesis and play with him. Why, he'll wrap you up and put your legs around you and look like a spaghetti dinner, and he'll sauce on it when he's finished with you. But Romans shows you how to get him. Romans shows you how to get him, whether it's a

Jew or it's a Muslim. Or a Confucianist, or whoever. Shem doesn't think like Japheth does. So he gave you a whole chapter on Semite mentality. Why? Because he thought you'd be smart enough to study it and read it so you would know how to deal with a Semite. But oh no, not us. Gentiles are a mindset. They're different than the Semites. And when you understand the difference between the two, Paul says, "Hey look, you're going to be the church that's going to reach the world. I'm done with Israel for a while. You're going to have to take the material in Romans and you're going to have to reach the world. So you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to give you the first five chapters showing you how they think. Study it, learn it, plan your attack based on that. Not your own chicken soup, noodle, goopy ball, cough drop, cure for the flu. Follow the Bible. Get that thing down."

14. Then the next section, chapter 6 through chapter 8, is the doctrinal section. That is where the church doctrine is solidified. They are the most important chapters in your Bible to you. And I guarantee you if I, not all you five years or less people, I'm not even talking to you. If I had to throw out a piece of paper and tell you, "Lay out those doctrines in those chapters," you wouldn't even know what to do with it. And yet you claim to be a Christian. You claim to know the Bible. I am not impressed.
15. Then you have chapter 9 through chapter 11, what we call the prophetic section. And that's where he shows you how God views the church, Israel, and three different concepts. We'll get into it. Oh, we're going to tear these apart when we get into them. Of course, after we're done this morning, we may vote again. You may want to change your mind. I told you it's going to be a year of the Bible. There's going to be accountability this year. Let me tell you something. You're going to be a leader in this church. You're going to be a peacock. Then you're going to do what the Bible says. That simple. We may not need a new building after all. Chapter 9 through chapter 11, the prophetic section. God's not through with Israel. And how the church should view that.
16. Chapter 12 through chapter 15 is the practical section. Greatest chapters in the Bible. Greatest chapters in the Bible to you on the practical aspect of ministry. And I guarantee you if I passed out paper to you and told you to lay out for me the practical aspect of your ministry, not what you say, but what you should be doing, and then line it up if you are doing it, maybe we better do 2 Corinthians.
17. And then chapter 16, you have the conclusion. And a nifty little reference there in chapter 16:25 to the body mystery, where Paul's talking about the body mystery to the revealed through him.

Romans is the first book in your Bible after the historical books that covers the five sections. And that's how we're going to break it down. When we take these sections, we're going to take them one at a time. We're going to lay them out, we're going to X-ray them, we're going to put them into an MRI on them, we're going to do everything we can do to it. We're going to do an autopsy on it, we're going to break it down into every facet and every concept. You want the book of Romans? All right, to whom much is given, much is required. Here in the Bible? All right, you had a free ride so far. From this point on, there's accountability in the factor with it. All you young Christians are just getting on track, not even talking to you. If we're ever going to get to the next level, we've had four or five years now where everybody just got to kind of do their own thing and coast. From this point on, things are going to change. You're going to have to

understand, if we're going to teach this book, I am not going to get the energy to teach it if you're not going to take the energy to live it. Just that simple. And I'll help you throughout the process. And we'll put that thing into play in your life and we'll get it going from there. So next week, we'll pick it up where we left off, we'll come on down through it, and we'll add the rest of the things we've got to get to. And then, like I said, we're not going to be in any hurry. We're going to take our time and work this thing through and it's going to have to be done right. To whom much is given, much is required. And we have to follow that concept if we put this thing together. Let's pray.