

If you have been coming any length of time here, even just a couple of weeks or sporadically, you know that we are coming through the New Testament, laying out every book of the Bible. We just finished last week probably the single greatest book that you really need to understand in the Bible. I took a lot of thought and put a lot of time into laying out the book of Acts for you this time, simply because I know that it is such a vital book that you have to truly understand.

Last week, we talked about the seven things that you lose when you lose your Bible. In the book of Acts, we talked about the two lines of Bibles. We firmly established that we know what the Bible is: God's Word. I think it was necessary last week for you to understand, and seeing how it all popped up again in Thursday night Bible study with the tabernacle and the seven furnishings that we talked about, it truly amazes me how much you are grasping and understanding this material, and it is really going to make a difference in your life.

So today, we are going to get into the book of Romans. In the book of Romans, you have heard me say it many, many times: it is basically the handbook of Christian doctrine.

## I. The Purpose and Placement of Romans

There are some things about Romans that I want you to understand to help you put your Bible all together. What we are going to try to do today is not only give you an outline of Romans that would be very valuable in your own personal study or if you are teaching the Bible to somebody else, but, more importantly, or equally as important, I would say, we are going to fit Romans into your Bible format. That is very important.

You will remember the book of Acts. We showed you how we outlined it on the board up here, how the book of Acts breaks down into three sections, and those three sections are based on two key chapters. We saw in the first seven chapters of Acts how God is dealing with the nation of Israel, and there are no Gentiles there at all. Our first key chapter was Acts 7.

We see in Acts 7 everything begins to change from that point on in the book of Acts. We start to see that Peter, by Acts 12, begins to completely fade out. We see after Acts 7 things start to change as far as the gospel going to the Samaritans and to the Gentiles. We see Paul getting saved in Acts 9. Peter is pretty well out of it by Acts 12, and then Paul, we saw, begins his ministry, and now we see it completely change with where they are first called Christians at Antioch.

We now see, and we learned this in the book of Acts from Paul's ministry, the establishment of what we know as the New Testament church under New Testament doctrine. Remember, I took time to show you the difference between the apostles' doctrine, which was being taught in Acts 1-7, and the New Testament church doctrine, which Paul teaches and preaches. This messes a lot of people up, but we got that pretty well cleared up for you, and you should have a pretty good handle on that at this point. We now realize that once we start Paul's ministry, this is where the

New Testament doctrine begins to be laid down, and that is why the books in the New Testament are in the order they are in.

Now watch this, putting Romans in the right place: We have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We know that they are all dealing with Israel at the first coming of Christ, and they are basically historical books. Then our next book is the book of Acts. The book of Acts is the transition book, is it not? It starts out with Peter in the kingdom of heaven; it winds up with Paul in the kingdom of God. We see it come from the Old Testament nation of Israel into the church, from the Jew to the Gentile, and we see how that thing lays itself out.

Once we got to the end of the book of Acts, the church has now been firmly established. Peter is out of the picture. Israel is out of the picture. Jerusalem is never talked about again in a sense of God doing anything there. We have seen the missionary trips and churches started all over Asia Minor and even up into Europe, and now we have the church firmly established by the time we get to the book of Acts. The next book that he writes, going in the order that helps us put it all together, is the book of Romans.

## II. Paul's Epistles: Foundation and Application

The book of Romans, Paul writes, is the book that forms what the church is to believe. He writes the book of Romans, and this defines what you and I, as a New Testament church, as far as our doctrine is concerned, should believe. Now that Paul is in and Peter is out, and the church has been firmly established in Acts 12 through after Acts 28, I want you to understand this: Paul writes some books other than Romans, and he writes to seven churches. In those seven churches, you are going to find that he deals with specific issues. We will talk about that here in just a moment.

After he writes the book of Romans, then he writes some other books, and these books fall into two formats.

- He writes to the seven churches.
- He writes to New Testament Christians.

## III. The Simplicity and Standard of Biblical Doctrine

You know, people get really confused in the Bible, and yet the Bible is a very simple book. Believe me, I would not, and I do not claim to know it or understand it to any great degree, but I do want to tell you this: If I can figure out what I know about the Bible, which you could put into a thimble, if I can figure out what about the Bible, you certainly can. We get the idea that the Bible is a very complicated book. We get the idea that the Bible is a very hard book, and the truth of the matter is the Bible is not a hard book. What makes it hard is—look at it this way.

Everybody remembers when we were 16, 17, or 18, do we not? Some of us, like Jerry Norman, are having a harder time today than others, but he does not want me to tell how old he is. He is 41. Jerry, you look good for 41, buddy. Okay. I am 39, Jerry. Do you believe that? Okay, anyway.

Remember when you were living with your parents? Let me ask you a simple question. Now I know this does not fit everybody because some of you were model kids, like Kevin. Yeah, right. Zach, you were a model kid, were you not? I was. You were? So you met me. Now you are corrupted. Okay, I can deal with that.

Bottom line is this: Let me ask you a question. Looking back in your life, would your life have been better and less hectic, now that you have hindsight, and hindsight is always 20/20, would your life have been better and less hectic if you would have actually listened to the advice your mom and dad gave you when you were 16 or 17? Mine would not have, but I am asking you. No, man. Now just stop and think about it. Put it in perspective. Would your life have been a lot less hectic, a lot less cluttered, and maybe in some cases, you made some very serious bad mistakes in life? Not everybody does. They come in different packages, but in a general sense, I think we all would generally say that our lives would have been better and more simplified and less hectic and complicated if we had just listened to what our parents would have told us.

I would have to have the same contact with listening to me when I am talking to you about the Bible. The reason why people get messed up in the Bible, and the reason why people make the Bible such a hard book, is because they will not listen to somebody who understands how simple it really is. That Bible is not hard, but man likes to make it complicated because they do not listen to people who understand the easy way and the hard way to learn the Bible. Just like some of you kids at 16 or 17, you were going to do it your way no matter what mom and dad said. Some of God's people, when you lay out the clear teaching of the Word of God that will affect their lives, they are going to do it their way no matter what you say. In both cases, you lose some things, and you have some problems that come into your life.

My job, really, basically, in its most basic form, my job is to make the Bible and Christianity and a relationship with God as easy as it is, not making it hard as it is. We do not have a lot of flower frills around here. Do not need them. Do not want them. I want to always present to you how easy the Bible is. You do not need to know Greek. You do not need to know Hebrew. You do not need to go to Bible college. You just simply need to listen how simple Paul lays these things out and how simple God actually laid the Bible out. That is all.

Let me tell you what I am talking about. When you come to your New Testament, a lot of people get messed up in the Bible. A lot of people get messed up in the Bible because they violate this one basic simple rule, which I think is probably the greatest single simple rule of understanding not only the New Testament, but the Old Testament. Once you realize how important Paul's writings are, once you realize what Romans does for you as far as setting down the systematic doctrines that this church, any church, is supposed to follow, the things that we are supposed to believe, the things that we are supposed to heed to, then here is what you do:

When you come to your Bible in any testament, Old Testament and New Testament, when you are reading something, if what you are reading goes along with something that Paul wrote in his epistles, then you can apply it right into your life because the two match up. When you read something that does not line up with something Paul writes, then you have got to be careful with

that, and you have got to find who that is written to, because the standard, the standard of Christian doctrine, is what Paul writes to you and me.

I will give you a good example of that. I think one of the most messed up, screwed up, fouled up concepts that most Baptist preachers have today is the fouled up, screwed up concept of divorce, remarriage, and the concept of marriage in the Bible. You are going to find that in every case, I guarantee you, I never missed it in 40 years. Every time you find somebody, some pastor, getting up and having a marriage class or talking about divorced people or talking about this and talking about that, they will always start in Matthew, they will always go back to the Old Testament someplace back there, and they will try to make those verses fit into where people are at today.

Here is the problem with that. This is just one example. The teaching to the New Testament church on marriage, divorce, and remarriage is not found in Matthew. It is not found in the Old Testament in Deuteronomy. It is not found any place where you are going to find it in the Old Testament. It is found in one of the books that Paul writes, 1 Corinthians 7. In that chapter, we have nailed it out before, you will find 21 principles that he lays down about marriage, divorce, and remarriage. You know what you will find in that chapter? You will find that Paul will tell you there are things that he is giving to the church that were not given to the Old Testament nation of Israel in three or four aspects.

When you go back and you make the Old Testament or Matthew, which is still technically the Old Testament, you make that your doctrine on divorce, marriage, and the concept of dealing with people, and you miss the chapter that was written to us, the church, that takes some of that stuff and uses it, but cancels a lot of it out, and then adds other things to it. This is why people get screwed up when it comes to the Bible.

Now, you can take that concept to just about anything you want to do today. That is just an example. Your Bible, and you should already know this, your Bible is written to three groups of people.

1. It is written first of all to the Jew.
2. It is written second of all to the church.
3. It is written thirdly to the Gentiles.

What you have to do to be a competent Bible student and have a working knowledge of the Word of God, what you and I have to do, is be able to look at any scripture, any passage, any book of the Bible, and then understand first and foremost and fundamentally who that book is written to. Is it written to the Jew? Is it written to the Gentile? Because there are passages in your Bible that are not written to the Jew and are not written to you and me. They are written to the Gentile world. Then there are passages in there, large portions in there, that are written to you and me, the church. What you and I have to be able to do is to discern who it is being written to when it is being written.

That sounds like a hard thing. It is not. The simplest formula is when you understand the book of Romans, when you understand fundamentally what Paul is doing in Romans, and you realize what the books written to the churches deal with, and the books written to the individuals deal

with, then you can get into a passage. When you read something back in the Old Testament, then you can say, "Ah, Paul used that over here," or you can read that back there and you can say, "Wow, Paul never talked about that."

Do you know why people believe you can lose your salvation today? We have a host of good, godly, saved people who I believe love God, but they live their lives under the bad doctrine of not having eternal security. Do you know why that is? I will tell you why that is. It is because they read passages in Matthew or James or Hebrews that look like somebody is losing their salvation, and they cannot have the discernment to know who those books are written to, that they are not written to the church. I mean, how smart do you have to be to read Hebrews, the title, and realize that that book is written to Hebrews? How smart do you have to be to open up James and see down there in the first verse it says, "to the twelve tribes scattered"? They are not written to us. This is what understanding Paul, Romans, and his writings, fundamentally Romans today, really does for you.

A couple of weeks ago, two weekends ago, Brother Cleon had some guys over, and I just went over for a little while, and he invited some of his friends over that did not really, they were caught up in predestination or whatever the whole thing was and all of that stuff. I was just sitting there, and I do not get into those things. It is kind of like little sword drills for you guys, and you guys were, I mean, some of you guys did not even eat. You were busy. Forget that. I am eating, man. I just kind of sat down there and watched what was going on. To me, as an outside observer, there was one fundamental issue that these guys all had. They are nice guys. They are great guys. I mean, I love them to death. They are very kind, very loving. I believe they love the Lord. I mean, they are great people. But they all had one fundamental problem, and some of you probably picked up on it: the passage they were talking about, they had no idea discerning where they were supposed to go in relationship to the church. That is why they got messed up in it, and you will always get messed up that way. You just simply will.

#### IV. The "Remaxed Christian" and Biblical Grounding

We have what I call a lot of "Remaxed Christians." Do you know what a Remaxed Christian is? I have little definitions for things. I see things driving down the road. I see things, and they make me parallel to Christians, and I say, "Oh, that is a Remaxed Christian." You know what a Remaxed Christian is? You know in the summertime you see those big hot air balloons? Well, there are a couple of them around town that have "Remax" on the side of them. If I would have seen one with "Acme Auto Parts," they would have been "Acme Auto Parts Christians." It just happened to be that I saw a Remaxed big old balloon up there. I have seen them many, many times, and they remind me of a lot of God's people. They are full of hot air.

In a hot air balloon, you do not have any way of directing yourself. You cannot set a course. You just have to get blown where the wind blows you. The Bible says in Ephesians 4:14, there are a lot of God's people that are blown about by every wind of doctrine. They do not know what they believe, and they are Remaxed Christians. They are just up there, and they want to believe something, but they are just dependent on the next thing they hear that makes it exciting to them,

and they are just blown about in life wherever they go. You should not be that kind of Christian. God gave you the ability to be grounded in the Word of God.

I say this: you ought to be able to know in time in your life, I would say probably 96, 97 percent, you ought to be able at some point in your life to know where you are at in your Bible to a 96, 97 percent degree of where you are at wherever you go, whatever book you are in, whatever you are reading, as far as what it lays out to, doctrinally, inspirationally, or historically. You may not be able to get in and figure all the pieces out, but you ought to be able to come to that book and almost to a certainty, 95, 96 percent, be able to find yourself historically, doctrinally, and inspirationally wherever you are at because that is the way God designed that Bible to be studied.

When Paul writes Romans, he sets the baseline for us, the standard. He makes, as I have already said, the doctrinal statement for the church. The letters he writes afterwards, after the book of Acts, to the churches, are built on that foundation. Back in the Dark Ages, and some of you that came through church history know what I am talking about, back in the Dark Ages when the Roman Catholic Church was beginning to develop and all the heresy was beginning to circulate, there was a group of people that the Roman Catholic Church called "Paulicians." They called them Paulicians because as the Roman Catholic Church was developing and heresy was swirling around the church, men were now beginning to teach that you followed the doctrine out of Matthew, that you got your teaching out of Matthew, out of the Gospels. These guys stood up and said, "Oh, you are out of your mind. As the New Testament church, we do not take church doctrine from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; we take church doctrine from what Paul wrote because Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul wrote those to churches." They understood the same thing I am telling you today.

So the Roman Catholic Church called them Paulicians. Do you know why they called them Paulicians? Because they understood and followed the teachings of Paul for the doctrine of their church. I am a Paulician today. Those same Paulicians that were called out in the fourth, fifth, sixth century, by the time we get to the 1700s and the 1600s and the latter part of the 1500s, they are called Anabaptists, and then they are called simply Baptists. But you have the roots of a Paulician in you if you are a Bible-believing New Testament church because they knew that Paul's doctrine was the teaching for the church.

Romans has 16 chapters in it. In those 16 chapters, you have just about every New Testament subject or doctrine defined and explained that you could ever want. I do not have the reference verses on this; that is not my point today. But you want to talk about subjects:

- The righteousness of God is explained in Romans.
- The concept of our faith is explained in Romans.
- God's Word being the truth of God and how it impacts man; it is in Romans.
- The gospel of God; it is in Romans.
- The power of God through the gospel; it is in Romans.
- A New Testament salvation. We call it the Romans Road. I led Raylene to Christ yesterday, and when most of you bring people to Christ, you do not go to Acts. You do not go to Matthew. You know where you go? You go to Romans, and that is your base text. So much so

that it has been called down through history the Romans Road to salvation. You start in Romans 3, you go to Romans 6, you go to Romans 10, and then you are home free.

- You want to talk about the concept of eternity? It is in Romans.
- You want to talk about the concept of relationship with other people? It is in Romans.
- The great doctrines of the Bible: Doctrine of justification Doctrine of glorification Doctrine of eternal security Doctrine of biblical predestination Doctrine of biblical election The doctrine of the dual natures of man The doctrine of the age of accountability The doctrine of Christian service The doctrine of the church The doctrine of ministry of the church The doctrine of sanctification The doctrine of separation The doctrine of Israel The doctrine of civil government The doctrine of the Gentile The doctrine of God's foreknowledge The doctrine of God's predestination All in the book of Romans.

This is where they are defined for you. When you get into the other books, then he deals with them on issues, but it is all built on Romans. If you understand and can lay out the great doctrines in Romans, you will never get caught up in the church heresies that you find today. You have heard me say it many, many times, heresy comes in two flavors:

- Heresy of unsaved people who try to put some heresy in your life that will send you to hell.
- Heresies that saved people have. Those heresies will not send you to hell, but they will certainly strip you naked at the judgment seat of Christ.

Of course, two of the greatest ones that we know of today that you probably deal with more than anything else, especially the first one, is the aspect of losing your salvation. Calvinism, predestination, has raised its head again. For many, many years, it was dead, buried. But as the church goes into apostasy, it has repackaged itself, renamed itself, but it is the same old stuff. Nothing has really changed.

When it comes to salvation, I do not ever get into these arguments with people. I really do not. It is just a thing where I just do not waste my time with it. It is good for you guys to do it, but you guys deal with a Calvinist or somebody that can lose your salvation much differently than I deal with them. That is good for you because you are still young yet. You get in there with your little sword drills and practice your verses on them, and your little bayonet thrusts and parries and all that stuff. I like that; that is good. But I just do not go there with them.

I know that there are 12 doctrines on salvation in the Bible. I would simply start with a guy and say, "So you believe you can lose your salvation?" "Yes." "You believe in predestination?" "Yes." "Okay. Those are pretty deep subjects, and you do not have those down pretty good, do you? If you could pretty much whack me with them?" You think, "Ah, yes, of course I could." "Okay, let me ask you a question. Explain to me the doctrine of justification. And give me the reference on it. Explain to me the doctrine of redemption. Give me the reference. Explain to me the doctrine of remission. And give me the reference. Explain to me the doctrine of expiation and give me the reference. Explain to me the doctrine of imputation and give me the reference. Explain to me the doctrine of regeneration and give me the text. Explain to me the doctrine of reconciliation. Explain to me the doctrine of spiritual circumcision. Explain to me the doctrine of the two

adoptions found in the Bible. Explain to me the doctrine of sanctification. Explain to me the doctrine of glorification. Explain to me the doctrine of propitiation."

Well, he would look at you like he just fell out of a tree and saw the Night of the Living Dead in living color. Now, you are going to tell me that you understand the great eternal truths of predestination and where God foreordained back in the distant past? And you are going to tell me you have it figured out about how you can lose your salvation when you do not even know the 12 fundamental doctrines they are built on? You sell that someplace else, son. You are like a four-year-old with a loaded .45 automatic. You are going to kill yourself and somebody else. That is what happens.

Simply put, everything that Paul tells the church and then individuals in the rest of his books that he writes is built on the doctrinal statement in Romans. That is why what we believe in as a church, we can go back to the Bible and lay the doctrine out for it. When you understand these 12 doctrines that I just gave you about salvation alone, there is no way you can believe you can lose your salvation. You are a Remaxed Christian. There is no way you can hold the concept of predestination. You are a Remaxed Christian. You are full of hot air, and you just get blown about wherever you want to go. You cannot go to the Bible and even explain the fundamental basics.

Anybody here ever built a house, any kind of meaningful house, that did not put a foundation down first? Well, that foundation has to be laid because you are going to build the rest of the house on it. You just take a house and build it on ground and see what happens. If you are going to understand the Bible, particularly Romans and all the doctrines to the church, you better get yourself a foundation, and you better quit pretending you are somebody until you get it. You may be somebody to somebody else, but to me, you are just a four-year-old who cannot even pull the slide back.

## V. Romans 1: The Doctrine of the Gentiles

Romans breaks down real easy. We have done this before, but again, I am going to come at it from a little different angle today. I want to add some things to you who have been through it before, and yet break it down in a way that you can grasp it.

Chapter 1 of Romans. In Chapter 1, he begins a study on one of the great doctrines in the Bible, and it is called the doctrine of the Gentiles. He says in verse 18:

*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.*

*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*

*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.*

*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

*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.*

Now that is what Gentiles do. I do not have a lot of time to get into this morning, and I do not want to get into Gentiles and all the things, the way they act, the way they do, but I want to give you in this chapter here, I want to give you a simple four-point outline that you can mark down for all Gentiles.

You know what? You have people say, "Boy, America is in a bad way." Yeah, America is in a bad way. One of the questions that one of the guys asked yesterday was, "What is our long-term goal as a church for where this whole place is going on planet Earth?" We had a great discussion about it. And yes, this country is in trouble. There is no question about it. But I want to show you why it is in trouble.

You all see this, and I hear it all the time. You try to talk to people about God today, and you might as well be talking to a Martian. They have no concept of God. They have no concept of anything that is spiritual. They have absolutely, they cannot get their heads around the most simple, basic, fundamental plan. They cannot. You try to explain spiritual concepts to them; they look at you like you are a three-headed monster. They cannot get it.

A hundred years ago, the worst sinner in America had more respect for God and the Word of God and more respect and more fear of God, even though he may have been an absolute immoral drunk. He had instilled in him, for where this country was, who God was, what the Word of God was, and his respect level and conscience level of God was higher than most of God's people today. That is a sad thing. That is why you see back there in the old days, did you ever wonder why the rescue missions back in the early 1900s sprung up and were so successful? I mean, I appreciate going down to the City Union Mission, but you know what? They are not going to really change anybody's life down there. They are kind of like a holding tank. I mean, I look at it, the area is good you can do. We do. But do you really think that, I think that we are going to, every time you go down there, that that whole place is going to get right with God and do what is right? No.

That is why I try to tell you guys, when you preach to them, you have got to keep it simple. You just have got to give them one or two basic things. I sit up there and let you watch you listen to you wax eloquent, and you just, they just, you lose them like a golf ball in high weeds. They cannot follow you because of where they have come from and how they have grown up. If you

were preaching a hundred years ago, you could do it. Cannot do it today. That is why preaching on the street does not work anymore. People look at you like there is something wrong with you. You do, you know, this sounds like a terrible thing. You do much more damage for the cause of Christ preaching on the street today because people, you say, "Well, that is the truth." Yes, the truth. No question about it. But that is like going up to this brick wall and banging your head against it. What do you think is going to lose your head? You are coming to a world trying to get out there and tell them the truth of God that does not even have the fringes, the basic aspect of grasping what you are saying. You are too stupid to see it. You think because that is the way to get it back then, that is the way we do it now. "Real men, real preach on the street." No, idiots preach on the street today. I have done my time in it. I know exactly. I preached across the street from a Catholic church and had them run over me with a car and throw pennies at me when mass was coming out. Do not tell me about it.

You have got to understand that we live in a society, in a world today, that you trying to talk to them about God, it just does not work. If you are not willing to get into their life and worm your way in and be their friend and be their friend and worm their confidence and let God open that door, you are wasting your time. You say, "Well, I do not know." Tell me about it. Yeah, you built a lot of churches, have you not? Tell me about it. Educate me. You clown. I am telling you.

There is a four-point process that happened to Gentiles in Romans 1. I will give it to you.

4. In Romans 1:18, he says God was revealed. God reveals himself to Gentiles. That is what he does. He is the true light, the light of every man that is coming into the world. God revealed himself.
5. Romans 1:21 tells you what happened when God revealed himself to Gentiles. God got rejected.
6. The next thing Gentiles do after they reject Him is found in Romans 1:23. They replace Him. You know what they replace Him with? They replace Him with animals. They replace Him with, when we look at God as a supreme Creator in charge of all things. Oh no, the Gentiles cannot go with that. They have got to come up with a female deity that counters God we all know as Mother Nature. God was revealed. God was rejected. God was replaced.
7. Then in Romans 1:25, they come to the point where God was reviled. They cannot stand God. This country cannot stand God. It cannot tolerate God today. It cannot tolerate Jesus Christ. It cannot tolerate Bible doctrine. It cannot tolerate the final authority of the Word of God. God's people are just a half an inch away from the world because they cannot tolerate Him either. They revile Him.

This country has come to the place where it was built on the Word of God. God revealed himself to them. Now they have worked through the process where we stand today, where this country reviles God and everything about God. When you get to that point, stage five sets in, five being the number of death, Romans 1:28. Here is the problem in America: God turned them over to a reprobate mind. You know what a reprobate mind is? It is a mind that is abandoned to sin by God.

You say God would not do that. Oh, you are an idiot. You do not know very much about history, do you? Well, how do you believe God just turned a man over? Well, you ought to read a book called Treblinka. You ought to read a book called The Practices in Hell by Eugene Copeland. Okay, God just would not do that. You do not know very much about life and history, son. You better get somebody to help you across the street. God does it all the time. God gives you that light. You reject the light, get it down. Light rejected becomes lightning at God's judgment.

There were preachers that got on the radio after 9/11 and said that 9/11 was judgment of God because of a sinful nation. You know what? They are off the radio today. They were classified as radical heretics in the whole world, and everybody in America thought that was terrible. I mean, you watch those poor, and I am all for it, man. You watch those poor, brave firemen going up those steps to the Twin Towers, and they got the look on their face while people are coming down telling them not to go up, and that their job, the duty, a sense of duty, is going up, and they are going up that thing, and they know that that building is going to collapse, and they got up there, what, two, three, 400 men, and got up into those buildings to try to help people, and those buildings collapsed, and they all died. In a world, because of that noble act—and it was noble—the world, because of that self-sacrificing act—and it was self-sacrificing—we just get the idea they are all in heaven today. Well, I have got news for you, brother. You can make all the sacrifices you want. I know the Bible says that no greater love hath a man than he gave his life for his brother, but I am telling you what, your sacrifice for somebody else means absolutely nothing if you thumb your nose at God sacrificing His Son for you. You can put that in your pipe and smoke it along with whatever else you are smoking.

We have come through that process. America, 1620, founded on the Word of God with the Pilgrim Fathers. They came over fleeing religious persecution. They came over with a Geneva Bible, forerunner of your King James Bible. They came over wanting the freedom to preach and teach and run their families and raise their families and soul win and win people to Christ and build churches without somebody in the middle of the night knocking their door down, hogging them off in prison and torturing them.

Around 1700, 1730, 1740, when we broke off from England and we began to begin our own nation, and in about 1776, when we signed, this became an official country. The founding fathers, every one of them, I do not care what they tell you today, the founding fathers, every one of them, they recognized, they knew what God meant to this country. They knew the price that was paid. They knew the persecution they suffered, and they made sure that it was never going to happen again, and they built God into the Constitution and it was the foundation of this country. It was this book right here. Influenced not by politics, not by somebody great powerful in politics. It was influenced by two of the greatest preachers that God ever sent around to a country, George Whitfield and Jonathan Edwards. Their preaching forged what we have in this country, and they did not do a democracy. They knew what a democracy was. They knew what the Roman Empire was. They knew what the cities in Europe were. No, no, no, no. They decided to have a republic, and a republic is not built on the majority rules. A republic is built on the unchanging principles of the Word of God.

But in the 1860s, we saw over in Europe, which had already apostatized because they went through the same five-point process, and in Europe by the 1860s was of a reprobate mind. Charles Darwin in the early 1860s came up with a first great scientific bomb to drop on the Bible, the theory of evolution. Rocked the world. Rocked the world, and it began to seep into educated people, and it began to come into this country. By the time we get to about the 1880s, German rationalism has wrecked Europe. The great rationalist minds of Europe, the great philosophical minds that have done away completely with God, who went through the process: God was revealed, the Reformation. God was rejected. God then was replaced, education. God was reviled.

In 1882, the famous Nietzsche made his famous speech when he declared to all the world that God had died. He shocked the theological world. The fact that the concept that there was no God anymore, that He died. Only some two-bit pipsqueak could come up with a concept like that. He will tell you something. You say, "How do you know God did not die?" Because I am a member of the family, and I would have been notified to go to the funeral.

We see it creep into America. In 1888, the work that the Westcott and Hort work of destroying the Word of God and coming up with the Greek text, which set the pace for all the new Bibles, was officially accepted by the Southern Baptist Convention. The Southern Baptist Church at that time, there was no independence like us. That is another whole story how we got here. God has always got a remnant. In 1888, at that time, the three biggest Baptist cliques in this country were the GRB, which was the American Baptist and which was the smallest of the three, and then the Southern Baptist, which was the largest of the three. So in 1888, we rejected God. You cannot reject God's Word and not reject God. Not if you have been here the last three weeks. I do not know where you have been, but you cannot get it done. The only next step once you replace God is you get to the point where you are reviled.

Did you ever see the anger and the absolute venom come out of Christians' fangs when you try to bring up the issue of the King James Bible? That is God reviled right there. What do you do with that? It is called Snake Shot. You can buy it at Steve's store. That is where God is reviled. That is when you start to bring up the pure Word of God, you can see the demons coming up. That is God reviled.

1966, Time Magazine on the front cover asked a great question: "Is God dead?" Now it is in America. In 1966, Time Magazine on the front cover: "Is God dead?" Of course, that is the same one in 1939 that made Adolf Hitler Man of the Year, or '33, I think it was, and then next year Mussolini. They do not have a very good track record. Ask the question, "Is God dead?" By the time we get to the 1970s, to where you and I are at today, America has passed through those five concepts, and now she has a reprobate mind. That is why you cannot talk to many people about God today. America is shot. America is finished.

Two great verses in your Old Testament that show what a reprobate mind is. Boy, they are America personified. The first one in Jeremiah 6:19. Just two verses down from our church verse, why we call ourselves Old Paths Baptist Church. It says in verse 19 here, you see that

thing, there is one to the Gentiles. That is not to the Jew. That is not to Christians. This is to Gentiles. We are studying Gentiles in Romans 1.

*Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.*

*To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.*

Do you get what he just said right there? He just said you can forget all the nice Christian things you do. You can forget going to church. You can forget singing in the choir. You can forget tithes, offerings. You can forget everything you do because they mean nothing to God if you reject His truth. Did you get that verse? If you did not get that verse, get it down. If you kids were a little bit older, that would be a memory verse, but I am not going to drop that one on you. I would be eating alone. Get that verse.

Then the other one is in Isaiah 5:20.

*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

*Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!*

*Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:*

*Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!*

*Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.*

There you are. God revealed. God rejected. God replaced. God reviled, and God gives them a reprobate mind. This is America. This is where we are at, and this is why you have a hard time reaching people for Christ today. The only thing that will penetrate somebody's life today, and let me just throw this in, the only thing that will penetrate somebody's life today, the only thing, and this here lies the problem with us, the only thing that will penetrate somebody's life today that will give you the opportunity to reach them for Christ truly is another life. God cannot do it through His Word. They rejected it. So God wants to do it through you, and He wants you to work yourself into their world, and through that conduit, reach them. But that is the problem, is it not? God's people are as worldly as the world's people. It is not going to get done. It is not going to get done.

## VI. Romans 2-4: The Jew, The Gentile, and Justification

Chapter 2 basically deals with the doctrine of the Jew. Chapter 1 dealt with the doctrine of the Gentiles. He is laying a basis here for where he is going in Romans. We are going to follow that mindset here. Chapter 2: Doctrine of the Jews. How they think and what they do.

Chapter 2 basically teaches, and you want to get this, the Jews look at the Gentiles as inferior to themselves. This is based on the Old Testament where that is basically true. The Jews think because they had God first, and as the Bible says in Romans 3:1-3, God gave them the oracles of God, the Word of God, that they are better than the Gentiles. As far as the Bible is concerned, that is basically true because John 4:22 says that salvation is of the Jews. So that is true. That is true. But the problem comes in that their arrogance carries on into the fact that they rejected Christ and add that to the other arrogance they already had. They are now full of self-righteousness.

In contrast, and you want to get this down, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 teach two great truths. Chapter 1 teaches the Gentiles are going to hell because of their ungodly, sinful ways of replacing God and doing what they have done. Chapter 2 teaches that the Jews are going to hell because of the ungodly, self-righteous, pious, religious ways that they hold, which are just as sinful as the Gentiles. These first two chapters set the stage for Chapters 3 and 4, which deal with what both the Jew and the Gentile have to do today to deal with their sin problem. Remember, now it is all different. Once we get past Acts 7, everything changes. Paul is now writing it down and showing you how those changes work.

Chapters 3 and 4, they are what we call dual chapters based on Chapter 1 and 2. These two chapters begin to set the stage for the great doctrines that are going to follow in the book of Romans. Chapter 3 shows us that the Gentiles, in the Old Testament, that would be Genesis 1 to Exodus 20, the way God dealt with them was on the basis of their conscience. That is how God dealt with them. He dealt with them on the basis of their conscience. So Chapter 3 talks about the fact that God dealt with them on the basis of their conscience, but he is telling them now that that is not the basis that God is going to deal with them on anymore because Christ just came, He has died on the cross, and now everything has to go through Calvary.

There is a great soul-winning verse here in Romans 3:23, and this will be our second memory verse, kids, so get this one down.

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Then Chapter 4 deals with the other aspect. It deals with the fact that it shows you that as the Gentiles, God is not dealing with them on their conscience, and God is not dealing with the Jews anymore based on the law. In Chapter 4, we see the great doctrine of two great concepts in the Bible: the doctrine of justification and the doctrine of receiving God's righteousness. Now those are two very important. We do not have time to explain them this morning, but Chapter 3 shows that the Gentiles and the Jew hold the old way. The Gentile, he thinks God is going to deal with him on his conscience. The Jew, in his arrogance, he thinks that God is going to deal with him through the law, but Chapter 4 says, "No, that is all changed now, and the only way that the Jew and the Gentile can get God and get what God has is to get God's righteousness through an act called justification." So what he is doing here is he is laying down the premises. He is showing you in Chapter 1 how the Gentiles think and how God dealt with them. He is showing you in Chapter 2 how the Jews think and how God dealt with them. Now he is showing you that both are in a mess. They both have a sin problem, and now he is showing you that neither the

conscience nor the law is going to fix their problem. The only way they can get it fixed, here comes the New Testament new teaching doctrine, is to get God's righteousness through an act of justification, and then he begins to explain what those things are. Ah, Romans is a great book.

## VII. Romans 5-8: Key Doctrinal Concepts

In Chapter 5, really Chapters 5 through 11, I call this the great doctrinal section, and each chapter deals with one or multiple aspects of the great doctrines, and it is a great chapter that continues to redefine God's righteousness, and it begins giving to us three or four great concepts here of justification before God. Now the great verse you want to get, and kids, this is your third verse here, starts out in Romans 5:1. This is a great one.

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

*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

That is how he starts this out because this chapter begins the great doctrinal study on justification. He says in verse 2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein ye stand." You know, understanding justification and understanding God giving you His righteousness, when you thoroughly understand that, there is absolutely no way that you can ever get the position that you can lose your salvation because once you understand the doctrine of justification, once you understand the doctrine of receiving God's righteousness, then it forces you to look at other doctrines in the Bible that simply cancel out that kind of thinking.

One of the greatest doctrines that comes out of this, he says it in verse 2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." One of the greatest concepts that comes out of this is the doctrine of standing in state. There is not a charismatic on this planet that could explain to you standing in state, the doctrine of standing in state. They do not have an understanding of it because they do not understand the fundamental doctrines of Romans. They are the Remaxed Christians; they just get blown about whatever somebody tells them. You throw an open Bible in their lap and try to have them show it, they would not know what to do with it. The doctrine of standing in state, we do not have time to go into it this morning; we have talked about it many, many times on Thursday night.

Another great concept that comes up out of Chapter 5, and this is a great one, he says down here in verse 1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 4:7, here is your next memory verse, this will be your fourth one, kids.

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

Now I want you to notice something up there in Romans 5:1. It says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Philippians 4:7 says, "And the peace of God." You see that thing there stands the doctrine of the peace of God and the peace with God. You see the peace with God wherever you find it in the Bible, the context will always be salvation. When you got saved, you know what you did? When you got justified and you got God's righteousness, you

made peace with God. Before that time, you were God's enemy, your enmity against God, the Bible says. God could not fellowship with you; He was at war with you, and you were at war with Him. But by you getting justified by faith and receiving God's righteousness by Christ's death on the cross, this is where the doctrine of propitiation, the doctrine of imputation, all comes in. You have got to get it all down. When you get all those things together and you understand how they operate in the Bible, then you fully realize that what you have here, the day you got saved, you made peace with a holy God. So he says in Romans 5:1, the great verse it is, why it is your memory verse, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Being justified by faith, getting God's righteousness, gives you peace with God. You and God solve the sin question. Then Philippians 4:7, "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ." You see that is after you get saved. You do not make peace with God after you are saved; you have the peace of God. You cannot have the peace of God until you make peace with God. Once you make peace with God, then you have the ability to have the peace of God. That is the peace that carries you through everything you have got to go through in life after you get saved.

Now, kids, that is why I gave you that verse because I want you to learn those, and those are easy verses.

Then we come to Chapter 6. Chapter 6 deals with the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 6 teaches about the unknown subject of being baptized into Jesus' death. Wow, that sounds almost spooky. That sounds paranormal. That sounds like it is a wild deal. What does it mean to be baptized into Jesus' death? Chapter 6 is one of the great chapters that the people that teach the damnable heresy that you have got to be baptized to go to heaven, that is one of the places they land, and they take the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Ghost here. It is talked about in Chapter 6 and the baptism of Jesus' death.

Chapter 6 basically teaches the New Testament concept of being dead in Christ to the things of the world after salvation. He says, "As many as you were baptized, you are baptized into Jesus' death." That is never water baptism. There is no water in Romans 6. There is any water anywhere around in Romans. Romans 6 is the great doctrine of the baptism that is the true baptism in the Bible that all the other baptisms are a picture of, and that is the baptism of the Holy Spirit the day you got saved.

Chapter 6 explains something a charismatic could never get to. It explains how a saved person cannot live in sin anymore after he is saved, even though they still sin. Now that is a contradiction in terms. You say, "How can you do that? How can you believe that you can be saved from hell and then still sin?" It is called the doctrines, the 12 doctrines that I gave you, to show you how that works. But you see, you are not going to spend the time in the Bible to figure it out.

Simply put, Christ's death on the cross was our salvation, and when you get saved, baptism of the Holy Ghost, you are put into that death, and now because of His death, you have eternal life, but now you have the ability to be dead to this world, and that is what the Bible is talking about in Colossians 3:3 where it says, "you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ." People today do

not even understand what it means to be dead to this world. Christians do not have a clue of how they can be saved, be in this world, but yet be dead to the things of this world. They do not have an understanding of it because they do not have a foundation in the book of Romans.

You know, you go to a funeral someplace, and you walk up to the casket, and everybody goes up there, and I have been to more funerals than I want to go to in my lifetime, but they all say the same thing, either at the casket or when they get away from the casket, they always say, "Boy, he looked good," or "Boy, he does not look very good, he must have really been sick." They always have some comment. Morticians do a great job; I mean, they can do miracles. I told you the story years ago about how I was in the army, and I got stuck playing taps because I played the trumpet, so I got to travel all around New England doing all kinds of funerals. I did the only two-star general killed in Vietnam; I did his funeral, and I stand on top of the hill, get ready to blow taps, and little to my knowledge, they had brought in 21 howitzers right behind me to give me my 21-gun salute. Boy, when those things blew, it blew my hat off, and I thought incoming was anyway.

I did this funeral for this time that this guy was run over by a tank. Now that would ruin your day. Ran right across his chest, and we get the reports, and they said this guy was down in Fort someplace, and he got run over by a tank, and I am thinking to myself, "Well, this will be a closed casket," because I got to be buddies with the funeral directors because you do them all the time, and they are a weird bunch anyhow, so I would have to hang out at the funeral place, and we would talk, and I would ask some questions because everybody wants to know about those things. I mean, you want to know what they do because you are going to face it someday. Well, you will not face it someday, but they are going to do it to you someday. So I have done it, and the casket was open, and I am looking down there, and the guy looked really good, and I am thinking, "Man, this guy is really, how do you get run over by? He might not have been run over by a tank." And I asked the funeral director, everybody had left, and they were out doing their deal, and I said, "Hey, man," I said, "I heard this guy got ran over by a tank," and he said, "Yeah, he did. You should have seen the mess." I said, "Well, man, you guys did a pretty good job with this guy." And he said, "Ah, he says, 'Just tricks of the trade.'" They get so mundane to it. It is like, "Man, that is a nice looking '57 shovel you got." "Yeah, yeah, I had one for a while. It is pretty good." He is talking about that, and he said, "I said, 'Well, how do you do that?'" And he said, "Well," he said, "no big deal." He reaches over and he takes, he pops the hood, so to speak. In other words, they had built a, they had a shell that made this guy's chest, and he had put the uniform and wrapped it around it, and so it was like popping your hood. He popped it off, and he showed. I said, "Put it back." And he said, "That is how we do it." And he put it back on the guy. I am saying to myself, "Wow, people do all kinds of things." Now sometimes you are run over your head, I do not know what they do in a case like that, but anyway.

But when you go to a funeral, they always walk up and you say, "He looks good," or "She does not look very good." You can go up to that person in a casket and you can say, "You know what? I have had some things in my heart that I wanted to say to you for a long time. I think that you are one of the nastiest people I have ever met in my life, and I really never have liked you, and I tell you what, I think you are ugly on top of it all, and I think that you are one of the most despicable people that I have ever met in my life, and I do not want any, you know what, and I

am glad you are dead, and I will just tell you what, I just, you know, I just has been a happy day for me because I never liked you, and I prayed for your death, and now you are dead, and I am going to go out and have a big thick steak afterwards, and I am going to have a big tall Coca-Cola, and I am going to just really celebrate the fact that you are dead." Now that sounds terrible, but you know what? It does not bother that person at all. You know why it does not bother that person when you tell him that? He is dead.

Why do you let things bother you that people say about you? You are supposed to be dead in Christ. You are supposed to be just as dead as that to the things of this world. You know why we are not? We do not understand the great doctrines of that concept. That is why. Dead in Christ. When you were baptized, when you got saved, you were baptized in the Holy Spirit, immersed. That is why we immerse in water, "being buried in the likeness of his death, risen in the likeness of his resurrection." That is why it says in Ephesians 4:4, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism." That is why 1 Corinthians 12:13 says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." When you got saved, you were baptized in the Holy Spirit of God, and you were baptized into His death, and just as He rose again to live forever, and you live in Him, you ought to be dead to the things of this world because you are dead, and your life is hid in Christ. Foreign doctrine. Foreign doctrine today. Foreign doctrine.

Chapter 7 now. Chapter 7 has two or three great principles in it, but primarily Chapter 7 deals with the new nature of the believers, the two natures, the dual nature. But there are some great lessons in here. The first lesson in this great chapter is how that now that you are saved, how does the Old Testament law affect you now? Does it affect you at all? And he covers that in this chapter. It is the beginning of the great study in your Bible on the understanding of the body, soul, and spirit. That is another foreign subject today. Another foreign subject is what is your body, what is your soul, and what is your spirit? Oh boy, do we get all out of whack on that. That is another thing, if you do not understand your body and what it is, your soul and what it is, and your spirit what it is, then you get all caught up in a terminology. Somebody says, "Well, I love that person with all my heart." Really? You mean this little organ in here that is pumping out blood? No, of course not. What is your heart? Somebody says the Bible says, "Love the Lord thy God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." What is your mind? Is that your soul? I mean, you say, "I can remember, my mind is my remembrance." Really? Is it in this physical body here? Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. Well then, how come in Luke 16, when the rich man went to hell, he has his mind down there, but the body in the grave is dead? You see, those are the things the Bible explains for you. So when you get into these doctrines, and I know it is foreign stuff today, it is foreign, it is foreign stuff, but it does not change the fact that it is Bible doctrine on which everything else Paul writes is built on.

Then the third great thing is a great study in here in the greatest chapter, I think, in the Bible that shows you how to deal with your children and their salvation. You know, we have got a lot of kids growing up in our church that are at the age groups now, and it is only going to be a matter of time before they start asking questions about how to be saved and what to do to be saved, and

this is always the parents' worst nightmare because every parent wants their kid to go to hell. It does not want their kids to go to hell. I am sorry, I was thinking of my next thought. Well, I do not know, maybe on a bad day you do. I cannot get into that. Excuse me for saying that. No parent wants their kids to go to hell. This is what I was saying. But the devil wants your kid to go to hell, and just as you will do everything to try to get him to heaven, he will do everything to try to get him to hell. I mean, you just need to know that going in.

You know what the devil always does? The devil always does this, and this is something you need to learn: the only way the devil can have an inch in your life is that when you fear something, because perfect love casts out fear, and God, if you understand the Bible, you do not have to be afraid of anything. So when parents are afraid of the fact, because they do not understand the principles, and they are afraid of the fact that their kid is going to die and go to hell, which is very honorable, you do not want him to. I know many parents who do not care one way or the other. What happens is the first time that kid makes the statement, "I want to be saved," you want him to be saved so desperately that you jump at the chance to get him saved, and then the truth of the matter is you did it out of fear, not at the biblical principles. The devil gets in the back door. I do not know how many people I have led to Christ in my life when they are 20s or 30s or maybe even 40s that suppose they got saved when they were little, little children, but never really got saved. You see, there is a doctrine on that in the Bible: the doctrine of the age of accountability. It shows you here in this great chapter how that the law affects your child before they hit that age of accountability, and it shows you exactly how to know when they are ready and exactly how to deal with it when you know that they are ready.

Parents, because of the fact that they do not know these things and they operate out of the fear that their child is going to die and go to hell if they do not get saved, many times they make the mistake of getting that kid saved and giving him a false salvation when the kid could not figure out salvation yet in his life if his life depended on it. The devil goes after him every way that he can, and we know, if you know anything about the Bible, you know one of the best ways the devil works is to get you to do the right thing at the wrong time.

Chapter 7, from verses 9 through 25, is on my struggle of the dual nature, the old man and the new man. Tremendous stuff. The doctrine of a new nature and an old nature. A charismatic could never get to this if his life depended on it. Again, the chapter shows the correct concept of this. It shows again why after you are saved from sin in Christ Jesus, we still sin every day, and we are still going to heaven. They can never get it. They cannot grasp the biblical depth of the concept because everything about what you and I believe, you have to be able to go back and find it in here and define it as a doctrine. Now that is why this church is not for everybody. I mean, I am just being honest with you, and I have never pretended that it was. You will not fit in well here if you just want to kind of have an idea and a concept that you can, if you are not going to take it serious, it is not going to work for you, and it is just the way it has to be. We are built on the Bible, and that is how it has to go.

The next chapter, Chapter 8, is the great chapter on the doctrine of the resurrection body and how to deal with the doctrine of eternity. You know, I do not know if you know this or not, God has three plans in the Bible.

- God has a plan for the universe. If you want to begin that study, you will find that in Isaiah 9:6-7. It will not give you all much of the detail, but it will certainly show you that there is a reason for it being there.
- Then God has a plan for the earth. You will find that beginning of that study in Isaiah 45:18. So God has a plan for the universe in the Bible; you can figure it out pretty good. God has a plan for the earth in the Bible; you can figure that out real good.
- Then God has a plan for you on this planet, and God's people never figured that one out. That will be Ephesians 2:7.

You see, God ties them all together; they are all connected together. You will never figure out God's plan for your life if you do not understand what the big plan God is doing because you want to know how to fit in it. God has a reason and a purpose. He created the solar system, the universe, and everything that is out there in the cosmos. God has a reason for creating planet Earth, and God has a reason for creating you and putting you on this earth in these cosmos, and they all tie together.

Romans 8 is the great chapter that deals with that. We talked about this a little bit Thursday night. We talked about God's plan. You see, God's plan for you right now, He will do it in your physical body, but He has to give you a spiritual part of you to do that. But when you get out into eternity, the physical body will not do it anymore, so He has got to give you a spiritual body for the ministry that He has got for you out there because the neighborhood is going to get a little bigger.

Romans 8 deals with the great study on the two adoptions in the Bible. There are two adoptions in the Bible, and the first adoption is the adoption, it is a spiritual adoption, and that is dealing with your soul. The day you were saved, your soul was adopted into God's family, but you are still in this physical body here, so there is a second adoption coming, and Romans 8 lays out the difference between both, shows you both, and that is the doctrine that is coming when you get your glorified body, and you understand how those things have to work.

I do not want to confuse anybody, but I will throw it out, you know, basic concept, and I am not doing this to confuse you, so listen to me carefully so you do not go out of here thinking I am teaching you something that is not true because it is true. Sitting here this morning, if you are saved, you are saved. You are only half saved. You are only half saved. Your soul is saved, but your body is not. Now your soul being saved is all you need right now because that is what God is in. The reason why this is another whole area of doctrine, the reason why God saved you, your soul, and adopted your soul, and did what He did with your soul, so God can have fellowship with you right now. But we live on planet Earth; you do not need a galactic body yet, even though the one we got gives us all kinds of problems. That goes back to the other doctrine, and that goes back to, you want to handle the body you got now, get dead, and your life is hidden in Christ. You have got it all tied together, but you are only half saved. Your salvation is complete in the sense of God's mind. You are seated already in heavenly places, but functionally, you still have this old body to contend with. Romans 8 shows you the completed part.

Now when I say you are only half saved, that is for the point of illustration. You are as saved as you are ever going to be, and there is no chance you are ever going to be saved, and God's mind,

you are already there, but technically speaking, you still have your body. You have not got your glorified body yet. It has not been redeemed, just your soul. When you get your body redeemed, then you are complete. Now you say, "Well, the Bible says you are complete in Him." I know what it says better than you know what it says, but just like Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are found in your Old Testament in your New Testament, yet technically speaking, they are in your Old Testament. I understand that you are saved and complete in Christ, but technically speaking, your body is not saved yet. Now it is as good as saved, but it is not. You say, "Well, I think my body is saved." Really? Mine did not, and yours is not either.

Then a great verse, I was going to make this a memory verse, kids, but I did not because this is too tough for you, but here is a great verse, Romans 8:17-18, talks about us in our glorified body.

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

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

That is a great verse. That is a great, great verse. That verse says, it says to all of us, we need to get past ourselves. So much of our lives revolve around our drama, our issues, all of the things that we go through in life that brings all the baggage and the stupid things we do because we just cannot get past ourselves, that we are the most important thing. Like a guy I met one time, I said, "He will never get married. He will never find anybody that loves him as much as he does." Our biggest problem is ourselves. We like that. We like that. We cause the drama in our lives, and then we like to enjoy the drama in our lives, just like we like to enjoy a movie. It is like a woman who is with an abusive husband. She hates being abused. She goes around and tells everybody. She gets on everybody's television programs and complains about it, but she never puts his rear end in jail. She keeps going back to him. You know why? Because she likes the drama. There is something in that that she just cannot live without, and something in there that pulls her back to that, and that is the way we are with the things of life.

We all have issues in our lives, and let us face it, the biggest problem we all have to deal with is the fact that we want attention. Now you may say, "Oh, not me." Oh, come on, by just saying, "Oh, not me," you just said, "I want attention." It is the fundamental flaw in human nature. "I will be like the Most High God." That is why we try to be the best ball player, the best basketball player, the best softball player, the best volleyball team. That is why we try to do everything we do to achieve the best, and there is nothing wrong with that. I am not saying that. I am saying when you take that thing, that all life and all your problems, you know, I have met people who, I have never met any problem that anybody ever had that probably could not have been solved in six months' time, maybe eight at the most, many of them much shorter than that. But you know why they go on for years and years and years? You know why you see that drudgery coming in all the time, and they love the drama around them? "Look at me, I am going through something, and I am going to keep going through it because it makes everybody look at me."

You need to get past yourself. You need to realize that God saved you for a purpose. That purpose was for you to deny yourself. That purpose was for you to find out God's plan for the

universe, find out God's plan for the earth, and find out your God's plan for you, and put yourself in that concept, and then give yourself to God the rest of your life, that you just want God to get the honor and glory out of it. Get past the issues in your life. Grow up. Suck it up. Cowboy up. Spaceman up. Army man up. Whatever you have got to do. And you realize that there is coming a day when you are going to realize that the sufferings of this present time were not worthy. Do you hear me? Were not worthy to be compared to the glory that is going to be revealed in us on that day at the judgment seat of Christ. I hope that God, all you do not have to show is a rerun of your drama. When you do not find out what God wants you to do in your life, and you do not do it, then you were shackled to the Saturday afternoon matinee of "My Drama," another serial, "Son of Drama," "Drama Four," "Drama Five." The characters simply change; the problems are always the same. Get past yourself and realize He has got a plan for you that is on this earth, that is in this universe, that someday the sufferings what you and I go through are not going to be worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in that day. That is our problem, folks. That is our problem.

## VIII. Conclusion: The Bible as a Flashlight

I am going to hold up there, but kids, I am going to give you your last memory verse here because I want you to have it. I have given you how many? Four. Here is five. Romans 12:1-2. I am going to use that in my sermon next week, but you only have to memorize one.

*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.*

Now we will use that verse when we get into Chapter 12 next week, but that is your fifth verse. Now, kids, let me just tell you this, you know the rules. Now you need to sign up back there because if you do not sign up, we are not going to put you in the category next week, so you have got to have the responsibility to get signed up back there. What we are going to do is, if you know what category you are, you either have got to memorize one, you have got to memorize two, you have got to memorize three. If you are really in that middle-aged group and you memorize all four, wow, that is special, and we will have something special for you.

Now let me say this, get Romans down. Realize what it takes to learn God in the Bible. It is not hard. It is not complicated. It just requires you getting everything else out of your world that you think is more important and getting it back to what is most important, or should be, and that is what God is doing with you. Let me just say something to you, if you are in this church and you have been here for a year and you are not fully moving along through the line, if you have been in this church six months and you are not working through your problems and have them well on your way of getting, then you need to stop today, look back, and revisit what you are doing because it does not take that long. I know in the process of doing what is right with God, you have got a lot of side streets that you go down that you just add to and hold up what God is trying to do in your life.

I look at Christian life like this, and then I am finished. I believe that when God began a good work in you back here when you got saved, in God's mind, He has what He wants for you to do.

I believe at the end of that rainbow is every reward that God could have you from the Jubilee to Christ on the Millennium, and I believe that when you walk down this road, I believe that this road has a lot of time and a lot of side venues that you can get into. I realize that when you walk down this road, the Bible basically says that it is darkness, so God had a plan for you, and God wanted you to fulfill that plan, but God also knew that the devil wanted to stop you, and he put all those different side roads in. He put the swamps in there. He put all of the things out there that are going to trip you up. Then the devil, back in Genesis 1:1, turned the lights out. So this trip you have got to go through to get to the end of what God wants you to do, it is in darkness. Just like if you are living out there and you hear all the sounds of the wild animals out there, it can become scary. So God took that into account, and God gave you the biggest flashlight you ever saw in your life. It is this book because this book is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. This book is the light that shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. This book is the book that God gave you to walk you through that life.

Now there will be times when you flip that light on and you start walking down there, you are going to come to a side road, and you are going to look down that side road, and you are going to see down there, you know how your flashlight illuminates the signs way down the road? You are going to shine that thing down there, and you are going to see at the end of that road that illuminated sign is going to simply say, "Dead End." Now you know what you are going to do at that point? You have got a decision in your life. You are going to stay in the book and keep the light on, or you are going to turn right and go down a dead end street. Those dead end streets last six years, three years, two years, four years, six months, a lifetime. You go on down the road a little more, and there is another one. You shine your light down there, and it says, "Bridge Out." But you continue to go down that road, and then you wonder why my car got submerged in the water. You wonder why life went sour on you. You wonder why you have got the problems you have got, and you cannot get out of them. Get off the dead end streets. Get back on the lane. Get back in the light.

People go through things in their life, and they say, "Oh, I do not know how that happened to me." "Oh, I just this and that." I will tell you why it happened to you: you did not get off and down a side street, and there is no future on a dead end road. Every time we go somewhere, we have to turn around. In my mind, I will be a dead end street. My wife said it to me the other day, I turned down that road, and she said, "You know, this is a dead end street." "No, I did not know that." The sign is right in front of me. I am just turning around, but she knows that there is no value. We are not going to get home from a dead end street, and you are not going to get where God wants you to get at the end of your life by hanging out on the dead end streets. He has got a job for you to do. He has got something He wants to accomplish in your life. He started there; you got saved. He gave you everything you need to get there. Get off the side streets. Stay away from them as much as you can, and stay on track with what God wants you to do because I am telling you that work that He began in you, no matter what you have got to go through, when you suffer for God, no matter what you have got to go through, whatever you lose because you stay on the right street, you will lose things by staying on the right street, and you will have heartache here, but it is much better heartache when you suffer for God than you suffer for your own stupidity.

I remember one time I was a kid growing up, and I was out playing, goofing around with the guys, and I hurt my leg, and I could not walk, and my mom said, "You have got your chores you have got to do," and I said, "Mama, I hurt my leg." You know what she said to me? She said, "You did not hurt it doing anything for me." You say, "Well, God, I am hurting." God says, "Well, you are not hurting because you did anything for Me. You are hurting because you are on the side street because the glory that is going to be revealed in us in that day is not worthy to be compared with what we go through today."

Romans is the book that puts you on solid foundation, gives you the understanding of why we believe what we do and why we do the things that we do, and why that no matter what we do, we go back to a book that becomes the foundation of why we believe what we believe, and that is what Paul wrote. Kids, go to work on your memory verses next week. Take time to sign up back there. I see the applications for softball are up. Do not forget to get a flyer back there for our soldier guys. Let us have a word of prayer, and we will be dismissed. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You.