

Romans: Citizenship in the Kingdom

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Key question for context in this logical flow of Paul's argument:

Since everyone is found guilty before God (Romans 1-3), and the sinner is made clean or "justified" by faith alone in the work of Christ for him (Romans 4), what benefits do they now receive? Paul has in mind four benefits that he covers in chapters 4-8: peace, union, freedom, and life.

- Since the guilty (chapters 1-3) are justified by faith (chapter 4), what four benefits do we now receive?

B. The Justified have PEACE with God - Benefit One (5:1-19).

1. Today we have peace, standing, hope of glory, and joy within suffering.

Sermon: The (5:1-5)

Pastor Ryan, 4/12/26 - Baby Theo arrived! Intro: What is the best club to join? It is the benefits of the justified.

HEADLINE: THERE ARE FOUR REAL RESULTS NOW FOR BEING JUSTIFIED NOW.

1. There are three characteristics of peace that we have through faith in Jesus Christ: A. We have peace with God. It is not the peace OF God though that is real. This is we were formally his enemies now we have peace with him. B. This peace comes through and because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and not our religious activity. C. It is Jesus who causes us to stand by grace in this peace forever.

2. There are three characteristics of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ: A. It is forward-looking hope. B. When going through suffering, hope is enhanced. The hope persists in difficulty. C. This hope will not disappoint because it is based on real promises that will happen.

Notes & Quotes:

V1-4 - How does benefit four of joy in suffering fit with the first three benefits of our justification? Answer: it turns on God's love now, and it is enough: "The fruits of justification relate to the past, present and future. 'We have peace with God' (as a result of our past forgiveness. We are standing in grace' (our present privilege). We rejoice in the hope of glory' (our future inheritance). Peace, grace, joy, hope and glory. It sounds idyllic. It is - except for Paul's fourth affirmation" (Stott p141). [Suffering is the thermostat that turns on the heat or love of God and makes us know he is near]. "When he shows that suffering starts a chain reaction that leads to hope (which is one of the fruits of justification), he is saying that the benefits of justification are not only not diminished by suffering, they are enlarged by it... In other words, if you face suffering with a clear grasp of justification by grace alone, your joy in that grace will deepen. On the other hand, if you face suffering with a mindset of justification by works, the suffering will break you, not make you. [example: I could be proud of how I suffer in that I suffer more than others, or I in my suffering well I am earning God's favor, etc.]... for what you have lost in your suffering (comfort, health, wealth...) was not where your joy is found" (Keller p122, 123 selected).

5:1-8 - The are benefits of justification we have NOW (Inference 1).

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 5:1-5	
Action: We are saved from God's deserved wrath on us because his righteousness is imputed to us through faith.		[1] Therefore, since <u>we have been justified</u> by faith,	
Result 1: We have peace with God.		<u>we have</u> peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.	
Result 2: We have access to grace in which we stand.		[2] Through him <u>we have</u> also <u>obtained</u> access by faith into this grace in which <u>we stand</u> ,	
Result 3: We have hope of the glory of God.		and <u>we rejoice</u> in hope of the glory of God.	
Result 4: We have joy within suffering. Suffering actually can drive us deeper into the awareness of God's love.	Idea: These benefits of justification actually grow through suffering.		[3] Not only that, but <u>we rejoice</u> in our sufferings, knowing that
	Explain Main 1: Why is this hope not too good to be true in the broken world? We get two reasons (same two as in 1 John 4:13-14).	Progressive: Suffering makes the justified person more single-mindedly persistent.	<u>suffering produces</u> endurance,
		Progressive: Single-minded persistence produces confidence.	[4] and <u>endurance produces</u> character,
		Progressive: This all leads to growth in our hope.	and <u>character produces</u> hope,
		Progressive: And our hope is real in God's deep love for us.	[5] and <u>hope does not put</u> us to shame,
	Ground 1 of Main 1: Subjectively - Because our hope deepens through the experience of God's love through the indwelling Spirit.	Idea	because God's love <u>has been poured</u> into our hearts through the Holy Spirit
		Explain	<u>who has been given</u> to us.
	Ground 2 of Main 1: Objectively - Because when we were unworthy, Christ actually did die for us. <u>The source</u> of these benefits of being justified: Christ died when we were meritless. Main 2: Why did he die for us?		[6] For while <u>we were</u> still <u>weak</u> , at the right time <u>Christ died</u> for the ungodly.
	Ground of Main 2: Because he wanted to demonstrate and show his immense love for us. No one would die for me. But he did.	Negative: The most loving person would not die for an evil person.	[7] For <u>one will</u> scarcely <u>die</u> for a righteous person —though perhaps for a good person <u>one would</u> dare even to die—
		Positive: But that is exactly what Christ did.	[8] but <u>God shows</u> his love for us in that while <u>we were</u> still <u>sinner</u> s, <u>Christ died</u> for us.

V2 - Standing in grace means permanent audience with the king as friend: “Our relationship with God, into which justification has brought us, is not sporadic but continuous, not precarious but secure. We do not fall in and out of grace like courtiers who may find themselves in and out of favor with their sovereign, or politicians with the public. No, we stand in it, for that is the nature of grace. Nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38f.)” (Stott p 140).

V2b - “Glory” sounds nebulous, but what is included in our reason for hope of the glory of God? Christian hope is not uncertain (Greek word ‘elipse’), like our ordinary everyday hopes about the weather or our health; it is a joyful and confident expectation which rests on the promises of God, as we saw in the case of Abraham. And the object of our hope is the glory of God, namely his radiant splendor which will in the end be fully displayed. Already his glory is being continuously revealed in the heavens and the earth. Already it has been uniquely made manifest in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, most notably in his death and resurrection.

One day, however, the curtain will be raised and the glory of God will be fully disclosed. First, Jesus Christ himself will appear with ‘great power and glory.’ Secondly, we will not only see his glory, but be changed into it, so that he will ‘be glorified in his holy people.’ Then redeemed human beings, who were created to be ‘the image and glory of God’, but now through sin ‘fall short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23), will again and in full measure share in his glory (Romans 8:17). Thirdly, even the groaning creation will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into ‘the glorious freedom of the children of God’ (Romans 8:21). The renewed universe will be suffused with its Creator's glory. All this is included in the glory of God and is therefore the object of our sure hope. We exult in it. And our vision of future glory is a powerful stimulus to present duty” (Stott p140-141 selected).

V3 - Piper makes a good case that all suffering is in mind as Satan uses it to discourage our faith: “All experiences of suffering in the path of Christian obedience, whether from persecution or sickness or accident, have this in common: They all threaten our faith in the goodness of God and tempt us to leave the path of obedience. Therefore, every triumph of faith and all perseverance in obedience are testimonies to the goodness of God and the preciousness of Christ—whether the enemy is sickness, Satan, sin, or sabotage” (Piper, *Desiring God*, p257) - 1 Thes 3:4-5, Heb 12:3-11, 2 Cor 12:7-10, 2 Cor 11:27.

V3-5 - This is the Grand Upward Spiral: “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God and suffering, when it doesn't destroy us in bitterness, it produces more hope by which to rejoice! Repeat... :-). The ‘twin engine of items for rejoicing’ - glory and suffering's results” (ERB notes 2013-2014).

V5-8 - How do you know joy in suffering is not too good to be true? Subjective & Objective: “How can you really know this hope of glory is right? How can you know that you don't just wish it to be true? How do you know it is true? Paul shows us that, as we see through the Bible, the Christian's ground of assurance is two-fold: one is internal and subjective, while one is external and objective. And both are necessary...

We can find joy in knowing him, and knowing peace and fellowship with him, even if we lose other things dear to us. We can look forward with cast-iron certainty to our home in glory; and we can enjoy a foretaste of it—an hors d'oeuvre before the main course—as the Holy Spirit works in us to give us that subjective knowledge of God's love for us. Then, with our hearts resting in Christ—as we “rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ”[objective knowledge]—we are able to enjoy all the good of this world, neither becoming disappointed by nor detached from it...

[How do you know if you are living in these benefits of justification? When your sin it drives you to God and his love not away from him. Don't make repentance a work. There is no fear in love]. Even if I hadn't

done this thing, that would not have made me acceptable in God's sight anyway! Jesus died for me, and his blood can cover 1,000 worlds filled with people 1,000 times worse than me!.. Well may the Accuser roar, of sins that I have done: I know them all, and thousands more: Jehovah knoweth none! When you face death, you do it with serenity because you are going to a friend" (Keller p122, 124 selected).

Ephesians 3 and 1 John 4 BOTH say we have these same two reasons for hope: subjectively experiencing God's love by his Spirit in us, and objectively knowing he proved his love by dying for me.

Ephesians 3:17-19

[17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in **love**, [18] may have strength to **comprehend** with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] **and to know the love** of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1 John 4:13-16

[13] By this we know that we **abide** in him and he in us, because he has given us of his **Spirit**. [14] **And** we **have seen and testify** that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. [15] Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. [16] So we have come **to know and to believe** the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.



Theodora Jean Louise Blick, April 12, 2026

2. In the future we will escape God's final judgment, and we have Him now and then.

Sermon: Enemies no more (5:6-11)

Pastor Jim, 4/19/26. Intro: In the 1800's it was common to have "wanted" posters around for notorious criminals. Guess what: we are on that poster.

HEADLINE: THERE ARE TWO REAL RESULTS LATER FOR BEING JUSTIFIED NOW.

1. Who are we? We were helpless, and we were on our own wanted poster like in the 1800's, v6-8. We were enemies of God.

2. What has God done? God is the active mover: he sent Christ to die in our place after living active righteousness. Justification is a legal term on our status changed, but reconciliation is different and means the relationship is restored as friend of God. He saves us so that we can be near.

3. What is our response? Rejoice in God, v11. The word "rejoice" is the same word translated "boast" used earlier of the Jews. We have been brought close. That is more than enough. Rejoice.

For God is not only the chief of all good things but also possesses in himself the sum and substance of all blessings, and he becomes ours in Christ. - John Calvin

Notes & Quotes:

V9-11 - There are "Lessor to greater" arguments in this section - now vs later: Stage 1 of our salvation is justification which guarantees stage 2 glorification.

Contrast 1 - the WHAT vs9: If we are justified now, then we have no more wrath later.

Contrast 2 - the HOW vs10: The risen life of Christ is going to complete in heaven what the death of Christ began on earth.

Contrast 3 - the WHO vs10: If God reconciled his enemies, he will surely save his friends. This serves as a guarantee we will not fall away but make it in belief to heaven. We have real assurance of our salvation (Stott MMN).

5:9-11 - There are benefits of justification we will have LATER (Inference 2).

V9-11 - But what about now, how do I know I will make it someday? “How do I know I will endure in the meantime” (Keller p127).

Arcing:		Passage: Romans
Inference - Result 5: Since we are justified now, we will escape God's final judgment later. Main 4: Why will we be saved from final judgment?	If: If Christ died for us,	[9] Since, therefore, <u>we have</u> now <u>been justified</u> by his blood,
	Then: he can “keep us saved” even through the judgment day.	much more shall <u>we be saved</u> by him from the wrath of God.
Ground of Main 4: Because if he died for us when we were his enemies, shall he do less for us as his friends?	If: And if he saved us in his dying,	[10] For if while <u>we were</u> enemies <u>we were reconciled</u> to God by the death of his Son,
	Then: surely he will keep us safe as he now is living.	much more, now that <u>we are reconciled</u> , <u>shall we be saved</u> by his life.
Result 6: We rejoice now in God as we are now reconciled with him through Christ and this remains later too for all eternity when we dwell with him.		[11] More than that, <u>we</u> also <u>rejoice</u> in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom <u>we have</u> now <u>received</u> reconciliation.



The long awaited Spring has arrived

Break - What six blessings result when we are saved?

Paul has a list of six real, hard-hitting truths in mind to encourage our hearts and build our hope! A Heavenly Treasure by Eric Blick, May 1, 2026

Reading the book of Romans is like hiking in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. I have loved every time I start from the car and make it up along the trails to high elevations with majestic views of the mountains and sweeping landscapes. It's like Paul walking with us tells us when we park the car, "this gospel is really good news, and we see glimpses of these peaks of the mountains in the distance." As we start the trail he says, "if the gospel is such good news and majestic then it's really because you are so bad off. You are guilty for worshipping yourself and creation instead of this God who made all this, and you are worthy of his eternal punishment (Romans 1-3)."

Then coming around the first bend on this trail we see the first 14-er mountain peak. We hear and see: We get a righteous record from God, earned through the life and death of Jesus, credited to our account while Christ takes the just punishment for my sin (Rom 3:24-26). How do we get this righteousness? Just like Abraham did, we believe in God's promise. Abraham and each of us believers have faith that God would provide our needed righteousness through himself (Romans 4).

Then it is like Paul sits us down on the trail, we take out our sandwiches and drinks, and he points out the path to the next mountain peak. With excited voice he says something like, "now that we have made it this far, let me tell you SIX great results of this great salvation. Let me remind you of where we are on this journey: look around at what it is like to get here, take in all that you see, and reflect on six beautiful results of what happens now that we are saved. Four of these results are present right now on this path, and two more are future results of blessing."

Let's look at the logical flow and path that Paul takes us on in Romans 5:1-10. These are the six simple steps or results to walk on this path as we take in the splendor of the heights:



The Action: We get God's righteousness deposited to our account making us justified. That is the action: we are saved by God, we get his righteousness, and that is done through faith. We are justified before him. One great way this has been described is my status changes to "just as if I have never sinned." That is justification. Paul starts Romans 5:1 with this:

Verse 1 - Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,



We are justified, and that is done by faith!

Result 1: God and I are at peace.

We are no longer at odds with our Creator. We have peace with him. Instead of our sin making us at war with him, he is for us. We are on the same team, and we are in his Kingdom as sons and daughters.

Verse 1b - we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Result 2: We have standing.

We have access to the throne of the king, and we belong in his presence. We have standing. And we are not jokers or court jesters only invited in for humor and then kicked out. We have an audience with the king.

Verse 2 - Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand,

Result 3: We have real hope of Glory.

We are joyful in the real hope that we will see the glory of God, that we see the glory of God in Jesus, and that we are ourselves are destined for glory. Paul says all creation is eagerly awaiting to see us glorified. We will be remade. We will have glory and creation is groaning in itself to see us glorified (Rom 8:15). We were built for glory and to behold the glory of God.

Verse 2b - and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Implied objection - Wait, that all sounds too

good to be true.

What about my suffering now? I see the world is broken. My loved one just died, and I know the world is not right. I suffer. I see others suffer. How can these first three results be true now while I suffer?

Result 4: Suffering increases our joy. What?

Suffering can actually increase our joy and our knowing that God loves us immensely. Paul writes,

Verse 3-5: Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame,

Implied objection - How do I know that even in suffering I am loved? How do I know I did not make this up?

Paul argues TWO reasons WHY we know God's love is not cut off in suffering:

Grounding Argument #1 - the SUBJECTIVE reason [because]: I have the Holy Spirit who tells me I am loved.

I have the Spirit of God IN me, and one of his jobs is to remind me how much I am loved, and I know it, and I feel it, and I want to feel it more. It is a subjective experience that the Holy Spirit brings. I am God's. I am his child, and God's Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, is IN me (Rom 8:9-10, 14-15). Paul can hardly help himself from showing us the beauty of this peak without showing us another peak right behind it and above it as he unpacks so many of these truths further in Romans 8, which the Puritans named "the Great 8"!

Verse 5b - Because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Grounding Argument #2 - the OBJECTIVE reason [for]: I see Christ died for ME demonstrating to me I am loved.

Paul gives us another reason why God's love stays with us in suffering. He gives us a fact: Christ actually did die, and he died for you and me, believer! This is the Romans 8:32 argument, and let that truth melt your heart: he is for you and loves you and did not spare his own son, so why would he not give you all things?

Verse 6-8 - For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Result 5 [Future] - We will escape God's judgement.

If he justified us by Jesus' blood shed for us, then when the final judgment of God falls we will be saved from his wrath. We WILL make it through the final judgment of God with flying colors! Future judgment is not something we need to fear!

Verse 9 - Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Implied objection: Yes, but what if I don't make it to that final judgment day?

What if God changes his mind, or what if he forgets I am justified now as the final judgment could be a long time from now? Or what if I am justified now but then I sin again, will my status be changed from justified to guilty again? I am good today but what about tomorrow?

Grounding Argument [for]: Jesus perseveres his friends in faith.

Paul give an astounding reason why we will avoid God's final judgment. He says if Jesus died for us before we had peace with God while we were his enemies, then if we are now his friends - and we are - how much

more will he stand by his guarantee to take his friends through God's final judgment? Let that land on you, believer, you are a friend of Jesus, a friend of God.

Verse 10 - For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Result 6: We get God NOW and forever.

This was the most precious truth that hit me at the 1 year anniversary of my son's death. I miss him. I long for him. I am crushed that he is gone, and I can't get to him now but will see him one day. What do I do in the meantime? What do I have now? I have NOW received reconciliation with God. I have HIM now. Ultimately he is the better treasure, and he is undoing the broken and evil and wrong and as the better second Adam restoring all things to himself including my son's resurrection from the dead.

Verse 11 - More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Take these six truths that Paul pounds out and recite them, memorize them, use them to build your hope in him. These are yours, your six benefits to being saved, walk this path and take in this grandeur. Use them to know AND believe his deep love for you.

Prayer

Lord, what a mighty God you are who saves. Thank you for doing this impossible work to justify us and covering us in your righteousness. We pray that you would remind us of these great blessings and results of knowing you and walking with you on this path. We love you!

Amen!

3. How can one man really provide this many benefits? Federal Headship matters.

Sermon: Death in Adam, Life in Christ

Pastor Ryan, 4/26/26. Texasman Olympic Triathlon with Jason - Intro: Like Ryan's high school physics teacher with the gift of making the complex easy, Paul does the same with Christ as the second Adam.

HEADLINE: WHAT ADAM DID WAS FOR OUR WORST, AND WHAT CHRIST DID WAS FOR OUR GOOD.

There are three key facets of the gospel or aspects of the gospel that are bubbling underneath the surface of this simple statement, death and Adam, life in Christ.

1. The gospel message is urgent: Spiritual and physical death come through Adam's sin in the garden, but life comes in Christ. We are either in Adam or in Christ. There are only two options: death or life.

2. The gospel message is astonishing: Luther called it the glorious exchange: Christ gets my sin imputed to him, and I get his righteousness imputed to me.

3. The gospel message is superior: "Whereas Adam brought condemnation, Jesus brought justification. Whereas Adam brought death, Jesus brought life. Jesus is the second Adam, the better Adam, the superior Adam."

Application: Flee to the Second Adam, and be in him by faith.



Olympic Triathlon with Jason in Dallas

What is typology? What does it mean when Paul uses the word "type" here in verse 14? How is it that Adam was a "type of Christ"?

Answer: Adam pointed to Christ. Paul compares and contrasts these two men. In the good that Adam did, Christ worked in an even bigger way for good later in history. In the bad that Adam did, Christ did the exact opposite - where Adam failed to trust that God is good, for instance, the Perfect Adam, Christ, trusted God even to the point of death on a cross.

In using both "lesser to greater" comparisons pointing out similarities as well as using "foils" or deep contrasts, the Old Testament directs our attention to history's climax, namely Jesus.

Notes & Quotes:

Paul highlights three ways Christ is different than Adam:

V15 - Christ's work had a different motive: Adam was self-indulgent, and Christ was self-denying. "Trespass" means to deviate from the path and "free gift" denotes free willingness. Adam lived the motto "my life for me" - Christ lived "my life for you."

V16-17 - Christ's work had a different outcome: Adam's sin resulted in condemnation and death, and Christ's work resulted in justification and life. We were slaves under the tyrant sin. Now, not only are we freed from the tyrant and under God's benevolent reign, it says WE also reign in life v17. We share the Kingship of Christ. In literature, this is Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy being referred to as Kings and Queens of Narnia.

V19 - Christ's work had a different nature: Adam's disobedience broke the Law of God for the first time in all of history, and Christ's perfect obedience fulfilled the Law of God for the first and ONLY time in all of history AND counts now for me!! That is MY resume now.

This is the point that Christ is making when he wants John the Baptist to baptize him instead of Jesus baptizing John: "But Jesus answered him (John), 'Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he (John) consented." Matthew 3:15.

“Therefore” is connecting to last section with this logic: How can one man overcome so much for so many?

How can one man make this much difference and bring peace with God, access, glory, joy in suffering, etc.? One man Adam brought us sin and death, and one man Christ - the Second Adam - brought us all these things.

“How can you make such a confident claim in light of the enormous power of death and sin now in the world? or: How can one person’s sacrifice, as noble as it was, bring about such incredible benefits to so many? or: How can that one act really change my present condition and eternal future?” (Keller loc 1689).

1. This is the career of the first Adam. He died, and we die.

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 5:12-14
Main 1: We sinned in Adam.	Main 2: Death only comes to those who are sinners. Why do we all die?	Progressive	[12] Therefore, just as <u>sin came</u> into the world through one man,
		Progressive	and <u>death [came]</u> through sin,
		Progressive	and so <u>death spread</u> to all men
	Ground of Main 2: Because we all sinned when Adam sinned. Main 3: Why did all sin even if there were no 10 Commandments yet?		because <u>all sinned</u> —
	Ground of Main 3: Because sin existed before Moses got the 10 Commandments. People without the law are not as guilty of sin as those with the law though guilty with the Law written on their hearts (2:12-15).		[13] for <u>sin</u> indeed <u>was</u> in the world <u>before</u> the <u>law was given</u> ,
Concessive of Main 1: And we would die even before the law was given.	Main 4: People died just as much before Moses gets the law.		[14] Yet <u>death reigned</u> from Adam to Moses,
	Comparison of Main 4: People died for the guilt of Adam’s sin.	Idea: We sin then because we are sinners.	even over those <u>whose</u> sinning <u>was</u> not <u>like</u> the transgression of Adam,
		Explain: Adam’s action is a “type” of Christ’s.	<u>who was</u> a <u>type</u> of the <u>one who was</u> to come.

Section Summary Quote: "Peace, grace, and glory (the three privileges of the justified - *that started chapter 5*) are not given to those who are in Adam, but only to those who are in Christ" (Stott MMN p29).

2. This is the career of the Second Adam in contrast to the First Adam (but): the salvation is better than the death, the justification is better than the condemnation, and the result is asymmetrical - in Adam we get justice, in Christ we become kings.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 5:15-21
Main 1: How are Adam and Christ are different? <u>There are three contrasts:</u>		[15] But the free <u>gift</u> is not <u>like</u> the trespass.
Ground of Main 1 (Series 1): Because <u>(Contrast 1)</u> the salvation brought by one man is much more than the sin brought by one man.	If / Then: This free gift of life through Christ's unselfishness vs. death in Adam's trespass in selfishness.	For if <u>many died</u> through one man's trespass,
		[then] much more <u>have</u> the <u>grace</u> of God and the free <u>gift</u> by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ <u>abounded</u> for many. (<i>grace & gift have abounded</i>)
Ground of Main 1 (Series 2): Because <u>(Contrast 2)</u> the result is different - condemnation vs justification. Main 2: Why is the free gift not like death from Adam?		[16] And the free <u>gift</u> is not <u>like</u> the result of that one man's sin.
Ground of Main 2: Because Christ not only covers the guilt of Adam's sin but all other sins too. Main 3: Why is abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness better than our death in Adam?		For the <u>judgment</u> following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free <u>gift</u> following many trespasses brought justification.
Ground of Main 3: Because <u>(Contrast 3)</u> justice metes out equivalence, but grace overflows well beyond what is deserved. We are kings. It's asymmetrical: in Adam we get justice of death, but in Christ we become kings to reign. The expected contrast is "death reigns" vs "life reigns", but instead we get kingship.		[17] For if, because of one man's trespass, <u>death reigned</u> through that one man, [then] much more will <u>those</u> <u>who receive</u> the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness <u>reign</u> in life through the one man Jesus Christ.
Inference: <u>How are Adam and Christ are the same?</u> I am declared before I act. By faith I receive the active obedience of Christ as a gift to me, AND he takes my punishment. He does both of these as my federal head.	Main 4: Why is it that Adam's sin brought us guilt, so Christ's obedience brings us righteousness?	[18] Therefore, as one <u>trespass led</u> to condemnation for all men, so one <u>act</u> of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.
	Ground of Main 4: Because Adam's one act made us legally sinners (before we act), so Christ's one act makes us legally righteous (before we act).	[19] For as by the one man's disobedience the <u>many were made</u> sinners, so by the one man's obedience the <u>many will be made</u> righteous.

There are Twin Heresies that distort the gospel message - Table 1:

Both are seen in the lives of the Prodigal Sons in Luke 15. One son left to live however he wanted, no rules, sensual pleasure, and squandered his father's inheritance (Liberalism). The other son stayed home and was embittered against the father trying to buy his affection with his obedience but not wanting the father either (Legalism). Both sons were lost. Both needed the gospel.

“Without a knowledge of our extreme sin, the payment of the gospel seems trivial and does not electrify or transform. But without a knowledge of Christ's completely debt-satisfying life and death, the knowledge of sin would crush us or compel us to deny and repress it” (Keller loc 1869).

Table 1

Legalism	Gospel	Liberalism
God is holy	God is holy and love	God is love
Earn your own righteousness	Receive God's perfect righteousness	You don't need perfect righteousness
Matter is bad and we are fallen—be suspicious of or reject physical pleasure (asceticism)	Matter is good yet we are fallen—physical enjoyment is good, but live wisely	Matter is good and we aren't fallen—satisfy your physical appetites
Sin only affects individuals—just do evangelism	Sin affects both individuals and social systems—do both evangelism and social action	Naive about depth of human sin—just do social action
People can't change / change is easy	People can change, but there are no quick fixes	People don't need to change
Go into guilt—work it off	Go through guilt—rest in Christ	Go away from guilt—convince yourself you're OK
Repent of sins	Repent of sins and self-righteousness	Repent of neither

C. The Justified have UNION with Christ - Benefit Two (5:20-6:23).

1. Question 1 of 4: Does the message of salvation by grace alone lead you to stay unchanged morally?

Sermon: Sin Has No Power Here

Pastor Ryan, 5/3/26. Intro: Are we singing lies when we sing together corporately Sunday morning?

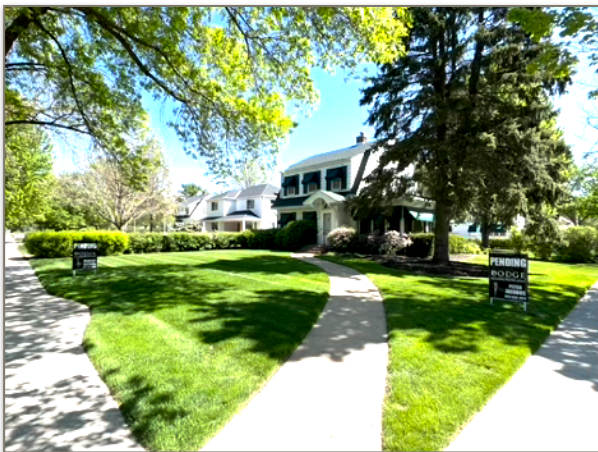
HEADLINE: ANSWER - NO, BECAUSE SIN NO LONGER REIGNS OVER US. WE ARE UNITED WITH CHRIST, HAVE HIS SPIRIT, AND CAN SAY NO TO SIN.

1. Know that you have freedom from sin: The context is that we are either in Adam or in Christ. The argument Paul is addressing is this: if God gets more grace more now that the law shows more sin, why not sin more then? If you are IN Christ, you are freed from sin's captivity.

2. Embrace that you have freedom from sin: In v11 Paul tells us to consider these things that are true to be true for us, appropriated to our lives not, and not just intellectually true.

3. Live like you do have freedom from sin: In v12-14 the logic is this: don't present your members to sin - why? Because you are dead to sin, because you are not under the law but under Grace - you are in the new covenant. You are married to another (7:1-4). Present all of who we are as weapons to God for righteousness. Because sin does not rule over you, you can present your members to God for righteousness.

Application: We have a daily choice: are we going to use our gifts and talents for righteousness or unrighteousness. Is the trajectory of your life different though not in perfection? We are free from the penalty of sin and also the power of sin. One day we will be free from the presence of sin.



1602 N Nye, Fremont, NE

Notes & Quotes:

V20-21 -Jesus' loving obedience is life and death for us. He is the better Adam: "While Adam was told he would enjoy blessing if he obeyed God, and yet chose to disobey (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:6-7), the second Adam knew he would face agony and death if he obeyed—and yet he resolutely walked in obedience to his Father (Mark 14:32-36). When we read of Jesus' continual loving obedience in the Gospels, it is a matter of life and death to us; because that obedience is our obedience, if we are in Christ instead of Adam" (Keller loc 1825).

V2-5, 8 - There is a 4th contrast between Adam and the Second Adam: "There is another, fourth, contrast between

Adam and Christ that Paul does not mention in chapter 5, and which he will focus on in chapter 6—but it is helpful for us to mention it here. Our union with Adam as our federal head is physical, but our union with Christ as our federal head is by faith. God unites us with Christ when we believe in him. This is why Paul can later say "we died" with Christ, we "were ... buried" with him, and we "were raised" with him (6:2-4, 8)" (Keller loc 1805).

5:20-6:23 - Paul has our holiness in mind: Union with Christ leads to holiness. Sin is inadmissible as a Christian. The argument to holiness is grounded in this double fact: we are united with Christ - Part I from 5:20-6:14, and we are slaves to God - Part II from 6:15-23 (Stott MMN).

6:2-10 Answer One: No, the gospel gives you knowledge of your new status with regard to sin. Sin no longer reigns over us. We have the Spirit and can say no to sin.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 5:20-6:10
Inference of Main in 5:18-19: The Law made a difference alright in justification but not like people think, it actually made the need higher to be saved - it showed more sin - not added to justification in any way.	Action: When the formal law came with Moses, sin got more visible and worse, but...	[20] Now the <u>law came</u> in to increase the trespass, but where <u>sin increased</u> , <u>grace abounded</u> all the more,
	Result: when Christ came, grace arrived to overwhelm, resulting in eternal life. If grace is shown great because sin is clearer, why not sin more?	[21] so that, as <u>sin reigned</u> in death, <u>grace</u> also might <u>reign</u> through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Question: Does the message of salvation by grace alone lead you to stay unchanged morally?		[1] What <u>shall we say</u> then? <u>Are we</u> to continue in sin that <u>grace may abound</u> ?
Answer: No. We died to sin when we became Christians.		[2] By no means! How <u>can we who died</u> to sin still <u>live</u> in it?
Main 1: We are baptized into Christ's death when we become saved. When he died, we died.	Idea / Explain	[3] <u>Do you not know</u> that <u>all of us</u> <u>who have been baptized</u> into Christ Jesus <u>were baptized</u> into his death?
Inference of Main 1: Therefore "we know" we were baptized with Christ so that we could live a new life. Main 2: Why did we die with him?	Action: We died when Christ died.	[4] <u>We were buried</u> therefore with him by baptism into death,
	Purpose: This is so that we will live a new life now.	in order that, just as <u>Christ was raised</u> from the dead by the glory of the Father, <u>we too might walk</u> in newness of life.
Ground of Main 2: Because we will be resurrected like him too.	If/Then	[5] For if <u>we have been united</u> with him in a death like his, [then] <u>we shall</u> certainly <u>be united</u> with him in a resurrection like his.
Action 1: "We know" that our old self was put away. For what purpose?	Idea / Explain	[6] <u>We know</u> that our old <u>self was crucified</u> with him
Result of Action 1: This is so the body of death is done (Action 2).		in order that the <u>body of sin might be brought</u> to nothing,
Result of Action 2: This is so that sin's influence in us would be nullified. Main 3: Why are we no longer enslaved to sin?		so that <u>we would</u> no longer <u>be enslaved</u> to sin.
Ground of Main 3: Because the dead have been set free.		[7] For <u>one who has died has been set</u> free from sin.

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 5:20-6:10 continued
Inference of v4-7: “We know” that the power of Christ’s resurrection will also triumph in us.	If / Then		[8] Now if <u>we have died</u> with Christ, [then] <u>we believe</u> that <u>we will</u> also <u>live</u> with him.
	Main 1: The risen Christ will never die again. Why won’t Christ die again?	Idea / Explain	[9] <u>We know</u> that <u>Christ</u> , being raised from the dead, <u>will</u> never <u>die</u> again; <u>death</u> no longer <u>has dominion</u> over him.
	Ground of Main 1: Because he died to sin and lives to God.	Alternative / Alternative	[10] For the death <u>he died</u> <u>he died</u> to sin, once for all, but the life <u>he lives</u> <u>he lives</u> to God.

6:11-14 Answer Two: No, the gospel gives you power over sin as well.

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 6:11-14
Inference of v8-10: Because if we have died with Christ, then you know you are dead to sin, and you must also treat yourself as dead to sin.			[11] So <u>you</u> also must <u>consider</u> yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
Main 1: United with Christ, you can obey sin or obey God, so obey God. Why can we obey God?	Series 1	Idea / Explain	[12] <u>[You]</u> <u>Let</u> not sin therefore <u>reign</u> in your mortal body, to make <u>you obey</u> its passions.
	Series 2	Positive / Negative Main / Comparison Main / Comparison	[13] <u>[You]</u> <u>Do</u> not <u>present</u> your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but <u>[you]</u> <u>present</u> yourselves to God as those <u>who have been brought</u> from death to life, and <u>[you present]</u> your members to God as instruments for righteousness.
Ground of Main 1: Because sin does not have dominion over us. Main 2: Why does sin not have dominion over us?			[14] For <u>sin will have</u> no dominion over you,
Ground of Main 2: Because you are not under the law anymore, sin’s mastery over you is and will be broken.			since <u>you are</u> not <u>under</u> law but <u>under</u> grace.

Notes on the Overview of 5:20-6:14 part 1¹

The Critics: Paul anticipates what some will say to this free justification by grace - "if God justifies the ungodly which he delights to do, 4:5, then there is no point in being godly." Jude similarly addresses this issue and writes, " ...ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

¹ Notes from John Stott in Men Made New

The Answer to the Critics is a Key question: How and in what sense have we died to sin? "Now, what is this death to sin: the death which Christ died (vs10), and the death that we therefore have died with Him (vs2 'we...died to sin' and vs11 'consider yourselves dead to sin')?" (Stott p37).

What "death to sin" does NOT mean (vs2 and following): It does NOT mean that we become like a corpse, and when the stimulus of temptation comes we neither feel it nor react to it as some have believed. Why? "Died to sin" is used three times here, once to describe Christ and twice to describe us so the meaning has to be the same for both. Also, commands to not yield our members to sin and to mortify the flesh by the Spirit would be meaningless.

Paul gives five steps to counter the critics:

Step 1 (vs3) United to Christ: Christian baptism is baptism into Christ not water. "Being a Christian involves a personal, vital identification with Jesus Christ, and that this Union with Him is dramatically set forth in our baptism" (Stott p36).

If a boat named Sun-runner is leaving Florida sailing to the Bahamas, a passenger on that boat can be said to be IN Sun-runner. She will be in the Bahamas soon. Another passenger getting on a boat on the slip right next to Sun-runner in Florida and ends up in Iceland is not IN the Sun-runner. This is a visual of what it means to be IN Christ and identified with Him. Where he has gone, so I have I, and where he is going, me too!

Step 2 (vs4-5) death and resurrection: Baptism is both into Christ's death and his resurrection. Union with Christ also means we get his death as our death. It means his physical resurrection becomes ours too - now, to live in this newness of life (vs4 or the abundant life John 10), and one day our physical bodies will come out of the grave because his did (vs5 future tense shall certainly).

Step 3 (vs6-10) Sin's tyrannical power over us is broken: Christ's death was to sin and a resurrection to God. The whole of me before I was converted died when Christ died. Gal 5:24 - crucify the flesh and Like 9:23 - take up your cross are both about a death to SELF. In contrast, Romans 6:6 is a declaration of a follower of Christ's death to SIN.

Summary Quote: "On the cross Christ broke the power of the little kingdom (I.e. living for me as king in a kingdom of one vs. for God's kingdom)... On the cross Christ paid the debt for every selfish desire, thought, word, or deed to which you will ever give yourself... On the cross Christ purchased power for you to obey... Although the **power** of the little kingdom over your heart has been broken, the **presence** of little kingdom thoughts and desires still remains... The cross of Christ guarantees that some day your kingdom conflict will be over" (*A Quest for More*, Paul Tripp, chapter 5).

The Logic in vs6 is this: "We became identified with him by faith and baptism, and so we shared in his death to sin. We were thus crucified with Christ, secondly, in order that our sinful nature might be deprived of its power. And this took place, thirdly, in order that we should no longer be enslaved to sin" (Stott p46).

What "death to sin" DOES mean (vs9-10 contrast to vs2): "It means the same for us as it does for Christ, namely, he bore sin's penalty... he took upon Himself our sins and their just reward... and he did it 'once', once and for all. As a result sin has no more claim or demand on him. So he was raised from the dead to prove the satisfactoriness of his sin-bearing, and he now lives for ever to God... We have died to sin [then] in the sense that in Christ we have borne its penalty. Consequently our old life has finished; a new life has begun" (Stott p43).

If we don't understand death to sin in this way, we deceive ourselves into thinking that sin is not really a temptation to us. However, we know by experience daily that it is! This is also why we have been given the Spirit of God to fight sin because it is a real fight. But now, with the Spirit, it is beatable and is no longer our sole master.

This is why Christ could say something counterintuitive and shocking: "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you" - John 16:7. We have the Spirit IN and WITH us!

Step 4 (vs11) reckon: Since we have died to sin and live to God, we must reckon it or consider it so.

Reckon means to consider and to remind ourselves and to meditate on what we know to be true. Volume 1 of our life before Christ deserved the death penalty which was served for us in Christ's death. United to him means when he rose to new life so did we and thus starts Volume 2 of our life, closing Volume 1.

"...the apostle does not state the impossibility of sin in the Christian, but the utter incongruity of it" (Stott p50).

Step 5 (vs12-14) live: As those who are alive from the dead, we must not let sin reign within us, but submit ourselves to God. The command is to live in holiness. Why? Because sin and the law have no more claim on us, (v14) and we have changed sides now as his loved children, we can live like who we are - under one new King - God, not the tyrant sin.

How do we change? Saint Augustine said that what you are is defined by what you love. Therefore it is only through adoration that we will change. John Calvin defines "hallowed be thy name" to have your entire heart captivated with wonderment and awe of Him. So how do we find God beautiful and thus change? Unmerited Grace - on the cross Jesus got the abandonment that we deserve so that we would never be abandoned by God (Tim Keller Podcast on the Lord's Prayer). Reminder: in step five we can't let yielding become a work by which we get proud or depressed. Lord, melt out hearts.

V6 - the body of sin and the old self are two different things: "Therefore, Paul is likely saying that the "old self" was killed in order to get rid of the "body of sin." Thus these are two different entities. What is "the body of sin"? Some think it refers to the "flesh," the sinful heart. But later in this chapter Paul says: "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires" (v 12). So the "body of sin" is the body controlled by sin. This is not to say that the physical body is sinful in itself, or that physical desires are sinful as such. But sin expresses itself through our bodies; or it reigns in us by getting us to obey its dictates; and so Paul calls it a "body of sin..." A Christian's "old self" is gone completely. The old "ego," the old self-understanding, the old stance of the whole person toward God and the world—all that is gone. It has died—I died—and "anyone who has died has been freed from sin" (v 7). As a Christian, "I," my truest self, really seeks God and loves his law and holiness. While sin remains in me with a lot of strength, it no longer controls my personality and life. It is still able to lead me to disobey God, but now, sinful behavior goes against my deepest self-understanding" (Keller loc 1969).

V10, 13 - United with Christ means we get TO DO righteousness and not just SAY NO: "We are righteous in God's sight. If we remember this, the motives for our sin will be undermined. Individual sinful acts have

sinful motivations. When we ask why we are moved to particular sins, we discover that our sins come because we still seek to find our “justification” (our identity, our sense of worthiness) in other things besides God. Thus, to remember that we are completely loved and righteous in Christ undermines and saps our motives and desires for sin” (Keller loc 2,052).

Do the crime, do the time: If you get caught for car theft, you are innocent or justified of that crime after you serve your five years. You are free of that event you did. In the same way, a murder convict is justified of his crime if he dies in capital punishment, but a lot of good that does because he is dead! Paul says something radical here: we are convicted of worse than murder in God's courtroom and sit, as it were, on death row. Our penalty is the eternal death penalty because it is sin against an eternal, infinitely Holy God. But, the perfect man HAS served that eternal sentence already when the eternal Christ satisfied that debt on the cross. The good news: I walk off of death row to live another day. So what do I do now? By the Spirit in me I employ all my effort to enlist the members of my body in making God's name famous (also Hebrews 9:28).



Mavis meeting Theo, April 2026

2. Question 2 of 4: If we are not under the law as a system of salvation, are we under any obligation to it at all now that we are justified?

Sermon: Which Master?

Pastor Ryan, 5/10/26. Intro: Grace Hopper of 1934 is credited with the quote, “it’s easier to ask for forgiveness than ask for permission.”

HEADLINE: ANSWER 1 - YES! YOU CAN BE EITHER A SLAVE TO SIN OR A SERVANT OF GOD, BUT NO ONE IS FREE.



Job well done, Grace!

Why should we not live however we want now that we are saved?

1. To go on sinning means we are slaves to sin, v16: We are either under the master of sin or God.
2. To go on sinning fails to see our identity with Christ, 17: The path of freedom from slavery is God’s path. We are free to become who he made us to be.
3. To go on sinning will lead to heartache and eventual separation from God, v21: There is no good fruit from the downward spiral of sin. It is brokenness and death, eternal separation from God.
4. To go on sinning means missing out on the joy and blessing in pursuing Christ, v22: It is not just saying no to sin. We are reminded it robs us of joy. There is better.

Notes & Quotes:

V16 - If the law does not save us, why should we obey it today?: “Because being saved doesn’t mean you are free from having a master. You can be either a slave to sin or a servant of God; but you cannot be neither, and you cannot be both...”

So Paul’s main argument is this: anyone who wonders if a Christian can sin is ignorant about sin’s enslaving nature. Put another way: a Christian does not have to obey the Ten Commandments in order to be saved, but a Christian does have to obey the Ten Commandments in order to be a free (and thus godly) human being. If you don’t obey the law of God, you become a slave to selfishness and sin” (Keller loc 2098, 2116).

V18-19 - Live like who we are. How does that practically work?: “We must remember that verse 19 comes after verse 18, where Paul tells us: “You have been set free from sin.” As we saw in the last two chapters, conversion brings us into a new realm and puts a new power into us. Sin no longer can force us to do anything. So when verse 19 says: “Now offer them in slavery to righteousness,” Paul is saying: Be what you are—be controlled in your behavior not by feelings or appearances, but by realities that the gospel tells you about... For example, if someone says something that makes me look bad, I will offer myself as a slave to God or sin at that moment. I could let my desire to look good be my master. I could let my heart say: This is a disaster! I look like a fool! I have to discredit this person quickly! I must pay them back! At that point, if I act out of this kind of thinking (offering myself to it), I will respond with bitterness, harsh language, and so on. Or I could remember that pleasing Christ is my ruling motivation. I could have my heart say: Well, this

person has pointed out (albeit with a hateful motive) a flaw that I really should deal with. But fortunately, God is my Judge and he has accepted me in Jesus Christ. If I act out of this kind of thinking, I will repent before God in my heart for what I truly am guilty of, and respond with a soft answer (as Proverbs 15:1 commands) to the person who made the point” (Keller loc2158, 2165).

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 6:15-23	
Question: Do we have any obligation to keep the Law if it does not save us?		[15] What then? <u>Are we</u> to sin because <u>we are</u> not under <u>law</u> but under <u>grace</u> ?	
Answer Progression 1: Yes, because everyone is a slave to something. So instead of being slaves to sin, we are free to be servants of God.	If Then	By no means! [16] <u>Do you</u> not <u>know</u> that if <u>you present</u> yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, [then] <u>you are slaves</u> of the one whom you obey, either of sin, <u>which leads</u> to death, or of obedience, <u>which leads</u> to righteousness?	
Answer Progression 2: We have become obedient from the heart to a new Master, and it is no longer sin as master. There are only two kinds of bond-service: to sin or to God. The <u>origins</u> of each: born into slavery to sin, brought into slavery to God by conversion. Main 1: How does each slavery develop and change?			[17] But thanks be to God, that you <u>who were</u> once <u>slaves</u> of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which <u>you were committed</u> , [18] and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
Idea (v19) / Explain (v16-18): I am using another analogy, slavery, which is tricky, to show freedom in Christ.			[19] <u>I am speaking</u> in human terms, because of your natural limitations.
Ground of Main 1: How each <u>develops</u> : slavery to sin results in ever-increasing wickedness; slavery to God leads to holiness. Main 2: What are the results?	Main		For just as <u>you</u> once <u>presented</u> your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness,
	Comparison		so now <u>[you]</u> <u>present</u> your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.
Ground of Main 2 (Alternative 1): The <u>results</u> of each are polar opposites: being slaves of sin results in wages being paid of death (including present brokenness).	Positive Action	Main Temporal	[20] For when <u>you were slaves</u> of sin, <u>you were free</u> in regard to righteousness.
	Negative Result	Main	[21] But what fruit <u>were you getting</u> at that time from the things of which <u>you are</u> now <u>ashamed</u> ?
		Ground	For the end of those things is death.
Ground of Main 2 (Alternative 2): Slaves to God results in the gift of eternal life. It is still not a wage but a gift.	Main		[22] But now that <u>you have been set free</u> from sin and <u>have become slaves</u> of God, the <u>fruit</u> you get <u>leads</u> to sanctification and its end, eternal life.
	Ground	Neg: Wages v.	[23] For the <u>wages</u> of sin <u>is death</u> ,
		Pos: Gift	but the free gift of God <u>is</u> eternal <u>life</u> in Christ Jesus our Lord.

D. The Justified have FREEDOM from the law - Benefit Three (7:1-8:4).

1. Question 2 of 4 continued: If we are not under the law as a system of salvation, are we under any obligation to it at all now that we are justified?

Sermon: You Belong to Christ

Pastor Jim, 5/17/26. Intro: Paul provides the introductory illustration for today's sermon - marriage.

HEADLINE: ANSWER 2 - YES, YOU CAN BE EITHER MARRIED TO THE LAW OR MARRIED TO CHRIST, BUT NO ONE IS "SINGLE."

1. The principle: The law only binds living people, v1. The law as a system of salvation never works while alive.

2. The illustration: Marriage binds two people together while both live, v2-3. We are bound in marriage "until death do us part."

3. The explanation: The husband is supposed to die to mirror this illustration, but he says WE die, v4. How do we die to the law? We die to the law when Christ died, we died with him to our law-keeping religion of being a "good person" matters for salvation. And we don't stay dead, v4. We belong to the Resurrected One. Since the law is not the one who is dying but we die with Christ, the law is still there after marriage in our new relationship with Christ but totally different.

4. The application: A. Remember to whom you belong to now, to whom you are married. B. We live for Jesus, v4, 6. We bear fruit for God, and we serve in the new way of the Spirit not the old way of the written code. Jesus works in us first - the gospel order - and then we can work. We have a new motivation (married and united to someone wonderful) and a new power (the Spirit of God in us) to obey.



Quiet, early morning fire with Cathy

Notes & Quotes:

V1 - The law only binds alive people: "Paul gives an illustration of a basic fact: the law only binds those who are alive! Death breaks the law's power" (Keller loc 2,212).

V4 - We are married to another in love giving up the "freedom" which is slavery to sin: "Marriage does entail a significant loss of freedom and independence. You cannot simply live as you choose. A single person can make decisions unilaterally but a married person cannot. There is duty and obligation. But, on the other hand, there is now the possibility of an experience of love, intimacy, acceptance and security that you could not have as a single person. Because of this love and intimacy, our loss of freedom is a joy, not a burden. In a good marriage, your whole life is affected and changed by the wishes and desires of the person you love. You get pleasure from giving pleasure. You seek to discover the wishes of your beloved and are happy to make changes in accord with those wishes" (Keller loc 2,225).

V6 - What do we do with the law now that we are not saved by it? "So does the Christian ignore the moral law of God? Not at all. We now look at it as an expression of God's desires. He loves honesty, purity, generosity, truth, integrity, kindness, and so on. We now use the law to please the One who saved us. So we are not "under the law." We are not married to it. We are married to Christ; we are seeking to please him,

and so the law's precepts are ways to honor the One we love. They are now not a burden—we have a new motivation (love for our Husband) and obey in a new framework (acceptance on the basis of Christ, not us, fulfilling the law)” (Keller loc 2,239).

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 7:1-6
Main 1 (Comparison): Paul changes metaphors to marriage to illustrate our union with Christ and freedom from the law. Wives are bound to their husbands until freed by death. Main 2: Why is a wife bound to her husband?			[1] Or <u>do you</u> not <u>know</u> , brothers — for <u>I am speaking</u> to those <u>who know</u> the law— that the <u>law is binding</u> on a person only as long as <u>he lives</u> ?
Ground of Main 2: Because the law binds her to him until the husband dies.	Main / Temporal If / Then:		[2] For a married <u>woman is bound</u> by law to her husband while <u>he lives</u> , but if her <u>husband dies</u> [then] <u>she is released</u> from the law of marriage.
	Alternative 1: She is an adulteress if he lives and she cheats.	If / Then Main / Temporal	[3] Accordingly, <u>she will be called</u> an adulteress if <u>she lives</u> with another man while her <u>husband is alive</u> .
	Alternative 2: She is free to marry another if he dies.	If / Then If / Then	But if her <u>husband dies</u> , [then] <u>she is free</u> from that law, and if <u>she marries</u> another man [then] <u>she is</u> not an <u>adulteress</u> .
Comparison of Main 1: We are married to Christ! So we are now (like all married persons) bound with the cords of love, not fear. Main 3: Why is to whom we are married matters?	Action: How each marriage starts: born into marriage to law; brought into marriage to Christ by his death.		[4] Likewise, my brothers, <u>you also have died</u> to the law through the body of Christ,
	Result: I belong to the risen Christ,		so that <u>you may belong</u> to another, to him who has been raised from the dead,
	Purpose: so that I may bear fruit for God.		in order that <u>we may bear</u> fruit for God.
Ground of Main 3: Because the results of each marriage is totally different. One is controlled by the sinful nature, leading to death; the other is serving in the way of the Spirit in true freedom.	Alternative 3: The law was like gas poured on us as dying embers exploding.	Action / Result	[5] For while <u>we were living</u> in the flesh, our sinful <u>passions</u> , aroused by the law, <u>were</u> at work in our members to bear fruit for death.
	Alternative 4: Married to Christ we serve in the freedom of the Spirit.	Action	[6] But now <u>we are released</u> from the law, having died to that <u>which held</u> us captive,
		Result	so that <u>we serve</u> in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

2. Question 3 of 4: Is the law a bad thing (since bondage to the law caused evil)?

Sermon: The Root Issue

Pastor Ryan, 5/23/26. Intro: NASA scientists lost their probe to Mars when it got too close to the atmosphere as unplanned. The problem: one system was using English metrics and one was using Metric. The inability to identify the root problem leads to catastrophic consequences. Our real problem is our sin.

HEADLINE: ANSWER - NO, IT WAS SIN IN ME WANTING TO BE GOD, SOVEREIGN, AND INDEPENDENT THAT MADE THE LAW INEFFECTIVE TO SAVE ME.

1. The law is not the problem to keep us separated from God: The Law is in reference to the ordinances and commands through Moses on Mount Sinai including the 10 Commandments. Verse 12 says these laws are all good from God.

2. Sin is the problem: Sin is rebellion against God. It is us doing what we want to do, just like Adam.

3. The Law and sin have a complicated relationship: The law both makes us aware of our sin which is already there, AND it arouses it. Covetousness is idolatry since we are not satisfied with God and are saying, “if only I had what they have, I would be happy.” Don’t tell me, “don’t steal pears”; I now want to.

Application: A. Don’t blame the law for your problems. B. Don’t look to the law to solve your problems. You can’t be saved by obeying the law. You get imputed righteousness and love the law in our new nature.



Backyard Iris for beauty

Notes & Quotes:

V7 - The law’s purpose was many things but one of them never was to save us by obedience to it: “Paul’s point is that the law cannot save us—that was never, and could never be, its purpose, because it was given to sinners; but it can and must show us that we need to be saved—that we are sinners. Unless the law does its work, we won’t look to Christ. We will be in denial about the depth and nature of our sin. In other words, we need the law to “convict” us of sin before we can see our need for, or have a desire for, the grace of God in Christ” (Keller loc 2,277).

V8 - The problem is me not the law. We want to be sovereign and god: “The analogy is do not put a sign up on your grass that says “don’t walk on the grass”, because now all I want to do is walk on your grass. That desire was already in me to rebel. Now I want to walk on your grass even more, and I didn’t know I wanted to before the sign. Again, the problem is not the good sign. The problem is me and my sin nature I got from Adam” (Pastor Jim Fain, 2005). Why do I want to walk on your grass? Because no one can tell this god what to do. Those are the embers in me that the good law as gasoline then ignites to a raging flame.

“We have a deep desire to be in charge of the world and of our lives. We want to be sovereign. Every law God that lays down is an infringement on our absolute sovereignty. It reminds us that we are not God, and prevents us from being sovereign to live as we wish. In its essence, sin is a force that hates any such infringement. It desires to be God. What was the first temptation from the serpent, in the Garden of Eden? “You will be like God” (Genesis 3:4). That was the essence of the first sin, and it is the essence of all of ours, too... Therefore, since the essence of sin is the desire to play God—to have no infringements on our sovereignty—every law will stir sin up in its original force and power. The more we are exposed to the law of God, the more that sinful force will be aggravated into reaction” (Keller loc 2,305, 2,309).

V8-9 - Pharisees thought they could keep all 9 commandments in actions only, and the 10th one was confusing and hard - don't covet: Jesus shows in the sermon on the mount that the 10 Commandments can't be reduced down to merely actions but desires and motivations. "Paul had never understood sin as a matter of inward longings and idolatrous drives and desires. He had never seen sin as essentially "coveting" against God, failing to love God enough to be content. He had thought of sin only in terms of violating rules" (Keller loc 2,347).

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 7:7-12
Question: Is the law a bad thing (since bondage to the law (7:5-6) caused evil)?		[7] What then <u>shall we say</u> ? That the <u>law is sin</u> ?
Answer Main 1: No, it was sin in me that made the law ineffective. Why is the law not bad?	If / Then	By no means! Yet if <u>it had not been</u> for the law, [then] <u>I would not have known</u> sin.
Ground of Main 1 Alternative 1: Because the law exposes sin for what it is. The law <u>DEFINES</u> what sin is.	If / Then Idea / Explain	For <u>I would not have known</u> what <u>it is</u> to covet if the <u>law had not said</u> , " <u>You shall not covet</u> ."
Ground of Main 1 Alternative 2: Because sin is aroused by its exposure to the law. The law <u>AROUSES</u> sin in me because I want to be the sovereign not follow God who is.	Main 2: The law is gasoline poured on me as smoldering embers. Why do I sin more?	[8] But <u>sin</u> , seizing an opportunity through the commandment, <u>produced</u> in me all kinds of covetousness.
	Ground of Main 2: Because the good law ignites my sin further.	For apart from the law, <u>sin lies</u> dead.
Series: The law <u>CONVICTS</u> of sin. "Alive" meant he thought his actions pleased God, but then 10th commandment was internal v8, and he was guilty and dead to save himself.	Main / Temporal Action / Result	[9] <u>I was</u> once <u>alive</u> apart from the law, but when the <u>commandment came</u> , <u>sin came alive</u> and <u>I died</u> .
Series: The law brings both <u>AGGRAVATION</u> of sin and overwhelming <u>CONVICTION</u> of guilt.	Main 3: The good law promises life. Why do I still die?	[10] The very <u>commandment</u> <u>that promised</u> life <u>proved</u> to be death to me.
	Ground of Main 3: Because sin in me deceives me and kills me.	[11] For <u>sin</u> , seizing an opportunity through the commandment, <u>deceived</u> me and through it <u>killed</u> me.
Inference: Here is the summary of v7-11 - The law is good, but I am sinful.	Series Series	[12] So the <u>law is holy</u> , and the <u>commandment is holy</u> and <u>righteous</u> and <u>good</u> .

2. Question 4 of 4: Is the law a killer?

Sermon: The Struggle

Pastor Ryan, 5/30/26. Grace & Cameron married and in Cabo San Lucas this morning! Intro: Here are three reasons why Paul is describing his normal Christian experience in fighting our sin as a believer: A. The verb tense changes to present tense away from past tense when he was justified in previous verses and chapters. B. He delights in the law of God, which a non-Christian cannot. C. After he says, “Who will deliver me ,namely Jesus,” the next verse is the future tense of deliverance at glorification when Jesus returns.

HEADLINE: ANSWER - NO, SIN IS THE KILLER.

1. The battle against sin is real: We do not achieve a place here on earth where we are without the temptation and giving into sin in our flesh. We still will fight it, namely by the Holy Spirit which is one of his jobs in Romans 8:5-32 that he is getting to next.

2. In our flesh we will not defeat sin: We do not have the power in ourselves to live victoriously over sin which wages war against us in our flesh.

3. Jesus is the only one who can deliver us from this body of death: We feel this “wretchedness” in us because we do what we do not want to do.

Application - follow-up questions: A. Are you battling against sin? “The struggle is a sign of life.” When there is no struggle or conviction over sin, there we never born again life. The mark of the Christian is not that we fully defeat sin here, but that we are are fighting sin. Are you in the war? B. Are you fighting sin in

your own power? The law is unable to transform us. C. Are you resting in the finished work of Christ and looking forward to his future deliverance? The answer to “who will deliver me?” is not “I will deliver me.” Philippians 1:6 says he will bring to completion what he started. We then have joy, gratitude, and dependence.

Notes & Quotes:

V13ff - What does Paul mean by Law?

Paul uses the word “law” in three distinct ways in these verses: 1. Sometimes “law” means the law of God (as in v 14, 16, 22, 25). 2. In verse 21, Paul uses the word “law” to denote a principle: “I find this law at work.” Paul means: I find this to be a general principle—the more I try to do good, the more evil comes at me. 3. In verses 23 and 25, Paul uses the word “law” to mean a force or power. “But I see another law at work in [my] members ...



the law of sin.” Paul is saying: In my heart of hearts—my inner being (v 22), my mind (v 23)—I delight in God’s law. God’s law is now the main power in my heart and mind. But there is another power within me—the power of sin. It is not the ruling influence of my heart, but it is still within me and makes war against my deepest desires for holiness” (Keller p186).

V25 - We are already free but not fully restored yet: “Already: Decisively and Irrevocably Free; Not Yet: Finally and Perfectly Free” (John Piper,” Who is this Divided Man - Part 6”, desiringgod.org).

Our experience of remaining sin: vs13-17 say the same thing again as v18-20 (v18-20 recapitulates v13-17).

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 7:13-17
Question: Is the law a killer?		[13] <u>Did that</u> which is good, then, <u>bring</u> death to me?
Answer: No, sin is the killer. Main 1: Why do I sin even though I have the good law?	Action	By no means! <u>It was sin</u> , producing death in me through <u>what is good</u> ,
	Result	in order that <u>sin</u> <u>might be shown</u> to be sin, and through the commandment <u>might become</u> sinful beyond measure.
Ground of Main 1: Because of <u>my weakness</u> : We have remaining sinful nature, prone to evil. Main 2: Why are my actions incongruous?	Alternative 1 - Idea / Explain Alternative 2	[14] For <u>we know</u> that the <u>law is spiritual</u> , but <u>I am</u> of the <u>flesh</u> , <u>sold</u> under sin.
Ground of Main 2: Because I don’t understand these actions. Main 3: Why are my actions confusing?		[15] For <u>I do</u> not <u>understand</u> my own actions.
Ground of Main 3: Because <u>my inner conflict</u> : Sin leads us to do things we hate.	Alternative 1 - Idea / Explain	For <u>I do</u> not do what <u>I want</u> ,
	Alternative 2 - Idea / Explain	but <u>I do</u> the very thing <u>I hate</u> .
Inference of v13-15: My sin reinforces that the law is right and good, and I am doing wrong.	If - Idea / Explain	[16] Now if <u>I do</u> what <u>I do</u> not <u>want</u> ,
	Then - Idea / Explain	<u>I agree</u> with the law, that <u>it is good</u> .
Inference: <u>Our identity</u> : In a sense then, when we sin, it is the sin in us that does it, not our truest self. Main 4: Why is sin not in my truest self?	Alternative 1 - Idea / Explain Alternative 2	[17] So now <u>it is</u> no longer <u>I</u> <u>who do</u> it, but sin <u>that dwells</u> within me.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 7:18-20
Ground of Main 4: Because of <u>my weakness</u> : We have remaining sinful nature, prone to evil. Main 5: How do I know there is nothing good in me?	Idea / Explain / Explain	[18] For <u>I know</u> that nothing <u>good dwells</u> in me, <u>that is</u> , in my flesh.
Ground of Main 5: Because in my strength I still sin. Main 6: Why do I not always do good?	Idea / Explain	For <u>I have</u> the desire to do <u>what is right</u> , but not the ability to carry it out.
Ground of Main 6: Because of <u>my inner conflict</u> : Sin leads us to do things we hate.	Alternative 1 Alternative 2	[19] For <u>I do</u> not <u>do</u> the good I want, but the <u>evil</u> I do not want <u>is what</u> I keep on doing.
Inference: Our identity: In a sense then, when we sin, it is the sin in us that does it, not our truest self.	Alternative 1: If - Idea / Explain Then - Idea / Explain Alternative 2	[20] Now if <u>I do</u> what <u>I do</u> not want, <u>it is</u> no longer I <u>who do</u> it, but sin <u>that dwells</u> within me.

Paul as a divided man is describing his life as a Christian not before: In his "Who Is This Divided Man?" sermon series on Desiring God, John Piper argues that Romans 7:14–25 describes the ongoing spiritual reality of a Christian, outlining ten specific reasons for this view:

1. **Delighting in God's Law:** The unregenerate mind hates the law, but Paul describes joyfully concurring with the law of God in his inner man, which points to a divinely renewed nature.
2. **Serving with the Mind:** Paul's claim to serve the law of God with his mind signifies the work of the Holy Spirit, which is a distinctly Christian characteristic.
3. **Inconsistent with His Past:** This tormented struggle with the law does not match Paul's description of his pre-Christian days, when he was completely confident in his legal righteousness.
4. **More Than Fallen Flesh:** Paul qualifies his admission that "nothing good dwells in me" by adding "that is, in my flesh," demonstrating the regenerate capacity to distinguish between the Holy Spirit's presence and the old, sinful nature.
5. **Grief over Sin:** The believer grieves doing what they hate, whereas the unregenerate person loves sin and operates in unbroken rebellion without this internal agonizing.
6. **Parallel to Galatians 5:17:** Paul uses the exact same language in Galatians to describe a Christian with the Holy Spirit fighting against the "flesh" as he uses in Romans 7.

7. **The Nature of Indwelling Sin:** Paul places the blame for his failures on "sin which dwells in me," reflecting the Christian realization that sin operates as a hostile invader rather than the total identity.
8. **Free from Captivity, Not Warfare:** Romans 8:2 declares believers are freed from the "law of sin and death," proving the warfare of Romans 7 persists even after the ultimate dominion of sin has been broken.
9. **Desire for Heaven:** The desperate cry for rescue from a "body of death" (Romans 7:24) is a uniquely Christian yearning for final resurrection and complete moral purity.
10. **Dual Nature Until Death:** Paul's concluding resolution ("I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin") affirms the Christian reality of possessing both a new man and remaining corruption.

Explore the complete transcripts and audio for Who Is This Divided Man? Part 1, Part 2, Part 3, Part 4, Part 5, and Part 6 on the Desiring God website; accessed and summarized through Gemini AI, 5/22/26.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 7:21-25
Inference: Our dilemma: The more we seek to do and be good, the more evil within presses upon us. Main 7: Why is evil close at hand when I do right?	Action - Idea / Explain Result	[21] So <u>I find</u> it to be a law that when <u>I want</u> to do right, <u>evil lies</u> close at hand.
Ground of Main 7: Because of <u>the two forces of the Christian heart</u> : A. Love of God's law in my truest self ("the law of my mind") B. Sin that hates the law of God ("law in my members").	Alternative 1: In our truest self we delight in God's word. Alternative 2 - Idea / Explain: Sin hates that law of God in my members.	[22] For <u>I delight</u> in the law of God, in my inner being, [23] but <u>I see</u> in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin <u>that dwells</u> in my members.
Inference: Discouragement: I still sin.		[24] Wretched <u>man</u> that <u>I am</u> !
Question: Who will deliver me from this body of death?		<u>Who will deliver</u> me from this body of death?
Answer: Hope: Christ has rescued and will rescue me!		[25] <u>Thanks be</u> to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!
Inference: Until the new heavens and new earth, I love and serve the law of God with my mind, the truest me, but sin dwells in my fleshly responses.		So then, <u>I</u> myself <u>serve</u> the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh <u>I serve</u> the law of sin.

3. Because we are justified and not by the law, we cannot be condemned any longer.

Sermon: Astoundingly Good News Explained

Pastor Ryan, 6/7/26 - 70.3 Ironman - Omaha! Intro: We love hearing good news, but this is the best.

HEADLINE: CHRIST FREES US FROM SIN'S PENALTY, AND HIS SPIRIT FREES US FROM SIN'S POWER DAILY.

1. In Christ we have been set free from sin's PENALTY: We deserved eternal death and condemnation for our rebellion against God (6:23, the wages of sin is death, 3:23 all have sinned and fall short of God's glory). The word condemnation is only used in Romans 5: 16-18: one man's sin lead to condemnation for all of us, but Jesus' one act leads to justification. There is no second payment that is needed to be made. Christ's works is sufficient.

2. In Christ we have been set free from sin's POWER: That is what the Spirit does. Though we will not reach perfection on earth, we now have the power to defeat sin.

3. What is the source and reason for this good news? How do we get these two benefits, namely, freed from sin's penalty and power? God did what the law could not to for us through Jesus. This is our union with Christ, we are "married to another" (7:1-5).



70.3 Ironman - Omaha

Application: This is precious news. Receive it as such.

Notes & Quotes:

V1 - What if we forget to confess something? Are we out of fellowship until then? No, that does not compute. The Holy Spirit will guide us and convict us and love us: "Many believe that Christians who confess sin and then live a good life are forgiven and are, at that moment, not condemned. But they believe that, should they sin, they are back under condemnation until they confess and repent again... But this view doesn't square at all with the comprehensiveness and intensity of Paul's statement. Paul says quite literally that condemnation itself no longer exists for us—"There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (8:1). Thus, the moment we come into Christ Jesus, condemnation is gone forever. There is no more condemnation left for us—it is gone. There can never be condemnation for us. There is nothing but acceptance and welcome for us!" (Keller p9).

V4 - We can overflow with actual righteous fruit by his Spirit: Our holiness really CAN please God because the Spirit indwells me: "If the possibility of holiness is so plain in the Bible, why do we find it so hard to believe? Probably the biggest reason is because we equate obedience with perfection."

"It is a dangerous thing to ignore the Bible's assumption, and expectation, that righteousness is possible. Of course, our righteousness can never appease God's wrath. We need the imputed righteousness of Christ. More than that,

we cannot produce any righteousness in our own strength. But as born-again believers, it is possible to please God by his grace." - Hole in our Holiness, Kevin DeYoung. My five year old daughter sending me artwork reflecting the two of us playing to bring to my office at work is GOOD, and I don't yell at her and say it is no good and I would rather have a Hallmark card! We don't end at Romans 7 with an endless yin

and yang battle of mind and flesh. We DO grow in holiness because the Holy Spirit FULFILLS righteousness in our flesh.

Salvation—total victory over sin: we have no condemnation and no bondage to sin.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:1-4
Inference: The first aspect is there is no condemnation for sin. Main 1: Why is there no condemnation?	Idea / Explain	[1] <u>There is</u> therefore now no <u>condemnation</u> for those who are in Christ Jesus .
	Ground of Main 1: Because the second aspect shows there is no bondage to sin and its penalty. Main 2: Why did we get this freedom from sin?	[2] For the <u>law</u> of the Spirit of life <u>has set</u> you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
Ground of Main 2: Because the first aspect (no condemnation) comes through Christ's work and not the law's work, and the second aspect (no bondage to sin) comes through the Spirit's work.	Ground	[3] For <u>God has done</u>
	Series 1	what the <u>law</u> , weakened by the flesh, <u>could not do</u> .
	Series 2	Action By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, <u>he condemned</u> sin in the flesh,
		Purpose [4] in order that the righteous <u>requirement</u> of the law <u>might be fulfilled</u> in us,
		Idea Explain <u>who walk</u> not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Why do we obey God's word if it is not for his approval?: The Heidelberg Catechism gives four reasons for doing good: 1. to show we are thankful for what God has done, 2. so he may be praised through us, 3. so we may be assured of our faith by its fruits, 4. and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ (Q/A 86). Likewise, John Owen mentions several gospel grounds for our obedience: 1. Good works are necessary because God has appointed them. 2. Our holiness is one special end of God's love which is meant to redound to God's glory. 3. Our obedience brings God glory and honor. 4. It brings us honor and peace and makes us useful to God. 5. It benefits the world by convicting sinners, converting others, benefiting society. 6. It testifies that we are justified and is a pledge of our adoption. 7. It is a means of our thankfulness (Communion with the Triune God, edited by Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor. Quoted in Hole in our Holiness).

Break: Identifying sin - idols of the heart / functional saviors - in order to put it to death by the Spirit:

We all sin. What are the idols we worship?

We normally look for sin in things we can't do, like "thou shall not kill". But sin is more crafty than that and also hides in good things. Augustine called it disordered loves, namely, having a list of what you love and God really is well down the list even if you won't readily admit what is higher. Whatever is higher is what we worship in a disordered way as an idol. These things on the list above God become idols even though they likely are not made out of gold and sit on your mantle. Tim Keller also called items on this list "functional saviors". "I know Jesus saves me, but I really won't functionally be happy and have fulfillment and have meaning unless he also gives me a spouse." At that point, the spouse is functioning as your savior from meaninglessness and worthlessness. Ultimately, sin is seeking meaning and worth apart from God, or to quote Paul in Romans 1, it is taking worship due to the creator and exchanging it for what he made - and he made some good things! It is Adam and Eve succumbing to the lie from the serpent that you can be like God without him, knowing good and evil on your own.

So what are your top three functional saviors on this list that tempt you? It probably is not the list in its entirety. Satan plays you. What do we worship in our disordered loves? This can help us see where repentance is needed for the sin under the sin. This can help us make headway in holiness as we know what to put to death by the Spirit so we can truly live (8:13).

In Romans 7, here is our real struggle with sin as a normal experience of the Christian life. We are wretched, AND thanks be to God who frees us from sinful idols' power and provides his Spirit to help me make headway in holiness.²

Identifying our Idols - here is a (non-exhaustive) list of idol-based "life-lies:"

Life only has meaning, or I only have worth, if...

1. I have power and influence over others - power idolatry.
2. I am loved and respected by - approval idolatry.
3. I have this kind of pleasure experience, or this particular quality of life - comfort idolatry.
4. I have a particular kind of look or body image - image idolatry.
5. I am able to get mastery over my life in the area of - control idolatry.
6. People are dependent on me and need me - helping idolatry.
7. Someone is there to protect me and keep me safe - dependence idolatry.
8. I am completely free from any obligations or responsibilities to take care of someone - independence idolatry.
- 9. I am highly productive, getting a lot done - work idolatry.**
10. I am being recognized for my accomplishments, and/or if I am excelling in my career - achievement idolatry.
11. I have a certain level of wealth, financial freedom, and very nice possessions - materialism idolatry.

² Keller, Tim: Romans 1-7 Commentary, Appendix B, selected quotes from pages 198-207.

12. I am adhering to my religion's moral codes and am accomplished in its activities - religion idolatry.

13. This one person is in my life and happy there and/or happy with me - individual person idolatry.

14. I feel I am totally independent of organized religion and have a self-made morality - irreligion idolatry.

15. My race and culture are ascendant and/or recognized in some way as superior - racial/cultural idolatry.

16. A particular social, professional, or other group lets me in - belonging idolatry.

17. My children and/or my parents are happy and happy with me - family idolatry.

18. Mr or Ms "Right" is in love with me - relationship idolatry.

19. I am hurting or in a problem. Only then do I feel noble, worthy of love, or able to deal with guilt - suffering idolatry.

20. My political or social cause or party is making progress and ascending in influence or power - ideology idolatry.

Three ways to find idols and helpful questions to ask:

When we are experiencing negative emotions, we need to find the possible idolatrous sources. For example:

1. If you are angry, ask: Is there something too important to me? Something I am telling myself I have to have? Is that why I am angry—because I am being blocked from having something I think is a necessity when it is not?"
2. If you are fearful or badly worried, ask: Is there something too important to me? Something I am telling myself I have to have? Is that why I am so scared—because something is being threatened which I think is a necessity when it is not?
3. If you are despondent or hating yourself, ask: Is there something too important to me? Something I am telling myself I have to have? Is that why I am so "down"—because I have lost or failed at something I think is a necessity when it is not?

We can therefore get to the root identity of our idols by asking some diagnostic questions:

What is my greatest nightmare? What do I worry about most? What, if I failed or lost it, would cause me to feel that I did not even want to live? What keeps me going? What do I rely on or comfort myself with when things go bad or get difficult? What do I think most easily about? What does my mind go to when I am free? What preoccupies me? What prayer, unanswered, would make me seriously think about turning away from God?

Dismantling our Idols - only one way works.

Once we have identified our idols, there are three ways to go about dismantling them.

1. The "moralizing" approach says: Your problem is that you are sinning here and here. Repent, and stop! This focuses on behavior, so doesn't go deep enough. We must find out the why of behavior—what inordinate desires are working and the idols and false beliefs behind them. Simply to tell an unhappy person to "repent and change your life" won't help because the lack of self-control is coming from a belief that says: If you don't have this, even if you live up to moral standards, you are still a failure. You must replace this belief by repenting of the one sin under it all—your particular idolatry.

2. The “psychologizing” approach says: Your problem is that you don’t see that God loves you as you are. This focuses on feelings, so doesn’t go deep enough. We must find out the reason a person doesn’t feel happy or loved—what inordinate desires are working and the idols and false beliefs behind them. Simply to tell an unhappy person “God loves you” won’t help, because the unhappiness is coming from a belief that says: If you don’t have this, you are still a failure even if God loves you. You must replace this belief by repenting of the one sin under it all—your particular idolatry.
3. The “gospel application” approach says: Your problem is that you are looking to something besides Christ to be your happiness. This confronts a person with the real sin that lies under the sins and behind the bad feelings. Repentance for rejecting Christ’s free grace and acceptance is a sorrowful yet joyful act. Paul tells us that the bondage of sin is broken when we come out from under the law. Every idol is the center of some system of works.



Blue sky walk - Jodi

E. The Justified have LIFE in the Spirit - Benefit Four (8:5-8:39).

1. The Holy Spirit subdues our flesh (v5-13) - Job 1 of 4.

Sermon: The Flesh and the Spirit

Pastor Ryan, 6/14/26 - Intro: This passage is not mainly a command, but describes life for those who are united to Christ and have his Spirit.

HEADLINE: THE SPIRIT GIVES US POWER TO SAY NO TO THE SLAVERY OF SIN.

Paul's main purpose is to see here what it means to be in the flesh and to be in the Spirit.

1. There is a difference in current mindset and priorities: The mind set on the flesh is death and hostile to God and does not please him. The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

2. There is a difference in final outcome, v6ff: This is a status situation: you are either in the flesh or in the Spirit. You are either united with Christ through his spirit, or you are hostile by nature to God.

Application: Are you in the flesh, or are you in the Spirit?



It's time again in Omaha: CWS

Notes & Quotes:

V6 - Setting the mind on the flesh or the world view without God is not only death but death now in no thriving: "But it is not simply, or even primarily, future life and death that Paul has in view here. Rather, he is referring to the brokenness and sense of dislocation that are experienced in this life by those who "have their minds set on what [the sinful] nature desires" (v 5). God created mankind to flourish in relationship with him, enjoying knowing him as we live in his world. So being controlled by our own desires rather than his can only lead to a life that is far less than life should be. It must lead to conflict

(internally and with others) instead of peace, to slavery instead of freedom (see Romans 6), and to death rather than life" (Keller p17).

V9-11 - This is a clear reference to the Trinity: To have the Spirit is to have the Spirit of God and Christ in us - blessed Trinity! So what if Christ dwells in us? 1. He gives LIFE to our spirits NOW (v10) and 2. He gives LIFE for our bodies at the restoration of all things (v11b); "Because of Adam's sin we die physically; because of Christ's righteousness we live spiritually" now and new bodies at the end (Stott MMN p89).

1. The Holy Spirit subdues our flesh: Overcoming sin with the Spirit (v5-13)

A. Setting the mind on the Spirit

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:5-11
Ground of Main 1: Because whatever preoccupies the mind controls the life. Main 2: Why?	Alternative 1	[5] For <u>those</u> who live according to the flesh <u>set</u> their minds on the things of the flesh,
	Alternative 2	but <u>those</u> who live according to the Spirit <u>set</u> their minds on the things of the Spirit.
Ground of Main 1: Because it leads to either death or peace. Main 2: Why?	Alternative 1 & 2	[6] For <u>to set</u> the mind on the flesh <u>is death</u> , but <u>to set</u> the mind on the Spirit <u>is life</u> and <u>peace</u> .
Ground of Main 1: Because we have an inability of our minds to deal with sin. Our minds are naturally hostile to God. Main 2: Why? What does hostile minds mean?		[7] For the <u>mind</u> that is set on the flesh <u>is hostile</u> to God,
Ground of Main 1: Because it make us incapable of a life pleasing to God.		for <u>it does</u> not <u>submit</u> to God's law; indeed, <u>it cannot</u> .
Inference (Idea): The ability of the Spirit to deal with sin.	Alternative 1	[8] <u>Those</u> who are in the flesh <u>cannot please</u> God.
	Alternative 2 (If / Then):	[9] <u>You</u> , however, <u>are</u> not <u>in the flesh</u> but <u>in the Spirit</u> , if in fact the <u>Spirit</u> of God <u>dwells</u> in you.
Explain (Progressive 1 & 2): You have the same Spirit in you to fight sin that raised Jesus from the dead.	Alternative 1: Without the Spirit you are not a Christian.	<u>Anyone</u> who does not have the Spirit of Christ <u>does not belong</u> to him.
	Alternative 2 (If / Then): If we have the Spirit, we have spiritual life now.	[10] But if <u>Christ is in you</u> , although the body is dead because of sin, the <u>Spirit is life</u> because of righteousness.
	Action: The Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.	[11] If the <u>Spirit</u> of him who raised Jesus from the dead <u>dwells</u> in you,

	Result (Idea / Explain): If we have the same Spirit, he will raise us too to new, immortal bodies later, and he gives us life now to obey.	he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
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B. Killing sin with the Spirit

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 8:12-13
Inference: We have a new <u>motive</u> - we are in debt! Main 1: Why is being a debtor to the flesh bad?			[12] So then, brothers, <u>we are debtors</u> , not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.
Ground of Main 1: Because it is death and no thriving, and you do not get real life. <u>Our aim</u> - the killing of our sinful nature.	Alternative 1: Death	If / Then	[13] For if <u>you live</u> according to the flesh <u>you will die</u> ,
	Alternative 2: Life	If: <u>Our power</u> - by the Spirit. Then: <u>Our reward</u> - spiritual life	but if by the Spirit <u>you put</u> to death the deeds of the body, <u>you will live</u> .

V12-13 - Only the love of God not shame will break sin's enticement: "We will feel the obligations of love and gratitude to serve and know him. Paul is saying that sin can only be cut off at the root if we expose ourselves constantly to the unimaginable love of Christ for us. That exposure stimulates a wave of gratitude and a feeling of indebtedness. Sin can only grow in the soil of self-pity and a feeling of "owed-ness." I'm not getting a fair shake! I'm not getting my needs met! I've had a hard life! God owes me; people owe me; I owe me! That's the heart attitude of "owed-ness" or entitlement. But, Paul says, you must remind yourself that you are a debtor. If you bathe yourself in the remembrance of the grace of God, that will loosen, weaken and kill sin at the motivational level. Therefore, "put to death" (v 13) is just a sub-set under "mind the things of the Spirit" (v 5). Mortification withers sin's power over you by focusing on Christ's redemption in a way that softens your heart with gratitude and love; which brings you to hate the sin for itself, so it loses its power of attraction over you." (Keller p21).

V14 - Being led is the ground for fighting sin by the Spirit: "In verse 13 he says that with the Spirit we really can triumph over the sin within us. Then he explains why this great power—power over sin—is available to us. It is because we are sons or children of God. So being "led by the Spirit" must be the same thing as "put[ting] to death the deeds of the sinful body" of verse 13. In other words, we are led to hate the things the Spirit hates (sin) and love the things he loves (Christ). We are thus led by the Spirit" (Keller p26).

2. The Holy Spirit reminds us of our sonship (v14-17) - Job 2 of 4.

Sermon: Life and Hope in the Spirit

Pastor Ryan, 6/21/26. In Chattanooga. Intro: A trip to another country can reset your gratitude for life here. Look at Romans 8 with a fresh lens and take in its beauty in gratitude.

HEADLINE: THE SPIRIT BRINGS GREAT BLESSINGS IN OUR LIFE.

1. Blessing number one - the Spirit gives us power over sin (v12-13):

The battle against sin is both ongoing and deadly serious. It is a mark of being saved that you do fight sin and is not a way to earn salvation.

2. Blessing number two - we are no longer slaves but made sons,

v14-15: As male or female we have the rights, as it were, of the firstborn son. Jesus prays ABBA Father in the garden of Gethsemane. We use the same intimate language or name of the father in our relationship with him.

3. Blessing number three - the Spirit guarantees our future inheritance,

v15-17: We will have glory and be in glory in the restoration of all things, fellowship with God in the new material world.

A slave	A son
Obeys under compulsion, because they have to	Obeys out of love for and joy in "Daddy"
Works under threat of pain or loss; punishment "pays back"	Discipline is not retribution, but loving instruction
Insecurity: If I slip up, my master might beat me	Security: If I slip up, my father will forgive me
Concentration on external behavior and compliance with rules	Concentration on relationship and attitudes
Has to work, but is given no honor	Is honored, and invited to join the work

Notes & Quotes:

Keller p33

V15 - We can call God ABBA because Jesus was forsaken: When we see

Jesus praying in the Gospels, he always addresses God as 'Father' like we are encouraged to do in this passage. The exception to this is on the cross when Jesus cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" God turned his back on his own son bearing our guilt and shame so that we could cry Abba Father and never be forsaken at any moment! "What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul / what wondrous love is this O my soul." - hymn *Wondrous Love*.

C. The requirements and SEVEN benefits of being a child of God

Arcing:			Passage: Romans 8:14-17	
Ground of Main 2: <u>The requirement for being a child of God:</u> Because not everyone is a child of God; only those who have the Holy Spirit. Main 3: Why is it of benefit to be God's child?			[14] For <u>all</u> who are led by the Spirit of God <u>are sons</u> of God.	
Ground of Main 3: <u>The benefits of being a child of God:</u> Because we have security, authority, intimacy, confidence, inheritance, discipline, and family likeness. Sonship is applied to women, all the benefits for a firstborn male.	Progressive 1: Benefits 1-3: <u>Security</u> (no loss of relationship), <u>Authority</u> (son with power over sin and devil), <u>Intimacy</u> (we have family access to the Father).	Alternative 1	[15] For <u>you did not receive</u> the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,	
		Alternative 2	but <u>you have received</u> the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom <u>we cry</u> , "Abba! Father!"	
	Progressive 2: Benefit 4 - <u>Confidence</u> (we have security in the Father)	Idea / Explain	[16] The Spirit himself <u>bears witness</u> with our spirit that <u>we are children</u> of God,	
	Progressive 3: Benefits 5-7 <u>Inheritance</u> (we have riches with the Father), <u>Discipline</u> (but not ease and comfort), <u>Family Likeness</u> (suffer like Christ in order to resemble him).	If / Then	[17] and if <u>[we are]</u> children, then <u>[we are]</u> heirs —heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,	
		Action	provided <u>we suffer</u> with him	
		Result	in order that <u>we may also be glorified</u> with him.	

Break: What seven benefits come to us from the Spirit by being children of God?

One of the Spirit's jobs is to remind us of seven truths about being loved as God's child. A Heavenly Treasure by Eric Blick, June 26, 2026

I love the logic and flow of the argument Paul uses in his letter to the Romans. It is a long book but travels a simple, logical outline and flow of thought. As we looked at in a previous Heavenly Treasure, we are all under God's just punishment (Romans 1-3) in exchanging our life's worship of Creator God instead for things that he made. We have great benefits of being justified by outside righteousness credited to our account by faith (Romans 4). Specifically, we have peace with God (Romans 5), we have union with Christ (Romans 6), we have freedom from the law (Romans 7), and we have LIFE in the Spirit ((Romans 8). What? That is wild! God dwells in me and corporately with other believers.

But what does the Spirit do all day? Paul takes most all of Romans 8 and says there are four jobs that the Holy Spirit does all day in the life of Christ's followers: He helps us fight sin (8:5-14), he reminds us of our sonship (8:14-17), he guarantees our inheritance (8:18-25), and he helps us pray (8:26-27).

Today I want to meditate on these verses 15-17 that show this fact that he reminds us of our sonship. But why is sonship so important, and for females, is that even great?

In Ancient Rome the wealth of one generation passed to the firstborn male in disproportionate fashion. What Paul has the audacity to say is you have all the rights of the firstborn son. That means for a boy or a girl, for first born or last born it doesn't matter, YOU have the inheritance of God!

So what benefits come to me and to you as we become God's son? What does it mean to be a child of God, adopted into his family, and what is the Holy Spirit reminding us of that is so great? Paul argues here that there are seven benefits that are yours and mine as followers of Christ, as verse 14 starts, "all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."

1. Security: "[15] For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,"

You are not going to lose this relationship. This relationship is not going to be red-hot today and then gone when you need it most. You are secure in relationship and love from the Father.

2. Authority: "but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons,"

You are not a hired hand but have the authority to act on behalf of the household. You are a son. You have authority over sin and over the devil and his minions.

3. Intimacy: "by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"



Mavis turns ONE!

“ABBA” is the language of intimacy of a child learning to speak crying out to her father who runs and overflows with passion and compassion to her. No one can just waltz in and call out to my dad with his private name I use for him that he has reserved for me. I have this intimacy and attention of the father. This is the intimate language Jesus uses to call out to his father in the garden of Gethsemane before he is killed.

4. Confidence: “[16] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,”

We have this witness who comes into court as it were and verifies that our story is correct. He says when we need to hear it most, “Yes, that is God’s child. She belongs to Christ. I saw her, that is God’s family.” We have a secure confidence we are his.

5. Inheritance: “[17] and if [we are] children, then [we are] heirs —heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,”

We have true riches with the Father. We have a lasting and beautiful inheritance. All that is the Father’s is Christ’s and ours! The whole next section of Romans unpacks more of what this inheritance is, namely, it includes us as followers of Christ getting glory, and we will experience the restoration of all things made right!

6. Discipline: “provided we suffer with him”

This is discipline and not a promise of a life of ease and comfort. This is a broken world still in need of redemption. We suffer. Christ suffered. But this is an action clause with a purpose. Let’s hear our last verse:

7. Family Likeness: “in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

Christ’s life was one marked by suffering and grief and sorrow with deep joy. His life was hard in this broken world. He ultimately suffered in sacrificial death in my place. Why as his follower would my path be something completely different? Of course, I will suffer too. But it is not wasted, and people begin to say, “you look like your dad.” I loved as a young boy people would say after they watched me walk with my outsized stride length, “you walk just like your dad.” I remember thinking, “how do you know who my dad is, and he did not teach me to walk like that I just picked that up” (from him! Ironically). That is family resemblance. People will see you and say, “Jesus looked like that in how he acted and loved.” God will use this suffering to make us more look like Christ. The suffering is used like discipline in a workout or gym to make us of deeper character, to look more like our older brother. In fact, we have family resemblance and family likeness. Not only are we God’s child, but we look like it. We belong.

Take these benefits together as one group of seven and let the weight of it land on you with fresh hope and peace. If you belong to God as a follower of Christ, you HAVE his Spirit, and he reminds you that you have security, authority, intimacy, confidence, inheritance, discipline, and a beautiful family likeness. You are loved. You are a son and child of God!

Prayer

Lord, what a great father you are! Thank you for saving us from your just wrath against us and bringing us in close relationship with you. Thank you for indwelling us by your Spirit and for reminding us we are loved, and that we belong to you. Help us grow in our hope in what it actually means to be a son of God, adopted into your family, and cause our lives to be lived differently because we know this to be true. Amen



3. The Holy Spirit guarantees our inheritance - Job 3 of 4.

Sermon: Not Worth Comparing

Elder Adam Marshall, 6/28/26. Intro: We know more than our six year old daughter of what surgery will look like on the other side. Likewise, God did not leave us here to flounder, but showing us future glory.

HEADLINE: #1 - THE SUFFERING IS WORTH IT, BECAUSE OUR INHERITANCE IS SURE.

1. Present suffering is real: He does not say funerals are okay and good. Suffering is real, but when it is compared to what is coming, it is small.

2. Creation is groaning for redemption: In Genesis 3 all of creation falls not just man with a broken relationship to God. It all is broken. But it is not merely a curse, but includes a promise of the Seed to restore all things. We are subjected to futility, but this was done so in hope. We are moving to decay but at the same time moving in hope of something greater, something restorative.

3. Christians groan because redemption has begun but not yet complete: The kingdom is here, but it has not yet arrived in its fullness - the “already and the not yet.” We are already saved and adopted and reconciled to God, but we are not yet free from death and seeing the fully manifested kingdom. We groan for the restoration and redemption of our bodies where we feel the curse of Genesis 3. But we have the first cut of the corn harvest now in the grain truck in the Spirit, meaning the rest of the harvest is certain to come.

4. Because Jesus was resurrected, we have a real guarantee: Why do we hope? Because God is faithful to restore all things to himself through his Son, the better and second Adam.



Quiet dusk

Notes & Quotes:

V17-18ff - We get glory in the restoration of all things as we dwell with God. That makes suffering worthwhile, and creation cheers us on in this hope: “This is Paul’s answer to the question about whether our future glory makes our present sufferings worth bearing. Even creation, Paul says, urges you to say: Yes!” (Keller p36).

V21 - The order of frustration, decay, and pain will be replaced: “First, instead of frustration, there will be fulfillment. When we consider the majesty and greatness of the oceans, mountains, valleys, forests and so on now, it staggers the mind to imagine what the world will be like when

it is free to be itself! Second, instead of decay there will be strength and newness. Currently, each moment things get older, faded, weaker and more incoherent. But in this new earth, things are new, beautiful, strong, coherent—forever. Third, instead of pain, there is only joy. This is why the best metaphor for the current state of creation is as being in childbirth (v 22—Jesus used the same image in Matthew 24:8)—the painful pangs are not meaningless, because the world is giving birth to a new version of itself.

V23 - What is our future glory like? “God will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) his own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what he said.” (CS Lewis quote in Keller p38).

Is the suffering of 8:17 worth it? 1. Yes, because our future hope of glory as a child of God makes suffering look pale now. The restoration of all things is coming! History is creation, fall, redemption, restoration.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:18-25	
Ground of Main 4 (v15-17): Future glory and inheritance overshadow our present suffering. Main 1: Why is suffering worth it?	Idea	[18] For <u>I consider</u> that	
	Explain (Idea / Explain)	the <u>sufferings</u> of this present time <u>are</u> not <u>worth comparing</u> with the glory that is to be <u>revealed</u> to us.	
Ground of Main 1: Because creation waits for our glory to be revealed. Main 2: Why do they wait?		[19] For the <u>creation waits</u> with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.	
Ground of Main 2: Becuase God subjected them to futility but in hope. Nature is flawed and weakened until we are freed from sin. Main 3: Why is this hope of freedom and glory real?	Action	[20] For the <u>creation was subjected</u> to futility, not willingly, but because of him <u>who subjected</u> it, in hope	
	Purpose	[21] that the <u>creation</u> itself <u>will be set free</u> from its bondage to corruption and <u>obtain</u> the freedom of the glory of the children of God.	
Ground of Main 3: Because we and creation groan like childbirth pains not cancer pains for our redeemed bodies with no sin in its members. We have the Spirit as firstfruits, a guarantee of what is coming. We are flawed and weakened until we are freed from sin. Main 4: Why is this hope real?	Progressive 1	[22] For <u>we know</u> that the whole <u>creation has been groaning</u> together in the pains of childbirth until now.	
	Progressive 2	Action	[23] And not only the creation, but <u>we</u> ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, <u>groan</u> inwardly
		Manner	as <u>we wait</u> eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
Ground of Main 4: Because this hope of complete restoration came with our salvation.		[24] For in this hope <u>we were saved</u> .	
Main 5: If you see something, you don't need hope. This hope gives us patience in suffering. Why do we need hope?		Now <u>hope</u> that is seen is not <u>hope</u> .	
Ground of Main 5: Because we do not see and have the restoration of all things yet. No one hopes for what they see, but we hope in patience for what is true though we do not see it yet.	Alternative 1	For <u>who hopes</u> for what <u>he sees</u> ?	
	Alternative 2	If (Idea / Explain) / Then	[25] But if <u>we hope</u> for what <u>we do</u> not <u>see</u> , <u>we wait</u> for it with patience.

4. The Holy Spirit helps us pray - Job 4 of 4.

Sermon: Prayer and the Holy Spirit - The Perfect Combination

Pastor Jim, 7/5/26 Intro: There are strange food that goes together well: cinnamon rolls and chili, chicken and waffles, and his favorite peanut butter and chocolate. The greater combo is prayer and the Holy Spirit.

HEADLINE: #2 - THE SUFFERING IS WORTH IT, BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US THROUGH IT.

1. In our weakness we struggle with prayer: Why are we weak? Because creation and we groan in the brokenness of the world that is not yet free from its bondage to futility, 8:20-23. Because we have sin to fight, and we can suffer in success and failure in fighting it, 8:13.

2. The Holy Spirit is that help: There is help available in God's Spirit, and he is strong. What is groaning? It is a heavy sigh, we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons the redemption of our bodies. He takes our heaviness and prays it heavily to God. The groaning does not get lost.



Grace & Cameron's wedding venue

3. God is the one receiving those prayers from the Holy Spirit, v27: The "he who searches hearts" is God searching our hearts. We don't need to be strong to be saints.

4. This is according to the will of God, v27: The Holy Spirit knows what the will of God is and he changes our prayers to pray accordingly. He prays what we would pray if we know what he knows.

Application: Remember this great prayer partner. He prays well for you. It gives us more boldness to pray out loud with others with unpolished words. It causes us to pray more because God hears and understands and is working.

Notes & Quotes:

V26 -Believers pray with groans? "...we find ourselves brought to silence by the very intensity of our longings... sometimes we feel so burdened by our mortality or by indwelling sin that we can only groan (vs23)... When we thus sigh with inarticulate desires, it is the Holy Spirit himself interceding on our behalf, prompting these groans... We should not be ashamed of such wordless prayers. God the Father understands prayers which are sighed rather than said, because he searches hearts, and can read our thoughts" (Stott, Men Made New, p98).

V27 - God listens and responds: "The Spirit helps us because we are weak, he intercedes for us because we don't know what to pray for, and he intercedes according to God's will so he listens and responds" (Stott, Romans p246).

V26-30 - Paul gives us two more reasons why this suffering of 8:17 is worth it: "A Christian's hope for the future—their own future, and that of the whole of creation—is a foundation for enabling us to face each day, and all it brings, with confidence. In these following verses, Paul points us to two more foundation stones. The first has to do with being helped in what we do not know (v 26-27); the second, with knowing that we are being helped (v 28-30). First, Paul points to the work of the Spirit when we have no words to pray; second, to the work of the sovereign God in all the circumstances of our lives. These three—future hope, the Spirit's help, and God's work in everything—then form the foundations for his remarkable, impassioned question-and-answer section in verses 31-39 [What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?...] This passage is the end of Paul's answer to the implicit question of 8:17-18: how can a Christian face the **sufferings and temptations of life** with overwhelming confidence, and a deep assurance that all the strife is more than worthwhile" (Keller p39)?

Is the suffering of 8:17 worth it ("likewise" continues this argument)? 2. Yes, because the Holy Spirit is our help through suffering, the suffering of the broken world and my fight against sin by the Spirit.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:26-27
Main 1: When we are too weak to act like children of God, the Spirit helps us. Why is the Spirit needed?		[26] Likewise the <u>Spirit helps</u> us in our weakness.
Ground of Main 1: Because in our suffering and groaning (v18, 23), words can fail us when we pray. Good news: the Holy Spirit knows how to put words to it for you, and God already sees those words.	Alternative 1 (Action / Manner): Sometimes words fail us in our suffering.	For <u>we do</u> not <u>know</u> what to pray for as <u>we ought</u> .
	Alternative 2: Even then the Spirit knows how to communicate that to God in great detail.	but the <u>Spirit</u> himself <u>intercedes</u> for us with groanings too deep for words.
	Progressive: Not only does the Spirit intercede, God already knows what words he will give to our groaning he sees.	[27] And <u>he</u> who searches hearts <u>knows</u> <u>what is the mind</u> of the Spirit,
	Main: (Idea / Explain): Why does God know the Spirit's mind praying for us? Ground: Because the Spirit prays according to God's will.	because the <u>Spirit intercedes</u> for the saints according to the will of God.

5. God's purpose to work all for our good - namely to be like Christ - is invincible: the five unbreakable "chain-links."

Sermon: Precious Promise, Precious Hope

Pastor Ryan, 7/12/26. Intro: The Grand Canyon is even more spectacular up close than in pictures. Just like this passage.

HEADLINE: #3 - THE SUFFERING IS WORTH IT, BECAUSE GOD IS WORKING IT FOR GOOD.

Here are five assertions of the precious promise that God works for good:

1. This is a promise only for those who know Christ: In v28b it says it is for those who love God, those called by God.
2. This does not mean life will be easy or that we as Christians avoid all suffering: The context is verse 16-17 of this chapter, we will suffer with him. If we don't see this, we will quit over the grief over the grief.
3. This is a forward looking promise: The good he has in mind its being shaped into the image of Jesus.
4. We can be confident in this promise because of God's initiating work: He foreknew all the way to glorify.
5. This promise is precious: God's got me. He's using pain for our good which is the greatness of Christ.



July 12, 2024, Mt. Elbert, CO

Notes & Quotes:

Three points from Jonathan Edward's first sermon (vs28-30): In Tim Keller's sermon entitled Christian Happiness, he recaptures many of Edward's themes in this passage: as believers, vs28 says that our bad things in life will be undone, vs29 says that our good things can never be taken away, and vs30 says that the best is yet to come. Jesus did not suffer and die so we could somehow have better circumstances than unbelievers. He suffered so our suffering would not be in vain but rather be the very thing God would use to polish us to the image of his Son. Jesus is not offering us better circumstances but a better life, a life of greatness and glory (vs30). What does it mean to made into the image of Christ (vs29)? We often overthink this, but it can be simple: it is the kind of life Jesus lived showing the character of unselfishness, deep compassion, pure anger, and focused passion of Jesus in the Gospels. Do you know how to read the Gospel narratives in such a way as to see the image of God in Jesus that somehow by the in dwelling Spirit he is faithfully shaping us to begin to act more in the exact same ways? That is a life of true greatness that he is not only calling us to but faithfully shaping us into so that Christ is the firstborn of many brethren - us! Verse 29 says he guarantees this radical, beautiful transformation to character of greatness.

V29-30 - We now see down the chain in both directions: "How does this look from the vantage point of our present lives? Christians have experienced being called as they heard the gospel, and enjoy being justified because they have put their faith in that gospel. Now, Christians are able to look back "down" the chain, and know that before creation God fore-loved them, and predestined them to be justified. And a Christian can look on "up" the chain, and know that in eternity they will know unimaginable glory in his presence. If we love God, we are called (v 28). And if we are called people, then we are fore-loved, predestined, justified, soon-to-be-glorified people. This is wonderful! (Keller p53).

V30 - What is glory? "Paul has already several times used the noun glory. It is essentially the glory of God, the manifestation of his splendor, of which all sinners fall short (3:23), but which we rejoice in hope of

recovering (5:2). Paul also promises both that if we share Christ's sufferings we will share his glory (8:17) and that the creation itself will one day be brought into the freedom of the glory of God's children (8:21). Now he uses the verb: those he justified, he also glorified. Our destiny is to be given new bodies in a new world, both of which will be transfigured with the glory of God... For sanctification is glory begun; glory is sanctification consummated" (Stott p253).

Is the suffering of 8:17 worth it ("and we know" continues this argument)? 3. Yes, because the Sovereign God is working all things - even suffering - for a good plan for his own. This is the basis for Christian confidence.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:28-30
Main 1: We know five things: God is working, he is working for good, he is working in all things, he does this for those who love him, and the loved are called according to his purpose (Stott p249-250). What it is the Christian's confidence? the sovereignty of God in history. His purpose in all circumstances is for our best. No opposition will harm us. Why is this GOOD going to happen?	Idea 1: We know one more thing.	[28] And <u>we know</u> that
	Explain 1 (Idea 2): God works good for those who love him.	for those <u>who love</u> God <u>all things work together</u> for good,
	Explain 2: Those who love God are the called ones.	for those <u>who are called</u> according to his purpose.
Ground of Main 1: Because the good of being made like Christ is guaranteed to happen by the five unbreakable chain links: the ones who love God are foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. How does the confidence come? the certainty of God's salvation: He saves us in stages. No flaw or evil will remain in us (29-30). There are no dropouts in this five step process of the five unbreakable chain links.	Progressive 1: What is the "good" that God has in mind that he is working all things to? It is not wealth or power but something bigger: acting with character and a great life like his son. Foreknew is fore-loved. Predestined is to decide beforehand (Acts 4:28).	Action (Series 1): He fore-loved us. [29] For those whom <u>he foreknew</u>
	Progressive 2: Called is the "effectual call" of God not the general call of all hearing the good news.	Action (Series 2): He predestined us. <u>he also predestined</u> to be conformed to the image of his Son,
		Result: We too will be resurrected like Jesus. in order that <u>he might be</u> the <u>firstborn</u> among many brothers.
	Progressive 3: Justified is forgiven but also declared right with his righteousness deposited to us.	Action [30] And those whom <u>he predestined</u>
		Result <u>he also called</u> ,
	Progressive 4: Glorified is so sure and guaranteed that it is past tense as if it has already happened. Sanctification is glory begun; glory is sanctification consummated and completed.	Action and those whom <u>he called</u>
		Result <u>he also justified</u> ,
		Action and those whom <u>he justified</u>
		Result <u>he also glorified</u> .

6. God purposes blessing in his love - the 5 unanswerable questions.

Sermon: If God is For Us, Who Can be Against Us?

Pastor Ryan, 7/19/26.

HEADLINE: IF GOD WORKS FOR MY GOOD, AND HE'S GUARANTEED NOT TO STOP, ISN'T THAT LOVE TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

There are at least three very encouraging truths we see in this text:

1. God is for us: This is only to those who are followers of Christ. There is a long list of people that can be against us, but if God is for us then none of it matters. Suffering can feel like God is not for us. Are you going to measure the love of God by your pain or by him going to the cross?

2. We no longer have to fear condemnation or judgment: God declares us righteous, Rom 3:24. Christ is using his power and all he did to intercede for us.

3. Nothing can separate us from the love of God: Paul lived the list of suffering on this list, and he saw God's love from him never leaving him. All this good news is tied to Jesus' work.

Application: Think on these things. Memorize this section. God's promised love is sure.



Grace & Cameron wedding

Notes & Quotes:

V31-33 - Ours is a thinking peace from fear, anxiety, and guilt: Dr. Lloyd Jones called it "logic on fire! Paul is saying: Think! Are you afraid (8:31)? You aren't thinking! Are you worried (v 32)? You aren't thinking! Are you feeling guilty (v 33)? You aren't thinking! See the logic of free grace and justification! These aren't dry doctrines; they are life itself. And if you are not living with overwhelming assurance and power, you haven't really fully understood them. The remedy is to read, re-read, deeply ponder and learn to live out of the truths of verses 18-30!" (Keller p56).

V32 - Suffering for the believer CANNOT mean he does not love us: "since Christ proved his love for us by his sufferings, so our sufferings cannot possibly separate us from it. In the context, which began with a reference to our sharing Christ's sufferings (8:17), they 'should be seen as evidence of union with the crucified one, not a cause for doubting his love... Christ has proved his love by his sufferings; therefore our sufferings cannot separate us from his love' (Stott p258). In suffering, at least it has to mean that God DOES love you, because he already did the hardest deed to send Christ to suffer.

V36 - Life IS hard and broken, that's not an illusion: "'For God's sake' is quoted from Psalm 44:22 where Israel is persecuted by other nations because of their loyalty to Yahweh)" (Stott p257).

V37 - We "super-triumph!": "in regard to believers: (1) they encounter not matters of indifference, but rather real suffering and hardship in the fallen creation of the good Creator; (2) they triumph not only at the

end of the trials but also here and now through Christ; (3) they do not merely triumph, but rather, as Paul announces with a neologism, they “supertriumph.” This “super-triumph” is ours through “the one who loved us” (8:37). Now Paul transposes the language of 8:28 (“those who love God”), revealing its foundation. His prior reference to the “love of Christ” (8:35) makes it clear that it is Christ to whom he refers as the “one who loved us.” Moreover, just as it is clear in 8:32 that “the Son” whom God “delivered up” stands above all created things, so also here the love of Christ must be more than the mere love of a creature, since it is through this love that we “super-triumph” over the fallen creation. Paul goes on to make this matter explicit in 8:39: it is the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Beale p637).

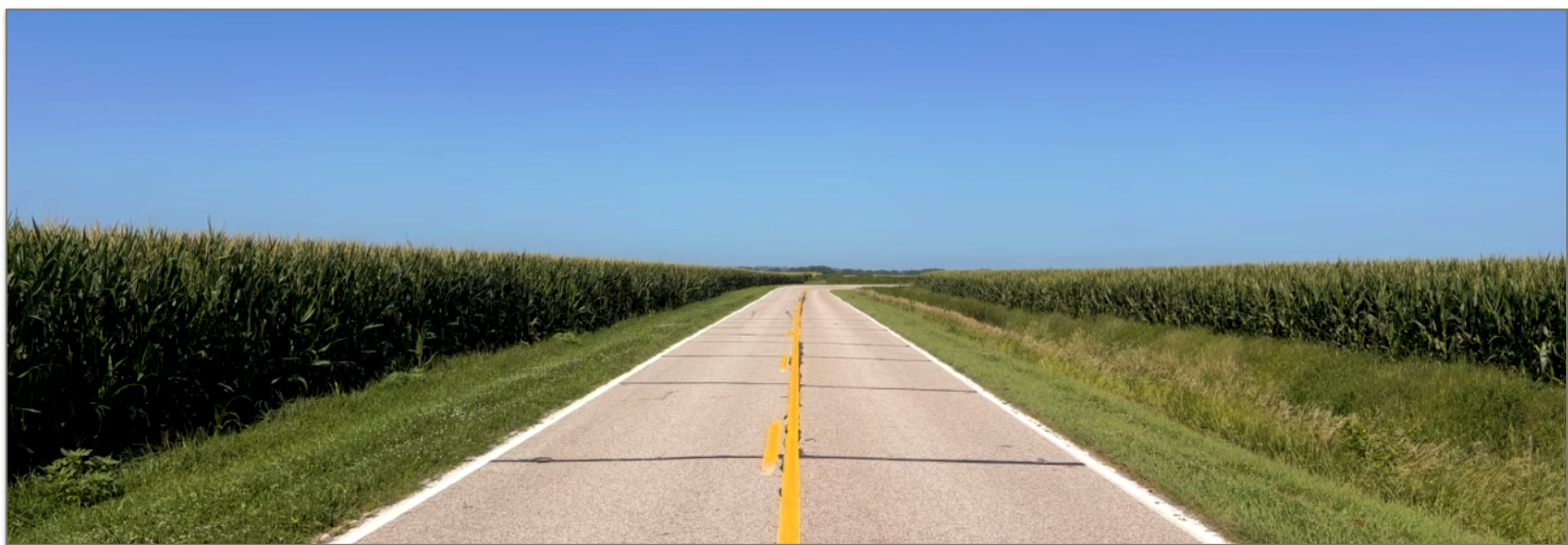
Why do we have this confidence? It is the adequacy of God. Nothing inside or outside will separate us from him: God is most powerful, God is generous, God justifies, Christ’s work is for us, Christ’s love is unwavering, boundless and endless to me.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:31-36
Question: What shall we say after we have just heard all these things : God works even our suffering for actual good to have a great life like Christ which is guaranteed: <u>the Five convictions</u> : God is working, he is working for good, he is working in all things, he does this for those who love him, and the loved are called according to his purpose; <u>the Five Affirmations</u> : the ones who love God are fore-loved, predestined, called, justified, and glorified.		[31] What then <u>shall we say</u> to these things?
Question - Series 1: God’s power - is anyone stronger? If the God who has purposed our glory is all-powerful, why are we afraid of any opposition at all?	Question: Are you fearful? If Paul asked without an “if”, yes, the list is long who is against us.	If / Then
Question - Series 2: God’s generosity - if he gave the hardest, why not everything else?		[32] <u>He</u> who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how <u>will he</u> not also with him graciously <u>give</u> us all things?
Question - Series 3: God’s pardon - if the God who has purposed our glory has declared us righteous, why ever feel guilty or unforgiven?	Question: Are you always feeling guilt?	[33] <u>Who shall bring</u> any charge against God’s elect?
	Answer	Idea / Explain <u>It is God who justifies.</u>
Question - Series 4: Christ’s work - if he died for me and was raised and rules and is for me interceding, how can anyone condemn me? There is no better sacrifice and life I need to cover a condemning word over me.	Question	[34] <u>Who is to condemn?</u>
	Answer: The Father raising Jesus and at his right hand says sacrifice accepted.	Idea <u>Christ Jesus is the one</u>
		Explain (Series 4) who died—more than that, who was raised— who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Arcing:		Passage: Romans 8:31-39	
Question - Series 5: Christ's love - real suffering including death cannot take Christ away from loving us.	Question: Who can separate us from Christ's love?. Main 1: This is a long list of candidates to 8:17 of what suffering is - "...provided we suffer with him." Why do we suffer?	Idea	[35] <u>Who shall separate</u> us from the love of Christ?
		Explain	<u>Shall tribulation</u> , or <u>distress</u> , or <u>persecution</u> , or <u>famine</u> , or <u>nakedness</u> , or <u>danger</u> , or <u>sword</u> ?
	Ground of Main 1: Because evil is against God's people, and we don't readily see him right now, Psalm 44:22.	Idea	[36] As <u>it is written</u> ,
		Explain (Idea / Explain)	"For your sake <u>we are being killed</u> all the day long; <u>we are regarded</u> as sheep to be slaughtered."
	Answer: No one, nothing on any list can separate us from Christ's love and work all for good, more than conquers. Main 2: Why in suffering are we more than conquerors?	Idea / Explain	[37] No, in all these things <u>we are</u> more than <u>conquerors</u> through him <u>who loved</u> us.
	Ground of Main 2: Because death or nothing else in all creation can separate us from the love of God.	Idea	[38] For <u>I am sure</u> that
		Explain	neither <u>death</u> nor <u>life</u> , nor <u>angels</u> nor <u>rulers</u> , nor <u>things</u> present nor <u>things</u> to come, nor <u>powers</u> , [39] nor <u>height</u> nor <u>depth</u> , nor <u>anything</u> else in all creation, <u>will be able</u> to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The answer to each of the five unanswerable questions is, "No one and nothing!"

Theology of Suffering - free from the "grief over the grief": Verse 37 doesn't say AFTER tribulation and distress in verse 35's list are we triumphant but rather DURING and IN! If we expect we are in a wilderness now heading to the ultimate promised land, then we won't have the additional distress that we are experiencing distress and suffering. We won't ask, "Why me?", or "I can't believe this is happening to me?" Somehow in this broken world we are more than conquerors even when we are weak. Verse 35 does not say these things won't happen to followers of Christ. Expect them, AND expect them not to separate you from his immense love! "Pain is no measure of his faithfulness." - Sara Groves



Life from sleet

Break: what 3 things help us suffer well?

One...

A Heavenly Treasure by Eric Blick, July 24, 2026

Provided that we suffer with him...

Then we get 3 things to help us suffer:

FOR creation groans

LIKEWISE then

AND WE KNOW 15 things:

God works for good - 5 ways

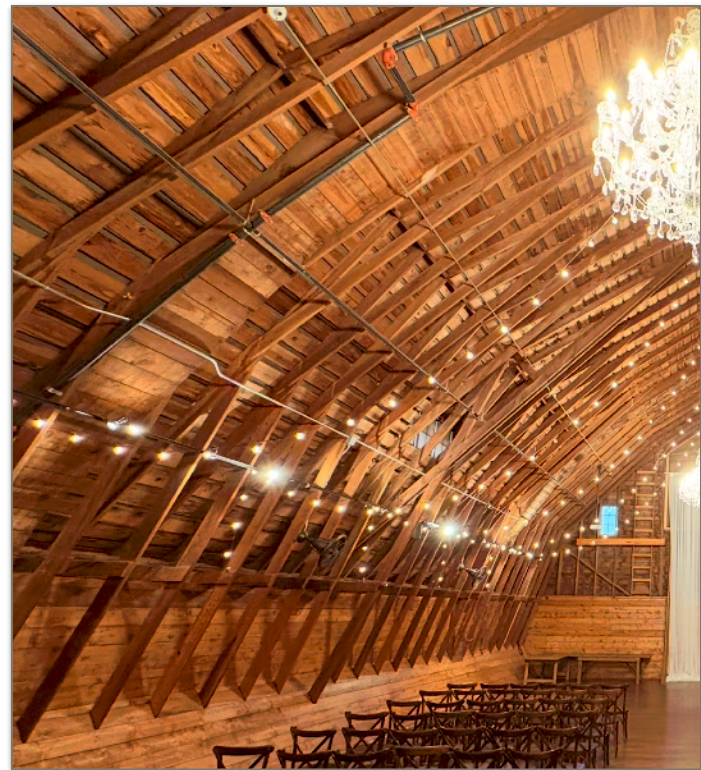
What is the good he has in mind? Big life quote like Christ.

Is that guaranteed? Yes, 5 unbreakable chain, no drop outs

What do we say for the first 10? 5 unanswerable questions. We can't be separated from his love in this suffering.

Prayer

Lord, what a great father you are! Thank you for saving us from your just wrath against us and bringing us in close relationship with yo



Grace & Cameron's wedding venue

HT Continued.... To be published 7/24/26

