

Romans Review 1-8 (Pt 2)

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Modified from Irving L. Jensen's excellent work " Jensen's Survey of the NT "				

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Romans Verse by Verse Notes

Romans

Review of Chapters 1-8 (Part 2)

What Have You Learned?
by Dr. Wayne A. Barber

We are continuing a review of the first eight chapters of Romans. Last time we looked at chapters 1-5. And now we'll see that chapters 6-8 are just as exciting, because they take me another step. He begins to show me much more of what God did for me. He has done some tremendous things in my life. In Romans 6:1-6 He has made me a brand new person in Jesus Christ. "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him."

I was trying to explain this to a lady I was sitting next to on a flight, so I said, "Look at that little word 'united.' I learned something here. It has two words in it, 'planted together with.'" I explained to her, as we have gone over it many times, that it's like all the ingredients of a biscuit, mixed together in such a way that they can never be separated. I said, "It's like His life has been baked into us. It is not as if it is just with us to where it can be removed at any time. It has been baked into us. We have been united with His resurrection life. His life now is in us."

She had the most quizzical look on her face. "What do you mean? God lives in me?!" Absolutely. We are "biscuits" for Jesus. He

has been baked into us. You can't go anywhere that His life is not in you. You are a brand new person. This is the much more. He didn't just free you from the penalty of sin. He made you into a brand new creature. He put His life and His righteousness into you. It has been baked into you. You are a brand new person in Jesus Christ. Which means that you have a brand new power now that you are in Him. Verse 6 says, "knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."

"**Done away with**" is a terrible translation! So is the KJV's "destroyed." No! It is *katargeo*—shift it into neutral. In other words, I still have the same body right now I had when I was lost. The difference is, it has just been shifted into neutral. God's life has been baked into me. He gives me a power now that I don't have to say yes to it anymore. In fact, Romans 8 says that I am no longer under obligation to the flesh to do what the flesh wants. I am under obligation to the Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body. This body of sin I still have, but it has been shifted into neutral. Now, I can shift it back into drive real quick when I choose not to obey Christ, when I choose not to walk by faith. But as long as I choose to surrender and walk by faith and trust Him and trust His word, then He, in me, does through me what I couldn't do myself. His life is in me.

Then I showed her verse 8: "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." That is something we ought to believe every day of our life. We ought to have it anchored down and giving ourselves to it. We live with Him. Not only one day shall we live with Him, we live with Him every day now. Wherever I go, there He is. That is a comforting thought. Verses 9-10 continue, "knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God."

The one thing I wanted to show her was that the life that is within me is gravitating me towards the Father, that sin is not the same thing in my life anymore. I used to chase after sin. Sin chases after me now. It is different. Something has changed about me. God's life is in me, gravitating me towards that which God wants me to be. You see, that is what a brand new creature in Christ is.

Verse 11 reads, "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." The word "**consider**" is *logizomai*. It means to take all the things that I have taught you, draw a line and come up with the right conclusion. You are dead to sin, dead to its penalty, dead to its power. So quit living as if it is still in control.

Then I took her to verses 12-14, which I think are three of the most key verses in all of chapter 6: "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts." This woman was living with a married man. She was living in sin. I began to understand that by the questions she was asking me. "How can I stop doing this? How can I stop doing that?" I said, "Listen, you have to make up your mind. You can stop any time you get ready to, when and if you put your faith into Jesus Christ. Now if He doesn't live in you, forget it. It won't work. But if He does live in you, you know what His Word says. You know you are not supposed to be living in that relationship. Go on and say no to it and don't let sin reign in your mortal body."

The word "**reign**" is *basileuo*. It means as a king reigns over his kingdom. Don't bow down to it anymore. Don't say yes to it anymore. You don't have to do that. Verse 13 is saying learn to relate to Christ, do something different. He says, "and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." In other words, start learning to put yourself in the proximity of Christ. Put yourself where you can grow. Put yourself where your mind can be rightly affected. Don't keep putting yourself back into the presence of sin. Put yourself before Christ. Put yourself where you ought to be. Train your senses to learn to relate to Him in a proper way.

Then in verse 14 he says, "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace." I began to show her that being under law involves an attitude. That attitude is, "I am going to do it for you, God." How many services have you been in when somebody got up and said, "You better not do this and you better not do that"? Then they give an invitation, and the whole church comes down crying and weeping, "Oh, I will never do that again. I am so sorry." Then they walk out the back door and that doesn't last 30 seconds! They forgot they are no longer under the Law. Under the Law you go out and try to do it in your own energy. You can't do it. But when you are under grace, God lives in you to overcome you. It is not you overcoming sin, it is God overcoming you.

You cannot overcome sin, but Jesus in you can overcome you. That is the way sin begins to disintegrate in your life. You have to learn that. Quit focusing on the sin. Focus on Him. Focus on His Word. Get into His Word. Present the members of your body to Him and watch. He begins to overcome you. That is the way it works. His Word gets in your mind. I call it Drano, spiritual Drano. It just begins to unclog all that garbage that gets in there.

Find me a Christian who is not in the Word of God, and I'll show you a Christian who has drifted into the habit of sin and one defeated individual who doesn't even believe that God can do anything in his life. But you get that same Christian back up under the Word, back where he ought to, focusing on Christ, presenting the members of his body to Him, learning to focus on Him and not the sin and you watch the victory that occurs almost immediately in his life. Victory is what God does in our life. Victory is not the

goal that a Christian works toward. Victory is what he already has. He enters into it when he says yes to Him and when he focuses on Him and stops focusing on all this other stuff. God begins to do the cleansing work in his mind and in his life.

Well, in 6:15-23 we have a brand new problem and that is the choices we make. Paul says, "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!" Then he starts taking you through the choices you used to make and the choices you make right now. Then he ends up in verse 23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." This life that God has for you is Jesus being Jesus in me. It is not me trying to be like Jesus.

Well, chapter 7 shows them a person who decides, "I am going to do it my way. I am going to get back up under the law." Seventy-seven times the word "law" is used in Romans. Twenty-two times it is used in chapter 7. To me what he is saying in chapter 7 is, "If you want to try to do it your way, go on back. You are going to realize the same defeat you had a long time ago. But if you get back up out of that and get up under grace, that is where it works in your life." All of chapter 7 is talking about that. He comes down to 7:24 and says, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" "Wretched" means burdened down, toilsome man. Paul is saying, "I am fighting this battle every day of my life and it seems like I don't have any power at all. Who will set me free?" Not what, but who.

Verse 25 says, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin." Then you come into chapter 8, and that is what makes chapter 8 so wonderful. This is what grace is all about. This is the Holy Spirit of God living in a person's life. Verses 1-4: The Role of the Holy Spirit. Verses 5-11: The Result of the Holy Spirit. Verses 12-14: The Rights of the Holy Spirit. Verses 15-17: The Relationship that the Holy Spirit brings. Verses 18-21: The Reward the Holy Spirit guarantees. Verses 22-27: The Resource of the Holy Spirit (who prays when we don't know how to pray). Verses 28-29: The Revelation of the Holy Spirit (the fact that God is actually causing everything to work together for good for His pre-resolve, that means we are going to be changed into the image of His Son). And Verses 30-35: The Resolve of the Holy Spirit (to carry out the plan of God, all the way until that event when we are glorified and the sons of God are revealed).

Then you come into chapter 9. The reason I reviewed all of Romans was because we are about to talk about Israel. We have seen how God has been in charge of salvation for the Gentiles and now we are going to move to the Jew. If you will look at the two different terms through Romans, you will see Jew, Greek and Gentile mentioned all through the book. There are two groups of people there. There are the Jewish people, Israel, and then there are the Gentiles. He has been dealing basically with both, back and forth, up until chapter 8. Now he is going to make a turn, and he is going to talk about Israel. If God is in charge of what is going on in our life in salvation and sanctification, then we know that God is in charge of what is going on in Israel. Paul begins to ease us into that. It is good news. It is good news for the Jew. It is good news for the Greek. It is good news for the Gentile. It is an incredible picture in chapters 9-11, not so much of just the sovereignty of God but the power of God in salvation. God is so awesome to do the work of salvation, even with a nation that has rejected Him. I think we are in for a great adventure together as we ease into that.

The first verse is what I am going to conclude with this time. "I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit." I don't know why but that little word "conscience" got on my mind, and I couldn't get it off. I have stayed with that thing so long, I am not going to share a tenth of what came to me on that thing. What is your conscience? Is your conscience bothering you? What is your conscience? Paul says, "I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit." That is one of the things that we have that God has given to every man, not just to Christians, but every man. There is something on the inside called the conscience. Now, Christians have one that has been enlightened, filled with truth. Ours is much more spiritually shaped and gives us a greater thermometer than what a lost person would have. But even a lost person has a conscience to a certain degree. The Indians used to say that the conscience is like an arrow that is turning in your heart, pricking you when you do something that is wrong. But if you keep ignoring it, it will finally grow dull and you won't even realize it is around anymore. That is what lost people probably have done with their conscience. But with a Christian, our conscience has been enlightened by truth.

What is that conscience? The word is *suneidesis*. It is *sun*—together with, and *eido*—to know. So it means to know together with. In other words, when I do something on the outside, there is something on the inside of me that casts a moral judgment of whether or not I have lined up with what my conscience has told me. There is something about us that has a conscience. Since I know truth, and I can behave maybe a certain way out here, something on the inside pricks me because it didn't line up with what my conscience knows to be true and what God requires in my life. So our conscience becomes something very important to an individual. Take the word "**conscience**" and run it through the New Testament. It is incredible how you can sear your **conscience**, how you can deny it or you can obey it. This is something inside of an individual that once he has been exposed to truth, once he has been exposed to the Holy Spirit of God living in Him, once he knows what God requires, when that individual chooses to go beyond that and deny that **conscience** that is moving on him, that person immediately experiences the pain and the misery of having denied his own **conscience**. Of course, the Holy Spirit is Who works through all of that, along side it. It doesn't just have to

work through the conscience. But Paul said, "my conscience bearing me witness."

He is going to get into the fact that he is burdened for his people. There are several different pronouns that fit into this thing. I want you to see that. He says in verse 1 of chapter 9, "I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit." There are three prepositions that are important. One is *eis*. That involves a movement into something. The other preposition is *ek*. That involves a movement out of something. Then you have that little preposition *en*, and it involves a resting in what you are already in. In other words, you are "in" Christ. Paul is saying, "Christ is bearing me witness. Christ is looking right at me. I am in Him. I am not moving out of Him, into Him. I am there. I am resting in Him. And by who He is in my life, He has affected me. He has divinely affected me. I could never write to you something that was deceitful, for Christ is witnessing this thing. He is my witness. My conscience is my witness."

Then he says, "my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit." In other words, Paul is saying, "There is no way in the world I could lie to you. There is no way in the world I could deceive you because God has effected me so in my conscience that it is bearing witness, and He is bearing witness. What I am saying to you is the truth."

I tell you what, when you know chapters 1-8 and you begin to understand what he is teaching and it has affected your conscience of how you are to live, no wonder we get so miserable sometimes when we go against the grain of what we know the Holy Spirit is telling us and has enlightened us to do from within. I tell you what it does for me. If you are seeking with all of your heart to obey Christ and you are seeking to realize that your conscience must be always clear before God as Paul said in another place and then clear before men, then whatever they say to you or however they come at you, you never have to fear. Because once you have got it right before God, then you will have it right before men whether they accept it or not. Truth has affected your conscience. Chapters 1-8 have got to affect us to where even in our conscience we know now how to live. We know what to do. We know things because God has enlightened us, especially in our conscience. Then when we approach certain situations, we line up and make sure our conscience is clear, that our whole motive of whatever we do is just to please God. All we want is to obey His truth that He has so precious given to us. When we can line up that way in our conscience in everything that we do, I guarantee you that is the secret to living free before men and living joyously before God.

The problem with a lot of people is that they know in their conscience what they are supposed to be. They know in their conscience what they are supposed not to do. A lot of people have rejected that. They have chosen to go another way and that is why they are miserable. That is why they are defensive. That is why they are argumentative. This is where all their joy has gone. But when I can line up under God (and God knows my heart and my conscience) enlightened by His truth, I can walk clear in my conscience before Him and clear in my conscience before men. I am looking at a joyful life which is the result of the good news of salvation.