

Romans 7-11 Devotionals & Sermon Illustrations

[PREVIOUS](#)

[NEXT](#)

ROMANS 7

[Click for illustrations/devotionals from Bible gateway](#)

[Click here for Our Daily Bread devotionals that relate to Romans 7](#) - some may already be archived on this page

[Romans 7:5](#)

[Romans 7:6](#)

[Romans 7:7](#)

[Romans 7:13-25](#)

[Romans 7:14ff](#)

[Romans 7:14-25](#)

[Romans 7:15](#)

[Romans 7:15-25](#)

[Romans 7:18](#)

[Romans 7:18](#)

[Romans 7:24](#)

[Romans 7:24](#)

Romans 7:5

"FORBIDDEN FRUIT"

The sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.- Romans 7:5

In Galveston, Texas, a hotel on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico put this notice in each room:

No Fishing From The Balcony

Yet every day, hotel guests threw in their lines to the waters below. Then the management decided to take down the signs -- and the fishing stopped!

In his Confessions, Augustine (354-430), the well-known theologian, reflected on this attraction to the forbidden. He wrote, "There was a pear tree near our vineyard, laden with fruit. One stormy night we rascally youths set out to rob it ... We took off a huge load of pears -- not to feast upon ourselves, but to throw them to the pigs, though we ate just enough to have the pleasure of the forbidden fruit. They were nice pears, but it was not the pears that my wretched soul coveted, for I had plenty better at home. I picked them simply to become a thief ... The desire to steal was awakened simply by the prohibition of stealing."

Romans 7 sets forth the truth illustrated by Augustine's experience: Human nature is inherently rebellious. Give us a law and we will see it as a challenge to break it. Jesus, however, forgives our lawbreaking and gives us the Holy Spirit. He imparts a new desire and ability so that our greatest pleasure becomes bringing pleasure to God. -HWR

Why do we keep on trying
The far of this world's sin
When God has set before us
The joy of Christ within? -JDB

Forbidden fruit tastes sweet but has bitter consequences.
Our Daily Bread

Romans 7:7 "Is the law sin? God forbid."

Augustine placed the truth in a clear light when he wrote,

"The law is not at fault, but our evil and wicked nature; even as a heap of lime is still and quiet until water is poured on it, but then it begins to smoke and burn, not from the fault of the water, but from the nature of the lime which will not endure it."

C H Spurgeon

Romans 7:7-25

The Daredevil - In 1919, British actor Sir Ralph Richardson was an office boy for an insurance company in Brighton. To relieve the tedium of the job, he decided one day to see if he could walk around the building on a narrow ledge several stories above the street. He meant for his exploit to coincide with his boss's absence from the office—but unfortunately, as the young daredevil was edging his way past his boss's window, the man entered the room and froze. Richardson gave him a cheery wave and called, "I was chasing a pigeon."

Why did young Richardson feel compelled to offer his boss an excuse, and a silly one at that, for his foolish escapade? The answer to that question reveals a lot about human nature. Not only does the sinful nature within us provoke us to foolish behavior. It also urges us to point the finger at someone else. Is that what Paul was doing when he said that the Law provoked his sin? In other words, was Paul implying that God's Law was somehow faulty?

The Apostle proposed that notion himself, and answered it in characteristic fashion: "Certainly not!" Here he seemed to have the Mosaic code more clearly in view, for he quoted one of the Ten Commandments as an example. He then noted three functions of the Law:

1. it reveals sin (v.7);
2. it provokes sin (v.8); and
3. it condemns sin (vv. 8-12).

The Law of Moses isn't the problem. Instead, God's commands are a reflection of His holiness and goodness. No, it's sin which causes death (v. 13). Why? Because an unspiritual person can't obey spiritual statutes. It's like teaching calculus to a baby. Paul went on to prove it with two lines of evidence. First, he drew on his own inability to keep from doing wrong (vv. 15-17), giving this struggle its classic statement in verse 15.

Second, he was also incapable of doing right (vv. 18-21). Paul's internal conflict seemed to doom him and all mankind to failure (vv. 22-24). But thankfully, he didn't stop there —because there is One who gives victory (v. 25)!

Romans 7 makes it plain that as "slaves to sin," we were in desperate need of a new identity in Christ! We have spent a lot of time this month dealing with harmful things that can get a foothold in our lives. But the opening declaration of verse 25 is so positive that we want to continue in that spirit. Today, look back over your recent Christian experience. Can you recall an area where God has given you victory over a problem? Can you see other clear signs of growth and progress in your walk with Christ? As you go to prayer today, begin with praise!

Today in the Word, May 21, 1992

Romans 7:13 "... that sin ... might become exceeding sinful."

' Paul here calls sin "exceeding sinful." Why didn't he say, "exceeding black" or "exceeding horrible" or "exceeding deadly"? Because there is nothing in the world so bad as sin. When he wanted to use the very worst word he could find to call sin by, he called it by its own name, and reiterated it: "Sin ... exceeding sinful. "

C H Spurgeon

Romans 7:14-25

Present or Past Tense - In Romans 7:14-25 Paul speaks in the present tense, having previously spoken in the past. "I was" (v. 9) gives place to "I am" and "I do" (vv. 14, 16). So what he is telling his readers here is that the principle of which he spoke in verses 7-13—that God's law defines, detects, and damns sin in us, showing us how far sin dominates us—still applies now that he's a Christian.

Many commentators feel that in verses 14-25 Paul is simply saying again in present tense what he said in past tense in the preceding seven verses. I don't agree. Anyone who regards Paul as a good communicator must see his shift to present tense as a sign that, having spoken of the past, he is now moving on to speak about his present experience as a Christian. Any rejection of this, the most obvious explanation, accuses Paul of not knowing how to say clearly what he meant. Besides, a person who is not a Christian would never be able to claim truthfully that he delights in the law of God in his inmost self (v. 22) because "the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God" (8:7).

Nor do I believe, as some claim, that Paul is here speaking as a Christian in poor spiritual health. Don't ask me to accept that when Paul dictated any part of Romans he was in a low spiritual state! In reality, it is a mark of spiritual health passionately to desire to be perfect for the glory of God and then to be deeply distressed when one finds that sin, though dethroned and no longer dominant, remains within, marauding and trying to regain control, so that one cannot fully achieve righteousness. This healthy distress at the way in which, morally speaking, what one aims for always exceeds what one actually grasps is what Romans 7:24-25 portrays. - Your Father Loves You by James Packer, (Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986), page for March 21

Romans 7:18

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells

Several years ago we had a pet raccoon we called Jason. For hours he would entertain us by wrestling with our dog, MacTavish, a kind and gentle Scottish terrier. Jason, on the other hand, was a kind of schizoid terror. One minute he would snuggle up on your lap like a perfect angel and the next he'd be engaged in the most fiendish antics. If unrestrained, he would breakfast on dove eggs, raid the garbage can, or tear up the flowerbed. Although he was a delightful pet, we became increasingly aware that his destructive actions were governed by his wild instincts. Jason would always have the nature of a raccoon, and we had to watch him closely no matter how tame he seemed to be.

Often when I observed Jason's behavior, I thought of the fallen, sinful nature that we as Christians retain even though we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Paul referred to this as the "flesh" in which "nothing good dwells" (Rom. 7:18). It may be repressed and restrained, but it is always there. Unless we are daily controlled by the Lord, our old "self" will demonstrate its destructive, pleasure-seeking capacity in some way or another.

Although we are new creatures in Christ, we still possess a tendency to sin. But we need not be governed by it, for we are united to Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. By obeying God's Word and yielding to the Spirit, we can be victorious over the flesh—the "nature of the beast" within. —M.R.D.II

The secret of self-control is to give control of ourselves to God.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 7:18

Strong Foes - As Christians, we face strong foes that would bring us into spiritual defeat. Our greatest enemy, however, lurks within. Even though we have been born again, we are deeply aware of our inclination toward evil. The apostle Paul wrote, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find" ([Rom. 7:18](#)). He added, "For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (vv.22,23).

In Victor Hugo's story, "Ninety-Three" a ship is caught in a storm. The frightened crew hears a terrible crashing sound below. Immediately the men know what it is: a cannon has broken loose and is crashing into the ship's side with every smashing blow of the sea! Two men, at the risk of their lives, manage to fasten it down again, for they know that the unfastened cannon is more dangerous than the raging storm. Hillery C. Price made this application: "Many people are like that ship—their greatest danger areas lie within their own lives." - Source unknown

Romans 7:19-25 [Click here](#)

November 16 DAILY RENEWAL

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk

Romans 7:23 "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind."

It is some comfort when we feel a war within the soul to remember that it is an interesting phase of Christian experience. Such as are dead in sin have never made proof of any of these things. These inward conflicts show that we are alive. There is some life in the soul that hates sin, even though it cannot do as it would. Do not be depressed about it. Where there is pain there is life

C H Spurgeon

Romans 7:24 "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This proves that he was not attacking his sin, but that this sin was attacking him. I do not seek to be delivered from a man against whom I lead the attack. It is the man who is opposing me from whom I seek to be delivered. And so sometimes the sin that dwells in believers flies at us, like some foul tiger of the woods, or some demon, jealous of the celestial spirit within us.

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' I went to that same Primitive Methodist Chapel where I first received peace with God through the simple preaching of the Word. The text happened to be, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

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"There," I thought, "that's a text for me." I had got as far as that, when the minister began by saying, "Paul was not a believer when he said this." I knew I was a believer, and it seemed to me from the context that Paul must have been a believer, too. Now I am sure he was. The man went on to say that no child of God ever did feel any conflict within. So I took up my hat and left the place, and I do not think I have frequented such places since.

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Romans 7:24

O wretched man that I am!

This chapter is very full of the personal pronoun. Me and I are the pivot around which its argument revolves. The strenuous efforts which the soul makes, not so much to justify as to sanctify itself, to realize its ideal, to walk worthy of the Lord, are well-pleasing, and are described by a master hand.

Is there one of us who has not read these words repeatedly, and in desperation? They have been so exactly true. We have longed with passionate sincerity that a new man might arise in us to free us from our old man, and make us the men we fain would be. We have been conscious of a subtle force mastering our struggles, like the serpents overcoming Laocoon and his sons; we have realized that a corrupting carcass was bound to our backs, as to the Roman criminals of old, filling the air with miasma, and poisoning our life. We have cried bitterly, O wretched man, who shall deliver?

The key to the plaintive moan of this chapter consists in this. It is the result of the endeavor to live a holy life apart from the power of the indwelling Savior, and independently of the grace of the Holy Spirit. All such efforts are sure to end in wretchedness. We can no more sanctify ourselves than we can justify. Deliverance from the power of sin is the gift of God's grace, as forgiveness is. And it is only when we have come to the very end of all our strivings and resolvings, and have abandoned ourselves to the Savior He should do in us and for us what we cannot do for ourselves, that we are led to cry, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

All things are possible to God;
To Christ, the power of God in men,
To me, when I am all subdued,
When I, in Christ, am born again.

Romans 7:1-25

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 7:1-25

A certain type of vandalism--painting buildings, trains and other objects with graffiti--has become an international sport for some people. These graffiti ""artists"" fly to various cities around the world, intending to leave their mark so they can brag about their dubious achievements. Last summer, when four young Germans were arrested in New York City, police found hundreds of spray paint cans in their bags. One of the men freely admitted that they had come to New York to paint ""a wall, a train, or anything.""

What these jet-setting vandals do to deface property is similar to what Satan tries to do to believers. He is an unwelcome visitor, looking for opportunities to deface our lives and testimonies with the ""graffiti"" of sin. As we learned yesterday, our enemy has an ally within us, the sinful nature that we carry as our heritage from Adam.

But that hardly makes us pawns of the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 John 2:16). Paul ends Romans 7 on a note of victory, expressed in today's verse. And John declares: ""Everyone born of God overcomes the world"" (1 John 5:4).

We are on our way to the eternal victory of heaven. But there are some struggles to deal with along the way. In Romans 6 Paul outlines our identification with our new Master, Jesus Christ. In chapter 7, he shows the impossibility of achieving the righteousness God requires by trying to keep the law's requirements.

As believers, we are set free from the law the way a woman is free from the ""law of marriage"" if her husband dies (Rom. 7:2). Our problem with trying to meet God's standards is that our sinful nature will always be in rebellion against God.

It's not that God's demands are evil. Far from it, Paul says (v. 7). The flaw lies within us. All God's law does is arouse us to an awareness of how sinful we are and how far short we come of His requirements.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

In coming days we're going to see that God has given us many weapons with which to fight and win in spiritual warfare.

But along with using the weapons He has provided, we need to make sure we are not giving aid and comfort to the enemy! This is a good time for you to look around your home or apartment to see if you are allowing any of the enemy's propaganda to get to you or your family.

Romans 7:15

A Prisoner No More

Read: Romans 7:15-25

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

Romans 7:15

A middle-aged man approached me after I led a workshop at his place of employment and asked this question: "I've been a Christian nearly my whole life, but I'm constantly disappointed in myself. Why is it that I always seem to keep doing the things I wish I didn't do and never seem to do the things I know I should? Isn't God getting tired of me?" Two men standing next to me also seemed eager to hear the response.

That's a common struggle that even the apostle Paul experienced. "I do not understand what I do," he said, "For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Rom. 7:15). But here's some good news: We don't have to stay in that trap of discouragement. To paraphrase Paul as he writes in Romans 8, the key is to stop focusing on the law and start focusing on Jesus. We can't do anything about our sinfulness in our own strength. The answer is not "try harder to be good at keeping the rules." Instead, we must focus on the One who shows us mercy and cooperate with the Spirit who changes us.

Focus on the One who shows us mercy & cooperate with the Spirit who changes us.

When we focus on the law, we are constantly reminded that we'll never be good enough to deserve God's grace. But when we focus on Jesus, we become more like Him.

I sometimes get caught in the cycle of trying harder to be good, failing, getting discouraged, and giving up. Help me, Lord, to depend on Your grace and to draw near to You so that You can change my heart.

Focus on Jesus.

INSIGHT: There is an interesting element in this passage from the apostle Paul. We often focus on the difference between law and grace. But Paul highlights two different laws in this passage. It is not that the Mosaic law is bad and grace is good. Instead, Paul says that he delights in God's law but is held captive by the law of sin. God's law is something to delight in; the sin that is revealed through that law is something to be set free from.

By Randy Kilgore

Romans 7:18

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells

Several years ago we had a pet raccoon we called Jason. For hours he would entertain us by wrestling with our dog, MacTavish, a kind and gentle Scottish terrier. Jason, on the other hand, was a kind of schizoid terror. One minute he would snuggle up on your lap like a perfect angel and the next he'd be engaged in the most fiendish antics. If unrestrained, he would breakfast on dove eggs, raid the garbage can, or tear up the flowerbed. Although he was a delightful pet, we became increasingly aware that his destructive actions were governed by his wild instincts. Jason would always have the nature of a raccoon, and we had to watch him closely no matter how tame he seemed to be.

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Our Daily Bread

Romans 7:19-25 [Click here](#)

November 16 DAILY RENEWAL

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk

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All things are possible to God;
To Christ, the power of God in men,
To me, when I am all subdued,
When I, in Christ, am born again.
--Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily Vol. 5

Romans 7:24-8:17

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 7:24-8:17

Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death. - Romans 8:1-2

It might have surprised some observers to know that John Wesley felt "cold" spiritually. Raised in a Christ-centered home, he was surrounded by the love of the Lord, his parents, and his eighteen siblings. When he was five, he was miraculously saved from his family's burning house. Later he went to Oxford to prepare for ministry. There he and his brother Charles formed "The Holy Club," whose dedication to living out the Christian life earned the group's nickname, the "Methodists."

Yet despite Wesley's sincere desires for God, he was spiritually restless. When his ministry failed in England, he went to colonial Georgia as a missionary. But this ministry also ended poorly. While sailing home, Wesley was profoundly impressed by the deep faith of some Moravian believers. During a fearsome storm, they were singing hymns!

Back in London, he attended one of their Aldersgate Street meetings, on May 24, 1738. As the preacher taught on Romans 8 (using Luther's commentary!), Wesley was transformed. Later he wrote: "While [the preacher] was describing the change which God works

in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ; Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”

Romans 8 follows a long section describing Paul’s agony between his desire to do what is right and his inability to do so. At the height of this internal struggle, Paul cried out: “Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (Ro 7:24) Immediately came the only answer possible: “Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Ro 7:25).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

If you’re keeping track, John Wesley is the third person in our study whose life was transformed by the book of Romans--and he won’t be the last!

ROMANS 8

[Click for illustrations/devotionals from Bible gateway](#)

[Click here for Our Daily Bread devotionals that relate to Romans 8](#) - some may already be archived on this page

[Romans 8:1](#)

[Romans 8:1](#)

[Romans 8:1-10](#)

[Romans 8:1ff](#)

[Romans 8:2](#)

Romans 8:3

[Romans 8:3](#)

[Romans 8:3](#)

[Romans 8:5](#)

[Romans 8:6](#)

[Romans 8:6](#)

[Romans 8:9ff](#)

[Romans 8:11-18](#)

Romans 8:12

[Romans 8:12-17](#)

[Romans 8:12-17](#)

[Romans 8:14](#)

Romans 8:14-17

[Romans 8:15](#)

[Romans 8:15](#)

[Romans 8:15](#)

[Romans 8:16](#)

[Romans 8:16-17](#)

[Romans 8:16-17](#)

[Romans 8:16-30](#)

[Romans 8:16-27](#)

Romans 8:18 [Romans 8:18](#)

[Romans 8:18](#)

[Romans 8:18-25](#)

Romans 8:22-39

[Romans 8:22-30](#)

[Romans 8:26ff](#)

[Romans 8:26](#)

[Romans 8:26](#)

[Romans 8:26-30](#)

[Romans 8:27-39](#)

Romans 8:28

Romans 8:28

Romans 8:28

[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:28 - 30 Hyperseeing](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:30](#)
[Romans 8:31](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:31-39](#)
[Romans 8:32](#)
[Romans 8:33](#)
[Romans 8:33](#)
[Romans 8:34](#)
[Romans 8:34-38](#)
[Romans 8:35](#)
[Romans 8:35](#)
[Romans 8:37](#)
[Romans 8:37](#)
[Romans 8:38](#)
[Romans 8:38](#)
[Romans 8:39](#)

Romans 8:1 Click here

January 17 WALKING NOT AFTER THE FLESH, BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk.

Romans 8:1

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 8:1-8

The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace. - Romans 8:6

Writer and theologian John Stott has these insights into the Holy Spirit's place in our lives:

"There is no need for us to wait, as the one hundred and twenty had to wait, for the Spirit to come. For the Holy Spirit did come on the day of Pentecost, and has never left His church. Our responsibility is to humble ourselves before His sovereign authority, to determine not to quench Him but to allow Him His freedom. For then our churches will again manifest those marks of the Spirit's presence which many young people are specially looking for, namely biblical teaching, loving fellowship, living worship, and an ongoing, outgoing evangelism."

Christ's sacrifice enables our minds to be controlled and our hearts filled with the Holy Spirit, the promised divine Counselor (Jn.

14:16-17).

Today's reading draws a contrast between life in the Spirit and life under the law. In the old system, people were in bondage to sin and stood condemned.

By contrast, in the new system, people are not condemned and are free in Christ. The difference is Christ, whom God gave as a sin offering (Rom. 8:3). Thanks to Him, we can and should live not according to the sin nature, but according to the Spirit (Ro 8:4; cf. Gal. 5:24-25).

This means that we should have our minds and wills set on God's desires, not on our own sinful urgings (Ro 8:5).

The contrast could not be more complete. A life filled with the Spirit (cf. Eph. 5:18) is full of life, not death. It is characterized by peace, not hostility toward God. It submits obediently to God's law--which is not even possible without the Spirit.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY We like to recommend additional Bible study. As you dig deeper, you'll say with the psalmist, "How sweet are your promises to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps. 119:103).

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

I like the old translation. There was a martyr once summoned before Bonner. After he had expressed his faith in Christ, Bonner said, "You are a heretic and will be damned."

"No," said he, quoting the old version, "There is therefore now no damnation to them that believe in Christ Jesus."

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Oh, for faith to lay hold on this! Oh, for an overpowering faith that shall get the victory over doubts and fears, and make us enjoy the liberty with which Christ makes men free! You that believe in Christ, go to your beds this night and say, "If I die in my bed, I cannot be condemned!" Should you wake the next morning, go into the world and say, "I am not condemned!" When the devil howls at you, tell him, "You may accuse, but I am not condemned!" And if sometimes your sins rise, say, "I know you, but you are all gone forever. I am not condemned! "

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As "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," so we may solemnly say, "There is therefore now a most weighty condemnation on you who are not in Christ Jesus, who are walking, not after the Spirit, but after the flesh."

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:1 [Click here](#)

April 9 OUR GLORIOUS STANDING!

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk.

Romans 8:2 [Click here](#)

January 18 THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk

Romans 8:3 "God sending his own Son ... condemned sin in the flesh."

God had condemned sin before, but never so efficiently as in the person of his Son.

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:3

WEAK THROUGH THE FLESH

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh ... Romans 8:3

These words of Paul are not a criticism of God's law, but rather emphasize the inability of sinful man to keep its perfect commands.

It was the beloved Bible teacher Dr. William Pettingill who so vividly illustrated the truth of this verse by telling of a personal experience. He had been invited to the home of close friends for dinner. Wandering into the kitchen, Dr Pettingill entered just as the hostess took a large fork and thrust it into a beautifully browned roast, and tried to lift it from the pan. So tender, however, was the meat, and so well done, that the fork could not support it. It just went right through. Finally, after several such attempts, she gave up, and taking a large spatula placed it under the roast and removed it easily. Dr. Pettingill went on to say that the fork reminded him of the law and the roast portrayed man's sinful nature. Although the fork failed to lift the roast out of the kettle, it was not the fault of the fork! There was nothing wrong with it at all. It was a good strong one. The problem was in the meat. The fork was "weak through the flesh." That's exactly what Paul was trying to say in Romans 8:3 when he spoke of "what the law could not do." God's law was perfect and good, but it could never save anyone, simply because of the depravity of the human heart and the inability of sinful man to support it. For that very reason, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us ... " (Rom. 8:3, 4).

Salvation is not obtained by keeping the Ten Commandments, for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." It is received by trusting Christ who alone fulfilled God's perfect law. Through His death at Calvary He paid the penalty for the world of sinners who continually break the law.

Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;
"Come unto me," O hear His sweet call.
Come, and He saves us once for all. —P. P. Bliss

Over against a demanding Sinai stands a redeeming Calvary! —G.W.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:5-17

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: James 1:19-21; Romans 8:5-17

A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. - Proverbs 25:11

A caller to a radio talk show discussing careers wondered why his best employees seemed to be leaving. "I increased their salaries and gave them the best projects," he explained. "But we have a few run-ins and they leave anyway." When the host asked the caller to describe the "run-ins," he mentioned that they were incidents when he yelled at his employees for their mistakes. "I think that's the problem," the host declared. "People don't want to deal with anger, even it comes with more money. I think you need some anger management courses if you really want to keep your employees working for you!"

Anger management . . . in our society this is the answer to uncontrolled rage that disrupts our families, relationships, and workplaces. These techniques may be helpful, but as we see in our passage today, James also talks about anger management, and prescribes a radical solution--a new life in Christ that makes new attitudes and behaviors possible.

As we have already seen, our desires lead us into sin (James 1:14–15). But God desires that we live righteously. Yet He doesn't just declare that He expects this from us without also providing the means to make it possible. James 1:21 points toward the resource: "Humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you."

Romans 8:5–17 elaborates on the difference between a life controlled by the sin nature and a life controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Because of our belief in Jesus Christ, we have His Spirit at work in us, leading us to life (Rom. 8:11). We are not struggling alone to live righteously to please God—we are able to live rightly because the Holy Spirit gives us the power to resist sin (Rom. 8:13).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Anger may be a significant struggle in your life, and if so, these verses should remind you of the urgency of submitting this to the Holy Spirit so that you will not be dominated by your temper.

Romans 8:6

“Gorgeous Inside”

Read: Romans 8:1-11

To be spiritually minded is life and peace. —Romans 8:6

It's a rather nondescript house that sits on a busy thoroughfare. With no distinctive characteristics, this rather plain home is easy to ignore. But as I drove past it the other day, I noticed a “For Sale” sign in the yard. Attached to the sign was a smaller notice that happily announced: “I’m gorgeous inside.” While I’m not in the market for a new house, that sign intrigued me. What could make this otherwise forgettable house gorgeous inside?

It also made me wonder: Could that sign apply to us as followers of Jesus? Think about it. No matter what we look like on the outside, shouldn’t there be within us a beauty that reveals God’s love and work in our lives?

What does the Bible say about inner beauty? We might start with Romans 7:22, which says, “In my inner being I delight in God’s law” (niv). A few verses later in Romans 8:6, Paul speaks of a Spirit-controlled mind that is characterized by “life and peace.” And in Galatians, we see that letting the Spirit take charge of our inner being will build in us the “fruit of the Spirit” (5:22), a beautiful array of qualities such as love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness.

Delighting in Scripture and allowing the Spirit to work in our heart will make us look good on the inside—and will pay off in a life that honors God.

Dear Lord, I pray that through the work of Your Spirit dwelling within me I will be transformed into a grand display of the fruit that will attract others to You and reflect glory back to You.

Righteousness in your heart produces beauty in your character.

By Dave Branon

Romans 8:7

"The carnal mind is enmity against God."

Paul uses a noun, not an adjective. He does not say that the carnal mind is opposed to God merely, but it is the positive enmity. It is not black, but blackness. It is not at enmity, but enmity itself. It is not corrupt, but corruption. It is not rebellious; it is rebellion. It is not wicked; it is wickedness itself. The heart, though it be deceitful, is positively deceit. It is evil in the concrete, sin in the essence. It is the distillation, the quintessence of all things that are vile.

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:9 [Click here](#)

April 10 THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk

Romans 8:9 "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

If it were possible (which it is not) for you to produce the same virtues in yourself which are produced by the Holy Spirit, yet even

those would not suffice, for the text is absolute. It does not say, "If any man have not the works of the Spirit" or "the influences of the Spirit" or "the general character which comes from the indwelling of the Spirit." It goes deeper and declares, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate is not one of degree, but of kind.—

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:12

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. Following the terrible Mexico City earthquake of 1985, live satellite coverage carried the news of Mexico's anguish to a watching world. I sat in front of our television set stunned by the extent of the damage. Mountains of broken concrete filled the screen. Rescue workers dug frantically. Fires raged. Smoke and dust filled the air. Then suddenly in the lower left-hand corner of the screen appeared the words "Courtesy: SIN." The letters S-I-N actually stood for Spanish International Network, but for a moment it meant something different to me. It reminded me that in some way all trouble, pain, and suffering can be traced back to the problem of sin. That's not to say that God judged Mexico City with an earthquake. But if sin directly or indirectly causes such tragedy, or even the more disastrous quake described by John in

Revelation 6:12, it deserves to be treated with contempt, not courtesy.

Since all human anguish can be traced back to the entrance of sin into this world, how can we take it so lightly? Why do we give it our attention? Why do we comply with an evil that causes a loving God to react with the judgment described in Revelation 6? We don't owe sin anything. Jesus paid sin's debt and broke its power when He died on the cross and rose from the grave. We can avoid the "courtesy" sin offers by living in the power of the resurrection. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23

), and that's a courtesy we don't need. —M.R.D.II

God will give us the victory if we will go to the fight.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:13 "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."

If you will not have death unto sin, you shall have sin unto death. There is no alternative. If you do not die to sin, you shall die for sin. If you do not slay sin, sin will slay you.

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:14-17

MORE THAN A CONTRACT

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs. -Romans 8:16-17

We are all accustomed to contracts. We are often required to sign them, whether with a builder to construct our house or with the department store when we purchase an appliance. Contracts, formal or informal, specify what happens if one of the parties fails to live up to an agreement.

When we put our trust in Christ for salvation, however, we do more than sign a contract. We enter into a binding relationship with God whereby He makes us His children by the new birth and by adoption (1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 1:5). Because of this close family relationship, we are permanent heirs of an eternal inheritance reserved in heaven for us (1 Peter 1:4).

Contracts can be broken if one of the parties fails to keep his part of the promise. Fortunately for us, our eternal destiny is based on more than some legal agreement we make with God. Rather, we are secure because of our family relationship with Him. If a youngster fails to show up for dinner, the parent's obligation isn't canceled. The parent starts a search for the child. One member's failure doesn't cancel the relationship.

How thankful we can be that eternal life is based on our relationship with God through Christ. -HWR

We're members of God's family,

We're children of the King;

Because we've put our faith in Christ,

To us He'll always cling. -Sper

We are heirs of God not merely by contract, but by birthright.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:15

Shocking Accessibility

Read: Romans 8:14-17,24-26 | Bible in a Year: Deuteronomy 14-16; Mark 12:28-44

You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." —Romans 8:15

When John F. Kennedy was president of the US, photographers sometimes captured a winsome scene. Seated around the president's desk in the Oval Office, cabinet members are debating matters of world consequence. Meanwhile, a toddler, the 2-year-old John-John, crawls around and inside the huge presidential desk, oblivious to White House protocol and the weighty matters of state. He is simply visiting his daddy.

That is the kind of shocking accessibility conveyed in the word Abba when Jesus said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You" (Mark 14:36). God may be the sovereign Lord of the universe, but through His Son, God became as approachable as any doting human father. In Romans 8, Paul brings the image of intimacy even closer. God's Spirit lives inside us, he says, and when we do not know what we ought to pray "the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (v.26).

Jesus came to demonstrate that a perfect and holy God welcomes pleas for help from a widow with two mites and a Roman centurion and a miserable publican and a thief on a cross. We need only call out "Abba" or, failing that, simply groan. God has come that close to us.

We want to talk to God, but it can be difficult to find words to express the emotions of our heart. The Discovery Series booklet Let's Pray may help. Read it online at www.discoveryseries.org/hp135

Prayer is an intimate conversation with our God.

INSIGHT: The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is the evidence that we are saved. The Holy Spirit is also called "the Spirit of God" and the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9). Paul taught that the Spirit is the deposit that guarantees our salvation (Eph 1:13-14) and the source of our new life (Rom. 8:11). Assuring us that we are God's children, the Holy Spirit enables us to affectionately call out to God, "Abba, Father" (v. 15). As "the Spirit of adoption" (v.15), the Spirit changes our status from slaves to sons (Gal. 4:6), giving us the full privileges of sonship—making us heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). The indwelling Spirit helps us to pray by interceding for us and with us (v. 26).

By Philip Yancey

Romans 8:17-18

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 8:17-21

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. - Romans 8:19

One of the basic principles of science is called the "second law of thermodynamics" or the "law of morpholysis." This law states that left to themselves, natural systems become disordered or disorganized. The energy runs out. The complexity deteriorates. It's called "entropy."

This principle applies universally. Your watch, without new batteries, will run down and cease to function. Your car will not stay in good working order if you pay no attention to it. The plant you don't water withers. Stars eventually cool. People and animals grow old and die. There are no exceptions.

But this is not the way it was meant to be. This may surprise you, since to us it just seems part of the “natural order” of things. The truth is that the created world is in “bondage to decay” (Romans 8:21) because of the original sin. Nature suffers from our sin, and in some sense will share in our redemption.

As heirs of Christ, we suffer like Him--this is the road to sharing in His glory (Romans 8:17). In comparison to this future glory, our present troubles and trials are nothing (Romans 8:18).

The created world is also hoping in this future glory, waiting “in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed” (Romans 8:19; cf. 1 John 3:2). Paul shows creation here waiting anxiously, knowing what will happen and longing for it.

Why is creation interested in what happens to us? Because its destiny is hitched to ours, as we are its rulers or stewards (Gen. 1:28). It suffers from sin not by any fault of its own, but because of humanity’s disobedient choice in Eden (Romans 8:20; cf. Gen. 3:17-19). The Greek word, translated frustration, carries implications of futility, frailty, and purposelessness--and scientifically speaking, entropy.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY Perhaps you feel like creation today, groaning for redemption, suffering under the troubles and trials of this present life. Encourage your heart by memorizing the first two verses of today’s reading: Romans 8:17-18. Keeping them ready in your memory will boost your faith!

Romans 8:17-21

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Romans 8:18

The Merit of Christ - If we consider the greatness and the glory of the life we shall have when we have risen from the dead, it would not be difficult at all for us to bear the concerns of this world. If I believe the Word, I shall on the Last Day, after the sentence has been pronounced, not only gladly have suffered ordinary temptations, insults, and imprisonment, but I shall also say: "O, that I did not throw myself under the feet of all the godless for the sake of the great glory which I now see revealed and which has come to me through the merit of Christ!"

Martin Luther

Romans 8:18

GROANS NOW, GLORY LATER

I once heard of a Christian seminar titled, "How To Live A Stress-Free Life." Such an unrealistic hope promptly made me stressful! Yet, we all long for relief.

A Christian friend of mine whose family is experiencing tough times admits feeling let down by God. She said, "I've prayed, agonized, and claimed promises, but nothing changes. The frustrating thing is that I know He has the power to get us out of this. I've seen Him do it before, but this time He's silent."

Larry Crabb, in his book "Inside Out," emphasizes that our only hope for complete relief from hardship is to be with Jesus in heaven. "Until then," he says, "we either groan or pretend we don't." He adds, "The experience of groaning, however, is precisely what modern Christianity so often tries to help us escape."

My friend is groaning and she's not pretending she isn't. Like all of us, she simply wants things to change. But the fact is, something IS changing -- SHE is! Paul assured us in 2 Corinthians 4:17 that our present sufferings are lightweight and brief compared with the weighty and eternal changes those sufferings are producing in us. So let's not lose heart. There's glory ahead! (Rom. 8:18). -- JEY

The obstacles that we must face
Along life's rocky way,
Are used by God so we might hear
"Well done" from Him someday.-- Sper

God often uses a setback to move us ahead.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:18-39

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 8:18-39

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. -

Joni Eareckson was a teenager when she dove into the Chesapeake Bay a healthy, athletic girl, and was pulled out of the water a quadriplegic. Already a Christian, Joni spent months praying for healing. But as time passed, her hope turned to despair, anger, and depression. During this time, one verse kept coming back to her—Romans 8:28. Finally, she saw that her dive was really no accident at all, and that God could use her situation for His greater glory. This single verse helped Joni to focus on God's plan for her life and eased her despair.

It's fitting for us to close our study this month with another person impacted by the book of Romans. One of the first people we looked at, Augustine, was changed forever by Romans 13. For Martin Luther, Romans 1:17 had this same effect; and for Billy Graham, it was Romans 5:8. John Wesley found his heart was "strangely warmed" by the first part of Romans 8. Later, a young paralyzed woman was profoundly encouraged by that second half of Romans 8. You may recall from our study of John Wesley that Romans 8 begins with the wonderful declaration that believers in Jesus Christ have been freed from condemnation. The chapter continues with promises of life in the Spirit for those who have become children of God.

Today's passage continues by showing that the eternal glory of God at work within us far outweighs any trial that we experience this

side of heaven (Romans 8:18). And we are not alone in our trials--all of God's creation suffers because of the effects of sin and longs for that time when things will be restored to God's original intention (Romans 8:21). Seeing life from this eternal perspective gives us confidence that God is working all things for good in His glorious purposes (Romans 8:28). Because God Himself is for us, nothing can possibly separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - It should be evident from our study that God's Word goes out of His mouth and accomplishes exactly what He intends (Isa. 55:11).

Romans 8:18-25

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: James 1:16-18; Romans 8:18-25

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. -

TODAY IN THE WORD

One of the earliest lessons that parents teach their children is not to take candy from strangers. This seems odd to young children--candy is good, so someone offering it must be good, too. Parents have to help their children understand that candy is only good when it comes from an adult who loves them; otherwise, the candy that seems good could actually hurt them.

Yesterday we looked at the example of Adam and Eve and the relationship between desires that contradict God's commands and sin. As descendants of Adam and Eve, we are all sinners. We all stand to inherit death, which is the result of our sinful choices that rebel against God (see Rom. 6:23).

But God was not willing to give up on His creation. By means of sending Jesus, the same God who spoke a word and created all things has spoken a Word again to bring new birth. Our birth into this world will eventually end in our physical death. But our spiritual birth is into eternal life.

James wants us to understand that the truly good things in life actually come from God (v. 17). The "candy" offered by the world may appear to bring happiness, fame, wealth, or security, but it really leads to death and decay. Christians must remember that God has far greater blessings in store for those who love Him.

As those who believe in Jesus, the Word of truth, we are the firstfruits of a redeemed and renewed creation (v. 18). We have been given the greatest gift of all through our salvation from the curse of sin and death.

In addition to this perfect gift from our Father, God continues to provide us with other good gifts, such as wisdom, encouragement, and direction in life.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Part of wisdom is knowing the difference between gifts that are truly good and those that will lead us astray. God is the source of all good things in our lives, and those blessings should point us toward Him.

ROMANS 8:22-39

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies (Romans 8:33).

A cat burglar in Northville, Michigan, knows from experience what it is like to live above the law. The story began with a missing diamond ring. Although authorities located the robber, they made no arrest. With tongue-in-cheek, a state trooper described the thief as "small of stature, fleet of foot, and moving with a great deal of stealth." He also explained that because of the suspect's age and first-offender status, no charges could be filed. The real reason for letting the culprit go was that he was not subject to the law. The burglar was the complainant's 7-month-old kitten. The pet was implicated by a metal detector that beeped when waved over the animal. X-rays later confirmed their suspicions. The kitten, of course, was not booked; cats live above the law.

This amusing story reminds us of the Christian's position in relation to God's law. In Romans 8, Paul tells of those who will never be accused and tried by the court of heaven. And in Romans 4:8, the apostle said, "Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin." Of such a person he asks, "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies." Believers live above the law because the cross of Christ protects them from eternal condemnation.

If we become careless about sin, we will suffer pain and loss and be disciplined. But, praise God, we will not be sentenced to hell. Christ has delivered us from the curse of the law. —M.R.D.II
When I'm justified through Christ's merits, God looks at me "Just as if I'd" never sinned.

Our Daily Bread

ROMANS 8:22-25

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 8:22-25

The whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. - Romans 8:22

An environmental catastrophe unfolded last summer in Brazil. When a pipe burst, more than one million gallons of crude oil was dumped by the Petrobras company into the Barigui River. The oil drifted downstream, endangering drinking water, farmland, and animal life for a distance of 140 miles. Workers and volunteers labored around the clock to stop the oil's flow before it reached the city of Uniao da Vitoria (population: 70,000). Brazilian officials said the spill was the worst river contamination in their history--worse than a similar accident only six months before. That same company had spilled 345,000 gallons of oil into Guanabara Bay, polluting beaches and killing ocean life near the capital of Rio de Janeiro. For its carelessness, Petrobras was hit with a \$28 million fine.

When we read about or come in personal contact with incidents such as this, we can almost hear for ourselves the groans of creation described in today's reading.

Continuing from yesterday, we pick up the theme that the created world is waiting eagerly for our glorification, for at that time it will also be liberated from its bondage (Romans 8:21).

In the meantime, just as we suffer (Romans 8:17), creation also suffers. Still personifying it, Paul described it as "groaning," an emotional term suggesting crying or suffering. But specifically, creation is groaning like a woman in childbirth. Mothers reading this devotion need no further explanation--labor pains are intense!

This simile illustrates the pain that sin causes. Both creation's suffering and a woman's labor pains trace back to the Curse (see Gen. 3:16). But since salvation will trump the Curse, and since labor leads to a newborn baby, this image also implies hope and life.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - One book that may help stimulate your thinking on the relationship between Christians and the created world is *Redeeming Creation* by four authors, all of whom are both believers and scientists

Romans 8:24

We are saved by hope -- Romans 8:24

The Saving Power of Hope

It is not difficult as one looks out on life to recognize the saving power of hope. One thinks, for instance, to what a large extent it is hope which saves humanity from idleness. When a student faces an examination, it is his uncertainty that makes him toil. Were he perfectly sure that he would fail or pass, that would take all the zest out of his studies. Hope is the kindly instrument of God for rescuing mankind from inactivity, and inactivity is sister to stagnation. It is in hope that the writer wields his pen; it is in hope that the sower casts his seed. Search deep enough into the springs of action -- you always catch the whispering of hope. In a large sense, we are saved by hope from the tragedy of doing nothing in a world where there is everything to do.

Hope Rescues Us from Giving In

Akin to that is the great fact of life that we are saved by hope from giving in. For the great multitude of men hope lies at the back of perseverance. That may not be true of elect natures. It was not true of Marcus Aurelius, for instance. Never was there a more hopeless man than he, yet how magnificently he persevered. But for the rank and file of ordinary mortals on whom the Gospel always keeps its eye, hope is essential to holding on. One thinks of the story of the little lame boy who was "hoping to have wings some day." He could not race nor leap like other boys, but he was hoping to have wings some day. It was that hope which helped him to endure and taught him to bear the burden of his lameness, and so it is largely in this life of ours. From giving in when things are very difficult, from breaking down just at breaking point, from losing heart when all the lights are dim and the clouds return after the rain, in deep senses we are saved by hope.

Hope Saves Us from Losing Faith

Equally true is it of life, that we are often saved by hope from losing faith. Think, for instance, how often that is true of our Christian hope of personal survival. When his friend Arthur Hallam died, Tennyson was plunged into the depths. It seemed as if the foundations were destroyed and the moral universe had fallen in ruins. And then, as one may read In Memoriam, morning broke with the singing of the birds through the shining Christian hope of immortality. Nothing could be more dreary than the inscriptions on old pagan tombs, but pass to the catacombs and everything is different: they are radiant with trust in God. What millions have been saved from loss of faith in the hour when the heart was desolate and empty by the burning hope of a blessed immortality. "My soul, hope thou in God." His name is love, and love demands forever. "Forever" is engraven on the heart of love as Calais was engraven on the heart of Mary. When life is desolated by the hand of death so that faith in Fatherhood is very difficult, multitudes have been upheld and comforted by the saving power of hope.

Christ Inspired Hope

Now, it is very beautiful to notice how our Savior utilized that saving energy. Think how often He began His treatment by kindling the flame of hope within the breast. One might take the instance of Zacchaeus, that outcast from the commonwealth of Israel. He had been taught there was no hope for him, and he believed it till the Lord came by. And then, like the dawn, there came the quivering hope that his tomorrow might differ from his yesterday, and in that new hope the saving work began. Often hope is subsequent to faith. The Scripture order is "faith, hope, charity." But it is equally true, in the movements of the soul, that hope may be the forerunner of faith. And our Lord, bent on evoking faith, that personal trust in Him which alone saves, began by kindling hope within the breast. That is how He often begins still. He does not begin by saying, "Trust in Me." He begins by kindling these hopes of better things that are lying crushed in every human heart. Despair is deadly. It is blind. It cannot see the arm outstretched to help. Our Lord begins with the quickening of hope.

Christ Kept Hope Alive

One reads, too, in the Gospel story, of the pains He took just to keep hope alive. That, I think, is most exquisitely evident in His handling of Simon Peter. One would gather that Peter had a nature very prone to access of despair. He was the kind of man to climb the mountaintop and then swiftly to drop into the valley; and the pains, the endless pains that Jesus took to keep hope alive in Peter's breast, is one of the most beautiful things in history. One day he had to call him Satan. What darkness and anguish that must have brought to Peter! He would move through the crowding duties of the day saying despairingly, "The Master called me Satan." And then, within a week, when our Lord went up the Mount of Transfiguration, He said, "Peter, I want you to go with Me." It was not Peter's faith that needed strengthening. Peter trusted the Lord with all his heart. It was Peter's hope that needed to be strengthened, crushed by that terrific name of Satan. And then one remembers how on resurrection morning after the black hour of the denial, the angel (commissioned by the Lord) commanded, "Go, tell the disciples and Peter." The Lord had to wrestle with the despair of Peter. He had a mighty work to keep his hope alive. He had that same work with Luther and with Bunyan and perhaps with many a one who reads these lines. All of whom, rescued from despair by the divine hopefulness of Christ, understand what the apostle meant when he wrote that we are saved by hope.

George H Morrison, renowned Scottish preacher

Romans 8:26 "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us."

It is a mark of wondrous condescension that God should not only answer our prayers when they are made, but should make our prayers for us. That the king should say to the petitioner, "Bring your case before me, and I will grant your desire," is kindness. But for him to say, "I will be your secretary. I will write out your petition for you. I will put it into proper words so that your petition shall be framed acceptably," this is goodness at its utmost stretch. But this is precisely what the Holy Ghost does for us poor, ignorant, wavering, weak men. Jesus in his agony was strengthened by an angel; you are to be helped by God himself. Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses, but the Holy Ghost himself helps your infirmities. (CHS)

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Never give up praying, even when Satan suggests that prayer is in vain. Pray in his teeth. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). If the heavens are brass and your prayer only echoes above your head, pray on! If month after month your prayer appears to have miscarried, if you have had no answer, continue to draw close to the Lord. Do not abandon the mercy seat for any reason. If it is a good thing that you have been asking for, and if you are sure that it is according to the divine will, wait, tarry, pray, weep, plead, wrestle, and agonize until you get what you are praying for.

If your heart is cold, do not wait until your heart warms. Pray your soul into heat with the help of the ever-blessed Holy Spirit, who

helps in our weakness, who makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered (Rom. 8:26).

Never cease prayer for any reason. If the philosopher tells you that every event is fixed and that prayer cannot possibly change anything, go on praying. If you cannot reply to every difficulty that man suggests, resolve to be obedient to the divine will. "Pray without ceasing." Never, never, never renounce the habit of prayer or your confidence in its power.

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:26

The Spirit Delivers - Marvin Williams

Until recently, many towns in rural Ireland didn't use house numbers or postal codes. So if there were three Patrick Murphys in town, the newest resident with that name would not get his mail until it was first delivered to the other two Patrick Murphys who had lived there longer. "My neighbors would get it first," said Patrick Murphy (the newest resident). "They'd have a good read, and they'd go, 'No, it's probably not us.' " To end all this mail-delivery confusion, the Irish government recently instituted its first postal-code system which will ensure the proper delivery of the mail.

Sometimes when we pray we feel like we need help delivering to God what is on our heart. We may not know the right words to say or how to express our deep longings. The apostle Paul says in Romans 8 that the Holy Spirit helps us and intercedes for us by taking our unspeakable "groanings" and presenting them to the Father. "We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans" (Ro 8:26). The Spirit always prays according to God's will, and the Father knows the mind of the Spirit.

Be encouraged that God hears us when we pray and He knows our deepest needs.

Romans 8:26

The Spirit Himself maketh intercession with groanings. (r.v.)

There is a threefold groaning here.

Creation groans (Romans 8:22). — The sufferings of the dumb animals, under the brutal tyranny of man; in hard service; in the torture chambers of vivisectionists; to yield pleasure; to give food; or to provide dress — must fill the ear of Heaven with groans. The sighs of myriads of acres, condemned to bear the poisonous poppy or the barley for the manufacture of spirit, must be heard across the broad expanse of space. There is a discord, an oppression, a vanity in the universe around us, which constantly betrays the secret oppression of evil. Goethe said that Nature seemed to him to be like a captive maiden crying aloud for release.

The saints groan (Romans 8:23). — We wait for our adoption, for the manifestation of our sonship, for the redemption of our bodies from the last remnants of the fall; and as we wait, we groan beneath the pressure of the present, the weight of mortality, and with eager desire for the blessed advent of the Lord.

The Spirit groans (Romans 8:26). — The pressure of sin and sorrow in our world is heavy for Him to bear, and He sighs bitterly, as Jesus did when He stood face to face with the grave of his dead friend.

But these groans portend life, not death. They are full of hope, not despair. They are the pangs of birth, not the throes of death. Out of the agony of the present the new heavens and earth are being born.

"Unto you is given To watch for the coming of His feet Who is the Glory of our blessed Heaven. The work and watching will be very sweet, Even in an earthly home; And in such an hour as you think not He will come."

Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily Vol. 5

Romans 8:28

PRECEPTS FOR PILLOWSAnd we know that all things work together for good to them that love God ...

Romans 8:28

In prayer meeting at church one night, one of the ladies shared a story she had heard that morning about a woman in the hospital.

In the days prior to her operation, the afflicted woman spent much time in prayer and Bible study and found three verses which brought special comfort. They had to do with God's love, His mercy, and His wonderful grace. She thought of these three Scripture passages as "pillows," since she was resting upon them in a very special way in view of the coming surgery.

As she came out of the anesthetic following the operation, she grasped for one of the pillows on her bed. The doctor quickly stopped her and said, "I'm sorry, but you can't use that since it's very important that you lie perfectly still and remain on your back." "Well, doctor," the woman replied, "you may keep that pillow from me, but I have three of my own that you can't take away." The doctor assumed she wasn't fully conscious and humored her, saying, "Three pillows of your own? I don't see any!" More alert than the doctor imagined, the patient explained that three Bible verses had become her "pillows of comfort" as she prepared for surgery. "My first pillow is Romans 8:38, 39, 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God ... ' My second pillow is Psalm 13:5,

'But I have trusted in thy mercy ... ' And the third is Ephesians 2:8, 'For by grace are ye saved through faith ... ' These are my three pillows that you can't take away, doctor, and I am resting upon them!" Leaving the room, the physician paused a moment in the doorway and whispered to her nurse, "We don't have to worry about her. She'll be well in no time!"

Though I do not know the reason,

I can trust, and so am blest;

God is love, and God is faithful,

So in perfect peace I rest. —Anon.

God's good promises put a rainbow of hope in every cloud and a "pillow of grace" in every bed of affliction!—H.G.B.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:28

When Things Don't Go Well

Read: Romans 8:28-30

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God. Romans 8:28

The first words that many people like to quote when misfortune hits are: "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). But that's hard to believe in hard times. I once sat with a man who had lost his third son in a row, and I listened as he lamented, "How can this tragedy work for my good?" I had no answer but to sit silently and mourn with him. Several months later, he was thankful as he said, "My sorrow is drawing me closer to God."

Tough as Romans 8:28 may be to understand, countless testimonies give credence to the truth of it. The story of hymn writer Fanny Crosby is a classic example. The world is the beneficiary of her memorable hymns, yet what worked together for good was born out of her personal tragedy, for she became blind when she was an infant. At only age 8, she began to write poetry and hymns. Writing over 8,000 sacred songs and hymns, she blessed the world with such popular songs as "Blessed Assurance," "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," and "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior." God used her difficulty to bring good for her and us and glory for Him.

God has good purposes and always remains with us.

When tragedy befalls us, it's hard to understand how anything good can come from it, and we won't always see it in this life. But God has good purposes and always remains with us.

What trial in your life have you found to be for your good? What good things have come from it? What are you now suffering that you pray will bring something good?

God always has good purposes for our trials.

INSIGHT:

Romans 8:28 is often given as a promise to comfort and encourage those who are going through difficult and painful times. This promise is all-encompassing, for "all things" must include the good and the bad circumstances of life. It assures us that God is not

absent and is sovereignly working in all things for our good. Although He may seem silent or even out of sight, nothing is ever wasted in the hands of God. The Old Testament equivalent of Romans 8:28 is Genesis 50:20: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good" (nlt). Romans 8:28 is a promise with a redemptive purpose, for God wants us "to become like his Son" (v. 29 nlt). Sim Kay Tee

By Lawrence Darmani

Romans 8:28

It Holds True

Professor E. C. Caldwell ended his lecture, "Tomorrow," he said to his class of seminary students, "I will be teaching on Romans 8. So tonight, as you study, pay special attention to verse 28. Notice what this verse truly says, and what it doesn't say." Then he added, "One final word before I dismiss you—whatever happens in all the years to come, remember: [Romans 8:28](#) will always hold true."

That same day Dr. Caldwell and his wife met with a tragic car-train accident. She was killed instantly and he was crippled permanently. Months later, Professor Caldwell returned to his students, who clearly remembered his last words. The room was hushed as he began his lecture.

"Romans 8:28," he said, "still holds true. One day we shall see God's good, even in this."

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:28 "All things work together for good to them that love God."

To the sinner, however, all things work together for evil. Is he prosperous? He is as the beast that is fattened for the slaughter. Is he healthy? He is as the blooming flower that is ripening for the mower's scythe. Does he suffer? His sufferings are the first drops of the eternal hailstorm of divine vengeance. Everything to the sinner, if he could but open his eye, has a black aspect.

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Did you ever hear of a man who got his health by being sick? That is a Christian. He gets rich by his losses, he rises by his falls, he goes on by being pushed back, he lives by dying, he grows by being diminished, and becomes full by being emptied. Well, if the bad things work him so much good, what must his best things do? If he can sing in a dungeon, how sweetly will he sing in heaven!

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When that eminent servant of God, Mr. Gilpin, was arrested to be brought up to London to be tried for preaching the gospel, his captors made mirth of his frequent remark, "Everything is for the best." When he fell from his horse and broke his leg, they were especially merry about it. But the good man quietly remarked, "I have no doubt but that even this painful accident will prove to be a blessing."

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"We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son"

(Rom. 8:28–29). Everything that happens to you is for your own good. If the waves roll against you, it only speeds your ship toward the port. If lightning and thunder comes, it clears the atmosphere and promotes your soul's health. You gain by loss, you grow healthy in sickness, you live by dying, and you are made rich in losses.

Could you ask for a better promise? It is better that all things should work for my good than all things should be as I would wish to have them. All things might work for my pleasure and yet might all work my ruin. If all things do not always please me, they will always benefit me. This is the best promise of this life.

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When God has a plan for an individual, He often begins with discipline in the form of affliction and sorrow. Just as a good farmer cuts down the trees and clears the land before planting, God cuts down our trees of pleasure and pride, that our hearts may be plowed, broken, raked, and prepared to receive the good seed of the word.

Sometimes a storm brings people to their senses and arouses their consciences until they cry to the Lord. At other times, serious business losses bring such distress that people are driven to seek riches that are more enduring than gold, a competence that is more reliable than profits, and a comfort that is more genuine and lasting than wealth. Yes, and without these the Holy Spirit has frequently been pleased to convict of sin and reduce individuals to total despondency and abject self-abhorrence.

Submit cheerfully. There is no affliction that comes by chance. We are not left to the misery of believing that things happen independent of a divinely controlling power. Not a drop of bitter ever falls into our cup unless the heavenly Father's wisdom places it there. We dwell where everything is ordered by God. Whenever adversity must come, it is always with a purpose. And if it is God's purpose, should I wish to escape it?

We have this blessed assurance. "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Adversity is a healing medicine and not a deadly poison. Thus without a murmur, drink it all and say with your Savior, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39).

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:28

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God

A man in China raised horses for a living. When one of his prized stallions ran away, his friends gathered at his home to mourn his great loss. After they had expressed their concern, the man raised this question: "How do I know whether what happened is bad or good?" A couple days later the runaway horse returned with several strays following close behind. The same acquaintances again came to his house—this time to celebrate his good fortune. "But how do I know whether it's good or bad?" the old gentleman asked them. That very afternoon the horse kicked the owner's son and broke the young man's leg. Once more the crowd assembled—now to express their sorrow over the incident. "But how do I know if this is bad or good?" the father asked again. A few days later, war broke out. The man's son was exempted from military service because of his broken leg. Again the friends gathered

From our limited human perspective, we cannot know with certainty how to interpret life's experiences. For the trusting child of God, however, it's altogether different. We can be assured that God is working for our benefit through everything that happens. We do not need to ask, as did the old Chinese gentleman, "How do I know whether it's good or bad?" According to [Romans 8:28](#), we know that it's always for good. —R.W.D.

What the unbeliever calls good luck the believer knows to be God's love.

Our Daily Bread

[Illustrations in this section from the excellent resource - Bible.org](#)

Romans 8:28

Illiterate Janitor - Somerset Maugham, the English writer, once wrote a story about a janitor at St. Peter's Church in London. One day a young vicar discovered that the janitor was illiterate and fired him. Jobless, the man invested his meager savings in a tiny tobacco shop, where he prospered, bought another, expanded, and ended up with a chain of tobacco stores worth several hundred thousand dollars. One day the man's banker said, "You've done well for an illiterate, but where would you be if you could read and write?" "Well," replied the man, "I'd be janitor of St. Peter's Church in Neville Square." - Bits and Pieces, June 24, 1993, p. 23

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Beethoven - The great composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) lived much of his life in fear of deafness. He was concerned because he felt the sense of hearing was essential to creating music of lasting value.

When Beethoven discovered that the thing he feared most was coming rapidly upon him, he was almost frantic with anxiety. He consulted doctors and tried every possible remedy. But the deafness increased until at last all hearing was gone.

Beethoven finally found the strength he needed to go on despite his great loss. To everyone's amazement, he wrote some of his grandest music after he became totally deaf. With all distractions shut out, melodies flooded in on him as fast as his pen could write them down. His deafness became a great asset. - Daily Walk, August 9, 1993

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Valuable Quarantine - In 1832, French engineer Ferdinand Marie de Lesseps was traveling on the Mediterranean Sea. When a fellow passenger became sick with a contagious disease, the ship was quarantined. The confinement was terribly frustrating for de Lesseps. To help pass the time he read the memoirs of Charles le Pere, who had studied the feasibility of building a canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. That volume led the engineer to devise a detailed plan for the construction of the Suez Canal, which was completed under his leadership in 1869. That quarantine 37 years earlier proved to be immensely valuable to de Lesseps—and to the world. -- Daily Walk, April 25, 1992

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My Web of Life

No chance has brought this ill to me;
'Tis God's sweet will, so let it be,
He seeth what I cannot see.

There is a need for each pain;
And He will one day make it plain
That earthly loss is heavenly gain

Like as a piece of tapestry
Viewed from the back appears to be
But tangled threads mixed hopelessly,

But in the front a picture fair
Rewards the worker for his care,
Proving his skill and patience rare.

Thou art the workman, I the frame;
Lord, for the glory of Thy name,
Perfect Thine image in the same.

Source unknown

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Positives Amidst Troubled Times

One man's life provides a dramatic answer to the question, can God indeed bring positives out of troubled times? This young man's name is David, and he is an awesome picture of God's using difficulties for good. For years he viewed trials as something that affected only his external world, and any blow to what he owned or how he looked would discourage him and leave him feeling cheated. Today, David travels around the world, talking with people about how he discovered that no matter what happens to the outside, it's the internal life that trials really touch. Just like what happened in Jerry's life (whose story we shared in the last chapter), the bigger the trial, the more potential to see God's power and peace at work in the inner person.

During the Vietnam War, David went through rigorous training to become part of the ultra-elite special forces team the Navy used on dangerous search-and-destroy missions. During a nighttime raid on an enemy stronghold, David experienced the greatest trial of his life. When he and his men were pinned down by enemy machine-gun fire, he pulled a phosphorus grenade from his belt and stood up to throw it. But as he pulled back his arm, a bullet hit the grenade, and it exploded next to his ear. Lying on his side on the bank of a muddy river, he watched part of his face float by. His entire face and shoulder alternately smoldered and caught on fire as the phosphorus that had embedded itself in his body came into contact with the air.

David knew that he was going to die, yet miraculously he didn't. He was pulled from the water by his fellow soldiers, flown directly to Saigon, and then taken to a waiting plane bound for Hawaii. But David's problems were just beginning.

When he first went into surgery—the first of what would become dozens of operations—the surgical team had a major problem during the operation. As they cut away tissue that had been burned or torn by the grenade, the phosphorus would hit the oxygen in the operating room and begin to ignite again! Several times the

doctors and nurses ran out of the room, leaving him alone because they were afraid the oxygen used in surgery would explode!

Incredibly, David survived the operation and was taken to a ward that held the most severe burn and injury cases from the war. Lying on his bed, his head the size of a basketball, David knew he presented a grotesque picture. Although he had once been a handsome man, he knew he had nothing to offer his wife or anyone else because of his appearance. He felt more alone and more worthless than he had ever felt in his life. But David wasn't alone in his room. There was another man who had been wounded in Vietnam and was also a nightmarish sight.

He had lost an arm and a leg, and his face was badly torn and scarred. As David was recovering from surgery, this man's wife arrived from the States. When she walked into the room and took one look at her husband, she became nauseated. She took off her wedding ring, put it on the nightstand next to him, and said, "I'm so sorry, but there's no way I could live with you looking like that." And with that, she walked out the door. He could barely make any sounds through his torn throat and mouth, but the soldier wept and shook for hours. Two days later, he died.

That woman's attitude represents in many respects the way the world views a victim of accident or injury. If a trial emotionally or physically scars someone or causes him to lose his attractiveness, the world says "Ugly is bad," and consequently, any value that person feels he has to others is drained away.

For this poor wounded soldier, knowing that his wife saw no value in him was more terrible than the wounds he suffered. It blew away his last hope that someone, somewhere, could find worth in him because he knew how the world would perceive him.

Three days later, David's wife arrived. After watching what had happened with the other soldier, he had no idea what kind of reaction she would have toward him, and he dreaded her coming. His wife, a strong Christian, took one look at him, came over, and kissed him on the only place on his face that wasn't bandaged. In a gentle voice she said, "Honey, I love you. I'll always love you. And I want you to know that whatever it takes, whatever the odds, we can make it together." She hugged him where she could to avoid disturbing his injuries and stayed with him for the next several days. Watching what had happened with the other man's wife and seeing his own wife's love for him gave David tremendous strength. More than that, her understanding and accepting him greatly reinforced his own relationship with the Lord.

In the weeks and months that followed, David's wounds slowly but steadily healed. It took dozens of operations and months of agonizing recovery, but today, miraculously, David can see and hear. On national television, we heard David make an incredible statement. I am twice the person I was before I went to Vietnam. For one thing, God has used my suffering to help me feel other people's pain and to have an incredible burden to reach people for Him. The Lord has let me have a worldwide, positive effect on people's lives because of what I went through. I wouldn't trade anything I've gone through for the benefits my trials have had in my life, on my family's life and on countless teenagers and adults I've had the opportunity to influence over the years.

David experienced a trial that no parents would wish on their children. Yet in spite of all the tragedy that surrounded him, God turned his troubled times into fruitful ones.

The Gift of Honor, Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D., pp. 56-58

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Nothing Happens By Chance

F. B. Meyer was scheduled to preach at Chiswick Baptist Chapel, but when he arrived, he discovered the church door shut and locked. Somebody had made a mistake and announced the meeting for the following Thursday and the pastor's letter to Meyer had arrived too late to prevent Meyer from coming. In reply to the pastor's letter of apology, Meyer wrote: "Do not trouble, nothing happens by chance, and the rather long walk, in the calm autumn air, did me good." - The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers, W. Wiersbe, p. 193

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A Thing of Beauty

In a small pub in the highlands of Scotland a group of fishermen gathered one afternoon and were enjoying a round of ale. Just as one was showing, with his hands, how big one fish was that had gotten away, a waitress passed. His hand hit a glass of ale she was carrying on a tray and some of the dark brew spilled on the white wall of the pub. It began to run down.

The waitress hastily took a cloth from her apron and began to wipe, but the ale had left an ugly dark stain. At another table, a man rose and came over. He took a crayon from his pocket and as all in the pub watched, began to sketch around the stain. In a few moments, he had drawn the head of a magnificent stag with spreading antlers. Under his hand, the mistake had become a thing of beauty. The artist was Sir Edwin Landseer. At that time he was England's foremost painter of animals. - Bits and Pieces, November, 1991

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He Writes

He writes in characters too grand
For our short sight to understand;
We catch but broken strokes, and try
To fathom all the mystery

Of withered hopes, of death, of life,
The endless war, the useless strife—
But there, with larger, clearer sight,
We shall see this—His way was right.

John Oxenham, Source unknown

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Snoballs in Summer

Stanley Arnold was a man with million-dollar ideas. Peter Hay tells us about one of them in the Book of Business Anecdotes (Facts on File Publications, NYC and Oxford, England). Some years ago, Arnold was managing one of his father's 15 Pick-N-Pay stores in Cleveland, Ohio, when a blizzard hit town. The city was paralyzed, and all 15 stores were empty. Employees who had reported to work didn't have much to do—until Arnold came up with his idea. He had the employees make snowballs—7,900 of them. They he had the snowballs packed into grapefruit crates and transported to a deep-freeze facility. Then he asked the Weather Bureau when he could expect the hottest day of the year. They told him mid-July. Armed with this information, Arnold took a train to New York and went to see Charles Mortimer, then president of General Foods. He proposed a joint promotional sale of General Food's newly introduced Birds Eye frozen foods. The sale was to be held in mid-July, and young Mr. Arnold wanted General Foods to provide an array of prizes. The sale was to be called "A Blizzard of Values." As his contribution, Arnold proposed to give away snowballs. General Foods agreed to cooperate.

Summer came, and it turned out to be 100 degrees on the sale date. Police had to be called to control the crowds. During the five days of Pick-N-Pay's "Blizzard of Values," some 40,000 General Foods samples were given away, along with 7,900 grapefruit-sized snowballs. Thousands of customers were introduced to the new products, and the food industry discovered what excitement could do for sales. - Bits and Pieces, January, 1990, p. 17

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Braille

It was 1818 in France, and Louis, a boy of 9, was sitting in his father's workshop. The father was a harness-maker and the boy loved to watch his father work the leather. "Someday Father," said Louis, "I want to be a harness-maker, just like you."

"Why not start now?" said the father. He took a piece of leather and drew a design on it. "Now, my son," he said, "take the hole-puncher and a hammer and follow this design, but be careful that you don't hit your hand."

Excited, the boy began to work, but when he hit the hole-puncher, it flew out of his hand and pierced his eye! He lost the sight of that eye immediately. Later, sight in the other eye failed. Louis was now totally blind. A few years later, Louis was sitting in the family garden when a friend handed him a pine cone. As he ran his sensitive fingers over the cone, an idea came to him. He became enthusiastic and began to create an alphabet of raised dots on paper so that the blind could feel and interpret what was written.

Thus, Louis Braille opened up a whole new world for the blind—all because of an accident! - Bits and Pieces, June, 1990, pp. 23-4

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A Faithful Father

I trust him so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul, and he will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends me in this sad world. He is able to do this because he is almighty God; he desires to do this because he is a faithful Father. - The Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 26

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Boll Weevils

I once read about farmers in southern Alabama who were accustomed to planting one crop every year—cotton. They would plow as much ground as they could land plant their crop. Year after year they lived by cotton.

Then one year the dreaded boll weevil devastated the whole area. So the next year the farmers mortgaged their homes and planted cotton again, hoping for a good harvest. But as the cotton began to grow, the insect came back and destroyed the crop, wiping out most of the farms. The few who survived those two years of the boll weevil decided to experiment the third year, so they planted something they'd never planted before—peanuts. And peanuts proved so hardy and the market proved so ravenous for that product that the farmers who survived the first two years reaped profits that enabled them to pay off all their debts. They planted peanuts from then on and prospered greatly.

Then you know what those farmers did? They spent some of their new wealth to erect in the town square a monument—to the boll weevil. If it hadn't been for the boll weevil, they never would have discovered peanuts. They learned that even out of disaster there can be great delight.- Roger Thompson, Source unknown

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The Lighthouse

Auguste Bartholdi went from France to Egypt in 1856. He was awestruck by the grandeur of the pyramids, the magnitude of the mighty Nile, and the beauty of the stately Sphinx of the desert. His artistic mind was stimulated. While on this trip he met another visitor to Egypt, Ferdinand de Lesseps. Ferdinand was there to sell an idea. An idea to cut a canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea that would save merchant ships the long journey around the tip of the African continent.

Auguste was taken by the concept. He decided to design a lighthouse to stand at the entrance to this canal. It wouldn't be an ordinary lighthouse. It would symbolize the light of the Western civilization flowing to the East. It took 10 years to build the Suez Canal. For 10 years Auguste worked on his idea. He drew plans, made clay models. He scrapped plan after plan. Then he had the right one. It was the perfect design. Only one problem remained. Who would pay for it? He looked everywhere, but no one was interested. The Suez Canal was opened—without a lighthouse.

Auguste went back to France defeated. Ten years of toil and effort wasted. You would have liked his idea. It was a colossal robed lady that stood taller than the Sphinx in the desert. She held the books of justice in one hand and a torch lifted high in the other to light the entrance to the canal. After Auguste returned to France, the French government sought his artistic services. His planning and designing culminated in the Statue of Liberty lighting the New York harbor. His disappointment had turned to delight. - Joseph Stowell, Through The Fire, Victor Books, 1988, p. 48

Romans 8:29

UNBLEMISHED BEAUTY Whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. --

Romans 8:29

Women in nearly record numbers, we're told, were drawn in envy to the picture of a well-known movie actress on the cover of a popular magazine. She had been portrayed as possessing flawless beauty.

But the editors of another magazine published a follow-up story telling about a photo company that had billed the first magazine \$1,525 for their work on the picture "to clean up complexion, soften eye line, soften smile line, add color to lips, trim chin,... adjust color, and add hair on the top of the head." So however beautiful she actually is, she needed something--quite a little it seems--to hide the blemishes that would quickly destroy her image of "ideal loveliness."

What a picture of man's spiritual condition! Every one of us is flawed when compared with the moral excellence of Christ (Rom. 3:23)

. No matter how good we may appear, we need more than a religious touchup to conceal our sins. We desperately need the soul-cleansing, atoning blood of Jesus Christ. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, God gives us His flawless righteousness. From then on, He works within us by His Spirit to conform us to His likeness.

Are we making the unblemished beauty of Christlike character the daily goal of our life? VCG

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,
All His wonderful passion and purity;
O Thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine,
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.--Orsborn

The most beautiful people are those who remind us of Christ.

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:29

No Portrait - On a wall near the main entrance to the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, is a portrait with the following inscription:

"James Butler Bonham—no picture of him exists. This portrait is of his nephew, Major James Bonham, deceased, who greatly resembled his uncle. It is placed here by the family that people may know the appearance of the man who died for freedom."

No literal portrait of Jesus exists either. But the likeness of the Son who makes us free can be seen in the lives of His true followers.
- Bill Morgan, Source unknown

Romans 8:31 Click here

February 19 THINGS FOR AND AGAINST

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk

Romans 8:31

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

And so it was, for, as he could not travel quickly, the journey was prolonged, and he arrived at London some days later than had been expected. When they reached Highgate, they heard the bells ringing merrily in the city down below. They asked the meaning and were told, "Queen Mary is dead, and there will be no more burning of Protestants!"

"Ah," said Gilpin, "you see, it is all for the best." It is a blessing to break a leg if thereby a life is saved. How often our calamities are our preservatives!

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There is an opposite to this, and it belongs to some who are here: If God be against you, who can be for you? If you are an enemy to God, your very blessings are curses to you. Your pleasures are only the prelude to your pains. Whether you have adversity or prosperity, so long as God is against you, you can never truly prosper. Take half an hour this afternoon to think this over: If God be against me, what then? What will become of me in time and eternity? How shall I die? How shall I face him in the day of judgment? It is not an impossible "if" but an "if" which amounts to a certainty, I fear, in the case of many who are sitting in this house today.

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You may assume that those of us who are always before the public speaking of the blessed promises of God are never downcast or heartbroken. You are mistaken. We have been there, and perhaps we know how to say a word in season to any who are now going through similar experiences. With many enterprises on my hands, far too great for my own unaided strength, I am often driven to fall flat on this promise of my God, "I will never leave you nor forsake yo

u" (Heb. 13:5).

If I feel that any plan has been of my devising, or that I sought my own honor, then I know that the plan must rightly fail. But when I can prove that God has thrust it on me, that I am moved by a divine impulse and not my own feelings and wishes, then how can my God forsake me? How can He lie, however weak I may be? How is it possible for Him to send His servant to battle and not comfort him with reinforcements when the battle goes hard? God is not David when he put Uriah in the front lines and left him to die (2 Sam. 11:15). God will never desert any of His servants.

Dear brothers and sisters, if the Lord calls you to things you cannot do, He will give you the strength to do them. If He should push you still further, until your difficulties increase and your burdens become heavy, "as your days, so shall your strength be" (Deut. 33:25). You shall march with the indomitable spirit of those who have tried and trusted the naked arm of the Eternal God.

"I will never leave you nor forsake you." Then what is the trouble? Though all the world were against you, you could shake all the world as Samson shook the lion (Judg. 14:6).

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" Though earth, hell, and all their crew come against you, if the God of Jacob stands at your back, you will thresh them as though they were wheat and drive them as though they were chaff. Roll this promise under your tongue. It is a sweet food.

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:31-5

We Have an Intercessor - Sometimes we see people make professions of faith, come into the church, get excited about evangelism and other things, only to later renounce the faith. We wonder: Will this happen to us? A Christian is capable of a radical fall, but never of a total and final fall.

Consider Peter and Judas. Peter rejected Christ, as did Judas. Peter denied Christ, as did Judas. But Christ was praying for Peter, while Christ said that Judas was a son of perdition from the beginning. Judas was never truly converted, while Peter was. Thus, Peter returned to Christ after his season of sin and apostasy. Judas never did. Because Christ intercedes for us, we can have confidence that we also will never fully depart from Him. - Tabletalk, August 25, 1985

God's Preservation

What makes our regeneration permanent is not our perseverance, but God's preservation. Ultimately it is not how diligently we persevere, and persevere we must, but how well God preserves us in faith. - Tabletalk, August 14, 1989

Romans 8:31

On June 25, 1981, Eugene Lang returned to the elementary school he had attended 53 years earlier. Lang was a successful businessman by that time, a man worth millions, but the neighborhood he'd grown up in had changed drastically. East Harlem's children were poor, and the drop-out rate for the community schools were among the highest in the nation. As Lang made the standard, graduation-day speech about working hard, studying, and going to college, he noticed that hardly anyone was paying

attention. So that's when he changed his speech.

"This is your first graduation - just the perfect time to dream," he says. "Dream of what you want to be, the kind of life you wish to build. And believe in that dream. Be prepared to work for it. Always remember, each dream is important because it is your dream, it is your future. And it is worth working for."

"You must study," he continues. "You must learn. You must attend junior high school, high school, and then college." The words are empty, no one really believing that these kids will make it. The statistics, the history, argues against his speech. But he continues. "Stay in school and I'll ..." The speaker pauses, and then, as if suddenly inspired, he blurts out: "I will give each of you a college scholarship."

After a second of silence, a wave of emotional cheering and applause and excited conversation rolled over the room. It was the start of an amazing movement that has seen more than 12,000 students attend college with the help of more than 200 additional, generous sponsors.

In that first year of the promise, however, Lang did more than guarantee the money for 61 fidgety sixth-graders. He helped school administrators prepare the students for college, even hiring tutors for the students, giving them the very best chance at making their way to - and through - college.

To say the least, those sixth graders and their families found out that Eugene Lang was for them!

Doesn't it make a difference if you know someone is for you? Get ready for some great good news: God is for you!

Romans 8:32

February 3

He Freely Gives

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Romans 8:32

IF this is not a promise in form, it is in fact. Indeed, it is more than one promise, it is a conglomerate of promises. It is a mass of rubies and emeralds and diamonds, with a nugget of gold for their setting. It is a question which can never be answered so as to cause us any anxiety of heart. What can the Lord deny us after giving us Jesus? If we need all things in heaven and earth, He will grant them to us: for if there had been a limit anywhere, He would have kept back His own Son.

What do I want today? I have only to ask for it. I may seek earnestly, but not as if I had to use pressure and extort an unwilling gift from the Lord's hand; for He will give freely. Of His own will, He gave us His own Son. Certainly no one would have proposed such a gift to Him. No one would have ventured to ask for it. It would have been too presumptuous. He freely gave His Only Begotten; and, O my soul, canst thou not trust thy heavenly Father to give thee anything, to give thee everything? Thy poor prayer would have no force with Omnipotence if force were needed; but His love, like a spring, rises of itself and overflows for the supply of all thy needs.

Spurgeon, C. Faith's Checkbook

Romans 8:32

Cheese Sandwiches

Author Peter Kreeft tells the story of a poor European family who saved for years to buy tickets to sail to America. Once at sea, they carefully rationed the cheese and bread they had brought for the journey.

After 3 days, the boy complained to his father, "I hate cheese sandwiches. If I don't eat anything else before we get to America, I'm going to die." Giving the boy his last nickel, the father told him to go to the ship's galley and buy an ice-cream cone.

When the boy returned a long time later with a wide smile, his worried dad asked, "Where were you?"

"In the galley, eating three ice-cream cones and a steak dinner!"

"All that for a nickel?"

"Oh, no, the food is free," the boy replied. "It comes with the ticket."

Romans 8:34

He's Praying for Me

Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843), pioneer missionary to America, testified, "If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me!"

Our Daily Bread

Romans 8:34 "Who is he that condemneth?"

Why, Paul, Satan will bring thundering accusations against you. Are you not afraid?

"No," says he, "I can stop his mouth with this cry: 'It is Christ that died!' That will make him tremble, for he crushed the serpent's head in that victorious hour. And I can shut his mouth again: 'yea, rather, that is risen again,' for he took him captive on that day. And I will add, 'who sitteth at the right hand of God.' I can foil him with that, for he sits there to judge him and to condemn him forever. Once more I will appeal to his advocacy: 'Who maketh intercession for us.' I can stop his accusation with the perpetual care of Jesus for his people."—

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Romans 8:34 "It is Christ that died." If any confront you with other confidences, still keep to this almighty plea: "Christ has died." If one says, "I was christened and confirmed," answer him by saying, "Christ has died." Should another say, "I was baptized as an adult," let your confidence remain the same: "Christ has died." When another says, "I am a sound, orthodox Presbyterian," stick to this solid ground: "Christ has died." And if still another says, "I am a red-hot Methodist," answer him in the same way: "Christ has died." Whatever may be the confidences of others, and whatever may be your own, put them all away, and keep to this one declaration: "It is Christ that died."

C H Spurgeon

Romans 8:37 "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Jesus is the representative man for his people. The head has triumphed, and the members share in the victory. While a man's head is above the water you cannot drown his body.

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The diamonds of divine promises glisten brightly when placed in the setting of personal trials. I thank God that I have undergone fearful depression. I know the borders of despair and the horrible brink of that dark gulf into which my feet have almost gone. Because of this, I have been able to help brothers and sisters in the same condition. I believe that the Christian's darkest and most dreadful experiences will lead them to follow Christ and become fishers of men (Mark 1:17). Keep close to your Lord and He will make every step a blessing.

The Holy Scripture is full of narratives of trials. Your life will be as garnished with trials, like a rose is with thorns, but provision is made in the Word for Satan's assaults. Confidently believe that Scripture's wise plan is not in vain. You will have to battle the same spiritual foes that assailed and buffeted saints in days past, but spiritual armor will be your safeguard in times of attack (Eph. 6:11).

As the Spirit sanctifies us in spirit, soul, and body, we become more like the Master. We are conformed to Him not only in holiness and spirituality, but also in our experience of conflict, sorrow, agony, and triumph. Jesus was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). Now we are to be made like Him. The Savior's public life begins and ends with trials. It commences in the wilderness in a contest with Satan (Matt. 4:1), and it ends in Gethsemane in a dreadful battle with the powers of darkness (John 17). The gloom of the desert deepens into the midnight darkness of the cross to show that we also must begin and end our lives with trials.

If the Lord's victory was won on Golgotha in blood and wounds, surely our crown will not be won without wrestling and overcoming. We must fight if we would reign, and through the same conflicts that brought the Savior His crown, we will obtain the palm-branch of everlasting victory (Rev. 7:9).

Romans 8:38-39 "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life... "

Someone asked me the other day, "What persuasion are you of?" and the answer was, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—C H Spurgeon

ROMANS 9

[Click for illustrations/devotionals from Bible gateway](#)

[Click here for Our Daily Bread devotionals that relate to Romans 10](#) - some may already be archived on this page

[Romans 9:1-5](#)

[Romans 9:2](#)

[Romans 9:3](#)

Romans 9:12

Romans 9:1-8

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 9:1-8

[The gospel] is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. - Romans 1:16

TODAY IN THE WORD

One of the issues Christian theologians have wrestled with for generations is the question of where and how the nation of Israel fits into God's plan for the present and the future. The theology of this matters because it will help to shape our belief about Israel and the Jewish people, the nature of the church, and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Some theologians contend that Israel no longer has a place in God's plan. These people see the church as the 'new Israel' or 'spiritual Israel' that took the place of Old Testament Israel in God's program.

God worked through Israel in the old covenant, and now He's working through the church in the new covenant, believers of this argument maintain. Therefore, there is no reason to expect that God will bring Israel back onto the stage of divine history.

We believe, however, that to identify the church with Israel in this way clouds the clear teaching of Scripture concerning God's chosen people.

As we will see today and tomorrow, Paul teaches that instead of the church being the continuation of Israel, Israel was set aside temporarily because of unbelief so that God could bring forth a new entity called the body of Christ. Israel and the church retain their distinctive identities in the New Testament.

Romans 9-11 is a thorough treatment of Israel's past, present, and future in the unfolding of God's plan. We will touch on these elements today and tomorrow in an attempt to get a handle on what the Bible says about Israel.

It's pretty obvious from Paul's anguish over his unbelieving fellow Jews that he didn't think God was finished with the children of Israel. There is no argument that God chose Israel to be His representative people on earth, the human line through which His Son would come to earth. Paul listed Israel's spiritual privileges an impressive list (vv. 4-5).

Given all of this, then, how did Israel reject its Messiah, Jesus Christ, and wind up being rejected by God [a rejection, by the way, that was not total (Rom. 11:1-6)]? Paul's answer is that not all the physical descendants of Abraham are the true Israel, only those who receive and believe God's promise.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

We will be reminded tomorrow that God has not forgotten or abandoned His chosen people.

Paul had a great burden and desire for his fellow Jews to be saved. We can imitate his example by praying that the gospel will penetrate many Jewish hearts as God's people are drawn to their Messiah. The psalmist urged us, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem' (Ps. 122:6). Pray that God will enable His ancient people to find the peace that comes through faith in Christ.

Romans 9:1-5 What's It All About?

Read: Romans 9:1-5

I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh. —Romans 9:3

Recently I was in a crowded shopping area when I saw a woman plowing her way through the crowd. What intrigued me was the message on her T-shirt, which read in bold capital letters, IT'S ALL ABOUT ME. Her actions reinforced the words on her shirt.

I'm afraid she's not alone. That message is declared by so many men and women today that it could be the motto of our modern world. For followers of Christ, however, that statement simply is not true. It is not all about us—it's all about Jesus Christ and others.

The apostle Paul certainly felt the weight of this reality. He was so concerned that his fellow Israelites would know Christ that he said, "I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:3). That is a remarkable statement! Far from thinking it was all about himself, Paul affirmed that he would willingly exchange his eternity for theirs.

Paul's teaching is a refreshing reminder of self-sacrifice in a challenging world that is destructively self-centered. The question we must ask is: Is it all about me? Or is our life about Jesus Christ and the people He came to reach? -- [Bill Crowder](#)

Think about it. What's it all about?

Others, Lord, yes others,

May this my motto be.

Help me to live for others

That I may live for Thee. —Meigs

Our lives should be marked by love for Christ and others—not obsession with self.

Romans 9:3 "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren."

I have sometimes felt willing to go to the gates of hell to save a soul, but the Redeemer went further, for he suffered the wrath of God for souls.

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What would be the result, if we felt as Paul did? Likeness to Christ. After that manner he loved. He did become a curse for us (Gal. 3:13). He did enter under the awful shadow of Jehovah's wrath for us. He did what Paul could wish.—

C H Spurgeon

Romans 9:12, 9:13

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. (r.v.)

The apostle is dealing here, not with individuals as such, but with peoples and nations. For instance, Isaac stands for the entire Jewish race — Abraham's seed (Romans 9:7). He is dealing with the question, why it was that God chose Israel and rejected Edom; chose Jacob and rejected Esau: and he shows that the ultimate decision of their destinies lay in the purpose of God, according to election. The one was elect to be a channel of immense blessing to the world; whilst the other was rejected.

But we must always associate the Divine foreknowledge with the Divine choice. "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate." We must regard Jacob and Esau, not as individual personalities merely, but as the founders of nations. For God's purpose in the building-up of the chosen people, Jacob the methodical and far-seeing, was more suited than Esau the free-lance, the rover, the child of impulse and passion. And, besides, there were religious aptitudes and capacities within him, of which Esau gave no sign or trace. This does not solve the entire mystery, perhaps; but only casts it a degree or two further back. Still, it ought to be considered.

Like a candle, it casts a slender ray on to the black abyss. In any case, is it not certain that God's choice did alight on him who was most suited to serve the Divine purpose?

It may be that God is wanting to execute his pur. pose through you. Take heed. Still the savory dish steams on the desert air, and appeals to the appetite of our natures; and we are strongly tempted to forego the unseen and eternal for a moment's gratification. See to it that for one morsel of meat you do not sell your birthright.

Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily

Romans 9:15 "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

It is equally true that he wills to have mercy, and has already had mercy on every soul that repents of sin and puts its trust in Jesus.

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If there is one doctrine in the world which reveals the enmity of the human heart more than another, it is the doctrine of God's sovereignty. When men hear the Lord's voice saying, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," they gnash their teeth and call the preacher an Antinomian, a High Calvinist, or some other hard name. They do not love God except they can make him a little God. They cannot bear for him to be supreme. They would gladly take his will away from him and set up their own will as the first cause. - C H Spurgeon

Romans 9:17-18

Active or Passive Hardening - To understand this, we have to distinguish between active hardening and passive hardening. What we have in this verse is an example of God's punitive judgment against a wicked man. Pharaoh was already wicked. Pharaoh already had an evil heart, out of which came evil continually. Pharaoh delighted in doing evil. If Pharaoh ever did anything good at all, it was as a result of the constraining and restraining work of God's common grace.

One of the ways God punishes evil is to allow men to do what they really want, which is to become even more evil. As Paul puts it in Romans 1:24, 26, 28, God "gave them over" to the evil they want to do. God does this by withdrawing His restraint, which has the result of allowing men' hearts to harden against Him. Thus, God does not cause men to sin, nor does He make them bad. Rather, He simply lets them harden themselves, as a punishment for their wickedness. - R.C. Sproul, Tabletalk, August, 1989, p. 51

Romans 9:30-10:4

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 9:30-10:4; 11:25-32

The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. - Romans 11:26

TODAY IN THE WORD

Concerning the future of Israel in God's plan of the ages, Bible teacher John MacArthur writes, 'If in His sovereign grace [God] is now granting salvation to believing Gentiles, 'how much more' (Rom. 11:24) will He bring His covenant nation Israel back to Himself in belief?...God is not finished with His ancient chosen people, and even during this time when Jews as a nation are severed from God's special blessing because of unbelief, anti-Semitism in any form is anathema to the Lord.'

Dr. MacArthur's warning against arrogance or mistreatment toward the Jewish people echoes Paul's warning against conceit on the part of Gentile believers toward Israel. God has a future, a glorious future of salvation, for the nation which He redeemed from Egypt and made His own.

This is the message Paul wanted to communicate to the Christians at Rome. It's a message we need to remind ourselves of today, because God's salvation for Israel is still a future reality.

We have noted God's rejection of Israel as a nation for the sin of rejecting the righteousness offered by Messiah and going about to establish their own righteousness. But in Romans 11:25, we learn that Israel's unbelief is both partial and temporary. This 'hardening' of Israel is a 'mystery,' a truth that had been previously concealed but was now revealed.

The use of this term suggests that Israel's failure to receive its Messiah was more than just a matter of human unbelief. God sovereignly chose to set aside Israel so that He could show His mercy to the Gentile world.

But even though Israel has been temporarily set aside in God's plan, a day is coming when the Gentile body of Christ will be full. Then God will turn again to Israel.

Paul declares, in fact, that 'all Israel will be saved' (Ro 11:26). Does this mean that at some future point, every Israelite will be converted? Some Bible teachers believe so, placing this great event at the end of the Tribulation. Others believe the 'all' does not imply everyone, but the nation in general.

Whatever the case, God clearly has something special in store for His ancient people. He is not finished with Israel.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Paul leaves no doubt in Romans 9-11 that Gentile believers owe a great spiritual debt to the Jews. The roots of our faith are firmly grounded in the Old Testament.

One way we can help return the blessing is by praying for and supporting Christian ministries that specialize in witnessing to the Jews. Yesterday we prayed for the salvation of God's chosen people. Today, let's pray that believers will be faithful in taking the gospel to the Jewish people (Rom. 1:16).

ROMANS 10

[Click for illustrations/devotionals from Bible gateway](#)

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[Romans 10:1](#)

[Romans 10:1](#)

[Romans 10:1-13](#)

[Romans 10:9ff](#)

[Romans 10:9](#)

[Romans 10:9](#)

[Romans 10:9](#)

[Romans 10:11-15](#)

[Romans 10:12-13](#)

[Romans 10:13](#)

[Romans 10:13](#)

[Romans 10:13-17](#)

[Romans 10:14](#)

[Romans 10:14](#)

[Romans 10:14](#)

[Romans 10:14](#)

[Romans 10:15](#)

Romans 10:1-15

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 10:1-15

The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is the word of faith we are proclaiming. - Romans 10:8

Saint Francis of Assisi, a twelfth-century monk, was quoted as saying, "Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words." His words remind us of the importance of the congruence of our lives and our words. The principle of integrity is a biblical one (cf. 1 Corinthians 13), but we should not assume that words are never necessary when preaching the gospel.

Romans 10 explains the essence of the gospel as a message of truth that mandates words. The gospel message is described as the

“word of faith” (v. . The gospel demands more of us than that we live decently. As a word, it compels us first to believe, then to confess, and finally to proclaim.

The gospel comes to us as truth about Jesus, forcing us to choose what we will believe. Is Jesus Lord? Is He the Son of God? Or is He merely a good teacher and a moral man? Words are all we have for these distinctions, so a gospel that is merely “lived” and not spoken cannot fully convey this dimension of belief in the truth of the gospel.

When we believe the gospel, our next step is to confess the gospel. Becoming a Christian necessitates a time in our lives when we say aloud what it is that we've come to believe, both to our Christian community as well as the unbelieving world around us. This can happen initially through the act of obedience in baptism.

After we confess our faith in Christ and admit aloud who Jesus is and what He's done on our behalf, we continue to testify to Christ with words. Verses 14 and 15 explain clearly why we must do more than live good lives and hope that a lost world takes notice. There is no reconciled relationship to God without belief. To believe, one must hear. And to hear necessitates preaching, using words to share the truth about the Word.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Words matter. Some churches and individuals, in an effort to reclaim the importance of personal integrity in evangelism, have backed away from the importance of a verbal gospel witness. They seem to say that doing good and being kind will be sufficient evidence of Jesus. Paul would heartily disagree. Do you have a relationship with an unbeliever? Pray for the opportunity to share with your friend about who Jesus is and how he or she can know Him.

Romans 10:1 Heart Desire

Read: Romans 9:1-5

My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. —Romans 10:1

A Jewish leader was invited to speak at a gathering of Christians in the USA who were celebrating Israel's 50th anniversary. The rabbi saw Christians as friends of the Jews. He declared “We are safe in America not in spite of Christianity. We are safe... because of Christianity

This statement is a welcome rebuttal to the accusation that the Christian faith is anti-Semitic and even responsible for the death of 6 million Jews during World War II. It's true that some Christian leaders in Germany were guilty of anti-Semitism and cowardice, but they were not the ones who influenced Hitler. He was deeply affected by the writings of the bitterly atheistic philosopher Nietzsche, who hated the Christian faith and advocated the slaughter of the Jews.

Bible-believing Christians are to reflect the attitude of the apostle Paul, who had a deep love for his fellow Jews (Rom. 10:1). He longed for them to discover, as he had, that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Savior of people of all nations. Paul even said that he would be willing to be cursed by God if it would result in blessing and salvation for Jews (9:3).

Does your heart ache for the descendants of Abraham? They have a rich Old Testament heritage, but they need Jesus Christ. Pray for them today. -- [Herbert VanderLugt](#)

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone. —Havergal

Everyone needs to choose Jesus—even God's chosen people.

Romans 10:9 Click here

April 8 THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk.

Romans 10:9

A Sure Salvation

Read: Romans 10:8-15

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. — Romans 10:9

A story is told that Queen Victoria of the UK was deeply moved during a church service. Afterward, she asked her chaplain, "Can one be absolutely sure in this life of eternal safety?" He did not have an answer. But an evangelist named John Townsend heard about the Queen's question, and after much prayer he sent her a note: "With trembling hands, but heartfelt love, and because I know that we can be absolutely sure now of our eternal life in the Home that Jesus went to prepare, may I ask your Most Gracious Majesty to read the following passages of Scripture: John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10?"

Two weeks later, the evangelist received this letter: ". . . I have carefully and prayerfully read the portions of Scripture referred to. I believe in the finished work of Christ for me, and trust by God's grace to meet you in that Home of which He said, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' —Victoria Guelph"

Townsend was confident that in this life we can have assurance of eternal safety (v.9), and he had a concern for others as well. Consider what John 3:16 and Romans 10:9-10 mean for your eternal destiny. God desires to give you the confidence that your sin is forgiven and that after death you'll be with Him forever. -- Brent Hackett

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood. —Crosby

Lives rooted in God's unchanging grace can never be uprooted.

Romans 10:1-17 World Travelers

Read: Romans 10:1-17

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace! —Romans 10:15

In 1983 at age 16, an English girl began an 11-year trek around the world—on foot! Why did she do it? She said, "I had to discover myself."

In case you think you couldn't or wouldn't undertake such a journey, a podiatrist in Washington, D.C., informs us that we already have. He claims that the average person's feet travel more than four times the earth's circumference in a lifetime.

That's a lot of walking! But where are our feet taking us, and why?

In Romans 10, Paul wrote about the feet of those who carry the gospel wherever they go (v.15). He said that unless someone goes and tells others about Jesus, they will not hear and they will not be saved.

With that in mind, we can walk with a cause—not to discover ourselves but to help others discover Christ. For this reason, God enlists our feet, even calling them beautiful!

But what about people like Joni Eareckson Tada who can't walk? She testifies, "I've learned that you can be in a wheelchair and still walk with Jesus!" Yes, all believers can live for Jesus wherever they go. Our lives can be a shining testimony of the power and truth of the gospel.

Where will your feet be going today? How will you spread the good news about Christ? --[Joanie Yoder](#)

Help me to see the tragic plight
Of souls far off in sin;
Help me to love, to pray, and go
To bring the wandering in. —Harrison

Loving the lost is the first step in leading them to Christ.

Romans 10:1-13 The Highway To Heaven

Read: Romans 10:1-13

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. — Romans 10:9

Under the headline Car Lover Buried In Corvette, the newspaper column opened with: "If there is a highway to heaven, George Swanson may get to the Pearly Gates in style. He was buried in his white Corvette." His wife Carolyn said, "A lot of people say they want to take it with them. Well, he took it with him."

Yes, there's a highway to heaven, but you can't travel it in a Corvette after you die. You must get on this highway while you are alive, and you get on it by placing your trust in Jesus Christ.

In Romans 10:1-13, Paul declared that the road to heaven is not difficult to find nor to access. It is right in front of us in the Word of God. Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). He died for our sins, broke the power of death by His resurrection, lives in heaven as our Advocate and Intercessor, and places on the highway to heaven all who trust Him as their Savior and Lord.

Whether or not you're buried in a Corvette makes no difference. The highway to heaven starts on this side of death, and the entrance is easy to find. The Bible says, "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Are you on the right road? -- [Herbert VanderLugt](#)

There aren't many ways into heaven;
God's Word says there is only one:
Confessing Christ Jesus as Savior,
Believing in God's only Son. —Sper

To get to heaven, you must go by the way of the Cross.

Romans 10:9

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, etc. (r.v.)

Salvation here is evidently to be taken in its most extended meaning. It stands even more for the deliverance of the soul from the love and dominion of sin than for the removal of its justly incurred penalty. That we should be pure in heart, holy in thought, consecrated in life, with all the range of our nature controlled by his indwelling Spirit — such is the Divine intention with respect to us, as suggested by this deep, great word Salvation. But there are two conditions, on our compliance with which this saving power is realized.

We must confess Jesus as Lord. — Throughout Scripture there is a close connection between Christ's Royalty and his Saviorship. "Behold, thy King cometh to thee, ... having salvation;" "Him hath God set forth to be a Prince and a Savior." "Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, ... made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." We shall never know Christ as a Savior from inbred sin until we have definitely and absolutely enthroned Him in our hearts. A physician is not content with healing outbreaks of disease and fever when they occur; but claims leave to examine all the arrangements of the house, so as to deal with the sources of the mischief.

We must also steadfastly believe in the Resurrection. — The risen Lord, sitting at the right hand of God, in all the vigour of an indissoluble life: still working in the world, and energising the hearts of his own entering to indwell, to fill, to unite with his own eternal life — such is the vision offered to our faith. Let us look away to Him with a persistent, unwavering gaze, until sin ceases to attract us, and Satan finds a Stronger in possession.

Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily Vol. 5

Romans 10:9

Mouth Confession, Heart Belief

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—Romans 10:9

THERE must be confession with the mouth. Have I made it? Have I openly avowed my faith in Jesus as the Savior whom God has raised from the dead, and have I done it in God's way? Let me honestly answer this question.

There must also be belief with the heart. Do I sincerely believe in the risen Lord Jesus? Do I trust in Him as my sole hope of salvation? Is this trust from my heart? Let me answer as before God.

If I can truly claim that I have both confessed Christ and believed in him, then I am saved. The text does not say it may be so, but it is plain as a pikestaff and clear as the sun in the heavens: "Thou shalt be saved." As a believer and a confessor, I may lay my hand on this promise and plead it before the Lord God at this moment, and throughout life, and in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment.

I must be saved from the guilt of sin, the power of sin, the punishment of sin, and ultimately from the very being of sin. God hath said it: "Thou shalt be saved." I believe it. I shall be saved: I am saved. Glory be to God for ever and ever!

Spurgeon, C. Faith's Checkbook

Romans 10:9-10 - Robert Haldane on Genuine Faith - A person becomes righteous by believing God's record concerning His Son. But the evidence that this faith is genuine is found in the open confession of the Lord with the mouth. "Confession of Christ is as necessary as faith in Him, but necessary for a different purpose. Faith is necessary to obtain the gift of righteousness. Confession is necessary to prove that this gift is received. In saying, then, that confession is made unto salvation, the apostle does not mean that it is the cause of salvation, or that without it the title to salvation is incomplete. When a person believes in his heart, he is justified. But confession of Christ is in effect of faith, and will be evidence of it at the last day. Faith which interests the sinner in the righteousness of Christ is manifested by the confession of His name in the face of danger.

Romans 10:13 "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

I have often thought that if I had read in Scripture that "if Charles Haddon Spurgeon shall call upon the name of the Lord, he shall be saved," I would not have felt as sure of salvation as I do now, because I would have concluded that there might have been somebody else of that name, and I would have said, "Surely it did not mean me." But when the Lord says, "Whosoever," I cannot get out of that circle! -- C H Spurgeon

Romans 10:13 Change Your Name

Read: Acts 3:1-16

Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. —Romans 10:13

Names are important. Parents may spend months researching and deciding on the perfect name for their baby. Often their final decision is based on its sound, uniqueness, or meaning.

One woman took on a new name because she disliked her original name. She mistakenly believed that changing it could alter her destiny. That's not likely, but for those who trust in Jesus as their Savior and are identified by His name from that time on, a radical transformation does take place.

There is a powerful significance attached to the name of Jesus. The apostles performed miracles (Acts 3:6-7,16; 4:10) and cast out demons in His name (Luke 10:17). They spoke and taught in the name of Jesus. They baptized believers in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38). And it is only through the name of Jesus that we gain access to the Father (Acts 4:12).

When we become Christians, we share in that worthy name. And as we follow Christ, we are able to reflect His light to any darkness we encounter, whether in our neighborhood, our workplace, or even our home. Our prayer should be that when people see us—they will see Christ.

Our names may have meaning or significance. But to bear the name Christian is life-transforming. -[Cindy Hess Kasper](#)

Lord of my life, henceforth I bear
The name of Christian everywhere;
Therefore, O Christ, my spirit claim,
And make me worthy of Your name. —Freeman

The name of Jesus is the only name with the power to transform.

Romans 10:13-17 A Personal Gospel

Read: Romans 10:13-17

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. —Mark 16:15

In John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world.” But what about His love for individuals? The rest of the verse reveals the central purpose behind God’s sacrifice of His Son: “That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Therefore, without exception, every person may interpret John 3:16 like this: “For God so loved me!”

A. B. Simpson, a great missionary of the past, often hugged a globe to his chest and wept over the world’s lostness. Yet his global vision was marked by compassion for individuals. You and I also must feel the responsibility to take the gospel to our world—by sharing the good news with one person at a time.

Unfortunately, we often think of the Great Commission in terms of “foreign missions” only. “World missions” is perhaps a better term, for that includes our nearest neighbors, who are part of the world to which God has called us. And we are already there!

Like A. B. Simpson, embrace your smaller world through earnest prayer as you consider lost individuals in your family, neighborhood, and workplace. Then, as you seek to live and give the good news, expect God to open doors of opportunity. -- [Joanie Yoder](#)

Jesus died to bring salvation
For the rich and for the poor;
Those of every tribe and nation—
He includes the ones next door. —Anon.

The light that shines farthest, shines brightest at home.

Romans 10:1-15 - No Greater Mission

Read: Romans 10:1-15

Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. —Romans 10:13

Medtronic was one of the fastest growing medical technology companies in the USA during the 1990s. By all measurements—stock prices, revenue increases, and earnings per share—it has been thriving.

In an article for World Traveler magazine, CEO Art Collins is quoted as saying, “With a mission statement that it strives to ‘alleviate pain, restore health, and extend life,’ Medtronic transcends the paramount objective of making money. . . . While we track a number of measurement criteria for success, the single most important one is the fact that every 12 seconds the life of someone is improved by one of our products or therapies.”

Followers of Christ have a similar mission. We have a life-transforming message to proclaim to those who need to hear it (Romans 10:9-15).

Every day, people all over the world are being saved from sin and its consequences through faith in the Lord Jesus. Our mission as His followers is to be messengers who “preach the gospel of peace” (v.15), telling others about the Savior, Jesus Christ. There is no more worthy mission, for “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (v.13).

Are you doing your part to fulfill this mission? -- [David Egner](#)

Thinking It Over
Why do we tend to lose sight of our mission? If we
were to consistently embrace it, how would
it affect our prayers, our words, and our actions?

There's no better news than the gospel—spread the Word!

Romans 10:14

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Acts 8:26-40

How can they believe in the one of whom they have never heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching? - Romans

We have entered a new age for sharing personal information. It's the Internet generation of YouTube, personal blogs, and MySpace. Through GPS tracking devices implanted in our cell phones, we can even share our personal location at any time and place with anyone around the world.

As Christians, we should have a greater urgency to share about Christ rather than share about ourselves. The gospel is good news to be shared. Following the martyrdom of Stephen (cf. Acts 7) and the ensuing persecution of Christians, the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, giving them even greater opportunity to bear witness to Jesus (cf. Acts 1:). Here, the Spirit gave Philip a general direction in which to head. And as he obeyed, the Spirit spoke again, this time leading him to a particular chariot.

Notice who is the primary agent of the action in this passage. The passage gives no credit to Philip. Instead, it emphasizes the work of the invisible God, who, behind the scenes, brings the gospel to the lost. It is the Spirit who guided Philip so that he could tell the good news. It is this same Spirit who had, in advance, prepared the heart of this Ethiopian man, himself a converted Jew, a God-fearer returning from his religious pilgrimage. He was hungry for God's Word, even reading it aloud on his way. And providentially, the passage Philip overheard him reading was a prophetic passage about Jesus, explaining the circumstances of His death. The man was ripe to hear and to respond to the gospel.

The gospel is a compelling message. Obedience, such as the Ethiopian's baptism, is a sign that the gospel has taken root in someone's heart. Proclamation of that good news quickly follows, for the gospel makes each of us a missionary. Led by the Spirit of God, we seize the God-designed opportunities we find.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Evangelism isn't always as difficult as we imagine. We picture ourselves confronting hostile people with the gospel. And sometimes there are difficult audiences. Paul's life testifies to that. But often, God has been preparing someone to hear His Word, and our job is made relatively easy. Just like Philip, we start with the questions someone is already asking and answer them with the wisdom found in the Scriptures. Where is God at work in the lives of people around you?

Romans 10:11-15 Where Have You Been?

Read: Romans 10:11-15

How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? —Romans 10:14

Missionary Egerton Ryerson Young served the Salteaux tribe in Canada in the 1700s. The chief of the tribe thanked Young for bringing the good news of Christ to them, noting that he was hearing it for the first time in his old age. Since he knew that God was Young's heavenly Father, the chief asked, "Does that mean He is my Father too?" When the missionary answered, "Yes," the crowd that had gathered around burst into cheers.

The chief was not finished, however. "Well," said the chief, "I do not want to be rude, but it does seem to me . . . that it took a long time for you to . . . tell it to your brother in the woods." It was a remark that Young never forgot.

Many times I've been frustrated by the zigs and zags of my life, thinking of the people I could reach if only. Then God reminds me to look around right where I am, and I discover many who have never heard of Jesus. In that moment, I'm reminded that I have a story to tell wherever I go, "for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved' " (Rom. 10:12-13).

Remember, we don't have just any story to tell—it's the best story that has ever been told. -[Randy Kilgore](#)

I love to tell the story,
For some have never heard
The message of salvation
From God's own holy Word. —Hankey

Sharing the good news is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

INSIGHT: In Romans 9–11, Paul explained why so many Jews had not believed in Jesus: "They don't understand God's way of making people right with himself. Refusing to accept God's way, they cling to their own way of getting right with God by trying to keep the law" (10:3 nlt). Paul reiterated God's way of salvation: "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (v.9). Quoting Isaiah 28:16, Paul assured his readers that those who trust

in Jesus “will not be put to shame” (v.11). To encourage his readers to evangelize, Paul commended them: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace” (v.15).

Romans 10:13 No Excuses

Read: Romans 10:1-13

Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. —Romans 10:13

People have many different reasons for rejecting the gospel. A common one is to blame Christians for something they did or did not do. These critics say, “I know a Christian who treated me poorly.” Or, “I went to church, and no one talked to me.”

Indeed, Christians aren’t perfect, and many can be bad examples. But blaming others doesn’t remove one’s accountability to God.

The truth of the gospel does not depend on the way others live out their faith. Salvation is about Jesus alone. Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Some people may use Christians as an excuse to reject the gospel. But they certainly can’t point a finger of blame at Jesus. He is sinless and perfect in every way. Pilate said of Him, “I have found no fault in this Man” (Luke 23:14). And Jesus did what no one else could do—He suffered death on a cross to provide salvation for all who believe in Him. That makes it tough for someone to say, “I’m not going to become a Christian because I don’t like what Jesus did.”

Don’t get sidetracked by looking at the faults of others. Look to Jesus. He alone is the way to heaven. --[Dave Branon](#)

He is the Way, the Truth, the Life—
That One whose name is Jesus;
There is no other name on earth
That has the power to save us. —Sper

There is no excuse for saying "No" to Christ.

Romans 10:14 The Deaf Hear

Read: Romans 10:1-14

How shall they hear without a preacher? —Romans 10:14

When Thomas Gallaudet graduated from seminary in 1814, he had planned on becoming a preacher. However, his call to the ministry took a different turn when he met Alice, a 9-year-old, hearing-impaired girl in his neighborhood. Gallaudet began to communicate with her by writing words with a stick in the dirt.

Helping Alice motivated him to help others too. After consulting with European and American experts in educating the deaf, he refined a system widely known today as “signing” (a person’s hands spell out the message). Eventually, he established the American School for the Deaf.

Gallaudet’s school for the hearing-impaired contained a Christian curriculum that shared the gospel and included Bible instruction. He had answered the call to preach—but it was to a very special group of people. Signing was the way he communicated the gospel.

Like Gallaudet, we too should be sharing the Word of God with people in ways they can understand. Otherwise, “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14). How might God want you to reach out to those around you? -- [Dennis Fisher](#)

Seeking the lost, and pointing to Jesus,
Souls that are weak and hearts that are sore;
Leading them forth in ways of salvation,
Showing the path to life evermore. —Ogden

Don’t withhold from the world the best news that’s ever come to it.

Romans 10:14-18 Beautiful Feet

Read: Romans 10:14-18

How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? —Romans 10:14

Recently, I met the man who introduced me to Jesus 35 years ago. Warren Wiersbe, former pastor of Moody Church in Chicago and Bible teacher for the Back to the Bible ministry, had preached the gospel at a Bible conference in 1972. It was the first time I heard the good news of God's love for me as shown in Jesus' death on the cross. The Spirit opened my eyes and heart that night, and I received Jesus Christ as my Savior (John 1:12).

We praise the Lord for people like Warren Wiersbe who faithfully preach the gospel and introduce others to Christ. According to the apostle Paul, they have beautiful feet: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).

But spreading the gospel isn't just the responsibility of Bible teachers and pastors. All who know Jesus can share on a personal level with friends, co-workers, family members, and strangers. It's our privilege and duty. Otherwise, how will people "believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (v.14).

Let's make our feet beautiful by bringing the good news of Jesus to others. --[Anne Cetas](#)

Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet to lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongue to tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help to bring them to His side. —Flint

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news! —Isaiah 52:7

Romans 10:14-21 The Runner

Read: Romans 10:14-21

How beautiful . . . are the feet of him who brings good news. —Isaiah 52:7

In Old Testament times, there was no instant way of getting news. No television programs could be interrupted to announce that a coup had overthrown a government somewhere. No e-mails conveyed information instantly from the Chief of Staff to his Field Marshal. There was no CNN or Associated Press.

So, if an army was fighting a battle, the news of the outcome was sent to the homeland by a runner. The people of the city knew a battle was being fought, so they lined the city walls, eagerly awaiting the news of their army's defeat or victory.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we have the marvelous news of a victory to share. We can report that the battle for our souls was won by Christ on Calvary when He gave His life for us (Matthew 27:45-50; Romans 6:23). We have the proof: God raised Him from the dead in triumph (Matthew 28:1-10). Now we can proclaim the good news of the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life in heaven with the Father. This is assured for those who trust in Jesus, His Son (John 3:16; Ephesians 1:7).

As we tell the good news to others, let it be with the joy of victory in our hearts, and with feet that are "beautiful" because of the glorious message we bear. -- [David Egner](#)

Go to the lost, in the home, in the mart,
Waiting no longer, today make a start;
Tell them of Jesus who died in their place,
Share the good news of salvation by grace. —Bosch

The next person you meet may need to meet Jesus.

Romans 10:15

TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 10:9-15

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news! - Romans 10:15

William Carey, pioneer missionary to India, is often called the "Father of Modern Missions." When he first headed overseas, there was little support for cross-cultural evangelism, and virtually no independent mission agencies.

Indeed, when Carey first presented his ideas in 1786 to a gathering of Baptist ministers in England, he was ridiculed. It was widely believed that the Great Commission had been carried out by the apostles and that the modern church was not responsible to take the gospel to the whole world.

In response, Carey wrote a classic treatise on missions, including biblical arguments, a historical overview, global demographic statistics, answers to practical objections, and an outline of a strategic plan to reach the world. This included many elements we now consider standard, such as prayer support, finances, and training for recruits.

Sending is the key to the spread of the gospel. Whereas the Great Commission readings give a command to be obeyed, in today's passage Paul asks a rhetorical question that traces a chain of causes back to our "sentness."

The goal of missions is to see people saved, in the fullest sense of that word. What does this involve (vv. 9–13)? Inward belief of the heart, by which comes justification, and outward confession of Christ's lordship. The focus here is the historical fact of the Resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12–17).

How is this goal reached (Romans 10:4–15)? To call on the name of the Lord, people must first believe. Belief is impossible unless they've heard the gospel message. They can't hear the message unless there is someone to preach it to them. And there will be no one to do that unless they're sent! If any link in this chain breaks, missions does not happen. No wonder those feet (cf. Isa. 52:7) are so beautiful!

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Christian songwriter Twila Paris has turned today's verse into a well-known praise chorus, "How Beautiful." As part of your devotional time today, sing this melody before the Lord as a reminder of the mission He has given to every Christian.

ROMANS 11

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[Romans 11:33](#)

[Romans 11:26-36](#)

[Romans 11:33](#)

[Romans 11:33-36](#)

Romans 11:5 Tree Of Rest

Read: Ezra 9:5-9 | Bible in a Year: 1 Kings 12-13; Luke 22:1-20

There is a remnant according to the election of grace. —Romans 11:5

The lone tree in the field across from my office remained a mystery. Acres of trees had been cut down so the farmer could grow corn. But one tree remained standing, its branches reaching up and spreading out. The mystery was solved when I learned the tree was spared for a purpose. Farmers long ago traditionally left one tree standing so that they and their animals would have a cool place to rest when the hot summer sun was beating down.

At times we find that we alone have survived something, and we don't know why. Soldiers coming home from combat and patients who've survived a life-threatening illness struggle to know why they survived when others did not.

The Old Testament speaks of a remnant of Israelites whom God spared when the nation was sent into exile. The remnant preserved God's law and later rebuilt the temple (Ezra 9:9). The apostle Paul referred to himself as part of the remnant of God (Rom. 11:1,5). He was spared to become God's messenger to Gentiles (v.13).

If we stand where others have fallen, it's to raise our hands to heaven in praise and to spread our arms as shade for the weary. The Lord enables us to be a tree of rest for others. -- [Julie Ackerman Link](#)

Thank You, Father, that You are my place of rest.

And that all You have brought me through
can be used by You to encourage others.
Bring praise to Yourself through me.

Hope can be ignited by a spark of encouragement.

INSIGHT: In the midst of the joy of God's grace in allowing a remnant to return to their homeland, Ezra mourned. He mourned because the people of Israel were not only physically distant from God, but spiritually distant as well. Yet God in His grace did more than enable the physical return of the remnant; He also preserved a spiritual remnant. Upon hearing the law of God, the people recommitted themselves to Him (Ezra 10:1-4).

Romans 11:11-24

Re: TODAY IN THE WORD

Read: Romans 11:11-24

If the root is holy, so are the branches. - Romans 11:16

In horticulture, successfully grafting, cutting, and securing the branch of one plant into a different type of plant results in several advantages. Most significantly, the new plant can adopt a root system to survive in otherwise threatening soil.

But the differences between plants is also the largest obstacle to a successful graft. Plants that aren't closely related can seldom form a successful union.

Paul uses the idea of grafting to describe the relationship of Jews and Gentiles, a combination his readers might have considered destined to fail. The Jews are a cultivated olive tree, carefully tended and pruned for centuries; the Gentiles are wild olive branches, grafted in to this older tree and sharing its root, trunk, and sap. The holy roots symbolize the promises God made to the Jewish patriarchs, the founders of the faith; the branches symbolize the Jewish people. Thus, from the Jews, Gentiles gain stability, nourishment, and a religious heritage (v. 17). The whole tree, wild and cultivated, represents the unified people of God growing through history.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul uses this image to rebuke Christians for their arrogance in regarding themselves as more privileged than the Jews in God's eyes (v. 19). While it's true that individual Jews have been cut off, it's not by virtue of being Jewish, but because of "unbelief." Faith in Christ is the criterion for inclusion in the tree. Reminding the Romans of God's impartial mercy and judgment, Paul exhorts them to "continue in his kindness," lest they too be cut off. Moreover, believing Jews will be grafted on more easily, since they properly belong to the tree (v. 24).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well, "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). Today, let us remember the Jewish people. Pray for the in-grafting of the Jews into the tree of God's people. Pray that God would show mercy in awakening them to faith in Jesus the Messiah. Ask God to continually empower the work of such Jewish-Christian organizations as Jews for Jesus or the Messianic Jews, and give thanks for His merciful inclusion of the Gentiles in His work of redemption.

Romans 11:34

Less Complicated Design

Alfonso X, the king of Castile and Leon known as "Alfonso the Wise," was particularly famous for his patronage of the arts and sciences. The most celebrated work done under Alfonso's sponsorship was the compilation of the "Alfonsine Tables," which were published on the day of his ascension to the throne and remained the most authoritative planetary tables in existence for three centuries. The preparation of the tables was very laborious, and Alfonso remarked that if God had consulted him during the six days of creation, he would have recommended a less complicated design. (Today in the Word)

Romans 11:36

Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.

This verse reminds us of those lagoons of perfectly still clear water, of which travellers tell. So clear, that it is easily possible to look

into their translucent depths to where the submarine foliage waves! So deep, that the ordinary measuring line fails to plumb them! All these words are monosyllables. A child just learning to read could easily spell them out. But who shall exhaust their meaning?

Of Him. — The entire scheme of redemption; the marvellous history of the chosen people, with which this chapter is occupied; the universe of matter, all are included in the all things that have emanated out of God. No one has been his counsellor, or given aught to Him. From all created things, which are as the stream, let us climb to Him, who is their fountain, source, and origin; and in Him let us learn to fill our own souls to the very brim.

Through Him. — Through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, God has poured the entire grace and wealth of his nature to bless and help us. There is no good thing that does not come to us through the mediator, of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Through Him He made the worlds. Through Him we have received the reconciliation. Through Him, also, all grace is made to abound towards us. Never forget to magnify the Lord Jesus as the source of all your supply.

To Him. — Creation, Providence, Redemption, are all tending back to God. The tide is setting in towards the throne. A revenue of glory shall ye accrue from all that has happened within the parenthesis of time. Every whit in the great temple shall one day say "Glory!" Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily Vol. 5

Romans 11:33-36 Wow!

Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? —Exodus 15:11

One blustery day in June, our family, holidaying in the Canadian Rockies, went to a tourist site that was billed as a "must see." The cold wind made me reluctant to go on until I saw a group of people returning from the scenic spot. "Is it worth it?" I asked. "Definitely!" was their response. That gave us the incentive to go on. When we finally reached the spot, its beauty rendered us virtually speechless. "Wow!" was all we could manage.

Paul reached that point as he wrote about the work of God in saving Jew and Gentile in the book of Romans. Three things about God "wowed" him.

First, God is all-wise (11:33). His perfect plan of salvation shows that He has far better solutions to the problems of life than we are capable of devising.

Second, God is all-knowing. His knowledge is infinite. He needs no counselor (v.34) and nothing surprises Him!

Third, God is all-sufficient (v.35). No one can give to God what He has not first given to them. Nor can anyone ever repay Him for His goodness.

We can say with Moses, "Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" (Ex. 15:11 ESV). What a marvelous God we serve! -- [C. P. Hia](#)

By God's grace I stand on tiptoe,
Viewing all His wonders grand,
Praising Him who freely gave me
Simple faith to understand!
—Bosch

In God's character and in His creation, we see His majesty.

Romans 11:33 God's Ways

Read: 1 Kings 17:1-16

How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! —Romans 11:33

After Elijah had experienced some especially trying times, the Lord told him to flee to Zarephath where he could find food and shelter. Imagine Elijah's surprise when he discovered that the widow who was to provide for him was extremely poor! In fact, she expected that she and her son would soon die of starvation.

How often God delights to astonish us by the wonder of His ways! Our limited understanding of Him can be likened to a fly crawling on one of the great pillars of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. What does that tiny insect know about the architect's magnificent design? It sees only the little space of stone on which it moves. The beautiful carvings and ornamental work seem like towering mountains and deep valleys that only impede progress and obscure the view.

We as Christians often see only our immediate circumstances and perceive but a glimmer of God's marvelous purpose. The obstacles that block our vision and get in the way of our plans are actually part of the beautiful designs of divine grace.

Our heavenly Father knows exactly what He is doing. Although His ways are unsearchable, He assures us that all will work out for our good if we trust Him. -- [Henry G. Bosch](#)

God's ways and judgments baffle those
Who do not see His perfect plan;
But those who trust His saving grace,
With wonder all His actions scan! —HGB

God may conceal the purpose of His ways, but His ways are not without purpose.

Romans 11:33 GodAware

Read: Psalm 139:1-10

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! —Romans 11:33

On the FlightAware website, Kathy checked the progress of the small plane her husband Chuck was piloting to Chicago. With a few clicks, she could track when he took off, where his flight was at any moment, and exactly when he would land. A few decades earlier when Chuck was a pilot in West Africa, Kathy's only contact had been a high-frequency radio. She recalls one occasion when 3 days had passed before she was able to reach him. She had no way of knowing that he was safe but unable to fly because the airplane had been damaged.

But God was always aware of exactly where Chuck was and what he was doing, just as He is with us (Job 34:21). Nothing is hidden from His sight (Heb. 4:13). He knows our thoughts and our words (1 Chron. 28:9; Ps. 139:4). And He knows what will happen in the future (Isa. 46:10).

God knows everything (1 John 3:20), and He knows you and me intimately (Ps. 139:1-10). He is aware of each temptation, each broken heart, each illness, each worry, each sorrow we face.

What a comfort to experience care from the One of whom it is said, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom. 11:33). --[Cindy Hess Kasper](#)

Beneath His watchful eye
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard His children well. —Doddridge

We can trust our all-knowing God.

Romans 11:36 That Is Mine!

Read: Ezekiel 29:1-9

I am the Lord; that is My name. —Isaiah 42:8

The Nile of Africa, which spans 6,650 kilometers (more than 4,100 miles) and flows northward across several northeastern African countries, is the world's longest river. Over the centuries, the Nile has provided sustenance and livelihood for millions of citizens in the countries it passes through. Currently, Ethiopia is building what will become Africa's largest hydro-power dam on the Nile. It will be a great resource for the area.

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, claimed to be the Nile's owner and originator. He and all Egypt boasted, "My River is my own; I have made it for myself" (Ezek. 29:3,9). They failed to acknowledge that God alone provides natural resources. As a result, God promised to punish the nation (Ezek 29:8-9).

We are to care for God's creation, and not forget that everything we have comes from the Lord. Romans 11:36 says, "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever." He is the One who also endows humanity with the ability to manufacture and invent man-made resources. Whenever we talk about a good thing that has come to us or that we have accomplished, we need to remember what God says in Isaiah 42:8, "I am the Lord; that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another."

Praise the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does such wonderful things. Praise Your glorious name forever! Let the whole earth be filled with Your glory.

To God be the glory—great things He has done! -[Lawrence Darmani](#)

INSIGHT: The psalmist says, “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” (Ps. 24:1 NIV). Ezekiel underscores this point to the Pharaoh of Egypt. Pharaoh claimed to have created the Nile (Ezek. 29:3), but Ezekiel shows that God is angry with Pharaoh’s arrogant claim. God is the true Creator and He controls the beasts of the field and the fish of the sea (Ezek 29:3-5).

Romans 11:26-36 Unanswered Prayer

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways. —Isaiah 55:9

The apostle Paul had one overriding desire: that fellow Jews would embrace the Messiah he had encountered. “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart,” he said. “For I could wish that I myself were . . . cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers” (Rom. 9:2-3 NIV). Yet in city after city his fellow Jews rejected him and the Christ he preached.

In his most elegant letter, Paul set as his centerpiece (Rom. 9–11) a passionate passage in which he struggled openly with this great unanswered prayer of his life. He acknowledged one important side benefit of this distressing development: The Jews’ rejection of Jesus led to His acceptance by the Gentiles. Paul concluded that God hadn’t rejected the Jews; to the contrary, they had the same opportunity as Gentiles. God had widened, not closed, the embrace of humanity.

Paul’s prose began to soar as he stepped back to consider the big picture. And then came this burst of doxology:

Oh, the depth of the riches
both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments
and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:33).

The unsolved mysteries and unanswered prayers all fade to gray against the panorama of God’s plan for the ages. -[Philip Yancey](#)

In the end, unanswered prayer brings me face to face with the mystery that silenced Paul: the profound difference between my perspective and God’s.

Prayer imparts the power to walk and not faint. —Chambers