

# Welcome to the Study Of Romans

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you, Greg and Marty. It's a blessing to be with you and the boys, Caleb and Nathan.! Thank you very much for allowing me to come back. And thank you that you returned from last week.

And I'm looking forward to spending a little bit of time with you. He asked if I would come for a couple of Sundays and talk with you about a study in Romans. And so I thought that this would be a great opportunity to be able to do that.

And so I would like to do that with you today. But to introduce this, I would like you to take your scriptures, if you will, and let's read together from Romans chapter 8.

If you wouldn't mind doing that, turn it over in your biblical text to Romans chapter 8. And I'd like to spend just the first few moments just reading the first 14 verses of Romans 8, which we will talk about in just a few minutes.

I have with me the Legacy Standard Bible. And so it's fairly close to the ESV, but there might be a change of a few words in there. So Romans 8 says this, Therefore, there is now no...

[ 1 : 08 ] What's the next word? Condemnation. Okay? No condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Interesting in that verse that in the Greek text there's no verb.

It's called a verbless clause. And whenever there is a... And some of your translations probably have there is in italics because it's not there.

So when you look at your text, it begins, Therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

This is a very important way to emphasize things with the biblical writers. Biblical writers didn't have different font size.

Biblical writers didn't have italics and bold or different colors. If you were to look at my notes here today, I don't know if you can see it from where you are, But you see I have different colors that are on here.

[ 2 : 08 ] And my font's 14.14, you know, for me. So something happens when you hit close to 70. I'm not 70 yet, but close to 70. It's interesting, we had yesterday at our house, we had our 52nd high school graduation celebration at my house yesterday.

And it's great because I'm not quite 70, but there were a lot of kids, people, who are 70. So it was really wonderful.

It was really wonderful. But when I look at this text, I want to emphasize for you what the writer of the text is emphasizing.

His idea is, Therefore now. No condemnation. To those in Christ Jesus.

That little phrase, in Christ Jesus. Look at verse 2, it's going to come up again. For, or because. Why is there no condemnation? Because the law of the Spirit of life, the rule, the authority of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, for everyone who is in Christ Jesus, has been set free from the rule, the authority of sin and death.

[ 3 : 33 ] Verse 3. For, what the law could not do. You don't often see that phrase in the New Testament. What Torah could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did.

By sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh.

So that, the righteous requirement of the law, might be fulfilled in us. Not by us, but in us, those who walk according, not according to flesh, but according to the Spirit.

For those who are according to the flesh, set their minds on things of the flesh, but those according to the Spirit, set their mind on things of the Spirit. The mind set on the flesh, death.

The mind set on the Spirit, life and peace. Because, the mind set on the flesh is at enmity with God, it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it's not even able to do this.

[ 4 : 47 ] And those who are in the flesh, they cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

And if anyone doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he doesn't belong to God. But, if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies, your body of death, because of his Spirit who dwells in you.

So then, brothers, we, Paul includes himself, we are under obligation not to the flesh to live according to the flesh, for if you are living according to the flesh, you will die, but if according to the Spirit, you will be putting to death practices in your body, and you will live.

Verse 14, For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. D.A. Carson, somebody you or ladies in here are studying from, D.A. Carson said that 814 may be one of the most succinct definitions of what it means to be a Christian.

[ 6 : 15 ] And notice, what is it that says, Those, as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

What a great text. What a great text. Can I pray with you? Lord, thank you for our few moments together today, and I pray that your will would be accomplished among us, and thank you for a wonderful group of songs that we sang together.

Thank you for a look into Psalm 32, and I pray that you would bless us now for your honor and for your glory. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, what I'd like to do is, I just have about 30 minutes with you, so I want to do this.

I want to divide my message into two parts. Part one is, how do you study a book in the Bible? That's a very important question.

For me, after all these years, I would say this. The most important question to answer is, what is the structure that the Holy Spirit used the biblical author to lay out his book?

[ 7 : 19 ] There's a structure to the book. For instance, if I were to say to you, first four books of the New Testament are? Mark, Luke, and John. These are called the what?

The Gospels. So, Matthew and Mark are apostles, Luke is a Gentile doctor, and Mark is a friend of Peter. Okay? So, you've got two apostles, and two non-apostles.

So, each of them have a specific way in laying it out for us. You look at Matthew. Matthew is built around the five major sermons of Jesus Christ.

So, when you look at the Sermon on the Mount, all the way to the fifth one, which is chapters 24 and 25, you see this Mount, this Sermon on the Mount of Olive, and about the end times, there are five significant messages.

These are the largest known written messages that we have from the lips of Jesus. So, Matthew builds, structures his whole book around these five messages.

[ 8 : 23 ] Or, you take Mark. Mark is the shortest Gospel, but he has the longest section on the Passion Week of Christ. So, when you move into, barely out of chapter 10 all the way to chapter 16, that whole section is the one week of Jesus' last time here on this earth.

Or, you look at John. John has two parts. Part 1 of John is chapters 1 to 11, and it says over, Jesus says over and over, my hour has not yet come.

My hour has not yet come. My hour has not yet come. All of a sudden, bam, you hit chapter 12, and immediately you have, my hour has come. So, what's interesting to me is, those of you who know the Gospel of John, John 1, 1, in the beginning was the Word.

The Word was with God. The Word was God, going all the way back to the beginning. All the way to chapter 11, with the prophecy of Caiaphas, about the death of Jesus. In this section, you have, look, from eternity past, all the way to, right before the Passion Week.

And then you have this incredible, incredible section, from chapters 12 to chapter 20, dealing with a very short period of time of Jesus' life, and it's over and over repeated.

[ 9 : 39 ] My hour has come. My hour has come. My hour has come. In fact, when he does his high priestly prayer in chapter 17, Father, my hour has come. Please glorify me with the glory that I had before the world began. So, what I'm saying to you is just take the Gospels as an illustration that every single book has structure.

You understand the structure of the book, and then you begin to put within the structure the content, and it comes alive to you.

It comes full force at you as the Holy Spirit would want it to have. I think the way some people read the Bible, I feel like they just kind of open up the Scriptures and drop their finger and say, okay, now I'm going to read.

Okay, well, I'm glad that you're reading the Bible, and God can do good things with that. But remember, this is divinely given to us through a human author, so every word is perfect of the Spirit of God, and it comes to us with the organization of God Himself.

So, when you look at creation, there's organization. Look at the structure of a book. There is order. There is structure. So, when I look at the book of Romans, I come to a book that a lot of people say, it's too much theology, or very difficult, or whatever.

[11:01] And I understand that. I get that. These, just stop and think. We talk about the four gospels. These are theological, biographical thoughts through human authors.

And then you have the book of Acts, which is a history of about 30 years. And then you have from Romans all the way to Revelation at church letters to either individuals or to local churches.

So, isn't it interesting that the church puts this together and the very first of the 22 church letters is what? Romans. What's the second one?

Romans. What's after that? First Corinthians. What's after that? Second Corinthians. Okay. Isn't it interesting that on Paul's third missionary journey, he wrote three books.

and all three of those books are the preface into the 22 church letters. Romans. First Corinthians. Second Corinthians.

[12:00] What's interesting, Romans was the last of the three written. But it starts the 22 church letters. So, there's reason that they put that there and we don't know what the reason is except as you study Romans, you say, wow, this is a statement on the gospel of God.

What is the gospel? And I just love the way that Romans goes back to the Old Testament scriptures of all the books in the New Testament. Romans has more direct quotations of the Old Testament than any other book, including Matthew.

Matthew has 64, 65 direct quotations depending on how you count them. Romans has 69 direct quotations from the Old Testament. So that when you look at Romans chapter 1 verse 1b, it says the gospel of God, verse 2, which he promised beforehand in written scripture form through his prophets.

So, verse number 2, Paul is tying his gospel to what has already been written beforehand through the prophets in Holy Scripture. So, you would expect that going through the book of Romans, you're going to see quotation after quotation after quotation after quotation and probably at least a hundred allusions, non-direct quotations, but allusions to the Old Testament scriptures.

I mean, it's packed. It's packed. So, brothers and sisters, I say to you, I didn't mean to say all that. That doesn't count the 30 minutes, right?

[13:33] Okay. So, our deacons, I was 33 years pastoring, and our deacons would say, Pastor, we don't use a clock for you, we use a calendar for you.

So I said, okay, I got that. All right, here's what I'd like to do. Just real briefly, I want you to just see some wonderful things that I think would be a blessing to you. Just the beauty and power of the Romans letter.

Let me give you two church fathers that spoke concerning what this book means. Martin Luther, from his commentary, 1522, this epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel and is worthy not only that every question should know it word for word by heart, but occupy himself with it every day.

I like that. Just think of that. So 7,114 words. You got it? Okay. That's what he says when he says, I don't think you ought to know this by heart.

But I think there's a truth to this because we talk about preaching the gospel to ourselves each day. Well, there is no greater book than to preach the gospel to yourself than I would say here in the book of Romans.

[14:50] But there's also something else that I think is important and that Martin Luther in the same commentary as he opens up, he makes a very bold, and I call it neglected, bold and neglected words when he opens up his Roman commentary.

He says, the chief purpose of this letter is to break down, pluck up, and to destroy all wisdom and righteousness of the flesh. This includes all the works which in the eyes of people and even in our own eyes may be great.

Romans destroys flesh. Got that? Romans destroys flesh. The Apostle Paul who was a Pharisee of the Pharisee, who understood what it was to be in the Judaistic system is helping us understand that his flesh needs to be torn down.

All right, John Calvin, kind of interesting. I love this statement from John Calvin. He wrote a number of commentaries, and the very first one he wrote was on the book of Romans, and this is 1540.

And John Calvin says this, when one gains a knowledge of the epistle, he has an entrance open to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.

[16:14] In other words, Romans is the window that allows you to look at the Old Testament.

Okay? This is the window. So we want to make sure that we're looking at this particular book in a correct fashion.

So when I put those together, as two guys together, both Calvin and Luther, this is what I come up with. If we bind Calvin and Luther's ideas together, we get a complete picture of the Romans letter.

Not only does Romans illuminate the rest of Scripture, John Calvin, but it shines deep into our hearts, Martin Luther, causes us to fall upon our knees in confession and worship.

So that's what Romans is causing us to do when we get into this particular book. It's just like when teaching or preaching, brothers and sisters, I feel like one of the greatest little books on teaching and preaching is written by John Piper, The Supremacy of God in Preaching.

A little tiny book, but in that book, John Piper makes a great statement. He says this, on Saturday night, I take my manuscript, I follow my needs in my study, and I just lay my manuscript out before the Lord. I say, God, these are just human words.

[17:22] How do these human words ever touch the hearts of people? How can that happen? Unless the Spirit of God does something. So we're totally relying upon Him.

By the way, I see several of you trying to write things down. I'm going to give this PowerPoint to Greg so he can send it to you via email and you can have this PowerPoint. There's nothing sacred about it.

All I've done is copy-peel anyway, so it's okay. All right? Now, you're ready for structure. Let me take five minutes on structure. I want to help you understand what the Romans letter is about.

People can call the book of Romans, there are basically four different sections or four different blocks in which he writes, or I call them four essays that he has written as you work through the book of Romans.

So, when you think of the four essays that are here, each of the essays, and notice across the top, each of the essays has a topic, has an argument, and has an apex. Every single one does.

[18:29] So, a topic is just a topic of concentration. He's thinking specifically about something. So, when you look at the very first one, I'm not looking at the prologue or the epilogue, I'm just looking at the basic part of the letter.

When you look at this very first one, right in the middle of, really, 118 is where it begins. I put 1b to 4. You have a definition of the essentials of the gospel.

What is the gospel? Now, here's what's really interesting to me, brothers and sisters, and that's this. When you look at these three and a half chapters, isn't it interesting that in three and a half chapters, he spends 63 verses on how bad we are in the wrath of God.

Now, what's really interesting is he's not writing to unsaved people. He's writing to local churches in Rome. So, one question in your mind, if you're thinking, one question in your mind is, why would he tell us how bad we are and we're already saved?

Unless, he wants to make really sure that you know what Martin Luther said. Everything about us needs to be broken down, plucked up, and anything we think is great about ourselves, it's nothing.

[19:50] It's all a gift of God's grace. Okay? And then, I have the last chapter in red, because what Paul does is he writes in a way to bring you to the final chapter of the essay, and that is his apex.

That is his, he's trying to get the reader from this point to this point. What's really amazing to me is he doesn't think like you and I think.

Because if I was going to talk about the essentials of the gospel, justification by faith, if I was going to talk to you about justification by faith, I would say to you, okay, here it is, and then now let me give you a personal illustration.

I mean, Paul could give a personal illustration of what it means to be justified by faith. I mean, he was a Pharisee, he was taught at the feet of Gamaliel, I mean, all of the things in Philippians 3 that he says, I mean, all of that, he knew.

I mean, a good Pharisee had the first five books Torah memorized, and yet, he was without Christ. [ 20 : 55 ] But his apex is not a personal testimony. His apex is this, are you ready for it? It's about a man by the name of Abraham. Chapter 4 is given over to chapter 15 of Genesis, and chapter 15, verse 6 is quoted four specific times, all the way through the chapter, as he helps us understand what it means to be justified, declared righteous by God because of faith.

Here's what he did. He talks about how bad we are, and the importance of the cross of Jesus Christ, and justification through belief in Jesus, and for his apex argument, he goes 2,000 years before the cross, about a man named Abraham that was justified by faith.

faith. I tell you, brothers and sisters, that when you pick up Romans and you start looking at the structure, you come to the realization that, you know, Paul doesn't think like we think, and we don't have it together.

Do you realize that if we go all the way back to 2100 B.C., where Abraham was, 2100 B.C., that people were justified by faith because of what God said, they believed what God said.

In fact, if you go to Hebrews chapter 11, it'll have all these Old Testament saints. By faith, Enoch. By faith, Abel. By faith, Abram.

[ 22 : 24 ] By faith, Sarah. And on and on it goes. We don't often think that God's always, always, asked people, you believe me.

And that's exactly what Genesis 15, 6 says. Abram believed, anybody know the next word? God. He doesn't say he believed the promise of God, because God said to Abraham, look up and count all the stars, if you can.

That's how many kids you're going to have. Abraham is what, 75 years old? So he goes over to his tent, opens up the flap, goes into the nursery section of the tent, opens that flap up. There are no, baby toys on the floor.

There's no crying kids. There's no diapers hanging on the line. But 15, 6 says, of Genesis, Abraham believed God.

See, that's the key. This is the key. So, the essay that we have here, I wish I could just spend a lot of time with you guys on this, but already I can't.

[ 23 : 32 ] But I can give you this idea. structure is everything. So when you work through, you work through these amazing sections, 5 to 8, and we'll take the last few minutes here and just introduce chapter 8 for you, which is the apex of his argument.

How does 5, 1 begin? Therefore, being justified by faith, we have what? Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And this allows us to stand, verse 2, this allows us to stand in grace. Just think of the way he begins his argument, chapter 5, verses 1 and 2.

And he's going to conclude it in chapter 8. No condemnation. Therefore, now, no condemnation, if you are where? In Christ Jesus.

Very good. Very good. 9-11, he clarifies Israel's place in the gospel. Fantastic, fantastic section.

[ 24 : 37 ] And he ends up, in chapter 11, by saying, all Israel is going to be saved. You believe that? You better believe that. That's what the text says, 11-25, all Israel is going to be saved. And then, he comes to chapters 12-15, A, and here in chapters 12-15, A, he gives to us this incredible thought of, if the gospel is really what it's supposed to be, chapter 1-B all the way to chapter 11, then this is how you live the gospel.

Now, next time I come back, we're going to actually go right into chapter 12, okay? How is it that we live the gospel? Alright? Okay, but that's next time, not this time.

Actually, it's two weeks, right? Two weeks, right? Okay. So, but the next time I come back, I'd like to be able to touch that. Okay, so you see this? I'd love to have Q&A; with you, but it would take the rest of our service, so we're not going to do it, but I just want to give you an idea of structure, structure, structure.

When you pick up a book in the Bible, the first thing that should come to your mind, okay, how did James structure James in these five chapters? How does Revelation, how does the gospel, the apostle John put together these 22 chapters of Revelation, what is the structure that's here?

How does it work with Acts? Every book has structure. Within the structure, what happens is it's like going by and seeing the steel frame of a building as the builders are building that building.

[ 26 : 09 ] They spend so much time on the foundation, the concrete, all the things, and then they got the steel, and then finally they get to build. But the major part is the preparation, and getting the structure ready for the brick or whatever they're going to put on that building.

So that's what we have to do too as well in our own walk with Christ. Okay, with me? All right, here we go. Chapter 8, let's, oh, you know what? I forgot about this.

I'd like to make one note by Friedrich Godet. Friedrich Godet was a Swiss theologian and he made this statement about Romans 8 where we're going right now. He said this, if the Bible could be considered a ring, Romans would be its jewel, and chapter 8 would be the sparkle of the jewel.

Okay? That's where this came from. He was a Swiss thinker. And I love, I love to go back to history and to think through how they were thinking.

And so helpful, so helpful. Okay, having stated that, let's take some time here, if you don't mind, let's just take a few minutes here, and let's go to the apex of Paul's second essay.

[ 27 : 17 ] And as we go to the apex of Paul's second essay, I love the way he begins in chapter 8. He says, therefore, now.

Whenever you see the word therefore, you don't know exactly what word he uses in the Greek text. But every now and then, in the Greek text, like he does here, he uses a word that just causes us to, maybe, the way I would translate it, is consequently.

Or, this is the result of. Or, you see now. And he's going to give to us a statement. So, if you see that here, therefore, now, really, it's consequently, based upon what I have stated just above this.

Or, now you see, after seeing this above this, now you see why I can make this statement. And here's the statement. No condemnation for everyone who's in Jesus.

Yes. I go, yes, yes. No condemnation to those who are in Jesus. He actually uses the same word up in verse 25 where he has the conclusion of chapter 7.

[ 28 : 33 ] He says, thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, verse 25, so then, that's the same word, in 8.1. Therefore, so then, the idea is consequently, now, on the one hand, I myself, with my mind, am serving the law of God, but with my flesh, my body, there is the continual infection of sin.

So, one of the most interesting things that Paul does in this second essay, I think, is one of the most important essays for us to understand why is it that we can be justified, declared righteous, we can have a desire to serve God, but if we allow our mind to wander for one second, it always goes to that which is wrong.

It always goes. There's no question. It always goes to something that is wrong. Well, because we live in a body of death. We live in a body of sin.

Those are the two terms in the book of Romans that you'll see over and over again. You live in a body of death or a mortal body, which is a body of death, that's infected by sin, and chapter 5 tells us, and begins and tells us how we got that sin, and that sin never goes away.

In other words, listen very carefully, brothers and sisters. When you got saved, here's what happens. Here's what it means to be in Adam, all of humanity is in Adam. And what the Holy Spirit does when you get saved, the Holy Spirit takes you out of in Adam, and he puts you over here into another sphere in Christ.

[ 30 : 10 ] Okay? Here you are in Adam. Everyone's there. Here you are in Christ. So what the Holy Spirit does is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You can read this in 1 Corinthians 12.

He takes you out and he puts you in. And he just, yes, yes. But, there's a caveat here that Romans tells us about. And the caveat is this.

Your human constitution comes out and your human constitution does not change. And he puts you in. But, according to Romans, there's a couple things that happen.

One, you get the righteousness of Jesus Christ covering you in Christ, which is beautiful. Here I am, coming out in Adam, in Christ, the righteousness of Jesus Christ covers me so that God looks at me through Jesus Christ righteousness so he sees me in union with him.

It's wonderful. It's wonderful. It's a blessing. And, he says here, I know what's going on in 725. I know what's going on. Here's this battle that's going on, this war.

[ 31 : 17 ] He calls it a war in verse 23, just two verses up. He calls this war, a raging war. There's a great Presbyterian pastor I used to love to hear years ago, James Montgomery Boyce, 10th

Presbyterian Church.

And, he wrote four volumes on Romans. And, when he gets to Romans 7, he titles it The War Within. I love that.

The War Within. I love that. I can't think of a better term. That's what it says here in the text. You know, there's a war, a waging war taking place against this renewed mindset by the Spirit and this human constitution that has a propensity always to go south.

Okay? So, you're not weird, because I've talked to many, many people. You're not weird if you say, I love Christ. I have a great time in the Word. And then, all of a sudden, I get in the car and I get on the interstate.

I try to get on the interstate and it's just packed and trying to get over it. Honk, honk. I kind of lose my temper a little bit. How can that happen? I was just in the Word. I was just in the Word.

[ 32 : 25 ] So, this helps us understand what he says in verse 25. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Okay, exclamation point. Your scripture should have an exclamation point.

Alright? Consequently, now, on the one hand, here's my mind, going hard after the authority of God. On the other, my flesh, it still has this propensity of the authority of sin.

So, what Paul does is he reaches his arm out and he reaches and he taps you on the shoulder and he says, now, settle down. Settle down. Consequently, now, there is no condemnation when you're in Jesus.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Okay? How can that be? Verse 2. How can that be? For, because, the authority of the spirit of, what's the next word?

The spirit of life. This is very important. How Paul terms the spirit. Because, we have a dead, we are dead. Our bodies are dead.

[ 33 : 35 ] We're living in mortal bodies, as you see down here in the text. But, the spirit is life. Where does that take place? In Christ Jesus. So, here's what happens. You come out of an Adam.

You're placed in Christ. And when you're placed in Christ, you get Christ's righteousness. Now, on top of that, notice verse 2. The authority of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus liberates you from the authority of sin and death.

There's an amazing transfer of power that takes place. The transfer of power is, when I'm in Adam, I constantly did the things that my nature wanted.

And I just did it. Now, I'm in Christ and I have a new authority. It's a spirit of life. I'm no longer dead in trespasses and sins, to use Ephesians 2 language.

I am now in Christ and I have this new authority. And it's authority that has life. And this life looks like the spirit who gives the life.

[ 34 : 40 ] So that's why you have fruit of the spirit in Galatians. See, this life comes from spirit himself. Not us. We didn't generate it. So this life is going to have love, joy, peace, long-suffering, and gentleness.

And there it goes. So, in verse 2, the authority of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus liberates me from the authority of sin and death.

So what Paul does beautifully is he ties justification with liberation and puts it right here. So you come out of Adam and now you are liberated from your sinful lifestyle and ways you thought before you knew Christ.

It doesn't mean you're not going to, as we saw in 725, doesn't mean you're not going to be assaulted. That's the word that John Calvin uses. You're always assaulted by your flesh. But it does mean that we have a new authority.

Verse 3, he explains it. How can that be? For the law could not, what the law could not do in that it was weakened through the flesh, God did it.

[ 35 : 55 ] Okay, here's what he's saying here. Here is the law, a written document. Okay, here is Torah. Here are the Ten Commandments. Written document. Don't do this, don't do this, don't do this, don't do this, don't do that.

Now what Paul is saying is, when you look at the law, it was weak through what? Not itself, but I can't keep it through my flesh.

I can't keep it. Don't say naughty words. I can't keep that. Don't look at naughty things. I can't do that.

I fail every time all the way through here. So what the law could not do because of our flesh, notice, God did. How did he do it?

He sent who? He sent his own son. Now, he has three statements in this verse. Look at these three statements. What does he mean? Sending his own son.

[ 36 : 56 ] Number one, he sent him not as this giant on a hill somewhere that just flexed his spiritual, dynamic, divine muscles.

Look at me, I'm great. No. He didn't send an angel, his son like an angel. In fact, Hebrews chapter 2 says, Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for a while so that he might taste death for every man.

He's in the likeness of sinful flesh. He does not have sin, but he has our human flesh, a baby. Just think of this. I was listening to a song from Sovereign Grace not too long ago.

I was just thinking that Mary is holding in her arms this infant who is holding all of the world together with his word.

Hebrews chapter 1, verses 2 and 3. She's holding this infant. She's not able to speak yet. It's an amazing thought.

[ 37 : 58 ] And, what does it say? Second thing, he didn't just send him in the likeness of sinful flesh, but there's a purpose for the sinful flesh, and that is, likeness of sinful flesh, and that is so that, what?

He could be an offering for sin. The only way there can be an offering for sin is there has to be a death. Now, remember, death does not mean to cease to exist. Death means to separate the body from the spirit.

It doesn't mean to cease to exist. So, the only way that he could taste death for every man, to use Hebrews 2 language, the only way he could taste death for a man is God had to become like man, live a perfect life, become the perfect sacrifice for sin, but he couldn't stay dead because dead sacrifices only cover a single sin in the Old Testament.

So, if somebody did something naughty, there's a sacrifice of sin. That's covered. but once the lamb is dead, the blood is not effective for the next sin that comes or the next sin that comes.

What we need is a living lamb, experiencing the death and then rising again so that we have the living lamb. That's why John the Baptist could say, behold the lamb of God who takes away the what?

[ 39 : 19 ] Sin of the world, not one sin, the sin of the world. John 1 29. Really? Really? Yes. Really. Okay.

Are you still with me? Verse 4. Oh, and then, oh, the third thing is in verse 3 is he condemned sin in the flesh. This is the verb of the noun in verse 1.

Condemnation, you see that? There's the noun, the verb is he condemned sin in the flesh. That's an impossibility unless it's God himself. There's no way we could ever do that. He did it.

Why? Verse 4, so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. That's one of the most powerful statements to me on what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be saved.

So that the righteous requirement of the law. If I were to ask you what is the righteous requirement of the law, your answer should be this. One thing, obey.

[ 40 : 16 ] That's it. That's what the law is asking, obey. There's 613 commands in the first five books of the Old Testament. 613? Okay. One requirement, obey.

Okay? But notice here, so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled. Think of that. That every single law of Torah, Jesus completely obeyed. Every one. Again, look at verse 4.

So that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled. What's the last two words? In us. Not by us. If you get saved and you have the spirit living within, your human constitution constantly battling the spirit of life, if it was left up to me, I would never keep my salvation.

I would constantly be fighting. But it's not left up to me. It's done in us because I'm in Christ. And then he says in verse 4, look at our new character.

[ 41 : 26 ] Our character now as we live according, not according to the flesh, but now we live according to the spirit. Why? This authority, this rule, this spirit of life, we now live this way, according to the spirit of life.

And on the other side, we lived according to the spirit of Adam. That didn't get us very far. Okay? Now, quickly, verse 5 to 8.

For those things are according to the flesh, for those who are according to the flesh, they have a mindset that's on the things of the flesh. They have no idea of what it means to live pure before God.

But those who are according to the spirit, here's their mindset on the things of the spirit. Look at the contrast. Verse 6. For the mind set on the flesh is what? The mind set on the spirit is what? Life and peace. See, that word life again. Life and peace. That's the word that he used in chapter 5 to start the essay. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace. harmony with God. [ 42 : 31 ] Verse 7. Because the mind that is set on the flesh, it's at odds with God, image with God. It does not subject itself to the law of God.

It's not able to do this. And those who are in the flesh, they can't please God. I mean, if you're in the flesh, and you're on this side of the equation, you just can't please God.

I was talking to someone yesterday, and talking with this person, he's a very kind, gracious man. And I said to him, called him by name, and I said to him, if it, if it, all it would take is to, for you to be good, you still can't get into heaven.

If it's all it took, just, just be good. because all of our righteousnesses are as what? Filthy wags. Yeah, because we have the interspersions of pride, self, selfishness, all of it's interspersed with our works.

The most amazing and most hurtful thing to me is over all of these years, you'd think that after 42, what, 42, 43 years in the ministry, I would not have a prideful thought in preaching.

[ 43 : 45 ] I can be preaching the word, and all of a sudden a dart of pride just absolutely stabs my heart. Look what you just saw. Where does this come from?

You would think after all of these years, four decades, I would not have a problem with lying. I shade the truth. I don't lie, I just shade the truth.

You know. But this is what it means. Now look at 9, 10, and 11 real quickly. Okay, a couple minutes. However, you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you.

You know what, I could fill it this way. Here are the five facts. One, no condemnation against any justified sinner. Praise the Lord. Two, every justified sinner has a mindset from the spirit.

We didn't have that before, but now we do. Three, this is really important, brothers and sisters, because in verse 9, he begins with the word, in our English exit, it says, however, you are not in the flesh, actually begins with the word *umes*, which is the plural pronoun, you all.

[ 45 : 02 ] See, Paul must have been a southern. Y'all. Y'all. Okay? However, y'all. But, in Greek, the way they would emphasize something, they could either put it first in the sentence or last in the sentence.

In this case, verse number 9, he's showing the contrast between those who are in the flesh and not able to please God. Verse 8, y'all, however, are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the spirit of God dwells in you.

And if anyone does not have the spirit of God, he doesn't belong to him. This is the dividing line for Christianity. A Christian has the spirit of life.

That's verse 2. A non-Christian does not belong to God. He doesn't have the spirit. That's the difference. That's the difference.

It's not how good I can be, how many times I attend church in a year, not that I come on Easter or Christmas, but here I am looking at the text and it says, you all, all of you church members, you're not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the spirit of God lives in you.

[ 46 : 14 ] So here's the question, does God's spirit live in you? See, that's the question. That is the divine. That's how you get down to verse 14 and you have what Doug Moo and Piper and these guys call one of the greatest verses of what it means to be a Christian.

You are now being led by the spirit of God. You are sons, daughters of God. See, it's all about the spirit. Where is the spirit in your life? Where is the spirit in my life?

It's not about doing good. It's about God himself living within me. So this is so important, brothers and sisters, when I look at verse number 9.

If I look at verse number 10 to 11, I love these verses. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because you have this righteousness from Christ.

Verse 11, But if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your bodies of death.

[ 47 : 23 ] And this is through his spirit who dwells in you. It can't be more clear that we have life not because we just plug ourselves in on Sunday morning at church.

I'm in. I like the EV, you know. This is my car. I'm plugged in. Alright. No. You have life because verse number 2 says the authority of the spirit because of being in Christ is in you.

It's in you. so that you are able to accomplish everything that God wants you to accomplish. Alright. One final thing then we're done.

This is the fifth thing. Look if you will at the text. Verse number 12. So then, brothers, we are not under obligation, we are under obligation, excuse me, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you're going to die. Remember? But if by the spirit you are putting to death the practices of the body, you will live.

[ 48 : 33 ] The number one reason Paul has, if you want to give yourself a test, do I have the spirit or do I not have the spirit? Here's your number one test. How do you deal with personal sin? That's your number one test.

How do you deal with your own personal sin? And that's why I state here, a clear demonstration that you are a justified sinner is the mortification, the putting to death of personal sin.

Now, what I'd like to do, if you've, has anybody ever heard of a guy named John Owen, he's a Puritan that lived in the 1600s. Okay? Anybody living back in, okay, nobody here, all right.

I may be the oldest person, I don't know, but this book called Mortification of Sin by John Owen, you can get this for two bucks on Amazon. It probably, well, actually, I got this before the war, so it might be up to about seven bucks now.

I don't know. Everything is going up. But in there, if you get one of these, make sure you get the introduction by J.I. Packer. Are you familiar with J.I.

[ 49 : 39 ] Packer? He's a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful man of God with the Lord. J.I. Packer goes his first semester at Oxford, a young teenage boy, really, 17 years old.

He didn't know about Christ. He goes to Oxford. First semester, he's led to Jesus Christ by somebody at Oxford. And he gets a group of pietists, a group of guys and gals that really wanted to go hard after Jesus.

And so, he said that he listened to what they say, and they kept saying, okay, this is how you do this. This is how you deal with personal sin. And he said, I did everything they told me.

I felt like I was, the way he says here, he says, I felt like I was scraping the inside of my soul as best I possibly could, and I still would sin. So I just threw my hands up and I said, okay, as a 17-year-old boy, okay, I guess that I just will never experience holiness in my life.

life. He's going to the library at Oxford and he comes across a group of sermons by John Owen. He reaches in, pulls down one of those books and one of those books is this section called Killing Sin.

[ 50 : 56 ] That's what mortification means, killing sin. How do you kill sin in your body? And so he pulls it out, reads, and I just, let me just tell you what he says here.

He says this, I'm reading from J. Packard, his introduction, he says this, Owen saved my spiritual sanity. He searched me to the root of my being and taught me the nature of sin, the need to fight it, and how to do it, how to fight it.

He showed me how to understand myself as a Christian and live before God humbly and honestly without pretending either to be what I am not, or not to be what I am.

He made every point by direct biblical exegesis. The decisive dawning of all the insight he gave me, however, came when I read him in this thing, mortification of sin.

this small work is a spiritual gold mine. I could not more highly commend it to you. So, you can't write this down, but I took just a couple of points from John Owen, how to kill sin.

[ 52 : 11 ] Are you ready for it? He took it right here from the text. Just listen to these words. Here's what he says. Number one, we will never fully root out any sin as long as we're in this mortal body.

Are you kidding me? You will never root out any sin as long as you're in this mortal body. You can't just say, okay, now, no more of this ever, ever, ever, ever, ever.

Okay. I'm glad he's honest. Number two, the indwelling spirit implants in us a desire to cherish grace.

Grace stands in direct opposition to sin. It is the spirit that causes us to pursue the gift of grace, Romans 5, and he works in us and with us, not against us or without us, period.

Number three, this is the last one. Third, time is always of essence. You must immediately ask yourself, what do I desire?

[ 53 : 23 ] When sin, the sinful thought comes in front of you, you ask yourself, what do I desire? Do I want this sin above all else, or do I want Christ?

And then he makes this incredible statement that I have underlined and written in my Bible, and that's this. Your desire is the index of your soul. What you desire tells you where your soul is.

So if you close your eyes and you say, okay, what do I desire above all else in this world? That reveals who you really are.

You with me? So it's powerful to me, it's overwhelming to me, but I'm so thankful for verse 14, because everything comes down to verse 14, and that's this. As many as being led by the Spirit, these are the children of God.

So, what is your one goal today? Your one goal today is, what does the Spirit want me to say? Then say that. Your one goal, what does the Spirit want me to do today?

[ 54 : 36 ] Then do that. your flesh will always say, do this, oh, this is so much easier, so much better. And the Spirit is saying, no, this is the direction that you go.

So, brothers and sisters, thank you for letting me take some time with you today, and I just worked through a little bit of Romans, and it's a wonderful and yet convicting study.

And so, Greg, you can take this and whoever emails, you can do whatever you'd like to do with it, and you can kind of work through it as you would like. When I come back, it'll be two weeks that I'll be back, but I would like to spend a little time with you as what does the gospel look like to people who have been changed by the gospel, and that's going to be Romans 12.

And I think that this theologian's apex of the theology section really is powerful, and it's only touched them in the gospel. In fact, next week, Scott Bashur, Prof. Bashur, is going to be here, and he's going to spend a little more time with you on Romans 8, which is really great.

He and I talked about this, and I'm really excited about you hearing. I love Prof. He's a pastor for 25 years before he was with us. But I think it's very important because our goal is to come alongside Pastor Jeff, come alongside Pastor Greg, and say to you, listen, you can do this, but not in your strength, not in your power.

[ 56 : 05 ] You must kill sin, but he says, through the Spirit. Same verse, you mortify sin, but you can do this through the Spirit.

Okay? Would you pray for me, with me? Just bow your heads, close your eyes just for a moment, and let me just allow you very quickly to just talk to the Lord, and whatever he wants, could that be your request?

Lord, whatever you want, that's what I want. If you don't know Christ as your Savior, then this is the time you are under the authority of sin. You are not liberated from the authority of sin, yet.

But you can be. You could be. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, will be rescued, is the word. Lord, thank you for the kindness of these brothers and sisters.

Thank you for the joy to be able to open up your word. Thank you for the privilege to have your Spirit speak through your word to each of us. Lord, I don't know the needs of the people here.

[ 57 : 23 ] They don't know my needs, but I have needs. I know they have needs. So your Spirit is able to powerfully and sweetly and divinely take your word and pierce our heart, get below the facade and pierce our heart so that we might do business with you.

Thank you for this book that was penned almost 2,000 years ago, yet the Spirit makes it very relevant to us today. And so we thank you for the privilege that we have to share with one another. May Jesus be honored because we met together this morning and may he be lifted up, we pray in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.