

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
ROMANS 203-1

We have come now to the last section of the book of Romans.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

“I beseech you therefore...” Based on everything that has gone before. He opens up a new section in Romans here, and it is the last great foundation pillar of the book. You will remember that we studied and saw that the book of Romans is divided into three basic sections. The first 8 chapters deal with the issue of salvation and how the gospel saves us. Chapters 9-11 deal with the gospel’s relationship to Israel—what has happened to Israel now that the gospel of grace is in effect. Chapters 12-16, deal with how to live—practical living in an age of grace—and it is the fourth great foundation pillar to Paul’s gospel.

First, there is the issue of justification by grace through faith, plus nothing. It is the issue of our justification through the crosswork of Christ, and how God has given us eternal life, and made us secure in Him, and the absolute completely acceptable position that we have in Christ through the work of Calvary in chapters 1-5.

Then we see in chapters 6-8, the issue of living under the control of grace. We are not only justified by grace, but we are living under grace. We are dead to sin, we are dead to the law, and we are dead to the flesh; and we live under the control of grace. God has equipped us to live on the earth, to live our lives now. We have all these assets and we have all this position and all these things that God has given us that have equipped us to live for Him.

Then he turns to the dispensation of grace in chapters 9-11, and you have to understand that we are not spiritual Israel. God is not through with Israel. God is going to bring them in to their promised kingdom. He has interrupted His program with Israel. He has held up His purpose and plan and program with Israel to give them their kingdom and to restore the earth back under the authority of God through the kingdom that is committed and given to Israel. He has interrupted that program and that purpose, to execute another purpose first; and that is the purpose of forming the body of Christ.

Now after he gets through all of that, he comes to chapter 12, and he says: “I beseech you therefore, brethren.” In other words, he is going to add one last thing. You see all these wonderful things God has given you—all these mercies—you see justification by grace, you see the issue of living under the control of grace and being under the grace program. You see the issue of the dispensation of grace, what has happened to Israel. Now, I beseech you on the basis of that...by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

He is going to deal with you about some practical instructions about how to take all that other stuff that he has discussed and identified, and apply it to the details of your life. If you go back in your frame of reference and think through Romans, you should have a solid understanding of your sonship position in Christ and all that that encompasses. And now he says: you see all that, now I want you to walk like a son. I want you to handle the details of your life as a son, not as a child under bondage like Israel's program was; but as a son, an adult. He says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, that ye present your bodies." There is something interesting about the passage in this regard. The verse will fit either after chapter 11, where it is—with the mercies of God there, where it talks of the depths of both the wisdom and knowledge of God in verse 33, how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. He gives a great doxology. It also would correspond to chapter 8:38-39, the issue about nothing separating you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. But there is a real interesting thing the way the book is laid out.

If you go to chapter 8, when you get into chapter 8, beginning at verse 18, where he says the sufferings of this present time aren't worthy to be compared to what? The glory that shall follow. When does that glory come? When you go out at the rapture. Chapter 8 ends with issues about going out, our glorification, and that inheritance that we are going to have in the future. In chapter 8, he ends with the issue of our sonship inheritance, and because of that inheritance we are going to have as sons, we can endure down here.

Then you have chapters 9-11, where he deals with Israel, with the Jewish question.

Then you have chapters 12-16, and in 12:1, he says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies." As what? Living sacrifices. Now what did you do with a sacrifice in Time Past? They killed it, but is this a dead sacrifice here that he is talking about? No. It is a living sacrifice. Well, how can you be a living sacrifice? You have to be a living dead person. Are you a living dead person? You are crucified with Christ back here. "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Don't you understand that the issue of Romans 6 is that you have been identified with Christ in His death, His burial, His resurrection? You understand how that can take place when you get to chapter 12, because you have come through chapters 1-8, haven't you? What do you do when you get over here? He says, now, "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." He is talking about presenting your body to the Lord now, in the same manner that you will when you get your glorified body over there.

We are here in the dispensation of grace. [See Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth chart.] At the rapture, we go out. There is Israel in the tribulation period, and we come back with Him, and Paul says: hey, right now, I want you to present your body, just like you are going to present your glorified body to Him out over there. Let me show you how that works. Come back to chapter 6. I pointed this out to you before. Get chapter 6 in one hand and Philippians 3. Folks, the issue of presenting your body a

living sacrifice has to do with having the resurrected life of the Lord Jesus Christ being manifested and living—demonstratively on display—in you right now.

Romans 6:13

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

If you are somebody who is alive from the dead, what are you? You are resurrected, aren't you? He said, take the members of your bodies—your hands, your arms, your eyes—your bodies, and yield them to God; and do it like you are resurrected from the dead. He is talking about taking the position that you have in Christ and live it right now. Have that position become a practical reality in your life. You are to live right now as though you already are resurrected from the dead, in that complete and total oneness with the will and the purpose and the program and the plan of God. Anything less than that isn't acceptable to God.

Now your position isn't a reality in your life physically right now. In other words, you are not there yet. It is your position; one day you will be there, right? Right. But now we take all of that and make it a reality. We yield ourselves. You see, that has to do with taking your body and dedicating it into God's service to the place where the details of your life are lived in such a way that you respond to the stimulus that comes into your life, just as if you already were resurrected from the dead. Now that is something, and that is Romans 12:1. Present your bodies a living sacrifice. Come over to chapter 8. By the way, in chapter 6, verse 13, that issue of yield your members, that is the issue of present your body in Romans 12:1, just said in a different way.

Romans 8:11

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Sometimes folks take that passage as a reference to the resurrection, but that isn't what it is talking about. A mortal body is not a dead man. A mortal body is a body that is subject to death. Death hasn't taken it yet, but he is going to die. I Corinthians 15 talks about this corruptible, (the dead, corrupting in the grave), must put on incorruption. This mortal, (two classes of people, a live man subject to death), must put on immortality—not be subject to death. He is saying here in Romans 8:11, that the Spirit of God that dwells in you quickens—gives life. He is where you get the life—the resurrection life—to live now. As you walk in the Spirit, whose life is in control? The same life that you are going to have over here in your glorified body is running you now. Got that? Present your body a living sacrifice. You are dead and He is living—total identification with Christ—and you do it in such a way that it is a reality in the practical living of your life. You are taking all the position, and all the assets that you have in Christ, and these things are applied to your body, to your members, to you and all the details of your life.

Your body is the vehicle that carries around your soul and your spirit on this earth. It is the thing that gives you capacity to serve God. Have you ever heard a spirit shout? Have you ever seen a spirit preach? No. Do you know why? You have to have a body to do all that stuff. You see the body do it, don't you? You see me standing up here, what do you see? Do you see my soul? No. Do you see my spirit? No. People say that it is not spiritual, that we don't have anything but spiritual things, and it is nothing but spiritual things, and if it isn't spiritual, you know, it isn't real. A man was telling me just the other day how the Lord's supper is all spiritual, and that there is nothing physical for the body of Christ. Well, then I can't use my body to serve Him. Then we can't talk to each other, because I am using my lungs and my vocal cords and my mouth and my teeth, and talking. And you are using an ear, with a tympanic membrane and a vesicular chain and a cochlear nerve and an 8th nerve into your brain to get to it. It is all physical.

Now I understand it is spiritual, but I am saying there is a physical issue in here, and God is interested in it. God starts on the inside with your spirit and your soul, and He works outward. He puts the Word in, and He works outwards; and it isn't physical circumstances that are the issue, and it isn't how good your body works that is the issue. Have you got that? Your body might get sick, that is alright, it is going to die anyway. It might not work like a Lincoln or a Cadillac, maybe it works like a Volkswagon or a rusted out Chevrolet. But the point is that that body is the vehicle through which the ministry is done, and he says: present me that body now so that I can use it now, just like I am going to use your glorified body out over yonder. That is what is called dedication.

Philippians 3:20-21

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Do you know when God is going to change your vile body and make it like His glorious body? At the rapture. God isn't going to change your vile body until then. Listen to me, God Almighty isn't messing around with your body—changing it—today. He is going to do that at the rapture. God is going to heal your body; He is going to give you a new one. God isn't healing people today, you understand that. That healing program had to do with Israel looking for a kingdom. God isn't in the business of healing people today.

Somewhere along the line, your wife, your kids, you, your Momma or your Daddy, are going to get sick. Some of you guys are sick tonight. You are going to get sick, and some of you are going to forsake everything that you know. You are going to quit operating on sound doctrine. I have seen grace people do this through the years. They understand that God isn't healing people today, but then they get cancer and are going to make a deal: “God, you heal me and I'll do so and so.” You don't want to forsake sound doctrine. Pressure and problems ought to intensify the sound doctrine, and make you find your comfort and your rest and your direction in it, not in forsaking it.

God Almighty is going to take care of your body one day, and He'll take care of it just like that—in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. That is the program to take care of your flesh. The issue in the ministry today is your soul. But folks, your soul, in order to have a ministry, must have a body. He says: you understand all this stuff that I have done for you, now present your body to me, because I'll use that thing right now, just like I will use the resurrected one over yonder. How can God use your sinful body? Your body of sin? How can He use it? It is dead. Isn't it dead? Isn't that what Roman's 6 says? That is what the Book says. As far as God is concerned isn't it dead? Therefore can't He use it? A living dead man? Sure He can, but he doesn't use it on the basis of it; He uses it on the basis of what He is doing in it, doesn't He? And it is His life, not the life of the believer.

So we don't walk in the flesh. That is what Romans 8:11 says. The next verse says that we are debtors, not to the flesh. We don't owe the body anything. You say, but I want something that carries me around. You don't owe it a thing. You don't need to satisfy it and pamper it. It wants this and it wants that and it wants to do the other thing. Forget that. Whose “wanter” are you to please? Not the flesh, but the spirit.

You are in Philippians, look up Philippians 1:20.

Philippians 1:20, 21

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

Christ shall be magnified in my body. Why?

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Christ magnified in my body.

2 Corinthians 4:10, 11

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Present your body a living sacrifice, do you see that? His life manifested in you.

1 Timothy 3:16

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

God Almighty's life is manifest in the flesh of the church, the body of Christ. It is not through the flesh, not through the power of the flesh, not through the energy of the flesh; but rather as the body of Christ, as we present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God. Do you see the issue? Do you know what is important for a believer? Purity, holiness, and being acceptable to God. Is that true of you? If it isn't,

it ought to be. Do you know what Paul said? He said “I beseech you...” When you understand all that God has done for you, let that motivate you to present your body, yourself, to Christ—to God—holy, acceptable. When you understand what God has done for you, do you know what you will be interested in doing? You will be interested in reflecting His purity, His holiness, being set apart to Him. You will be interested in being accepted by Him.

People say if you preach grace to people, it will just teach them to live in sin. No, no, no. If you preached grace to people and you cause them to understand what God has done for them, and you get those first three pillars of Paul's gospel laid properly, do you know what it will do? It will cause them to be interested in being holy in the details of their lives, and acceptable to God in the details of their lives; because they have taken themselves and presented themselves to Him.

When you find people that are just living for themselves, you are finding people that don't understand. They are not motivated by grace; they are motivated by themselves, by the law, by a performance system, by doing what they want to do, by self-imposed expectations. Grace motivation motivates you to present yourself to God in absolute total dedication, and be interested in holiness and acceptableness, which is your reasonable service. You see all that God has done for you, and you say, how can I do anything less? Reasonable is an understatement. When you do what is reasonable, you have not done any great thing, have you? No, you sure haven't. I mean it is just what you ought to do. It doesn't figure any other way. Nothing else makes any sense than for me to give myself completely and totally into His service. Can you figure anything that makes any more sense for you?

You see all that God has done for you and you are motivated by His grace, it won't motivate you to do anything else. Grace will motivate you to total, absolute dedication. If you don't have absolute total dedication, it is because you are not motivated by grace. If you are out ministering in a church, and the church is dead and lifeless and listless and nobody will pray, nobody will study, nobody will witness, nobody will give, nobody will do anything, nobody will function in the capacity in which they ought to function as a body member, the problem is they are not motivated by grace. So what are you going to do? Teach them grace; because it is grace that will motivate them to proper living. It will teach them to be careful to maintain good works. Now go back to the verse.

Notice that second word. “I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God...” On the basis of the mercies of God, I beseech you. Do you know what it means to beseech somebody? Literally it is to beg them. I beg you, I request, I ask of you to do this. I am begging you to do this. That term is a term that reflects grace motivation. Notice that he doesn't say that I command you to do it. Come with me to Ephesians 4. In the first half of the book, he lays down the believer's wealth in Christ. Notice that when he gets into the second half of the book, he begins to talk about our walk. Ephesians is the next great doctrinal book.

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

He says I beseech you, not I command you, but I request. It is grace motivation that ask you. He says, see this great love. What do we say? We love Him, because He first loved us. Look at I Thessalonians 4, the next doctrinal book.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

Paul says, we told you how to walk, and we told you how to respond; we gave you the instructions, and the orders that God would give you, and I beseech you. You see, he didn't put them under the law; he didn't put them under a performance system that required obedience in order to get the blessing. He said, I beseech you by the mercies of God—on the basis of all that God has given you. Look how He loved you, look how He has provided for you. Now, I request you on that basis. Respond to that by serving Him.

Let me show you this word, *beseech*. Come to Philemon 8 and 9. The great example of grace motivation in the Bible is the book of Philemon. The great example of what God requires of a pastor is Philemon. Philemon often is not listed as one of the pastoral epistles, but it sure is. Philemon is a pastoral epistle that gives, in a living demonstration, all of the issues of godliness, all of the issues of grace motivation, all of the issues of the sound doctrine built into the soul of a man of God functioning properly.

Philemon 8, 9

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, [Hey, Philemon, I have a right to require you to do this.]

9 Yet [Notice the next three words.] **for love's sake** [I do what?] **I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.**

I beseech thee. Do you see that? Beseeching somebody is to request somebody to do it out of love. When Paul says, "I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God," he says, I request that you respond to God's love with gratitude and love for Him.

2 Corinthians 10:1

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

Do you see that? I request that on the basis of love—by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. You see the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I request you on the basis of that.

2 Corinthians 5:14

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

Not my love or your love for Him that constraineth, but His love for us. What is it that motivates you? That is it. You see, when you understand what He has done for you, that motivates you. Grace motivation, folks, is just to respond with gratitude to a proper understanding of the position that you have in Christ. When you understand what God values and esteems, and how much He has done for you in Christ; when you recognize your sonship position, and live on that basis, that is it—that is grace motivation. That is loving Him because He first loved you. You are not trying to strive and get the thing, but are motivated because God has given it to you, and you are just so grateful for it. You see it, and you get excited about it, and what do you do? You want others to see it.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren.” Now you understand that the issue of beseeching is the issue of a son's response. Have you ever noticed that children don't very often operate on the basis of gratitude? Who do you expect to operate on the basis of gratitude? A wife. Do children get married? Adults get married. He says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you what? That you present yourself. You see, it is an act of personal choosing. When he says I beseech you that you present your bodies, that presentation is an act. You are to act as a responsible son, as a responsible adult, on the basis of His goodness to you. You don't act out of legal constraint, but you make a personal choice to a certain course of action based on your own choosing: I see all that God has done for me, and that creates gratitude and love in my heart, and I choose to present myself to Him in response to that. That is adult sonship. That is maturity—a mature understanding and walk.

It is children that you put under constraints, and make them do. It is an adult who stands, and out of his own free choosing, chooses to serve and present himself.

Romans 12:1-3

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think [But to think. See that? Underline that word. Think. Think how?] soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

The ability to think soberly comes from where? It comes from sound doctrine. It comes from the renewed mind in verse 2. “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” That renewed mind gives you an ability to think differently. Now you can think about things as they really are, and that renewed mind and that renewed thinking has to do with thinking as an adult, and walking as an adult.

What Paul is going to do through chapters 12-15, is to describe to you how it is that you and I, under grace, are to walk as adults—mature sons. And he is going to talk about your sonship walk—not just the position and inheritance; but the fact that right now, God has equipped you to walk, and to handle the details of your life as a mature adult. Remember what we talked about before about maturity and adults? Do you remember Galatians 4? (We will get over there in a minute and look at that when we get in verse 3.)

The heir, when he is a child, doesn't differ anything from a servant, but is under tutors. He has somebody telling him what to do and when to do it; but when he comes of age and becomes an adult, what does he do? Does anybody tell him that he has to do this and do this and this? No. He makes up his own mind that this is the right thing to do. He has to decide. Nobody is going to come along and tell him what is right and wrong now. He has to discern on his own what is right and wrong, doesn't he, and he has to choose to do it.

Paul is going to tell you in the rest of these chapters, the standards—here are the ways, here is the mechanism, here is the procedure to go about living as an adult. Here is the thinking process that you are to have. Verse 2.

Romans 12:2

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

You are to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now first, he says, don't be conformed to the world. What is he talking about? He is saying, as a child of God, don't be pressed into the mold, conformed to something. That is, pressed in the shape of something. Don't be conformed to this world. What does it mean by “this world”? Come over to Galatians 1. You want to understand some things about the world now, so that you understand what worldliness is.

Galatians 1:3-4

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

The will of God for you, my friend, is to be delivered from this present evil world. If, as a son, I know that the will of my Father, is that I be delivered from this present evil world, what will I do as a son? I'll choose to be delivered—choose to be transformed. Am I going to choose to be conformed to the world? Are you understanding what I am saying to you? If you know what the will of your Father is, and you become a son, and you are an adult, and you love your Daddy because you know that He loves you and you are grateful, and you respond to your Dad, and you know that your Dad doesn't want you conformed to this world, but that He wants you to be delivered from this present evil world and all that is involved in that, then what are you going to choose personally, willfully, and joyfully do? Not be conformed to this world. That's right. Do you see that?

What he is talking about in Romans 12 is adult sonship. Now you understand a lot of people that get chronologically old never grow up, they are just big kids. I mean 30, 40, 50, 60 year old babies. Why? Because they are just like little babies in nursery, always in a snit, wanting their own way—"I'm going to do what I want to do." "I got a right, I got a right, I got a right." All that stuff, you know. Do you know what an adult does? An adult sits down and says: "Well, we have so much money coming in, so we have to have a budget." He chooses where money ought to be spent, and he says, "Well, we need it here, it ought to go here, and we ought to do this, and we ought to do this, we ought to, ought to, ought to, ought to."

Do you notice how kids pick up on that? Kids come to you in K-Mart and say: "Daddy, I want so and so," "Momma, I want this." "Put it back." What do they say then? "I need it." Notice how they change that. It begins with, "I want this." "No, you can't have it." "I want this." "No, you can't have it." Then they listen to you talk a while and then say: "Daddy, I need it." Do you know what that is? I know if I tell them that I need it, I really want it. An adult makes decisions. He chooses. He looks at the details of the situation and chooses the best course of action, the proper course of action, the thing that is going to be the best, and he takes that course. And that is what you are doing here. That is what Romans 12 is talking about—adult decision making, mature decision making spiritually. Notice the present evil world. Galatians 1:4.

Galatians 1:4

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Notice he calls it the "present evil world." You have to understand, gentlemen, that the Bible takes a basically negative view toward man, and a positive view toward God. Do you know what the world's view is? Opposite: positive toward itself, negative toward God: "Throw God out." "That is just superstition." "That is just the vestiges of our evolutionary past, the cannibalism, the tribalism," and all the rest of that.

The Bible says: "You are bad, God is right, you are wrong." The Book is right: a negative view toward man, a positive view toward God. Do you know the one thing that man never will forgive the Word of God for is that? If you go out here on the street corner and you pass tracks, and you hold up that Book, and you start preaching that book, men know instinctively that Book is against them. Now when you go out preaching, you might as well know it. You are going to have a negative view toward the world and a positive view toward God; and the reason that you do is that Paul calls it, the "present evil world."

He is not talking about the earth there; you understand that. It doesn't take five years in college and three in seminary to figure out that *world* is not talking about the ground. We use *world* in a lot of different ways. When we talk about the world tomorrow, and the world around us, and all that stuff, we are not talking about the earth—the planet. We are talking about the system that is going on around us—the cosmos—we call it, that kind of thing. The present evil world is the system that is under the control of Satan.

John 12:31

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 16:11

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

He is called *the prince of this world*.

2 Corinthians 4:4

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

He is called *the god of this world*.

“The present evil world” is the system that is under Satan’s control, and Paul is dealing with that.

Number two, the world system is the manifestation of the philosophy of Satan. It is the expression of the philosophy of Satan.

1 Corinthians 2:12

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

The world has a spirit to it; it has a philosophy, a viewpoint; and that philosophy is the expression of Satan's viewpoint. So number three about the world: The world is the channel through which Satan's program is developed.

1. The world is a system that is under the control of Satan.
2. The system promotes and expresses Satan's philosophy of life.
3. That system is the channel through which Satan’s program, his plan, and his purpose is developed.

Ephesians 2:2

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The course of this world is the course that is developing and promoting the plan and the program of Satan. What is Satan's wise plan? Isaiah 11: “to be like the most high God,” to ascend, to be up, and to go up. It is that: “Take it from me,” “Make me the big thing,” “I.” Pride was his sin, and his wise plan and program in Isaiah—we studied those things.

Isaiah 14: the world system is the system that develops Satan’s plan, and leads ultimately to its ultimate form in the antichrist. So Paul says, don't be conformed to that thing out yonder—to the system, the form and the fashion of the world that is about

you. Come over with me to I John 2, and James 4, and let me show you the system of values that the world has.

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity [hatred] with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

There is a verse that you need to remember. That is a strong passage. Friendship with the world is enmity with God. If you want to be the world's friend, you are not going to be God's friend. Well look here: If my Daddy tells me, "I want my son delivered from this present evil world, I want you delivered from it, that is my will and if you are friends with it, you can't be friends with me," and I love my Daddy, what am I going to do? I'm not going to be a little spoiled, snot-nosed brat running out there to the world, am I? What am I going to do? I am going to get rid of that world; I am not going to be conformed to it. I am going to be a friend of my Daddy, and I will be against the world. I will make a choice on the basis of gratitude and love.

Now if I don't have a Daddy that has been good to me and been gracious to me and has been a Daddy that I can love and respect, what is going to happen? I might have a different viewpoint about it, but do you have a Daddy that you can love? Didn't the verse say, I beseech you on the basis of the mercies of God? There is an offer that you can't refuse. And by now in Romans, you have come to understand and appreciate all that God has done for you through the crosswork of Christ—all of the assets and operating mechanisms that He has given you now, all of His wisdom and knowledge in setting aside Israel and bringing us in, and being just in it all. We understand all of that, and we can respond to it by standing as adult sons, and choosing willfully by act of personal choice to serve Him based on gratitude—not bondage—gratitude.

1 John 2:15-17

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Verse 16 gives you the three categories of things that the world values and esteems. What is the love of the world? It is the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Those are the three categories in which the things of the world are listed, and John said: "If a man love the world, the love of the father isn't in him." If the value system that you have in your mind and your thinking process matches the value system of the world, and if your thinking is conformed to the thinking that what is valuable is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, if those are the things that you count valuable, then you don't have a renewed mind, you don't have the love of the Father in you. You don't have the things that the father values and esteems in your mind. Paul says, don't be conformed to the world—don't have the system of values in your mind that match the things that the world values and esteems, but be ye transformed. Be just the opposite.

How do you “be transformed”? By the renewing of your mind. Now with regard to that word *renewing*: you know what you do when you renew something, don't you? You go in and you replace all of the old, inferior, worthless material with what? With brand new stuff. Well, if you are going to renew—replace the old, inferior, worthless stuff—renew your mind, what is he talking about? He is talking about taking all that old way of thinking that is worthless, inferior, and useless in the service of God, and replacing it. He is talking about replacing all those things of the world, the value system, all those standards of norms and judgment systems that you gain from the world—from all those years that you spent as an unsaved person, and from all those years that you spent as a believer who didn't have that sound knowledge in your mind. He says, renew your mind.

You know how to be transformed. It is by the renewing of your mind. It is a new way of thinking: you put out the old way, and you put in the new way. You are putting out human viewpoint; and what are you putting in? Sound doctrine, divine viewpoint. Now you say, how do you do that? Come over to II Corinthians 3. Right here, if you get this, the rest of these chapters will go quickly. Get this issue of the sonship attitude that you are to have—the renewed mind. You need really to begin reading in verse 12.

2 Corinthians 3:12-18

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord [the heart turns to the Lord], the vail shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Notice verse 18 very carefully, and for time's sake, I am just going to give you the references. “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord.” That glass is a figure of speech that refers to the Word of God. If you will write down James 1:22-25, you'll find a similar passage that refers to the same kind of a context in the Jewish program. You will find where the Hebrew saints over there have the same kind of a process, and it will work in their program, where the glass is defined as the Word of God.

James 1:22-25

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

So we, with open face beholding in the Word of God, what? The glory of the Lord. What was he talking about? Go back to verse 9.

2 Corinthians 3:9

For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

What is he talking about? The ministration of condemnation is the law. The ministration of righteousness is grace. If the law was glorious, how much more is righteousness glorious! Why? The law condemns you. What does grace do? It saves you, gives you righteousness, makes you right. Well, hey, if there was glory in what condemned you, isn't there a lot more glory in what saves you?

2 Corinthians 3:10-11

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

You see, the whole chapter is a contrast between the law and grace. Now we behold the Word of God, the glory of the Lord. What glory? Not the glory of the law, but the glory of grace—the glory that exceeds, the glory of righteousness, the glory of what Christ has done for us today—and what happens? We are changed. We get our word *metamorphose* from that word. There is a complete transformation, and notice what we are changed into: “the same image from glory to glory.” Do you know whose image we are changed into? The image of the Lord Jesus Christ; we are conformed to the image of His Son. Notice the last few words: “By the Spirit of the Lord.” You see folks, as you take in that doctrine about what God has done for us today, the Spirit of Almighty God takes us, and matures us, and transforms us, and renews our mind in a spiritual process where our thinking capacity becomes different. That is that renewed mind that transforms our thinking, and we are transformed. It is a spiritual transformation that, by the way, is just like the transformation that takes place in Philippians 3:21. Philippians 3:21 says, “change our vial body”—same word.

Philippians 3:21

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

It is the same word in Matthew 17, (the transfiguration), where His countenance was changed—same thing. Glorified humanity is what those references are, and that is what comes out here: God is glorified in our mortal bodies. The way that you have that, folks, is by that renewed mind. You replace the human viewpoint with divine viewpoint;

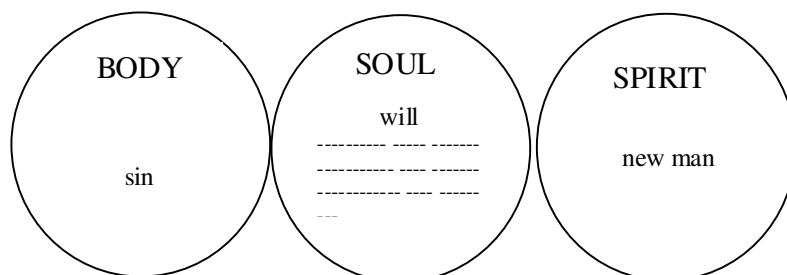
and when you do that, the Holy Spirit takes that divine viewpoint, and uses it to empower us for service for Christ. So what you need to do is get rid of the human viewpoint from the world, from your past, and from the way that you view things, and put in its place what God values and esteems. Then you can prove what the will of God is in the details of your life day by day. We will build on that basis next time, and I'll show you how that fits in relationship to the details of your life, especially as members of the body of Christ and your ministry goals. But please understand the issue that Paul is laying here is the issue of the capacity that we now have to function as sons—as adult sons walking in maturity, choosing, discerning, and applying our position and the will of God to the details of our lives for his glory.

Comment: You know, outside of the classroom environment, this is real rough to put in practical use when you get out there in our world. I find it real difficult for me.

A: Well, I'll go through that with you next time, that is why I was wanting to get down through verses 3 to 5; because when we get there, we are going to go over in I Corinthians, and I will show you how Paul takes the Corinthians through that. Corinthians is going to be a commentary on this part of Romans, just as Galatians was in the first part. He takes the Corinthians through the process. He says, here are some details in your lives that y'all don't know how to figure out what to do with. Let me show you how to apply Romans 12 to these details; and he gives them two standards that you can apply to any situation in your life that will determine for you what the will of God is. He shows them how to think it through. We are going to go over that in detail next time, and you'll see that. I understand what you are saying about it being difficult sometimes to know exactly how to apply all these things. The reason for that is that we are looking for ways to apply it. We are looking outside of us, rather than letting it come out of us from the inside, and you will see that next time. I hope it will be clear to you. You have to get this foundation in verses 1 and 2: this is the thinking process whereby you get a renewed mind. There is a way to think that produces the transformation, that is what he is saying; and First Corinthians is a whole book of practical illustrations of it.

Q: Will the renewed mind generate a will that will overpower the will of the flesh?

A: No. You have the body of sin. Then you have your soul, which is who you are. Then you have your spirit. You are your soul, and your will is a function of your soul. Sin dwells in your body. The new nature, the new man—is in your spirit.



You store up this sound doctrine in your soul, and you get that information in there, and then on the basis of this divine viewpoint—not the old human viewpoint, but the divine viewpoint—your will is strengthened, fortified by this doctrine to choose to walk in your new man rather than in your body of sin. Now that doesn't mean that you won't walk in line with what the world does—to walk in the flesh is just to walk in line with the dictates of the world system as given to you by the flesh. To walk in the spirit is to walk in line with what the Spirit of God is doing. You are in the middle, (the soul), so to speak.

We have already studied Romans 6, 7, and 8, how you are free from sin. You remember that you are alive unto God, but if you don't renew your mind, if you don't have that new way of thinking that matches the way the Spirit of God thinks, then you'll be walking in the flesh. If you don't have the mind of Christ through that doctrine, then you are never going to walk in the spirit; you are never going to have the capacity.

Now, what the Spirit of God does is work in you through the Word, as you put that information in there, and you by faith—by a conscious act of your choice—choose to walk on that basis. Let me say it like this. Say you have this filing cabinet, and that two thirds of it is filled with old human viewpoint. One third of it is new divine viewpoint. So two thirds of it is human view point, and you have replaced one third of it with divine viewpoint. When you walk in this way of thinking, (human viewpoint), what are you walking in? In the flesh. When you walk in this way of thinking, (divine viewpoint), what are you walking in? In the Spirit. You determine which way you walk on the basis of what you are thinking, and the way you are going; and that doesn't mean, “Oh, I just wish I was walking in the spirit,” because we make fleshly our desires for sanctification, because the religions of the world tell you to do right.

The way you think, and the way God thinks is when God says be kind one to another, then you know how God thinks and you know what God wants, and so you know what to do. But what your flesh says is, “I have a right to be mad.” Then you say, “Yeah, but I got a right not to be.” Why? Because God told me that I can. So it is a thinking process and you have to think. It is a mental process that you go by. What we do is react, and the sin nature is what reacts. As soon as you are conscious of what you are doing, (that is thinking), what do you do? Stop, and say, “I don't have to walk in the flesh, I'll walk in the spirit,” and the more that you put sound doctrine in there—the more you build it up—the more you take out of that filing system the idea that “I can't stop, I can't not do it, I can't, I have to react.” The more you take those old ideas out, and you put in, “Hey, I can stop,” the more you'll be walking in the spirit. See, I am running through something and I react, and I blow my stack, or I do whatever I'm going to do, you know, and then I come across the little thing in my file system that says I can stop. Well, the closer I move that to the front, the quicker I stop. How do you move it closer to the front? Throw some of the other pages out, so you walk more on the basis of the divine viewpoint. I am going to try to show you how that process works next time.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-2

Romans chapter 12. We are going to continue now in what we began last time. This is the last section in the book of Romans; it is the last foundation stone that Paul lays here, in the foundation of the gospel of the grace of God. "My gospel," he calls it, and that is that basic foundational material—information—that you have to have in order to give your ministry stability.

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We have talked about the passage down to that point, and we have talked about the issue of presenting your body a living sacrifice, and that your life is to be holy and acceptable unto God in the details, and that your service for the Lord begins with the execution of what is involved in this passage. Verse 2 is very critical. "Be not conformed to this world." Last time we went over I John 2, and I tried to show you those three categories in which the things of the world fall. The world evaluates and esteems things on the basis of three categories: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. And you are not to be conformed to that value system; that is not to be the system whereby you value and esteem things. That's the system of the world, and the love of the Father—the Father's value system—isn't in that kind of thing.

"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed." How? By the renewing of your mind. Transformation in this age—in the age of grace, in the dispensation of grace—comes through a renewed mind. That is, a new mental process, a new way of thinking. You get rid of the old way of thinking. What is the old way of thinking? That is the old man, the old human viewpoint that you were trained with from the time that you were an infant.

That is one of the reasons that it is important for you, as a believer, to raise your children in the things of the Lord. Do you understand? If you can take a child and teach him Christian principles and ways of life, when he gets saved, he has a head start on some of you, doesn't he? Sure, he does. Why? Not that he learned it from the Spirit of God. He wasn't saved. But he learned habits of living that are in line with what they should be. His thinking is already oriented in the right way. It is a great advantage to have been raised in a Christian home. Most of us don't have that advantage.

That is one of the joys at the church. Friday night, we are going to have another 50th wedding anniversary, and it is a joy to go to those things, see 150-200 people gather together, and see godly generations: people who have raised their kids, and their kids are saved, and their grandkids are saved. Friday night, I am going to speak. They asked

me if I would preach—no problem. But Alice told me: “I have got a niece and a couple of cousins that aren't saved.” How would you like to get your family together, and say I have a niece and a couple of cousins that aren't saved? Wouldn't that be wonderful? It sure would, brother. I can't do that. That is a great thing. Well, let's pass that thing down; and you have the opportunity. Maybe you can't look back at it, but you can look forward to it, can't you? Could you see your kids like that? Your grandkids, and your great grandkids, and let your kids be able to say that? So when you hit your 50th anniversary, and we all come and ding on the glasses for you, then we can say that about you. That's great.

That renewed thinking, that renewed way of thinking, is important. It is critical that you understand that, because when you renew something, you take out the old material, the old worthless, valueless, worn-out, no-good stuff, and you throw it out. And you replace it with the new material. We talked about that, and I tried to show you in II Corinthians 3 how that process works as you take in the doctrine—the divine viewpoint, the sound doctrine—and the Word of God works. God the Holy Spirit gives you a new mental process, a new way to think. So he says you develop this new thinking process. Come over to II Corinthians 10. There is a passage that I wanted to look at with you, and we haven't done it yet. There is a term that I want to give you so that you understand it.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

“Casting down imaginations.” An *imagination* is human viewpoint. It is something that you dream up, an idea, thought, scheme, plan that you develop on the basis of human viewpoint. If you remember Romans 1, where we studied about imaginations, you understand where they come from. They “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened”. “Casting down imaginations,” in other words, get rid of human viewpoint.

“And every high thing,”—every proud lofty thought—“that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.” We take God's knowledge—the knowledge and viewpoint that comes from God—and anything that exalts itself against that, and what do you do? You throw it away, and bring it into captivity. Do you know what it is to put something in captivity? You bind it up; you control it. Bring what into captivity? “Every thought.” Captive to what? “To the obedience of Christ.” Do you see that mental attitude issue there? That doctrinal structure in your soul. And what you are dealing with is mental attitude dynamics. There is a living process that takes place as you renew your mind, as you bring your thinking process into captivity to the knowledge of God. You throw out all the human viewpoint. When the details of life come—think of a detail in your life. When it comes at you, that stimulus comes from without. But where does God operate? Out to in? No, He works in to out. Please don't forget that, will you? Boy, I tell you, if you get a hold of that: God puts His Word in you, and the Word in your soul works out.

God's method of operating today is not working from without to within. It is not leading and guiding you by circumstances. He is not putting things on you. The Word is inside of you, the Spirit of God is inside of you, and you have been given a renewed ability to respond to the details of life from His viewpoint. You can literally get to the place where you think like God thinks. That is the key. How do you do that? You take the Word in, and store it up in your soul. I have talked to you about this and when we get over next year into the issue of ambassadorship, we are going to study some things about the physiology of this.

Here you have a guy who is sitting there and listening—taking in the Word. It comes in his ear, and the Spirit takes it in, then the man through positive volition toward the sound doctrine takes that doctrine and stores it up in his soul. He lays it up, and Paul is saying to us that as you store that information up, you store it up on the basis of the form, the pattern, putting it into proper order. It is as though you put the information in the file cabinet of your soul, but if you don't put it in alphabetical order, are you going to be able to find it? No. You have to put it in the form of sound words. You put it in the proper order and sequence—the right way.

So you build up that information, and as you build up that information in your soul—as you put it in there and store it up—your conscience comes into play. Remember this definition. Your *conscience* is your system of norms and standards—the system by which you determine what is normal. What is the standard by which you operate? It is your conscience. Often you will hear it referred to as your sense of moral blameworthiness. That is, it is the ability that you have to decide when something is right, wrong, acceptable, or unacceptable. That system of norms and standards is determined by the information in your mind.

So as you take out the human viewpoint, take out the vain imaginations, take out things that oppose what God says, and put God's viewpoint in, what becomes your system of norms and standards? To what do you become conformed? To God's viewpoint; and you begin to look at the details of life the way God looks at them.

Here is somebody, and they do something wrong to you, they offend you. What do you do? Smack them in the kisser? That is what the old man did, wasn't it? Wasn't that what you learned? But what do you do? You think about that detail the way that God thinks about it. We are going to read verses in a few minutes where he begins to apply this renewed way of thinking to details in life to give you illustrations about what do to. The key is to think about it the way God thinks about it. There is something in the rest of Romans 12:2 that I want you to see.

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Someone asked me last week, how you get the transformation. You get it by that renewed thinking process. That is why he says in verse 3, to think soberly. How many times have I told you, the hardest thing that you are ever going to do is to try to get people to think? I told you about the guy that used to come to our church in Selma, who finally told me: “I'm not coming here anymore.”

I said, “Why not?”

He said, “You have to work too hard to come here”

And I said, "Good night nurse, you don't have to do anything to come here. What do you mean, you have to work?"

"You make us think too much," he said.

I just opened the door for him. There wasn't anything else to do for a fellow like that.

No sin ever creeps up into your life, no failure, no short coming, no operating on human viewpoint ever comes up into your life, except first there is a long slow process of bad thinking. And you can tell me what you want to, and you can blow smoke at me or yourself or anybody else, and say that isn't so. It is a fact. That is what the book says. I don't care what you say. That book can go right inside of you and tell you what you are doing when you are not even conscious of doing it. You see, "the heart," (what does that verse say?), "is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins." That is what the next verse says. Let God tell you about it. So what do you do? You operate on the basis of what He says. Go back to 12:2.

Romans 12:2

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,

With that renewed thinking, we have replaced the human viewpoint with the divine viewpoint; and the Holy Spirit takes that divine viewpoint, and uses it to empower us in our service for Christ. The more of that divine viewpoint that we have stored up, the more He uses it in our soul. That is where the power comes from—the Spirit of God taking His Word, and empowering and motivating us.

Philippians 2:13

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

That is how God works in you; and you see, He creates the will and the doing—the energy to get the will done. So what you want to do is to get rid of the human viewpoint that you gain from the world; and put what God values and esteems into your soul, and into your mind, and into your frame of reference. Your frame of reference is that screen on which you flash the information, and you look at it, and you are consciously thinking about it; it is your conscious thoughts right now. There are a lot of things in your mentality and in your heart that you are not thinking about right now, but the frame of reference is that memory screen where everything is flashed up there—brought out of the memory banks—and flashed up there on that screen. And then your conscience evaluates it, and says: "Nope," "Yes," "Nope," "Yes," "Maybe," "Not enough yet," "Let's get it here."

Notice the rest of the verse. Here is why you want to have the renewed mind. Here is why you want to have the divine viewpoint resident in your soul. "That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

That word, *prove*, means *to demonstrate it*. Do you know how to prove a math problem? How do you prove an addition problem? You subtract it. Right? How do

you prove a subtraction problem? You add it. How do you prove a multiplication problem? You divide it? How do you prove a division problem? Multiply it. What do you do when you prove it? You are testing the thing, thinking the process through to the place where you know for sure that the answer is right. You are demonstrating it, proving it, testing it. You go out to the Indy 500, (They call it “the proving grounds.”), and they are going to prove a car. What are they doing? They are testing it to demonstrate that it will do what they say it will do, or what they think it will do. Do you know what that is?

There is a mental process that you go through to prove something, isn't there? You take the object, and you match it up over here with your system of norms and standards, and you try to mesh them together. Do you see how we are talking about this thinking process, this mental process where you think the thing through and come to the conclusion that something is right or it is wrong? That is important for you to understand. I want you to get a hold of that issue about proving what that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. That is the reason for the renewed mind. The reason for having that doctrine stored up in here is not just that you can go around and say: “Whew, look at all this doctrine that I have.” That isn't it. It is so that you might prove. It is so that you will be able to properly evaluate and determine what God's will for your life is in the details of your life.

He doesn't just give you all that doctrine in chapters 1-11 so you just know a bunch of stuff. He is giving you all that doctrine about your position in Christ, and about what God is doing in the dispensation of grace, so that you can properly evaluate the details of your life the way that God evaluates them; and determine what His will for your life is. Ladies and gentlemen, you are going to have to evaluate the details of your life to determine if you are in the will of God, or if you are not in the will of God, and that isn't all.

Look at verse 2, and see where he says, “that ye may prove...” He doesn't say that you may prove the will of God and stop there. What does he say? Do you see the degrees of the will of God there? There is a will of God that is good; then there is a will of God that is acceptable; and then there is a will of God that is perfect. Do you see that? I have read commentaries for years, and have never heard a commentary yet that would describe what that passage says. They just slide over it. Do you know what he is saying? There are some things that you can do that are the will of God for you that are good; then there is something that is better, and there is something that is the best. Let me show you another verse like it. Come over to Philippians.

Listen, gentlemen, you are going to have to have a renewed mind—a capacity to discern some things. You are going to have to know how to do this so that you can come to proper conclusions. You know what I am talking about. You are going to have to act like whom? A child, or an adult? An adult—like a son—not under tutors and governors, with someone telling you what to do: “do this” and “don't do that.” You are going to have to be able to look at the details of your life and determine: “I should do this, and I shouldn't do that.” Look at the verse in Hebrews 5.

Hebrews 5:14

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use [using the Scripture] have their senses exercised to discern both [what?] good and evil.

A guy can look at the details of life, and he can say: “that is right and that is wrong.” How? He has that frame of reference built up, that conscience built up in his soul. He has that doctrine in there, and his conscience—his discerning capacities, his ability to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God—works.

Now, that verse is saying “good or bad”. How about if something is good, but not bad? It is good, and then something else is acceptable, and something else is perfect. Something is good, but this is better, and that is best. Do you just quit when you find something that is good, or do you ever look for the best? Do you see that God doesn't want you to just settle for the good.

In Philippians 1, Paul is writing to mature saints. These are saints who have come through Romans; they have come through Ephesians; and they are perfected. They are mature. What does he pray for them? Verse 8:

Philippians 1:8-11

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

I preached some messages at church about 6 months ago about how to pray for mature believers. Do you remember that? If you don't remember it, maybe you ought to get the tapes. We expounded this passage right here. That is the issue here. Paul is praying for mature believers. What do you do when you get to the stage of maturity? You have the Romans truth—the foundation—and you have the advanced truth—Ephesians, now what? Is there anything else? Verse 9:

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; [He is saying: I want you just to keep growing in knowledge and in judgment. *Judgment* there is in the sense of being able to discern things, and know what is right and wrong. Know what God values and esteems. Why? The more that you know about what God values and esteems, what can you do? Look at verse 10:

10 That ye may approve [same thing in Romans 12, prove—test the thing out and say this is right.] things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

That word *excellent* in verse 10 means *the things of greater value*. The dispensationalists like to retranslate it, and say that it really means *that you may approve things that differ*. But the word doesn't mean to differ as my left hand differs from my right hand, or this from that. It means to differ in the sense of one thing being of greater value than the other. It means exactly what our word *excellent* means: this is good, this is better, this is best. And Paul says: Hey, do you know what a mature

believer can do? He can determine, not simply what is right and what is wrong; but of all the good things, what is best. You should never have any problem deciding what is right or what is wrong. As you grow in the Lord, and walk in Him, and walk in the Spirit of God, and are doing what God gave you to do, there is going to quickly come a time in your life when you are not having to choose right from wrong. You don't have the world's value system, so you are not having to decide if you are going to do this thing which is in the world or that thing. You are going to go by God's thinking.

Alright, I begin to operate on the way that God thinks about the details of my life, I get rid of the unworthy, and I get rid of the sinful practices—the overtly, easily determined-to-be-wrong things: adultery, drinking, smoking, cussing, gambling and all that kind of stuff. Those things are just easy to determine; they're things you grew up knowing were wrong. You get rid of those unworthy things. Then you begin to look at the details of your life, and have a choice about what you ought to do. Didn't you gentlemen have to choose whether or not you were going to go to school? Would it have been wrong for you not to have gone to school? Could there have been something good that you could have done instead of gone to school? Sure. Didn't you have to sit down and decide what was best?

Aren't you having to decide that right now? Some of you are getting some conflicts in your schedule because of timing, you are beginning to grow, and you have ministry beginning to go, and you are having to say: wait a minute. Don't you have to sit down and deal with things like that? I do it on a daily basis. Here are priorities, and none of my choices are bad things. I could do any of the things, and they would be good things; but some will be better than others, and then there are a few of them that will be the best and wisest use of my skills and abilities and time. So what are you looking for? You are looking for that ability to discern them, and to choose what? To choose what is perfect. That is what he is after. The way you get that is that renewed mind. Do you follow what he is saying?

“Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed...” He is not talking about you just getting rid of a few little problems. He is talking about you developing an ability to discern the will of God in every detail of your life; not just between the bad and the good. Most of us begin struggling with the bad and the good, don't we? But Paul is talking about being able to take a whole bunch of things that are good, and sorting them through, and seeing what is the best, the excellent, the perfect.

Here is an example: you are going to face an issue some time about where to have your ministry—where to go preach, and that kind of thing. Is it right to preach the Word? Three places want you to come and preach, to come and be their pastor. Are any of them bad? That is a good opportunity, isn't it? All of those are good choices, but you need to have the ability to discern. You need to be able to figure out the details, and be able to discern on your own through the knowledge and information that you have stored up, what the will of God for you is. You are not looking for some divine extra-Biblical revelation coming in and knocking you on the head, or knocking you down. You are not looking for some circumstantial thing. You are not looking out, but you're looking in.

When I say you need to decide on your own, I don't mean independent, and self-willed. I mean, have your will conformed to His will, and have the capacity to discern as an adult son—to act like an adult. My Daddy used to say: “Make up your own feeble mind.” Or: “Can't you make up your feeble mind?” That's it; choose the right thing.

Folks, that is a fantastic privilege—to act as adult sons. I hope that you will remember right here, Galatians 4, the passage about not being under tutors and governors, but He has made us sons, and we have that privilege.

Galatians 4:1-7

- 1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;**
- 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.**
- 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:**
- 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,**
- 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.**
- 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.**
- 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**

You see, you are an adult, and you are to live in that manner. You are to make your own decisions, and control yourself. You are to control yourself on your own, based on that renewed mind. You are to understand the divine operating assets that you have, God's standard of value—what He values, and what He esteems—and you are to act in an appropriate and a responsible manner by your own choice; not because somebody is forcing you to, or because they are going to whack you if you don't, but because you choose to do it.

I have defined for you people what a good work is. Do you remember? A good work is something you do because God told you to do it. He says: “Do it; I am not going to twist your ear and make you, and I'm not going to slap you down if you don't, but this is what I want you to do.” And you do it because you choose to please Him. Now, you know what that is: that is being an adult. Come with me to Ephesians 6. That is maturity, gentlemen, that is maturity.

A mature walk is a person who has their conscience, (their system of norms and standards, their system of being able to evaluate a thing and come out with the right choices), developed to the point that they can live on the basis of the proper standards given to them by their Father. I'll give you an illustration of it. Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Why is a child to obey his parents? Because it is right. From day one, you had better teach your children: “Do what I tell you, not because I'm bigger than you and can

knock you down if you don't, but it is what? Right. You see, you want to build into his understanding. I mean, you are going to make him do right, aren't you; because you are bigger than you him, aren't you? Hey don't ever forget you're bigger than the kids; you can make him do, and you better make him do, if you have put fear and trembling in him to make him do it for that reason. I mean, he is a kid, and when you are a child, what are you under? Tutors and governors. And that is why, when you begin that child, he is under a legalistic system. I understand that as a parent—to control the child—because he can't do it himself. But as he grows up, what do you do? You teach him to do right. Verse 4.

Ephesians 6:4

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

“Provoke not your children to wrath.” What works wrath? The law. Don't keep that kid under the law, he says. Do you understand? Where do you have to put him? You have to make him a man. You have to teach him to operate on the proper standards of evaluating things. So what do you do? You begin to instill those standards in him. Do right, do right, do right. How do you do it? You “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Everybody talks about *nurture and admonition*. I like those words, “bring them up.” You bring them up. You take them through the stages of growth for the development of their conscience. You don't deal with them the same at every point. You take them through each stage of their growth; and as they grow, you develop their conscience by the use of nurture and admonition. So when they become an adult, they can use that conscience that you have built in them to make their own judgments.

Listen, you know that some kids never grow up. They grow up physically, but they never become an adult, because they can never act as an adult. They always act on the basis of someone or something else telling them what to do; and they are never able to come to the place where they can act on their own. I don't mean independently of other people. A two year old kid can act on his own that way. We had one around there at church the other night—about 10 years old—acting up: kicking and screaming and hollering. Somebody has done that child wrong by never giving her a way to properly evaluate and know what the right thing to do is.

Nurture: that is just nourishment. You feed the kid. It is that inner development of the conscience. It is that building the standards by sound doctrine, putting it in them, teaching them what is right. And then what? Admonition: that is that personal application of the standards to the details of life—to train the person in the proper operation of things. Train them that when you touch the stove, it burns; and you don't do that by holding their hand up there and scalding them. You do it by giving them the instruction, and then giving them a reason not to do the thing, and a reason to do it. I'm not trying to teach a child-rearing class. I am trying to make an application of the way that you understand that you raise children, to the way it is with you. You develop that system of norms and standards, and do you know what the greatest things in your life will be when your kids begin to be grown up? Twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old and they begin to be able to make decisions—not

because Daddy told me, but because I see it is right and I see it is wrong. That is what God expects out of you.

In the assembly, what do we do? We get believers at all different stages, and we owe an obligation to one another to do what? To help each other grow. That is what he is going to go on with in chapter 12, and he is going to talk about our being in one body. That body relationship is the perfect relationship to allow us to exercise our sonship because we are in a lasting permanent relationship where we need each other completely and totally. We are dependent upon one another, we are responsible to one another, we have to look out for one another, we have to contribute to one another's health, and we can do it on the basis of our sonship—fully, properly functioning in the position and capacity that God gave me to function in. Now that is great.

Let's go back to Roman's 12. What I am trying to get you to comprehend is the issue of proving, because on the basis of that renewed mind, you determine what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. That is why when you read all these “how to” books: how to do this, and how to do the next thing, and how to do the next thing, and how to do the next thing, and they give you these six steps. If you will do this, you will get this result. That is the reason that they don't work. Because it is your responsibility to learn the principles and then to apply them on the basis of your proving; you make up your own mind. You determine on your own what is right; and again, I am not talking about self-willed. What are you bring every thought into captivity to? The obedience of Christ.

So it is not just going out with the attitude: “I'll just go out and decide what I want to do.” It isn't that at all. Why? Because you have to properly esteem what you should do. What should you do? What you want to do? No. See. Your conscious says no—no to self will. That is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. “I am not going to do it,” or “I am going to do it on the basis of what God values and esteems.” That is different. “I am going to choose to act in a proper and responsible manner based on that doctrine that I understand about what God is doing today.”

That is why I keep harping at you about:

1. Your identification in Christ—your oneness with him, and
2. The fact that you have to find out what God is doing today and do it.

You know how I use terminology like “stuff.” Alan and Nancy are telling me about a fellow who doesn't like to hear me talk about “stuff.” He says, don't say “stuff” so much. Leave all that “stuff” out, you know, and I talk about “stuff:” “That is the “stuff” that life is made out of.” Okay? That is a good Bible word. Back in the Old Testament, they “stayed by the stuff.” So you are going to be conscious of me saying that now. That is alright, but remember where it comes from. That is where the issue is. Verse 3:

Romans 12:3

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

“Soberly.” Think clearly, soberly, don't be like some drunk out here that can't think, that slurs his speech, and that kind of thing. When you think soberly, you think responsibly, you think clearheadedly, you think about things the way they really are. You need to know who you are in Christ. You need to be oriented to the grace of God that you learned about in the first 8 chapters of the book of Romans. And you need to be oriented to the plan of God that you learned about in chapters 9-11, the dispensation of grace. You need to be oriented to those things so that you can have a renewed mind, you can know what God is doing, and you can deal with the details of your life on the basis of who you are in Christ, and what God is doing.

Think right. Don't think about yourself above that which is written. Isn't that the problem that most of us have? Yes, that's right. We are not to think of ourselves above that which is written. Come over to I Corinthians 4. There is something to remember about that verse: The standard of grace is objectivity. The standard of grace is total objectivity—being able to look at the thing like it really is, and get the skinny on the thing, being able to get right down to the place where there isn't any sugar coating on it at all. You know who you are. That is what he is saying. Know who you are in yourself. Didn't you learn that in chapters 1-3 in the book of Romans, and then learn who you are in Christ? And don't forget that God put you in Christ permanently—for keeps—and you can't get out. That is who God sees you to be, and you learn that in Chapters 3-8. He said, now, you operate on the basis of that. That is how to think.

1 Corinthians 4:5-6

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

“That which is written.” What is written about men? Doesn't the verse say that the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the glory of the flesh, what will it do? Fade away, brother. It won't last very long, not much to it. “That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.” Now notice these questions.

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? [Who made you different from somebody else? God did.] and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? [What do you have that somebody didn't give you? Nothing. I mean the ability to take a breath in and blow it out—God gave you that ability. If it wasn't for the providence of God, you wouldn't be able to do a thing. Can you keep your heart beating? If you just sit there and think about it, can you keep your heart beating? Aren't you glad that you don't have to do it? Everything that you have was given to you. Well, some people, evolutionists for example, have good minds, and think about all that stuff to get around God. They could lose it just like that. You just better thank God. You can argue about where it came from and all that stuff, but you better thank God for His provisions in creation. “What do you have that you didn't receive?”]now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

Isn't that a good question? Don't get so stuck on, and don't operate on, the value system of the lust of the flesh: me, me, me, me, me; the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Operate on the value system that God has.

Romans 12:3. For I say, through the grace given unto me

Please notice that this is instruction that Paul has as part of his special message. When he talks about “the grace given unto me,” that will compare with Ephesians 3, where he says, “...according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me... who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” This is as much a part of Paul's special revelation for today as the issue of the one baptism, the one body, no speaking in tongues, and all the other things that people like to holler about, and forget about this. I look at the camera when I say that, but I'm talking to y'all. So don't forget that.

Romans 12:3-5

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members [Now here is how you think.] **As we have many members in one body,** [My body has a lot of different parts to it.] **and all members have not the same office:** [All the different parts in my body don't have the same job, they all have different jobs.]

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Well, if we are members, one of another, who are we supposed to live for? One another. Have you got that? That is what you live for. Hey, I can sit down to eat, and my right hand feeds me. My mouth chews it up. My stomach digests it. Who is it digested for? Just itself? Does my right hand just feed itself? You're laughing at me. But that is just as silly as some member of the body of Christ living for himself. What if my right hand says, “I'm going to keep all this food for myself,” and he is going to hold it over there, and none of it is ever going to get to my mouth. It is just going to hold it, and keep it all to itself. Now, what is going to happen? The rest of me is going to die, and you know what that hand is going to do? It is going to die with the rest of me. We live and breathe together. We are members one of another—responsible, and obligated one to another. So he says, think straight. Thinking straight allows us to appreciate the importance of that body relationship that we have, and it allows us to live for one another.

Now I don't want you miss that last part of verse 3. We are to think soberly. How? “According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” What is the measure of faith? The idea with that word *measure*, is a thing that you measure something by. You take a measuring cup, put the stuff in, and you measure it: a cup, 8 ounces, 12 ounces, or whatever it is going to be. In my office is a measuring stick—a yardstick. That is the idea. In fact, that word there, you could say, “as God has given to every man the yardstick of faith,”—same thing. “The measuring stick of faith.” He is talking about the standard, the ruler of faith. “The measuring stick of faith.” What is

the measuring stick of faith? It is sound doctrine. What do you measure the details of life against?

You see, it is given to everyone in the body—every man—every person in the body of Christ is given the measuring stick, and we are to have that measuring stick in our soul; and we are to be able to use that measuring stick to discern the will of God in the details of our life. And until we have reached that capacity, we are not ready for service—we are not perfected saints who can go out and do the work of the ministry. Your ministry as a pastor and a teacher is to get that measuring stick of sound doctrine stored up in their souls; and then to teach them how to use that measuring stick in the details of life so they can discern the will of God for themselves. They need that measuring stick in order to know what it is that God put them in that body to do, accept all the other members of the body where He put them, and all work together in total absolute unity.

Do you know that my right hand never has gotten angry at my left hand because it had to do all the writing? Isn't that funny? There are some of you people that get mad at your brethren in Christ when you have to do all the work, don't you? "I have to do it all." "Nobody is ever going to do anything." Yeah. Don't some of you get jealous when you see the other guy doing everything? My left hand never has been jealous because my right hand does all the writing. Do you know why? I have never gotten a complaint at night from my left hand that said, "All I ever do is just hang around; I mean the best thing that you could do with me is to put me in your pocket and play with your keys. That other hand gets all the glory over there. Do you know why it doesn't do that? Because it is in a body, and it thinks properly, it relates properly, it has the capacity to do what it is put there to do; and that is us. We are one body in Christ.

You see, you are in that body relationship in verses 4 and 5, and it is in that relationship that God treats us like sons, and it is a perfect relationship to express our sonship. In Time Past, the nation Israel was never able to walk like we can walk. They were under bondage under that other system, but not you. We have God in an intimate relationship with us, He is near, and we have a situation that they never dreamed of. We have what Paul calls, "the mind of Christ," and we are to operate on the basis of it. Go with me over to I Corinthians, if you will; and let me show you a passage that illustrates this. (We'll get into this more when we get into chapter 14.) We only have about 7 minutes left in the class, and Brother Leach is here tonight, so he will holler at me if I go over; and if he doesn't, the tape will run off anyway.

1Corinthians 8:1-3

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

"Now as touching things offered unto idols..." Paul is writing to the Corinthians, and he begins in chapter 7 by giving them a list of answers to questions that they had sent to him. The Corinthians should have been able to answer the questions themselves, but they didn't. They weren't walking in the light of the truth of Romans.

You see, they were failing in the details of their life to do the things that Romans would have equipped them to do.

We studied Galatians, and we saw in Galatians how that these people had to be corrected constantly about failing to stand in that sonship position. They needed to stay under grace and not go back under the law. Do you remember how we studied that?

In Corinthians, these people weren't walking in the details of their life according to the position that they had in Christ, under grace, as a member of one body. They were not discerning the will of God. They were not able to discern the will of God in the details of their lives, so they wrote to Paul, and asked him the details, and watch what he does.

1 Corinthians 8:1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. [Everybody has their own ideas.] Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

If all you have is a bunch of knowledge and viewpoint—ideas—that kind of thing, it cause you to have the attitude: I've got my idea. But what is going to edify? Charity. Agape—God's value system is going to edify.

1 Corinthians 8:2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

He isn't thinking soberly, is he? Do you see the connection with Romans 12:3? Don't let anybody think about himself higher than he ought. The guy thinks: I know, I know what to do; I've got it, I've got it.

1 Corinthians 8:3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

Hey, if you go on the basis of the Word, do you know what is going to happen? It is going to show in the details of your life.

1 Corinthians 8:4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

We have some basic Bible doctrine. “We know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is none other God, but one.” We have the basic Bible doctrine of Romans 1, and now that we have that, we know that there is only one God, and that an idol is just the vain imaginations of men.

1 Corinthians 8:5-6

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many, [In other words, all this angelic creation.]

6 But to us [We that understand Bible doctrine.] there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

In other words, we have some basic Bible doctrine that we can go on, that is going to settle this question.

1 Corinthians 8:7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience [Conscience: that system of norms and standards. conscience] of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak [They don't have much doctrine in their conscience. It is weak. It is what?] is defiled.

They have bad information in their conscience, and that makes their conscience worthless. Their system of norms and standards is of no value, because it doesn't have much doctrine in it; so it is worthless to them, and it doesn't give the ability to function properly. So they are worried about all this stuff sacrificed to idols.

Verse 7 is very important for you to get. "There is not in every man," (and that is saved men), "that knowledge." What has happened? They lack the renewed mind. They have never gotten the basic truths that we have studied in Romans 1:18 to the end of the chapter down in their thinking. They don't have that settled in their thinking. They lack the renewed mind, so they are not able to function, and to face the issues of life, and to make proper decisions about them. Why can't they make proper decisions about the things offered to idols? They don't have proper knowledge. They don't have the proper Bible doctrine. They have the old human viewpoint; not the proper viewpoint. So what do you do? He says that there is a problem. Their conscience is weak, it doesn't have much doctrine in it, it does not have much divine viewpoint in it; it is not fortified and made strong by sound doctrine. So it is worthless. So Paul says, here is what to do.

1 Corinthians 8:8-11

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: [He says, hey man, the issue with God is not whether we eat the meat or we don't.] **for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.** [Did you get that? It doesn't make any difference if you eat it, or if you don't, as far as God is concerned. That isn't the issue with God. Listen, you had better get that.]

9 But take heed [Here is where you had better watch out.] lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

Not *perish* in the sense of *die and go to hell*, but *destroyed* like over there in Romans 14. He said: for meat's sake, destroy not the work of God. Destroy what work? The work of building up that brother rather than destroying him and throwing him into a shipwrecked condition, tossed to and fro. What should you do? Verse 12.

1 Corinthians 8:12-13

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. [Why? You are sinning against the body of Christ.]

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will [I, by my personal choice, will act appropriately and in a responsible manner. I choose to what?] **eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.**

Have you got that? We have to quit, and we will go on with this a little bit next time. But you see what he is saying basically is: Hey guys, look at one another, and make sure that what you are doing is not harming and ruining another. You want to live for that other brother's edification, and if it is a problem to that guy, you've got liberty not to do it, as well as liberty to do it. Have a proper attitude, and a proper understanding; and if you properly value the relationship that you have in this body, you know what you are going to learn to do? Live for the other guy, because when you live for the other guy, when my hand feeds my mouth, do you know what is happening? The whole body is fed. Is my hand benefited? It sure is.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-3

Romans 12 begins a new section in the book of Romans. The issue is that the believer is to respond to the mercies of God that we have studied about in the first eleven chapters, by offering our lives to the Lord, and living in a way that is well pleasing to Him. We have been over the doctrinal sections—the first 8 chapters—and we saw the two basic doctrinal issues: justification, and then being filled with the Spirit—the issue of all that God has done, and how He has equipped us to live and function as members of the body of Christ on the planet, in our lives here. We saw all that He has done for us to make us acceptable before Him, and the way that He has equipped us. We saw all the assets that are ours that allow us to be able to live for Him, and to be all that He wants us to be.

Then we saw the historical and dispensational issues in chapters 9-11: how God has a purpose today that has caused Him to interrupt the prophetic program, hold up that prophetic purpose in order to execute the purpose that is involved in the dispensation of grace. God isn't through with Israel, you're not spiritual Israel. He will take up with them in the Ages to Come, but right now He has something else that He is doing.

And then we begin chapter 12 with: “I beseech you therefore, brethren”—on the basis of all these other things, “I beseech you.” Again, I call your attention to the fact that to be beseeched is to be requested to do something motivated by grace. The whole issue in the rest of this passage is going to be the issues of grace motivation. The operative principles of grace motivation are going to be dealt with here, and the issue of walking as sons, and the motivational framework that gives us the ability to be empowered by grace in the details of our lives on a daily basis are what he is going to deal with now. It is just the issues of practical living under grace, and letting grace live and function.

Romans 12:1-5

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

I call your attention again to verse 3. You are not to think in an improper manner. You are to think clearly, soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. Every believer has been given the measuring stick of the faith whereby

to evaluate things; and our conscience, and our frame of reference is to be “the faith.” We are to look at things—we are to view things—the way God views them; and we are to measure the details of our lives on the basis of that, not on the basis of our own viewpoint—the old life. So we are to put off the old way of thinking, and we are to put on the new way of thinking. And that new way of thinking is that measure of faith—that measuring stick of doctrine, sound doctrine—that God has given to us that we build up in our soul. We build it in our soul, and we build that house of doctrine, and we operate on the basis of that.

Now verse 4: “for as we have many members.” The idea is, don't think more highly of yourself than you ought, but think soberly. Think according to what God is doing, “for,”—that is a particle of further explanation. “For”—here is why you want to do that: “As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

Just a dispensational note here: That is a clear reference to the body of Christ. It is a clear reference to the functioning of the body of Christ, and the fact that the Romans, and the believers at that time, were expected, to function as body members. So when somebody comes along and says the body of Christ doesn't begin until after the close of the book of Acts, and these things in here are all something else, you understand that is just that they have an ax to grind, and they are grinding it.

Now notice what he is saying there. “As we have many members in one body.” In other words, my body and all members have not the same office. I have a physical body and it has a lot of different parts to it—a lot of different members—and all the members don't do the same thing, but they all make up the one body. “So we being many,”—a lot of different members—“are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” In other words, in the body of Christ, (just as it is in your human body), there is unity—one body amidst great diversity. We are all different, yet we are all one in that body.

Now that body relationship is the relationship we have, and that is the basic relationship that exists in the dispensation of grace. God places us in that body relationship, and Paul brings that issue up here, because the body relationship is that relationship that allows God to treat us, and for us to treat one another, as sons. We're not just born into the family of God; but we're full-grown sons, placed in the position of adult sonship.

We have already learned that the issue in Romans 12-16 is the issue of walking as a son—that adult walk of a mature son in the family, able to discern the details of your life, and the will of God in those details, and know what God wants you to do, not thinking of yourself more highly than you ought, not taking yourself and exalting yourself to the place where other people are put down, but then not with a false humility either. False humility is when you feel inferior to everybody else, and you exaggerate the worth of other people.

Rather we walk in what he calls “lowliness of mind”—that ability to value and esteem yourself in Christ, to see the value and the esteem that God has for you in Christ,

and the esteem and value that He has for other people in Christ, and even for those that aren't in Christ—the value that He has for them to get them into Christ, and to be able to walk that way. As believers, we walk in this body relationship, and that is what allows us to exercise that sonship position and walk that we have. We got down to this point last time, and went over to I Corinthians 8 which exemplifies this. This is the issue of “being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” We are one body, and yet there is diversity.

Romans 12:4-8

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

The idea is, hey, you see all the different positions that we have in the body, we are all one in Christ; and you have this position—this job—and someone else is this part, and someone else has this part, and someone else has this part, hey, get on with the program. Get on with being what it is that God put you in the body to be. Why? For your own benefit? No. For who else's benefit? For the rest of the body's benefit.

You will recall that when we studied the first 8 chapters of Romans, we studied almost verse by verse through the book of Galatians in comparison passages. The books of 1st and 2nd Corinthians can be done the same way through this section of the book of Romans, chapter 12 through the end; and the issue in the Corinthians epistles is that the Corinthians are not walking as adults, they are not walking in that mature judgment and lifestyle that they should have had, had they assimilated and stood on the doctrine that they would have given from the book of Romans. Paul deals with a number of different things with them in Corinthians and he shows them how they ought to respond and how they ought to be able to school and discern the will of God in their live and walk on in it.

In I Corinthians 8, you see the application of that renewed mind—discerning the will of God in the details of life among members of the body of Christ. In I Corinthians 8-10, he gives them some information that they needed in order to make some decisions on their own (as adult sons) in regard to some things that were happening in the life of the assembly.

1 Corinthians 8:1-2

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. [A guy thinks he has it all in his head, he thinks he has it figured out. Paul says, he hasn't got it yet.]

1 Corinthians 8:3-7

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: [In other words, they are lacking some things. There is some information that isn't there. These people don't function on the basis of the renewing of their minds, so they are not able to face some issues in their lives, and make proper decisions based on them. There is not that knowledge in every man.] **for some [notice] with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**

Your conscience is that system of norms and standards—that thinking process that Paul is talking about in chapter 12 of Romans. It is that thinking process whereby you come to decide that something is right or wrong. You have a system of norms and standards that you hold up next to issues, and decide whether things are right or wrong.

He says these people with conscience of the idol have a weak conscience, it is not fortified with sound doctrine. It is defiled. It has bad information in it. If your system of norms and standards isn't buoyed and fortified with sound doctrine, your conscience isn't of any value to you. It isn't of any value to you as a thing to help you live and function as a member of the body. Their conscience is defiled, it is worthless, it is just garbage; it is no good to them. What happens is, they then are not able to walk as sons, but what are they doing? They are all destabilized. Verse 8.

1 Corinthians 8:8

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

What commends you to God? What counts with God? Christ. Anything else? No, nothing that I have figured out yet. Have you figured out anything else that counts with God? Isn't the Lord Jesus Christ what counts? Isn't He the one that gives you your status—your adequate standing—before Him? Is what gives you adequacy before God whether you eat meat or not? No, religious correctness—ceremonial correctness is not the issue today. What is the issue today? Christ.

1 Corinthians 8:9-11

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

It is not talking about him dying and going to hell. We are going to see this when we get in Romans 14 where he says, for meat sake destroy not the work of God. The issue is the godly edification that is taking place in this weak believer will be destroyed. And he said that you, through your conduct and through your actions, don't want the ramifications of what you do to be that this weak brother is destroyed.

1 Corinthians 8:12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, [Notice, it is a sin against the brethren. You violate some things against him.] and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

When he says, you sin against Christ, he is not just talking about you sinning against the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. When he talks about you sinning against Christ, he is talking about the same thing that he is talking about in Romans 12. He is talking about the body of Christ: Christ, and all those who are united—made one—with Him.

Romans 12:4-5

4 For as we have many members in one body, [human body] and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, [so also is the body of Christ] being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Who does he say? Christ. You are so united to Him that you are one with Him, and when he is saying in I Corinthians 8:12, “you sin against Christ,” he is talking about you sinning against this brother. But he is not just a man stuck out over there that is unrelated to you. Do you get the idea? You are one with him in Christ. You are sinning against Christ—against the body of which He is the head.

I Corinthians 8:13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

That is what happens. When you tear down that weaker brother, you are tearing down what God is building up. That is the issue of godly edification. The Lord is building that house of doctrine, and that weaker brother has not gotten through Romans chapter 12, to where you are. Maybe he is just in chapter 1; he hasn't gotten very far. He has not gotten the issues of the Godhead figured out, issues that we have already studied. Do you remember that back in chapter 1 of Romans? If you have Romans 1 figured out, wouldn't you have I Corinthians 8 figured out, about “gods many and lords many”? You would understand all the issues about all that because we studied it, and we saw how Paul dealt with that. That is a beginning issue back there. Right? Right!

So these people haven't gotten very far, and he says, “Hey, don't tear up what God is doing. Don't tear up that edification complex. Look at one another, other members of the body, and make sure that what you are doing isn't ruining and harming each other. Do you understand what he is saying there? He is telling these Corinthians: “You brethren, are supposed to look at each other, and determine what God wants in the details of your life on the basis of what it does to other people—to other members of the body. Come over to chapter 10. He ends the section in chapter 10, with verse 15.

1 Corinthians 10:15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

He says, if you've got real wisdom, you will identify this, and say it is true. Watch where he says, "judge ye what I say." He begins to go through here and ask questions, and the reason that he asks questions is because it is their responsibility to make up their own minds—to make their own decisions. He is giving them the information necessary to show them how to do that, and then he calls for a response from them in that responsibility. "I speak as to wise men." I am talking to you guys like you're able to make up your own minds—to make your own decisions. "Judge ye what I say." Let's see if you can be men of wisdom, make decisions as sons, discern, and make wise judgments on your own.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

1 Corinthians 10:23

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things [underline it] edify not.

I've got liberty, right? It is lawful for me, but all things are not expedient—all things are not advantageous, all things are not profitable, all things are not the most appropriate thing for me to do in the light of where I am in these details in my life. "All things are lawful for me... but all things edify not." I want you to notice that the issue in edification here is not that they don't edify me; it is that they don't edify somebody else. Do you understand? It isn't that I am not edified by what I am doing. I might go and eat that stuff—that meat that I get at the shambles—and I can enjoy it; but it hurts the weaker brother, and so it isn't something that I want to do.

1 Corinthians 10:24

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man [What?] another's wealth.

Do you know who you are supposed to spend your time making rich? Other members of the body of Christ. You are to value and esteem them more highly than yourself. Let not a man think of himself more highly than he ought, but to think soberly, (Romans 12), according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. We have a conscience, a system of norms and standards that says: these people are my brethren in Christ, God values and esteems them; and I am not going to exalt myself above them in pride. I am going to live for their benefit.

1 Corinthians 10:25-28

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, [That's the meat market.] that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. [That is what he knows.]

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; [You see, make up your own mind. If you are disposed to go, and it is something

okay for you to do, you have the liberty to do it. You make up your mind on the basis of your ability to make decisions in the details of your life, and you are going to go.] **whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.** [Whose conscience? The other guy's conscience.]

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

That is high ground, guys. You know what the sonship walk is. The sonship walk is that you walk, and live by another person's conscience. Do you know what folks do when they get liberty? They say, now I can do anything that I want to do. Is that what grace teaches? In Titus he says, the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us. Do you know what grace teaches you? Grace teaches you that God puts you in a body relationship with everybody else; and now as member of that body, you can walk as a son. You are set free, and you have absolute total liberty. You have been given a renewed mind, a measure of faith, and you have been put into a mutual body, and you are to have mutual concerns for one another. I am to value the other guy as much as I value myself. I am going to value each person in Christ as much as I value another person in Christ.

Grace is something that allows you to do something that you could not do before, and that is, to serve God. And as you serve the Lord—as you walk in the relationship He has put you into—reality begins to come about. Do you know how God is made real to you? You don't go off in a closet, and ask God to send a shiver down your spine, and stand the hairs up on your back, and leave a white streak where He went. The way God is made real to you is as you see the Word of God begin to work in you, in your life, and in the lives of others, then God is manifest in the flesh. It is through that doctrine functioning in the body, and you get that body relationship going. God isn't out yonder working in the trees; He is working in His body. Let's go on. Verse 29.

1 Corinthians 10:29

Conscience, I say, not thine own, [See, there is it is.] but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

He asks them these questions because they are to be able to make their own decisions. Why should I allow my liberty to be judged of another man's conscience? Why can another man judge my liberty? He can if I choose to let him, can't he? If I make the conscious choice of limiting my liberty in view of that man's good, can't I do that? Sure I can.

1 Corinthians 10:30

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? [Paul, by the way, prayed for his food when he took it. If you don't believe that, read Acts 27 and see that he did.]

1 Corinthians 10:31-33

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to [What?] the glory of God. [How are you going to do that?]

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

33 Even as I please all men in all things, [underline it] not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

You see, folks, the whole issue is that you make your decisions based on what it is going to do to your brethren in Christ. Think about that. Your brethren in Christ start, where? Who are the brethren in Christ that you are around every day? Your wife, isn't it? Your kids. Then it goes out to your church, and your widest sphere of influences. But you see, you and I are in a body relationship. That is what he is dealing with back there in Romans; and in that body relationship, it is the thing that allows us to function as sons, because He has equipped us to make proper decisions—to be able to discern His will in these decisions based on grace, and how grace operates.

I want you to remember these two verses, because these two verses identify for you two very basic decision making issues. I Corinthians 10:23 and 6:12.

1 Corinthians 10:23

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

1 Corinthians 6:12

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: [Do you see how that compares with 10:23?] **all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**

The idea is that I have got rights, but I am going to limit my rights and my liberties by two measures:

1. Is it good for me? Is it something that is advantageous as far as my own personal long-term best adjustment and living? Or is it something that is going to make a slave out of me, and control me?
2. The other one is in 10:23, and that is, I am going to limit by rights by the question: Is it good for my brother?

In my own personal dealings, I have the capacity to discern whether it is good or bad; whether it is something that I should do, or not. And again, in the context of Romans 12, it is not good or bad; it is good, better, and best things. Are you with me when I say that to you? For me or for my brethren.

Gentlemen, all these things take discernment. The discernment that you get from the renewed mind that you now have from the first 11 chapters of the book of Romans is necessary to be able to make those decisions. But having said that, the converse is true. That discernment is what allows you to make those decisions, which are in the best interests of yourself and the brethren that reflect and identify the will of God for you in the details of your life. You don't have to sit around and wonder, and scratch your noggin, and say, "Well, does He want me to do that or this?" He wants you to be able to have the capacity to know based on that measure of faith, based on that standard of understanding, what it is that He is doing today, and what you should do. Most people never grow up; most believers are just little children trying to have their

own way. That isn't what you are reading there. We recognize the relationship He has placed us in, and we walk as who He has made us in Christ.

Philippians 2:3-5

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

He is saying, Hey, keep the other brethren first, just as Christ kept you first. The way that you do that is: number one—keep yourself functioning properly. Romans 12:5

Romans 12:5-8

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

What am I supposed to do with my gift of prophecy? Prophecy, man. I am supposed to know what it is that God made me and put me in the body to do, and I am supposed to get on with it. Whether ministry, let us wait on our ministering; teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, whatever it is; whatever it is that God put you in that body to do, get on with it, fellow. Why? Number one: keep yourself in proper adjustment.

I Corinthians 6:12. Make proper decisions that cause you to function properly, because you are responsible to me and for me. We are responsible for one another. We are in a body relationship, and we are to work together. The hands are to do what the hands do. What if your hands just went on strike and said, "I am going to do something else," or "I'm not going to do anything, I am just tired of this." It would be a mess to try to eat, wouldn't it? Do you think if your hands went on strike, it might eventually effect your feet? Your back says, "Well, I don't care if the hands go on strike, I am just hanging around anyway. I'll be here." Listen, it wouldn't take but about 6 weeks of that, and it would be a mess, wouldn't it? Have you tried to eat without your hands lately? It gets a little messy, doesn't it? You get the gravy and the rice all stuck up your nose, and you can't wash your face—you understand. The body all works together, and you affect one another. That is it; that is what he is doing here.

Now the issue in verses 6-8 is the issue of: there is diversity but there is unity, and we are all responsible to one another and for one another. I am responsible to you to be everything that God has made me to be, and to walk worthy of the calling that I have—walk worthy of my sonship position. But I am responsible for you also to make sure that I do everything that I can to help you walk that way also.

What we are doing here as we go through these passages, is discovering the operative grace principles that help us walk as sons. We have been through three of them now. Verses 1 and 2 of chapter 12 is the principle of liberty—the freedom principle. There is liberty. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present.” Present. See, it is not commanding, or forcing you. There is liberty here. You have the liberty now to present your body to God and to serve Him. You are free to serve the Lord in the details of your life on the basis of the sonship position, on the basis of who you are in Christ.

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

You have no right to go back under legalism. You have no right to go back, in handling the details of your life, under the law principle—the “if you do this, I will reward you with that” deal. That is the performance/reward syndrome. You have no right to do that. You are to stand fast where Christ has made you free—in grace. But that standing fast does not mean that nobody tells me what to do. It means now you are free to do something that you could not do before. We have already studied Romans 6, and you saw that before you were saved, you were free from righteousness. Now, you are free to walk in righteousness.

Galatians 5:13

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

By the proper valuing and esteeming of what God is doing today, be motivated by that grace, and serve one another. You are free. The first operative principle of grace is that you are free to serve God. You are free to handle the details of your life for His glory, and you, as a son, are responsible to make the decision of how that is to be done. You are responsible, and you are free. Do you know what believers don't want? They don't want to be free, because with freedom comes responsibility. The Corinthians just loved to be under bondage. Look at 2 Corinthians 11.

2 Corinthians 11:18-20

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. [You guys think you are so smart, you have a bunch of fools running you.]

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. [slaps you in the face, man, and you just let him get away with it.]

You see, these people were in the palms of the preachers' hands, and they allowed themselves to be placed into bondage, and had people take stuff from them, and control them, and run them. And when Paul came in there to try to show them their freedom in Christ, do you know what they did? They got mad at him, and they hated him for his trouble. They didn't appreciate it. Why? You mean they wanted to be in bondage? That's right. Do you know why? They are children. Do you know what children like? I have three children, and I know something about raising kids practically, and I know

something about it scripturally. Do you know what children want? Children want lines of demarcation. They want somebody to tell them: there is the boundary, don't go beyond it. And if they go beyond it, they want somebody to get them and put them back inside the boundary.

There is security in Momma and Daddy's discipline. You know that if you have kids. If you are any kind of a Momma and Daddy at all, you know that there is security and peace and rest for your little guys in your discipline, and in the bounds that you set for them. But when they get to be 12, 14, 16, and 18 years old, what happens? They don't want the bounds anymore, do they? Why? They are growing up, and you begin to take them through that growing process out of childhood into adulthood.

Paul is saying: Hey, you guys are adults, you're not babies. God just made you a full grown adult. Do you know what you are supposed to do? You are to decide for yourself if you are going to buy that old rusted out automobile or not. Daddy tried to talk his boy out of buying it, and he went ahead and bought it anyway. Well, your Daddy tried to talk you out of buying one, and you bought it anyway, didn't you? Sure. They function as adults. The Corinthians weren't doing that. They got mad when Paul came in there, and tried to make them function as adults. People are going to do that to you. Liberty—you are free to function as a son, and nobody but nobody is to come along and put you into religious bondage; and when you put yourself under it, you're outside of the will of God for you.

There is another principle. Romans 12:3. Think not of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but think soberly. Don't think that way, but think this way. What is that in Paul's epistles? Put off this, and put on that, isn't it? That is that replacement principle that we have talked about so much. You put off this way of thinking, and you put on the new way of thinking. Put off the old way—the old viewpoint, the old way that you used to think—and put on the new way of thinking. Put off the old man, and put on the new man. It is simply that replacement principle that is so predominate in Paul's epistles.

I have told you before that that replacement principle is the Pauline method of repentance. Repentance in Paul's epistles is the issue of putting this off and this on; and change is never effected in your life until you have put on the new man—the new activity. When you recognize the harmful, you are free to replace it. Freedom leads you into the ability to function with this replacement principle, this exchange principle. You are free to recognize the things in your life that are unworthy—that are to be done away with, the things that violate the standards of who you are in Christ. You are free to recognize those things, and then choose to replace them with proper behavior.

What does he tell Timothy? Flee these things and follow after... That is the issue in Romans 12:3. Don't think that way, think this way. Think with a renewed mind. In Ephesians 4, he says, put off the old man, and put on the new man which is renewed in the spirit of your mind. It is that renewed mind and I am reminding you about, these because we have studied these verses.

Liberty – the freedom principle.
The replacement principle.

Then in verses 4-8 is what I guess you could call, (from those verses in Corinthians), the expediency principle, or mutual concern. There is to be a mutuality of concern among members of the body of Christ. We are all equal members of the body. No matter what we do, we are all equal members one of another; and we are free to choose the things that are advantageous, profitable, and appropriate to the purpose of God. And we are to choose those things for: 1. my own best personal adjustment; and 2. the building up of others.

We have that mutual ability—consideration for one another—to exercise expediency. The word *expediency* means something that is profitable, advantageous, and appropriate. Expedient for me and for the brethren—there is that oneness that we have in Christ that allows us to function that way.

Now the fourth principle is in verse 9, and that is the principle of: let love be without dissimulation. That is the empowerment issue of grace motivation—let the love of Christ constrain us—the issue of it moving us out and going on. We will get there in a minute, but I want to go through verses 6-8, because there are some issues here that you need to be clear about.

He says that they have different gifts in the one body, in Romans 12:6, and they differ according to the grace that is given to us. The word *grace* is used in a lot of different ways in your Bible. In this context, it is a special favor—a special favor with regard to a ministry. It is a special arrangement by which you and I have a ministry—a special kind of ministry that God has for you. It is a special favor that you have been given a ministry. That grace given to you is like the grace in Ephesians 3.

Ephesians 3:7-8

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

“Is this grace given.” He is talking about that special arrangement by which salvation goes to the Gentiles apart from Israel—that special grace and opportunity given to Paul. In Galatians 2, it is interesting to notice verse 9. He communicates to them his gospel, and his ministry in the first 8 verses: “and when James, Cephas, and John, who seem to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me.” The idea is that they perceive that special favor that was given to Paul to have this ministry. By the way, it is not necessarily saying that they understood everything that Paul said to them. If you read 2 Peter 3, you know that they don't understand everything that he said to them. But they do perceive that separate, distinct, advanced ministry is given to Paul.

When he says in Romans 12:6, “having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,” has it ever sunk in that it has been a special favor that God has given you a ministry to perform in the body of Christ? God, by His grace, put you in the body of Christ as it pleased Him, I Corinthians 12:18. He put you there with a ministry to perform. That is fascinating, isn't it? I mean, you can say: “I am somebody,” and you can mean it, and it be true. Right? That's right. He put you in the body for a reason,

and each member of the body should do his job. And if you do your job, the body is going to be healthy, and it is going to be built up. Don't forget that, will you? You're responsible to do your job for your best, and for my best. That is the issue there.

There are seven gifts in Romans 12:6-8. He could have listed a lot of other ones, but he listed these seven. The point is not to list all the possible gifts, the point is: "Hey man, get on with the program." The point is just to say: Okay, we have all this diversity among this body, so let's get on with it. Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: Or he that teaches, get on with teaching. I mean, get on with it, man. If you are a teacher, get on with it. If you are a prophet, get on with it. If your gift is serving, then get on with serving. If your gift is exhortation, get people stirred up. He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity. I mean, don't make a big deal out of it, just get on with it. He that rules, with diligence. Whatever God put you in the body to do, get on with it; get on with the program. How many times have y'all heard me say that? Over and over I keep saying it. Why? It is an operative principle under grace. God didn't put you there so you could run around trying to find out what you want to do, and sit around wondering, and go to school 90 years, and say, wouldn't it be wonderful..., you know, swing your leg over the arm of a chair. He put you in there for service, and said go after it; go do it.

There are three passages on gifts in Paul's epistles that I gave you last time, and we didn't get to it. I want you to have this sheet. One side is called *Spiritual gifts* and the other side is called *An introduction to spiritual gifts*. This comes out of a series on the charismatic movement. You need to get those tapes and listen to them; because we are not going to have time in this class to go through a detailed exposition of the people, or the program, or the purpose, or the passing of the sign gifts. That is all in those tapes. There is also an exposition of I Corinthians 12-14 in those tapes. I gave you this just to give you a couple of things with regard to three major Pauline passages. You see them listed there: Romans 12, I Corinthians 12-14, and Ephesians 4:7-16. Each of these passages is important.

In Romans 12:6-8, these gifts that are listed are all edifying gifts. The issue in these passages is, building up the other brothers. These are what I call the motivational gifts that contribute to the functioning of the body of Christ. It isn't a complete list. In fact, if you go through this list, (you can take other passages of Scripture in Paul epistles), and you can see that every one of these gifts are things that are required of every member of the body of Christ. Is every member of the body of Christ to show mercy? Is every member of the body of Christ to serve other people? Is every member of the body of Christ to preach? Is every member of the body of Christ to teach? Is every member of the body of Christ to exhort other brethren? They are all things that every member is to do. These are the motivational edification gifts that are there to motivate the body of Christ. He picks out some gifts; he could have picked out others. He picked out these, and he says: see all these functions God has put in the body? They are there to edify other members of the body, just as we have been talking about.

Look at Ephesians 4. These gifts are really offices for the perfecting of the saints. In verse 8, he says that he gave gifts unto men. Skip the parenthesis in 9 and 10.

Ephesians 4:8, 11-12

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

The gifts were apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body. These are offices in the body of Christ whose purpose is to perfect the saints, and the key here is maturity—bringing the saints to maturity, to the proper functioning that they should have. In verse 16, there is the same issue: the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Each member of the body of Christ has a contribution to make, and by grace, the believer has been equipped for a special ministry—for a special contribution to the functioning of the body. You have to mature—be brought to maturity—so you can properly function. We have talked about this over and over. You have to be brought to maturity. That is the reason that you have to follow that Pauline design for the edification of the believer, to bring him to maturity so that he is a perfected, mature believer, so he can function properly. That is the reason that we are going over the design there in the book of Romans. That is the basis for our curriculum—to go through it so that you can reach the point of maturity, so that you can properly function. And the gifts in Ephesians 4 are for that purpose.

Then you come to I Corinthians 12-14; and these three chapters deal with the manifestation gifts. The Corinthians are abusing the gifts. I Corinthians 12:7.

1 Corinthians 12:7

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Every one of the gifts that are listed there are sign gifts that apply and are appropriate and function for the nation Israel. None of the gifts in I Corinthians 12 function today. They are all gifts that relate to the nation Israel in her program. They were all sign gifts that had to do with the nation Israel. The Corinthians lacked the kind of character that the Holy Spirit wanted to produce in the believer—a character which would have allowed them to have had those gifts in operation in their midst temporarily during the transition period, and properly functioning with them. But the Corinthians didn't have the character and maturity in their midst to properly use them, so Paul writes 1 Corinthians 12-14; and gentlemen, it is a scathing rebuke to the Corinthians for their misuse and their abuse of the sign gifts.

This issue of the gifts is a greatly misunderstood subject. These passages are greatly misunderstood. Failure to rightly divide the Word of God has caused many people to miss the emphasis in these chapters; and hence to use the passages to teach,

(especially among non-charismatics), that you and I have to go around and seek our gift. We need to look it. Have you found your gift yet? Say I have the gift of an evangelist, so I don't have to worry about teaching you guys, or studying. Well, I'm not going to study, because an evangelist's message never changes, right? Or, if I have the gift of a teacher, I don't have to witness to anybody. You go win them, brother, and bring them to me. You have seen that, haven't you? If I have the gift of ministering, I don't have to give. Sure, you have seen that. Do you know what that is? That is just stupidity. That is ignorant people running their mouth when they ought to be reading their Bible. There is not one instruction anywhere in Paul's epistles that tells you to seek your gift. Do you know what the instructions tell you? Grow to maturity, and then you will be able to identify the purpose for which God put you into the body. Look at I Corinthians 12:31. Somebody says: Okay preacher, I've got you now.

1 Corinthians 12:31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

You are supposed to covet, and seek the best gifts, right? Right. But why did you just say that God didn't tell you to seek your gift? "Covet earnestly." Who is he telling to covet earnestly the best gifts? The church at Corinth, isn't he? Do you see that *you* there? The church at Corinth was to desire to have the best gifts in operation in their midst. It is not the individual, but it is the corporate body of believers at Corinth that is the issue. As a body of believers, as a local church, they are to desire that the greater gifts be manifest in their midst. I Corinthians 14:1 is the same thing.

1 Corinthians 14:1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

The idea is, have the more profitable, greater gifts in evidence. But, what you find in Paul's epistles, over and over, is that emphasis on: grow to maturity, grow to maturity, grow to maturity. When you grow to maturity, you will be able to identify on your own, on the basis of making some decisions as a son, what it is that God put you in the body to do, and where it is that He wants you in the details of your life. You'll be able to identify what it is He wants you to be doing; and you don't need all that stuff coming from outside, grabbing you, and speaking in your ear, and all that kind of tomfoolery. You will have that house of doctrine built in your soul; and God the Holy Spirit will take that doctrine and motivate you, and enlighten you, and empower you to do what he put you in the body to do. So we are using Paul's design in these issues.

I don't want you to miss what he is doing here in Romans 12. He is giving you the operative principles whereby grace works: Liberty—freedom to choose to serve Him; the replacement principle; the expediency principle. We will go through the rest of the chapter next time.

Please study over that hand-out so that you will be able to have the information about the gifts. Also, I highly recommend to you that you get those tapes on the charismatic movement and study through them; because we are not going to have time in class. The proper thing for us to do right now would be to stop, and go over in Corinthians and study those details; but we just don't have time. We only have a few

more classes and we are going to be through, so we are going to have to hurriedly go through the rest of the book of Romans.

By the way, when you are pastoring a church, if you are teaching the book of Romans, right now would be an excellent time to teach the book of Proverbs, because Proverbs is written by a Daddy to his son to teach his son how to live as a son. It is exhortation. Hebrews quotes it and says: I speak unto you as to a son. He speaks unto us as to sons. If you haven't read through the book of Proverbs enough to be familiar with it, now would be a good time for you to do that. You will be able to discern those dispensational-oriented instructions, because we have already studied enough dispensational things. Most of the instructions in Proverbs are not that way though; most of them are clear basic principles of sonship living.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE Romans 203-4

We have just a few weeks left to finish the book of Romans, and my intention is to finish this semester. We might have to double up just a little bit to get it done, but we are going to do that; because it is critically important that we move out of Romans into some of the advanced information in Ephesians. Two years have gone by very quickly, and another one soon will be gone. We want to be able to get through the rest of the material, so we are going to travel through these passages quickly; and I am not going to try to take everything from here on out in detailed exposition of every verse. But I want to give you the concepts; and by now you should be able to do the detailed exposition yourself, because you have been prepared up to this point to do that.

We are going to begin in Romans 12:9. We are in the section of Romans that is practical instructions for practical living under grace. I talked to you last time about how he begins the chapter by dealing with the issues of the practical operative principles of grace. The freedom principal in verses 1 & 2. The replacement principal in verse 3. The expediency principle/the mutuality of consideration in verses 4-8.

In verse 9, he starts out: “Let love be without dissimulation.” We have talked about *love* in the past, and this concept of *agape* is important. Understand that there are different categories of love. If you are a Greek, there are several different Greek words for love. You are not Greek, so it doesn't mean a lot to you, but if you look in verse 10: “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.” That is a different word. The word there is the word from which we get our city name, Philadelphia. *Philos* is *love*; and then they put the word for *brother* on there—*delphus*, and you have *brotherly love*: Philadelphia. Or if you live in a town in Mississippi, it would be *Delphia*. They did the thing backwards for some reason.

But the point is, there are different words for love: *agape*, *philos* and *eros*. The word *erotic* comes from the Greek word *eros*. *Phileo* is just a warm personal kind of relationship; it basically means what our English word *love* means—a warm personal feeling, a warm relationship between people. The word *agape* is more of a mental attitude love; the Bible sometimes translates it *charity*. It is the word for cherish, or charity. That is a mental attitude type of a thing—an ability to evaluate, value, and esteem, and see worth and value in something on a mental basis, not on an emotional basis. When you see it translated *charity* in your Bible, don't you let somebody come along and say that is a bad translation. That is a perfectly good translation, accurately reflecting what the word *agape* means. *Agape* is a mental attitude love; and from here on, you are going to see practical instruction about how to practically apply the renewed mind that you are to have based on chapter 12, verse 2.

The doctrine that you have already assimilated going through the book of Romans gives you the capacity, (as you take that information in, and take out of your frame of reference the old human viewpoint, and put in the divine standards, and renew your mind), to develop a conscience that matches God's conscience.

Remember, we talked about the conscience. There are several words that Paul uses to talk about knowledge—knowing things. Number one is the conscience. Your conscience is that system of norms and standards that you use to determine if your

conduct and performance is meeting, or if it is exceeding, or if it is falling short of an expected standard. You have a system of norms and standards, and the conscience is a thinking process. It is a way of thinking through a situation where by you take this norm and standard that you have, and take your performance—your conduct, your activity, your responses, whatever it might be, the details of your life—and measure it by that standard. Your conscience is a description of that thinking process—that mental process—whereby you evaluate your performance, (or the performance of other people, but yours especially).

Now the conscience it is that system of norms and standards that you have; and when you have a conscience evaluating your performance, and it says that your performance exceeds the expected standard, what do you do? Approbation, right? When your performance meets it, what do you do? Satisfaction. When your performance fails to meet it, what do you do? Guilt, frustration, shame, rejection, low self esteem, and all those psychological hang ups that people get. A conscience does that.

In Romans chapter 2, he talks about their conscience: “the meanwhile, accusing or else excusing:” saying, this is right, or huh huh, this is wrong. That is your conscience; it is that evaluating system. It is that mental process of thinking and knowing whether or not you meet the standard, exceed the standard, or fail to meet the standard. What is the key in that? What would be the key to having real confidence, and approbation, and real guilt, as opposed to having a false confidence and false guilt? Having the right standards and norms in your conscience, right? Over there in I Corinthians, we read the passage that said that they had a defiled conscience; it wasn't any good. Why? It had the wrong norms and standards in it. It was weak; it wasn't fortified with sound doctrine.

So as you take in this renewed mind, you are taking in a system with which to evaluate things. You are gaining the ability to evaluate things. You are putting the norms and standards that match God's norms and standards into your soul. Then your conscience can use those things to properly evaluate. The way you get rid of false guilt and frustration, or pride, and all those things that go with it is by putting the proper norms and standards in your soul; and doing what he says in verse 3: think soberly—think according to what the standard really is. That is conscience knowledge—you are evaluating your performance.

Then there is another kind of knowledge: faith. Faith is a positive mental attitude. It is simply, believing—having a positive mental attitude, or positive volition toward Bible doctrine, toward the doctrine of God's Word. You can not believe something that God does not tell you, so faith is based on the Word of God; and it is a positive volition toward sound doctrine in the Word of God. I emphasize sound doctrine because if it isn't sound doctrine, (the Word rightly divided—what God says to you), you can't have faith in it. You can not have faith in something that God didn't tell you, because He didn't tell you to believe it. Faith is your positive volition toward your conviction that that sound doctrine is true, and right. Faith is basically what we call *conviction knowledge*—the conviction that this thing is right. I am convinced; I am convicted; I believe it is right; and I am believing God's Word. If you have conviction that something is right, then you can rest in it. Now if you rest in it, then you can have

confidence in it. “Having the same spirit of faith,” he says in 2nd Corinthians 4, as the Psalmist says:

2 Corinthians 4:13

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

Do you see? You can respond.

That brings you to another step in knowledge, and that is the issue of hope. Faith is conviction knowledge. Hope is assurance knowledge. It is that assurance of real godly expectations. It is that confidence in knowing that these things are going to come, and that is where you get assurance; that is where you get boldness. We have already studied those things in Romans 5.

Then there is one other issue of knowledge, and that is the issue of love, *agape*—the mental attitude of value and esteem. The issue in that esteem knowledge, is to be able to know something’s real worth, and to value and properly evaluate it on that basis.

Those four basic realms of knowledge are important for you to know. I have talked to you about those things from time to time, but sometimes I don't always categorize them.

Do you remember the four categories under which Paul uses the term reconciliation? When we went through Romans 5:11, I explained those to you; and I showed you both textually and doctrinally why the translators put the word *atonement* in there. People have come to me and said they appreciated the fact that I categorized the different reconciliations. People sometimes have them all in their head without categorizing them. It is the same with these various aspects of knowledge.

There is the conscience which is the thinking process, the mental process, whereby you evaluate. You have to work that process out, but it is done on the basis of faith—that conviction knowledge, on the basis of assurance—a hope—that assurance knowledge that gives you the ability to endure, and go through things, and be bold in the face of circumstances that look contrary. Then there is *agape*: that love, that esteem knowledge—the ability to evaluate a thing, and see the value, and the thing that is of worth, and highest estimation—God’s estimation. You need to have that standard of reference, that system of norms and standards that values and esteems according to the way that God values and esteems. You have to have the system of hope that rests in what God gives you to expect—the expectations that come from God; and faith, of course, has to rest in what God says or it is useless.

Go back with me to Romans 12, and try not to forget those principles; because what you are going to see in the rest of Romans, is the application of these things. What you are going to begin with now in verse 9, is the practical application of the renewed mind that you have. The renewed mind works on the principle of freedom, on the replacement principle, on the expedient principle, and on the grace motivation principle. Grace motivation is the issue of taking the position that you have in Christ, and all the wealth that you have in Christ, and valuing and esteeming what God has

done for you, and what He has made you in Christ, and having the love of Christ for you motivate you and empower you and be the thing that compels you in your Christian life. That is love motivation, that is the motivation of love and gratitude; we call it grace motivation because it is the motivating factor. Paul says you are not under the law, but under grace—the system of grace.

There is the law system, and the grace system. The law has a motivating mechanism: the *if/then* mechanism—the performance/reward mechanism. Grace has a system of motivation, and it is the *love* motivation. It is the ability to value and esteem yourself, and circumstances, and others the way that God values and esteems them—to see the worth that He has placed there, what He has made you in Christ, and let that be the thing that empowers you.

The issue in Romans 12 is, let's take this doctrine that you have, and let's see it applied to the details of your life. So he starts out by telling you:

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” And don't be conformed to this world. How? Isn't that what the brother asked here one night? He said: how do you do all that? The way that you do it is by the renewing of your mind—by thinking along different principles, in different ways, in different patterns of thought. Number one, your liberty in Christ—you are free—you are now free to do these things. In Christ, you have liberty. In verse 3, the issue is, don't think that way, think this way. Think soberly.

Romans 12:3

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Think soberly. Put off the old way of thinking, put on the new way of thinking—the replacement issue.

Romans 12:4-8

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Then in verses 4-8 the issue is that there is a mutuality of consideration between equal members of the body of Christ. I have to realize who God has made me, not just in Christ, but in union with each other; and everything I do I have to do on the basis of expediency. Remember those two verses in Corinthians: All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful for me, but I won't be brought under the power of any of them. It has to be to my best personal long-term adjustment, both for me, and for the other guy's edification. Because if I am not bringing myself into proper adjustment, can I be of any value to the other members of the body? I am a problem, not a benefit; so I look after myself, not just for my good, but I see that my proper functioning is for the other man's good. Have you got that?

Once you get all that straight, then he begins: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good. Be kind." He begins to tick off commands like that: boom, boom, boom. The reason he does that is that he is going to begin to practically apply that renewed mind. Here are the principles by which you think, but don't you want to see some of them applied to details? Okay. Let love be without dissimulation—hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil—something bad comes along, what is my attitude supposed to be? I am to hate it. The word *abhor* means *hate the thing*. I am to cleave to that which is good. Something good, what am I to do? Stick to it like glue, man. Wouldn't that take care of a lot of things in your life? You come along and something happens and your response to it? Did you ever sit down and say, hey, that is a good response or bad response. Most of the time we just say, "I have a right to feel that way."

Here is the way to evaluate things. And he is going to deal with the details of life this way. Let me stop right here, and let's go to I Corinthians; and I want to show you something that we are not going to be able to do because time is going to catch us; but I want you to be conscious of it. In Paul's two epistles to the Corinthians, he deals with the issue of the application of the renewed mind of the believer—walking under the grace principles, walking under those four principles of how grace operates and motivates in my life and your life as members of the body. He takes those principles, and applies them to the details and practical problems that are at Corinth; just as he did in the first 8 chapters when he took Galatians, and applied those issues back there. We studied Galatians as we studied the first 8 chapters of Romans. You can study Corinthians as you study the last chapters of Romans. We are not going to have time to do that, but I want you to see how he is dealing with the Corinthians on the basis of: "Hey, what you people need to do is function on the basis of a renewed mind. Think about what is happening on the basis of your liberty in Christ, on the basis of put off the old way of thinking and put on this new way of thinking—the replacement principle. Think of what is happening on the basis of what is expedient for the other brethren in the body, and on the basis of grace motivation. Quit living and acting like you aren't saved, and like you are doing it all on your own, or that you are under the law or some other program. Operate like you are living under the control of grace." Watch what he says:

1 Corinthians 1:10

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same [What?] mind and in the same judgment.

He said, I want you to look at the details of what is going on in your assembly in the same way. How can you do that? If everybody has the renewed mind, will they look at it the same way? If everybody has the mutuality of consideration for one another, are they going to be able to do that? Sure they are. You see, the application of that renewed mind brings about the ability to prove, and discern, and test, and demonstrate the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. He goes through this all the way through the book.

1 Corinthians 1:11-13

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

Those people are claiming personalities. They are not considering themselves on the basis of their equality in Christ, where you're ministering to me what God gave you to minister, and I am ministering to you, and everybody is in the place where God put them, functioning together. But what are they doing? Look at chapter 3 to see their mentality.

1 Corinthians 3:3

For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as [What?] men?

Is that how you are supposed to walk? Aren't we talking about walking under grace practically, applying practical living under grace in an age of grace? Aren't we talking about the execution of the sonship walk on the basis of the renewed mind? Were they doing that? Not hardly. They were thinking like a bunch of lost men, like a bunch of unsaved people.

1 Corinthians 3:4-6

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, [Now watch him ask questions? Sit down sometime and circle the question marks in I and II Corinthians. It will stagger you. The printer should have run out of them. Do you know why he is asking questions? He is saying: Think! Think about what you are doing! Think, you dearly beloved erring brethren, think! He wants them to evaluate the thing and come to proper conclusions—apply that renewed mind.] Who then is Paul and who is Apollo, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but [What?] God gave the increase.

Isn't that the issue? God gave the increase. Where did the increase come from? It wasn't Paul, and it wasn't Apollos. God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:7-9

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are [What? Notice that.] one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together [Look at that. Isn't that wonderful?] with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

Hey, this is God's work people. Realize who you are and it will cut out all that fighting and fussing, and apply that understanding about what is going on.

1 Corinthians 3:18-21

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

He says, don't be wise according to the world's standards. Forget the world's standards. Be a fool according to the world's standards. Get some real wisdom. Get that renewed mind.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

Do you see that? That is the standard that you ought to have. Let no man glory in men. Don't let it. For all things are yours.

1 Corinthians 3:22-23

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

I mean, realize that you are a part of what is going on, people. You are one of the saints of all the ages, and you are in God's purpose; act accordingly. Do you see that renewed mind? They are not acting like that. They have their little thing, and their little corner. The first 6 chapters of 1st Corinthians are a scathing rebuke of their carnality, of their failure to apply that renewed mind.

1 Corinthians 4:1-3

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, [Paul said, I don't care what other people think about me. I

don't care what you think about my ministry.] **I judge not mine own self.** [I'm not just out here trying to make a big deal for me.]

1 Corinthians 4:4

4 For I know nothing by myself; [Boy that is something for you to remember. You are going to sit down and try to evaluate your ministry, and do you know what Paul said? He said you don't know what you are talking about. Now I'm not talking about trying to understand what is going on and knowing what is right. But you are going to get discouraged, and get to fussing and fuming sometime in the flesh, and do you know what is going to happen? As soon as you get in the flesh and start walking on the basis of the old man, do you know what you are going to do? You are going to take the world's standards, and you are going to put it on your ministry. And then do you know what is going to happen? You are going to come up a failure, because you haven't been following the world's standards. Do you understand what I am saying to you? That is what they are doing.] **yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.**

1 Corinthians 4:5-6

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us [Paul said, I am telling you this because I am trying to get a point across to you.] **not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.**

Have you got that? Apply the renewed mind to the details of your life. That is the whole issue in the Corinthian epistles. Go through chapter 5, and see that there is somebody living in fornication such as the Gentiles don't even name. It's a terrible sin, and what does the church do? They didn't walk on the basis of a renewed mind; they walked on the basis of an old life. Of the old man's standard, and they didn't deal with it properly. There is the same thing in chapter 6.

1 Corinthians 6:1-4

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

He goes right down and says, get on the ball and get to thinking right. Act like who you are. Apply that renewed mind to the details of your life. Chapter 7.

1 Corinthians 7:1

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

Beginning here, Paul replies to questions that they had sent him. The first 6 chapters: Boom. Rebuke. He bawls them out for not applying the renewed mind, for not walking on the basis of Romans 12:1-2. Now he begins to say: You sent me a bunch of questions, so let me answer them for you. In chapter 7, he deals with the issues of marriage, divorce, separation, and virgins. In chapter 8, he writes concerning things offered unto idols, and he begins to deal with that issue. We went over this passage last time. He begins to deal with the issues of things offered to idols, and he deals with the issue of the liberty that you have to deny yourself in order to maintain something that is good for your brother. He does that in chapters 8-10, and he shows them how to properly think it through. Listen to me. He is showing them how to properly think through these issues, and thus apply the renewed mind to these details. You don't want to miss that.

1 Corinthians 11:2-3

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

He goes through some things about order in the local assembly where they had total disorder, and he talks to them about the order that they are to have.

1 Corinthians 12:1

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Chapters 12-14 are a rebuke to them for the misuse of the spiritual gifts—the sign gifts that were in evidence in their midst. Every gift in 1 Corinthians 12-14 is a sign gift. Every one applies to Israel's program, and they are in effect in the body of Christ in Corinth, (in that Gentile church), for a specifically designed dispensational purpose. And rather than recognizing that, the Corinthians are abusing the gifts, and misusing them; and he blisters the hide off of them about it, and shows them how to properly think about it.

1 Corinthians 15:1

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

He deals with the gospel, and this is the great resurrection chapter. There are people at Corinth denying the resurrection; and he says, think about what you are doing. How can you deny the resurrection? If you say that Christ died for you sins, was buried, and rose again, you have to believe in the resurrection. If He didn't rise, this whole thing is just nuts. Think about it. Look at the questions that he asked them through verses 12-15.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34

33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

He is saying, hey guys, wake up! Wake up people! Have you ever heard anybody say that to a congregation? Sure you have. But do you know what most preachers tell the congregation? Wake up and perform, and do this, so you can get the blessing. If you get in a congregation and it is in the condition that the Corinthians are in, what do you want to do? You want to study that epistle, and see how Paul tells them to apply the renewed mind. He is not telling them to do this so you can get the blessing. He is saying, wake up to who God has already made you in Christ! Wake up to the liberty that you have in Christ to serve Him! You don't have to be a servant to sin anymore. Wake up to the privilege that you have of thinking soberly, rightly, the way that God is thinking. Wake up to the privilege of putting off that old unworthy thing, and putting on the new. Bring in conduct and performance that matches who it is that God has made you. Look at the mutuality of consideration and concern, and think about how you live, and how it effects others, and how it effects yourself, and be motivated by who God has made you. That is what he is teaching here. He takes those grace principles, and applies them. In chapter 16, he even talks about the collection.

1 Corinthians 16:1

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

That is the last detail that he deals with, and he gives them specific instructions about how to think through it, and how to work on the thing. What I am trying to show you is how that thing spins naturally off of Romans. From Romans, you get the basic ground work for how to think and to live as members of the body of Christ. Never forget all the truth about your position in Christ—all the truth about all that God has done for you through the cross, all that grace is, all of the positional truth that you have learned, and that you have known—God put it inside of you. All of that information is there for the Holy Spirit to use to properly to motivate and empower you. How does God empower his people? The Word of God is quick, it is living and it is powerful. It is energy. We have quoted this verse time and again: I Thessalonians 2:13.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

The Word that effectually works in you that believe—that doctrine that you have assimilated through the first eleven chapters of Romans—all this wonderful stuff, and this person that you are, this new species of humanity that God has made you a part of: Now lets go out here and put this in shoe leather. Here are the principles that you have learned. Now watch them. Learn to think through things like that.

Romans 12:9

Let love be without dissimulation. [That word *dissimulation* means *hypocrisy*. Love is to be without any kind of hypocrisy. You are to speak the truth. You are to be the genuine article.] **Abhor that which is evil;** [Put that away.] **cleave** [Stick to. *Cleave* means *to stick to it like glue.*] **to that which is good.**

Do you see the put off and put on principle there? Put this away; but put this on.

Romans 12:14

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

There it is again. Ephesians 4:22-24. Do you remember that passage?

Ephesians 4:22-24

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Colossians 3:9-11 also talks about putting off the old man and putting on the renewed man through that renewed mind.

Colossians 3:9-11

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

That principle of that renewed mind leads the believer to put off the old patterns of sinfully habituated lifestyle, and to put on new patterns of activity and lifestyle—behaviors that are becoming to a member of the body of Christ. There are two factors in that. Put off: you have an old sinful habit, and what do you do? You de-habitate yourself. You quit having the habit of doing that thing. But did you break the habit when you did that? Well, you broke that habit, but is that what God wants done? You see folks, change does not come when you quit doing something wrong. Do you know when change comes? When you then also start doing something right. When is a thief no longer a thief? When he quits stealing? No, he is just an unemployed thief. Do you know when a thief quits being a thief? When he does what Ephesians tells him to do.

Ephesians 4:28

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Do you see that total change? That is the put off/put on principle. You want to put off some sinful habit. Maybe it is an emotional response. Maybe it is some emotional activity. Maybe it is a sinful physical activity. We live in an age today where our blessings are spiritual. The warfare today is spiritual. Therefore, with the believer, as he moves through the advancing stages of maturity, the overt, outward sins begin to pass away. He will quit drinking, he will quit cussing, he will quit stealing, he will quit doing this and that. Those things begin to pass away.

But did you notice that in the passages, he will talk about adultery, fornication, stealing, and drunkenness; and then he will talk about envy, and malice, and hatred, and

variance, and emulation, and strife, like they are all one? Do you know why? Because they are. They are all sin, and they are all unbecoming to who you are. It is just as wrong to be hateful and sinfully angry, (uncontrollably angry—without it being channeled at the program in the right way), envious, and covetous, as it is to be a drunk in a gutter somewhere. We don't like to admit that, and where the believer today winds up most often defeated is in sins of the spirit—the attitude—frustration, depression.

Do you know one of the greatest things that you are going to have to deal with in your ministry? It is frustrated ambition. Do you know how to deal with frustrated ambition? You realize it is self-seeking ambition; it is wrong, and you put it off. And you put in its place, godly humility. That is how you do that. [grin] You say, what are you grinning about? I am grinning about it being so simple. It is no big deal. Do you know what the problem is? You don't want to do it. There is the problem. Do you know what grace does? It puts you on the spot, and it says: Serve because you want to, and when you don't, hey, don't blame it on the problem. Don't blame it on how big the difficulty is. Do you know who you had better blame? Point those fingers all right back here, because I am the guy to blame. God fixed you, you are free. Isn't that the first principle there? You are free to present your body—your tongue, your attitude, your emotions—all of yourself to Him to be used for His holy purpose. Don't tell Him that you are not free, you liar. Liar, liar, pants on fire. You'd better be glad that you are saved, or your soul would be. That is right. You are free. Don't go around telling God that you are not. That's a basic principle.

Folks, that replacement principle is important, and change does not come until you put one off, and put the other on. That is how you have change in your life. You are free to have it. The problem is that you have to be motivated by grace. You have to be motivated by God's love to you instead of your own love for yourself. You have to work on the basis of that renewed mind; and every time you have failure, do you know whose basis you are working on? Wouldn't that encourage you? If I failed, and I get in the misery and doldrums of failure, and I am down in the mess, doesn't it encourage you to know why you are there? If you don't know why you are there, can you get out?

That is the very basis of repentance: that put off/put on method. That is Paul's methodology for repentance. That is what repentance is today. Repentance is not just crying. That is not repentance. Repentance is a change of mind. I quit that, and I start this. You didn't change your mind until you put something in the place of the other thing. You say that is kind of hard-nosed. Yes, it is. Do you know why it is? That is grace. When you are dealt with on the basis of grace, God is dealing with you in a hardball league. I know you thought it was real easy. Hey, He put you on the spot, and He just lays bare on the table, everything that you are. Grace puts you on the spot, and says: serve me; not to get anything—you have it all already. Serve me; not to keep anything—you are never going to lose it. It is yours permanently, for keeps. Serve me because you love me, because you are grateful that I loved you, and I did so much for you. Every time you don't do it, do you know why you don't do it? You sin against the greatest love that there is to sin against, and He just puts His arm around you, and says: that is alright, I love you anyway, come on and let's do it right this time. Well then couldn't you do it right that time? Sure you could. But do you know what we do? We don't think that way. We get all messed up, and then we say: I know, I will go and do something, and if I do this and this and this, He will be happy with me. You put

yourself back under the law system, and you are going to perform and get the blessing. But that won't work. Verse 10.

Romans 12:10

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

The value and esteem that you are to have one for another is what the verse is talking about. You are to be kindly affectionate. People, we have a kinship among ourselves as believers, and we ought to treat each other like kinfolk on the basis of brotherly love. I have three boys, and if you looked at them for brotherly love, you know they fight like cats and dogs—sibling rivalry.

When he talks about brotherly love, he is talking about kind affection. Because we operate on the basis of agape doesn't mean that we can't have phileo. Because we operate on a mental attitude love doesn't mean that we can't have warm personal feelings among ourselves. We can. You can learn to value and esteem your brethren in Christ, as who they are, (even the fellow who is a stinker and makes you apply the principles of dealing with stinkers that you don't like to apply—forgiveness, and all those things. “Forgiving one another.”—and he makes you forgive him because he keeps stomping all over your feet).

I have told you this before: unless he wrongs you, or offends you, you can not forgive him. That is the thing that has to happen before you can forgive him. So he just keeps on making you forgive him, but when you learn how to do that, the joy of forgiveness can make you appreciate that guy, and change your attitude. That is the renewed way of thinking. Do you see how that works? That is it. Be kindly affectioned one toward another in brotherly love, in honor preferring one another. Put the other guy first. Honor the other brother. Don't just tolerate him. Give him a place of honor. Write down by that verse, Philippians 2:3-5, and put down by that reference: Put the other first as Christ put us first.

Philippians 2:3-5

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Romans 12:11

Not slothful in business; [The *business* there is not your job. Look at verses 11-13. He is talking about your Christian duties. Don't be slothful in your Christian activities—the business that God has put you in—as far as your Christian walk goes.] **fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;**

Folks, Satan would use grace to make you lazy if he could. You don't ever want to forget that. Always—don't give any place to the adversary. Spiritual laziness is the cause of defeat. Remember that. Spiritual laziness is the cause of defeat. You never go down to defeat to the adversary, or to the flesh, or to the world, except you were

spiritually lazy—you weren't applying the renewed mind, you were slothful in business, and in your Christian duties, you were not fervent in spirit, you were not serving the Lord. Therefore you went to defeat.

Romans 12:12-13

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;
13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Wouldn't you love to have a church member who did all those things? Wouldn't you like to be a church member that did all those things? In the details of your life you are going to find their answers right there. Rejoicing in hope. Do you know how many problems and hard spots in your life on a day by day basis that verse can get you through? Three words: Rejoicing in hope.

Patient in tribulation. How many spots would that get you through today? That would take care of some of them, wouldn't it? We say we want to believe what God says, so we don't practice water baptism. How about practicing that one?

Given to hospitality. Distributing to the necessity of the saints. I want you to notice that one. Gentlemen, the body of Christ is to meet the needs of one another. That is how God works today. He works through His Word resident in the body of Christ, motivating the body of Christ to go out and meet the needs of other members of the body, and of people in the world. Galatians 6:10.

Galatians 6:10

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

He says we are to do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith; and it is talking about that generosity of heart. He is not talking about the fact that you have to feed everybody that comes along. That isn't the issue. The issue is that generous, open-hearted concern for one another. You go through that passage, and the details of your life will find some answers. What he is doing is, he is practically applying that new way of thinking. Verse 14.

Romans 12:14

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Notice this, he brought up an interesting subject. Bless them that persecute you. Has it dawned on you that there are some people that are not going to like you? The idea is, when you go out and begin to produce this new lifestyle, this renewed mind, it begins to affect the details of your life. You think everybody is going to appreciate that, don't you? But do you know what is going to happen? They are not all going to appreciate you. In fact, a whole lot of folks are not going to appreciate you. So he says, "Bless them which persecute you. Bless, and curse not." Now that is grace. You want to walk under grace. That is how you live under grace. You deal with the other guy on the basis of grace. Bless them that persecute you. Bless, and curse not. It's hard to do that driving down the expressway, isn't it? Well, that is true. There is a good practical application in the details of life. Bless, and curse not, brethren.

What is going to follow here, are some details about the Christian's personal response to evil. There are three responses you are to have to evil when it comes your way.

Number 1 is, don't be conquered by evil.

Romans 12:21

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Don't let evil conquer you when it comes. When that guy cuts in and waves his fist out the window at you, don't wave it back. Back off and give him a little room. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Don't be conquered by evil. Now listen. That takes planning, you know that? Are you listening to me? You have to plan to do that. When that fellow cuts in front of you, what is your natural response? What does your heart do? Growl. So what do you have to plan? You have to plan to overcome evil with good. You have to train yourself, you have to put off and put on. Okay? It takes planning, folks. It takes work.

There is plenty for you to do in learning to apply the principles of grace to the details of your life. If you don't think that there is plenty to do to make your life exciting, you haven't thought about it very much. People say, if you live under grace, that just teaches people that they can just go out and live any way that they want to. Gee whiz, they haven't thought about it. What have they been reading? Do you see what he is saying here? Grace puts you under an obligation. Grace puts you in a position where you are free, and it obligates you, doesn't it? The debt of love. Number one is, don't be conquered of evil.

Romans 12:17-18

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. [Don't give evil back.]

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Number 2 is: Conquer evil with good. That is verse 20.

Romans 12:20

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

In other words, if you do good to the guy that is doing bad to you, that is more effective than going out and dumping a bunch of coals of fire on his head, trying to get him to repent, or to pay him back. So the second thing that you do with evil is that you go out and conquer evil with good.

Number 3 is: seek to always be in a condition of peace with all men. As far as your side of the relationship goes, you always seek to be in peace with the other folks. Verse 15.

Romans 12:15-18

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Do you see all those things in there? If you do those things, are you going to be fighting very often? Look at verse 15.

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Is Christian sympathy going to cause bitterness on the other guy's part? Is he going to respond to you in a good way or a bad way? You know the answer to that. Do you know how to keep peace? Rejoice with the guy that rejoices, and weep with the guy that weeps. Verse 16 is important.

Romans 12:16

Be of the same mind one toward another. [In other words, no partiality. Love, trust, sympathy, interest is to be mutual among others. Don't make one guy better than the other; no partiality between people. You know folks, when you show partiality between people, what do you do? You are going to have problems before long. There are going to be hurt feelings, and mad feelings, and all that kind of stuff. Are you making for peace? No. Are you denying the oneness that you have in Christ? Are you denying the fact that the middle wall of partition is down? Yes.] **Mind not high things,** [Man, that is tough. We are prone to be self-centered, aren't we? Mind not high things. Go back to verse 3 on that one.] **but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.**

By that verse you want to write down Proverbs 26:12.

Proverbs 26:12

12 Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Romans 12:17

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

Don't give a man back evil for evil. By that verse, write down I Thessalonians 5:15.

1 Thessalonians 5:15

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

You want to work on the basis of grace, not the law. The law says an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Grace says you don't recompense to a man evil for evil.

You don't give him back what he deserves. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. We are going to have to come back to that, because I have a couple of things I have to say to you about that, and that is going to take about 10 minutes. Verse 18.

Romans 12:18

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, [You see, on your part, as much as it is possible.] live peaceably with all men.

If it is going to be a problem don't let it come from you. Don't let your conduct, your action, and your attitude be responsible for the fuss. Sometimes you can't stop it. Sometimes the guy is just bound and determined that he is going to get you. But don't let it be because of you. Verse 19.

Romans 12:19

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. Why don't you want it to be from you? You want to always be dealing with him on the basis of grace not wrath, and then if it comes, well, then it just comes, and you deal with it on that basis. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." That is something to remember, fellows. You need to underline that one. You are not in the business of avenging yourself. What are you supposed to do? "Give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Listen. The old saying, "I don't hold a grudge, I just get even," is not meant for the believer. I am sorry. You know when that fellow cuts you off on the expressway, do you know the only reason you get mad? You want to get even. Do you know how many of your problems on a daily basis could be taken off, if you quit trying to get even? Just sit and think sometime about the details of your life. How many of the agitations are caused just by you wanting to get even? He says, hey just leave it with the Lord. The Lord is going to take care of it. Is wrath the issue today? What is the issue today? Grace.

Romans 12:20

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, [What are you supposed to do?] feed him; [Feed the rascal. Oh man, you know what that means? That means if he has a need, and I can meet it, what am I supposed to do? Meet it.] if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

That is a quote from Proverbs 25:21-22.

Proverbs 25:21-22

21 If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

There are a lot of different ideas about what that means. Obviously heaping coals of fire on his head would cause him some mental misery. But the point is, Paul is not saying, if you do good to the guy, you are really getting even with him. He is not giving

you a sneaky way to get even with the guy. That isn't the idea. That is the way that most people expound the passage. Here is what he is saying. Here is a guy, (either he is a brother or he is not), value and esteem that guy the way that God values and esteems him. Deal with him on the basis of how God deals with him. Think about the relationship the way that God thinks about it, and you be God manifest in the flesh to that man. Do you want me to say that again? You let the actions and the attitudes of God Himself be what that man sees in you, and you be sure and tell him why you are doing it—not because you are somebody. When you do that, it is going to be more effective than if you were to heap big old coals of fire on that guy's head, and burn him up. Now isn't that what you are trying to do to him? That guy cuts you off, and he burns you up. What do you want to do to him? You want to burn him up, don't you? I want to make him as mad as he made me. No. If you want to see human nature, if you want to see your nature, get behind the wheel of an automobile. The Dan Ryan Expressway is the best example that I can think of. But watch people when they do that. They become different people.

By the way, do you know how to destroy an enemy? Make him a friend. You destroy an enemy. If you go and kill an enemy, did you destroy an enemy? He is in hell; isn't he your enemy? Did he go to hell and love you? Forget it. Do you know how to destroy an enemy? If you make him your friend, didn't you destroy him? Isn't that what God did with you? When you were an enemy, He reconciled you through the death of His Son? Didn't He give you what you needed? Didn't He deal with you on the basis of grace? Didn't He change your status from an enemy to a son on the basis of His grace? Isn't that what He is saying to do with your enemies in the details of your life? Apply the renewed mind. Are you getting that?

Romans 12:21

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

In verses 9-13, he is showing you how to apply the renewed mind in your relationship to other believers. In verses 14-21, he is showing you how to apply that renewed mind to your enemies. Next time we will go on in chapter 13 and see how you apply it to government—the principles of divine establishment—and to society around you.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-5

Before we go on into chapter 13 tonight, I want to go back into Romans 12 and comment on two things that we didn't get to last time. The first thing is regarding service.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

It is not until now, not until you get to Romans 12, that Paul ever really focuses on the issue of service. You see how all of a sudden in chapter 12, he has gotten involved in the doing, doing, doing: relate to this, do this, do that, and all that stuff we have been through. It is not until you get to chapter 12 that he focuses on your individual function in the body of Christ; and the reason for that is that it takes the maturity that you have gained up to this point in order to identify the position that you have in the body of Christ. Paul knows that you have to get that design; you have to get that foundation laid.

Gentlemen, the issue in these last few chapters is: now that you have gotten all this information, this stuff applies to your life. To go out and to execute the sonship walk, here are some practical instructions for living under grace. He begins to do that, and he begins to deal with the issue of service. Let me say this to you. We have come this far in Romans, and we have the doctrines and so forth down, and you need to right now start praying much about a particular direction in your life. You need to start watching, and observing yourself. You need to begin now, because you are ready now. Up until now you haven't been ready, and I haven't encouraged you to really begin to try to say: this is exactly what the Lord wants out of me in the body of Christ. But I am going to encourage you to do that in the future, because you have now come through the basic information that gives you the foundation.

If you haven't got the information, that is one thing; but you brethren sitting here in the class week after week and on the video, are getting the information. You know whether you have gotten it or not; and once you have gotten the information—the first three foundational footings—then he goes to the fourth one.

The fourth one has to do with being able to know what you are in the body of Christ for, and getting on with your service. Service doesn't begin for the Lord until you get to Romans 12:1; and after that it begins to go at a fast clip. In the next year or so, these things are going to solidify in your mind and heart. It is not going to be long before these things begin to put themselves in place, and you need to be watching, and praying. Be aware of these issues: the position that you have in Christ, and what it is in the body of Christ that you are there for, and being able to be a perfected saint who can identify what it is that the Lord is doing in his life. These things will begin to come into place.

Some of you have already gotten ministries going, others have not. But regardless of that, the issues are here, and that level of maturity has to be reached. Once you reach it, then the Lord will give you the capacity to discern in the details of your life what it is that He put you in the body for—what function it is, and where you ought to exercise that position that He has given to you. So I encourage you to be thinking on those issues. In our third and final year, our class is going to focus, and be geared on things that are going to bring you to the place where you ought to be able to identify these things. It is not on the basis of self will or self importance or personal desires, but on the basis of an adequate and proper understanding of what it is that God has given you, and where you are spiritually. The spiritual maturity level soon will be there, and the information will have been placed into your soul to give you that edifice of sound doctrine out of which you can function.

The foundation is being laid in Romans, and we are almost finished with it. So you need to become aware of these things, and begin to pray earnestly that the Lord will stir up the things in your heart to give you the discernment. Begin to observe yourself. Think about what the Lord is doing in your life, and be ready to respond to those things as they come up. That was the first thing that I wanted to say.

The second thing is in verse 17.

Romans 12:17

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

There is something here that is so essentially important to the ministry and to your ministry that I can't go beyond it without dealing with it. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Do not give anybody any reason to question you about anything. Don't give anybody reason to question your honesty, your integrity. Some people are going to do that, you understand that; some people are going to falsely accuse you; some people are going to get after you, and you are going to have enemies. I Thessalonians 5:22 says it another way:

1 Thessalonians 5:22

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Abstain from all what? Appearance of evil. Old man Bob Jones used to say, don't stop to tie your shoe in another man's watermelon patch. Do you know why? Because you look like you are thumping those watermelons. If the next morning one comes up missing, you know who he is going to say got it: the fellow who he saw out there tying his shoes. The appearance: it isn't enough that we be right, and know in our heart that we are right. We also are obligated to others, and this is something that maturity and grace will teach you. You have an obligation to other people, not just to know in your heart that you are right; but as much as is in you possible, appear correctly, and rightly, and honestly with them.

I guarantee you, if there is anything that I have learned in the last 6 years, being here at the Bible Society, it is the importance of this issue; because once you become a public figure, and stand before the public, the more and more that happens, the more and more important it is that you project an image where people have confidence. The

verse where he says let no man despise thy youth, is not talking about not letting anybody dare say anything about you. That isn't what he is saying. He is not saying, get on your high horse, when somebody questions you, and slap them down—don't let them dare say anything about you. He isn't saying that at all. He is saying don't let anybody despise your youth. He is saying, Timothy, don't give anybody any reason to think poorly of you. Do you understand the difference in that? It is not haughtiness—I'm not going to let you say anything about me. It is a different attitude; it means don't give them any reason to do it.

Some people are going to do it out of all kinds of bad things and opposition that you can't control. If the adversary can't get you to compromise the message, what will he do? He'll try to compromise the messenger. Gentlemen, you will hurt yourself, and your ministry; and I don't want to see that happen. So I want to give you the example of the Apostle Paul. He gives you an illustration of this in II Corinthians 8—the great man that he was, yet how meticulous he is in this very thing.

2 Corinthians 8:20-21

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

The issue in 2 Corinthians is money, and Paul has given them instructions about the collection that he is taking up among the Gentiles to take to the poor saints at Jerusalem. Gentlemen, there is nowhere in all of your ministries that it is going to be more important than to be sure that you have the appearance as well as the fact of honesty, than in this issue. You want to provide things honest in the sight of all men, and that is what Paul is doing here. Look back at verse 18.

2 Corinthians 8:18-19

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; [He sends him with Titus.]

19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

He sent this brother who has a good reputation, who the church has chosen to try. You see, Paul told the churches: You guys choose somebody to go with us. He sets up a committee as it were, to handle the funds. Why does he do that? Verse 20.

2 Corinthians 8:20-21

20 Avoiding this, [Here is what I am after.] that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

He sets up a situation where nobody could possibly accuse him of mishandling those funds. What is he doing? He is providing things honest in the site of all men.

2 Corinthians 8:22-23

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

23 Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

You see, he is being careful to provide a situation—he is raising all this money, but someone else is handling it. Go back to 1 Corinthians 16, and notice that he doesn't even presume upon the fact that he ought to accompany the money to Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

He said: The messengers that you approve, (that is who he is talking about in 2 Corinthians 8), by your letters, I'll send the money with them.

1 Corinthians 16:4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

Notice. Was Paul going to Jerusalem? Verse 4 says, they can go with me. He is going, but how was he going to get the money there? The other guys were going to take it. You send these fellows down here and get the money, and they can take it to Jerusalem. I am going to go to Jerusalem, and I will meet them there, unless you think it would be better and proper that I go too, (with the money), then they can go with me. The idea is that he is providing a structure and a framework where everything is exactly in order, so that everybody understands what is going on; and he even requires them in verse 3 to submit written approval of what is going on.

Sometime you might want to chaff under the bit at that kind of thing. But listen, it is always proper, especially in dealing with money, to be sure that everything has the appearance of right—honesty before men as well as before the Lord. So take that counsel to heart, and don't forget it. That is extremely important. It is best when money is concern to let somebody else handle the money, and don't get involved in it yourself.

Maybe in the beginning of your ministry, all those things won't be possible. If it is possible, let it be that way. Protect against ever having to handle the funds of the work; and if you do, set up a system where other people are accountable, other people look, other people see, other people know, and everybody is accountable. Everything from publishing financial statements every month to all the other things, that is the right way to do it. Don't do things behind the corner or under the counter where people don't know. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

I wanted to say that to you because I know how important it is, and he deals with that in the latter part of chapter 12 in the context of opposition—how you should relate and apply that renewed mind to opposition. Folks, opposition is going to get you if they can, people will say things against you. I got a letter one time from a guy in Michigan, a president of a school, a prominent guy, and he accused me of being dishonest. He said: “You are dishonest, and you are unethical.”

I wrote him back, and I said: “Well brother, whether I am or am not, you really cannot judge. I tell you what to do. Here are the names of the board of directors of the church that I attend. Why don't you write them and ask them. Let them give you their opinion.” He didn't write them, so I read his letter to the board one evening, and asked them to write him a letter, and tell them if they thought I was dishonest and unethical. None of them took it up, and I am grateful for that. But my point is, it is always good to be able to have witnesses that can stand with you, and are willing to put their unblemished hand to the record. You want to be able to stand without that kind of questioning being directed at you. You are going to have enough problems as it is.

Romans Chapter 13

Romans 13:1

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

He moves on from the topic of opposition, to the issue of government. He has talked about how to apply the renewed mind—that proper viewpoint—toward opposition, and now governments, verses 1-7. Then verses 8-14, deal with the issue of how to relate to society. At first, it might seem out of place for Paul to fit the government issues in here, but there is a tremendously important issue involved here that is often misunderstood and generally overlooked. I want you to see that there is a real important reason that he sticks the government in here. It might at first seem not to fit, and not to be so important; but it is important, once you begin to understand what this passage is talking about.

Romans 13:1-2

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Notice: The powers that be are ordained of God. If you resist them, you are resisting what? The ordinances of God—the rules, the things that God set down. He is not saying that God elected Ronald Reagan, or God elected Jimmy Carter, or that God elected whoever is president now. He is not saying that God put FDR in office. He is not saying that he put Hitler in power. He wasn't saying that he put Nero in power in his day. That is not the issue. The issue in the passage is the divine laws, and the divine institutions for the establishment of the human race; and they take us back to Genesis 1-11.

There are 4 institutions in the Bible that are divinely established, and their purpose is the establishment of the human race. In order to get them, you need to study the first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis. The institutions in Genesis 1-11 are still in effect today, not because those chapters are dispensationally operative today, but because they contain principles that were set down for the operation of the world. Most people put the dispensation of conscience and human government in there. I don't do that; I think conscience is a system of knowledge, and we talked about that in class. Human government is one of the divine institutions for the establishment of the human race. But there are four of these institutions that are given. They are permanent divine institutions for the establishment, protection, orderly functioning, survival, perpetuation, and blessing of the human race. You need to know what they are.

The first institution is volition. It was established when God created man to operate rationally under the volition that is in his soul rather than by his instincts. Volition is the first institution, and that volition is the key to the functioning of divine establishment. The key for the functioning of the establishment of the human race is the issue of volition. You have a will—a volition, a freedom to choose and make decisions in the details of your life. God established volition as the very basic issue, and the most basic of all authority in human life. Volition is the basis of all authority. It is that freedom, that authority, that right of the individual to make decisions in life. Volition is the basis of all accountability. You have a will—a volition—therefore you are accountable. You are responsible. Why? Because you can respond. You don't operate on the basis of instincts like an animal. You have a volition—an ability to rationally respond and operate on volition. That is part of the essence that God placed in your soul. The first institution is volition.

The second institution is marriage—Genesis 2. Marriage is structured to form the basis of stability in society. It gives the basic stability to society, and it also forms the foundation of the third institution; and that is family.

Family is the third foundation unit. The institution of the family is for the safeguarding and the perpetuation of the human race. The first institution is volition. The second institution for the establishment of the race is marriage. That gives the basic stability. The third one is the family. That gives the ability to safeguard, and to perpetuate mankind.

The fourth institution is nationalism. Nationalism is real important. God divided the world into nations—national entities with geographic boundaries. That was done back in Genesis 9, 10, and 11, and nationalism is critically important. That is what you are dealing with here in Romans 13—that fourth divinely established permanent institution for the establishment of mankind. Nationalism is adherence to the laws of divine establishment.

Each one of these institutions: volition, marriage, family, and nationalism has laws in the Word of God—principles whereby they operate. You need to understand and know the principles whereby volition operates, whereby marriage operates, whereby family operates, and whereby nationalism operates. Adherence to the divine laws of establishment is under the institution of nationalism. In other words, adhering to the principles and the laws of nationalism as set forth in the Word of God by a maximum

number of people in a national entity, (a nation), guarantees some things. It guarantees human freedom. It guarantees privacy for the individual. It guarantees the exercise of the first three institutions; and it also furnishes protection for the nation itself. So it is very important that these things operate.

With the creation of man in Genesis 1, the first institution is established—volition. God made a rational creature. He made man. Man is able to rationally operate on the basis of his volition. In Genesis 2, marriage is established. It is a divine institution.

Genesis 2:22-24

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

In Genesis 4, the family is established when Adam and Eve began to have children. When you get to chapter 9, when Noah walked off the ark, human government was established.

Genesis 9:1-2

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Noah comes off the ark, and he is to go out and do what Adam was to do—to have dominion over the earth, to be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth.

Genesis 9:5-6

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

That is the institution of human government. God said if somebody kills another man, I am going to require the murder's blood. How is he going to require it? Verse 6. He is going to require it at the hand of another man. In other words, men are established by God to execute His justice, and His judgment, and His principles in human relationships. When you give a man the authority to do the ultimate in government, you give him the authority to do everything that comes up to that point. Generally speaking, dispensationalists say that the dispensation of human government begins right there.

As I said before, I don't believe human government is a dispensation. The dispensation that is effect in Genesis is the dispensation that Paul calls *promise*—from Adam to Moses. That is the dispensational set up using Paul's terminology. Human government, rather than being a dispensation, is one of the divine institutions that is permanently fixed from here on, in the life of men. It is in effect today, and it is what he is dealing with in Romans 13. Look at chapter 10, and watch the nationalism issue.

Genesis 10:1-5

1 Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

God divides up the sons of men after their families, after their nations, and after their tongues.

Genesis 10:31-32

31 These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

When God divides up the sons of men in Genesis 10, He divides them up geographically. Those divisions become geographic divisions, racial divisions, and language divisions. He divides up national entities—national groups—basically with geographic boundaries. The issue is nationalism—national entities being gathered together who identify together.

Here is an individual—first institution, volition. Then he gets married. Now there are two of them—second institution, marriage. There are laws and principles for the individual to operate, and laws and principles for the husband and wife to operate. Then a family comes along—propagation of the race. There is the third institution—family, and there are laws and principles whereby it operates. But what happens when you get a family? Another family always moves in next door, don't they? Now you have more than one; now you have a community. Just as God separated the husband and wife into a unit, and then separated parents with the kids into a family unit, He separates people into national entities. In those national entities, there are certain rules and laws that He sets down for the operation of that nation; so that the nation can be perpetuated just like the family perpetuates the marriage, and perpetuates the individual, and so forth. Each one builds on the other, and nationalism is the top one that God established.

Acts 17:24-27

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, [God took one man, Adam, and then later on, one man, Noah, and He made all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth to exist; and notice:] **and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;** [Why did He do that?]

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

Do you see what God did? He established boundaries between people—national entities with boundaries—and why did He do it? Because He was mean, ornery and cantankerous? No, He did it so that those people following the laws of divine establishment for nationalism, (for the nation), would be able to do what? Find Him; and have some truth.

In Isaiah 10:13, the antichrist does what? He removes the bounds of the people. The same thing is in Hosea 5:10. Do you know why he does that? Come to Genesis 11, and notice. The Satanic plot and offensive to destroy nationalism is called *internationalism*. That is going across national boundaries—pooh-pooing national relationships—and making the international community a family of nations. We could sing, “We are the world,” in Genesis 11, and that is where it came from—a Satanic plot to destroy mankind, to gain the subjugation of mankind.

Genesis 11:1-4

1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

They said, “Let’s be one, lest what God had said, happen.” God told them to scatter. They said, “Let’s be one lest we be scattered abroad, lest what God said for us to do be what happens.” Satan’s policy of revolt and evil against the fourth divine institution is what is called *internationalism*. Any time that you internationalize things, or break down barriers, or have a nation that has a lot of different national entities in it, (like the U.S. does, a melting pot of all kinds of national entities, racial entities, language entities), you have a situation that basically is going to have a lot of trouble within. It is just the way that it is going to go. The reason for that is that it is a concept that is contrary to the issue of nationalism.

How do you take care of that? We are all here in this country, so what nation do we belong to? This nation. If this fellow says I am from France, or I’m from Germany, or I’m from Africa, or I’m from Asia, and they are all going to claim where they came from, what is going to happen to this nation? It is going to be broken to pieces. It will

break up. But when we all stand on the laws of divine establishment for nationalism, when we function in the nation the way the nation ought to function; then the nation can stand no matter how diverse all the other things. But it does not stand except that way.

I don't want to get off the subject here and go into that, because that is beyond my point here in Romans 13. But you need to study those first 11 chapters of Genesis, and see those things, and how they operate. Notice in Genesis 11:7-9, God scattered the people. He changed their language, and He does it to ensure nationalism, not internationalism. He thwarts their international efforts by confounding the languages, and dividing them up.

Go back to Romans 13. The reason nationalism is so important is that basically it is the institution that provides protection for the family, for marriage, and for the individual. What you are dealing with in Romans 13:1-2 when he says: “the powers that be are ordained of God,” is the authority in the divine institution. He is not talking about how God is setting this nation up and that nation up or this guy as president. He is talking about the institution—the ordinance of God—this divine institution of nationalism and government that God has established.

Romans 13:1

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.” There are certain laws and principles that are for the operation of government, and we need to go by those, and be subject to the authority. By the way, each one of those institutions has an authority. Volition is the authority of the individual—the person—to make decisions in his life. Then there is marriage—the authority of the husband over the wife. Then there is the family—the authority of the parents over the children. Then there is nationalism—the authority of the rulers over the citizens. Each one of them has power. There is power in each one of those institutions. Here, he is talking about the delegated authority involved in nationalism. Each one of us is to be subject to the higher powers—to the powers that God has placed in that institution, in that position of governmental authority.

The reason that we are to be subject is due to the fact that God has established the institutions. Write down by that verse, Titus 3:1 and I Peter 2:13-17. (I Peter is a tribulation epistle.) In those passages you will find that the same thing is enjoined. Understand that doesn't mean that everything that the ruler does is right. It does mean, however, that no matter the character of the ruler, he represents the ultimate human authority in the nation that he governs, or in the position that he has. Whether it is local, government, state government, or national government, he represents authority.

Titus 3:1

1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

1 Peter 2:13-17

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

In time past, this worked a little differently than it does today, because of the purpose and plan in the prophetic program. Things were a little bit different than they are today. People will use these passages to say that God elected Ronald Reagan, that God elected Jimmy Carter, that God elected FDR, that God put Hitler in office, and that God put Nero in office. But it doesn't operate today like it did back then.

Daniel 4:17

17 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones [That is the angels.]: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

Wright down by that verse, Jeremiah 27:5-6, and you will see that this passage in Daniel 4 is talking about Nebuchadnezzar. You will see that God Almighty established Nebuchadnezzar to be king. Jeremiah says He did.

Jeremiah 27:5-6

5 I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

6 And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

Due to the nature of the prophetic plan, God's program at that time included direct intervention like that. But folks, that has changed today due to the fact that the purpose of God has changed. Galatians 1:4 says, Christ gave himself for our sins that we might be what? Take over this world system?

Galatians 1:4

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

That we might be delivered from this present evil world. God's purpose today is to get us out of here; it is not to take over the political structure. Taking over the political structure was His purpose in the prophetic program, so he had direct intervention. Today, he is not directly intervening like that. Rather today, His purpose is to take us out of here, not into it, but out of it. But that doesn't mean that the divine institution of government still isn't His institution. He set up the principle—the institution of government—and He set up the institution for us to be obedient,

subservient, and subject to. So we are subject to it because it is the ordinance of God. It is the thing God set in motion, and it is His purpose and program, even if He is not directly intervening in it. In a minute we will see how we have an effect upon it, but it isn't the way it was in time past.

Romans 13:2

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Understand again, that is not a blanket statement of obedience. It is not just a statement of blanket obedience to everything that the government tells you. I get a letter from somebody, and they say: "Ahh, what you are saying is that you have to go be obedient to the government. You should have backed having the Jews in the concentration camps because Hitler said to do it." I am not making a blanket statement. If it were a blanket statement, a statement of blanket obedience to everything that the government said, then that would be God in this passage, telling you to disobey him in another passage, wouldn't it? Have common sense enough to understand that if the government tells you to do something that is disobedient to God, who should you obey? God. Right. Why? Because the government isn't functioning; it isn't telling you to do anything right.

God isn't going to tell you to do something that is wrong in order to be obedient. He isn't going to tell you to disobey Him in order to obey Him. That wouldn't make a lick of sense. It isn't what He is talking about at all. We are talking about the principles of the institution of government here. The only exception to obedience and subjection to the government is when the government or the nation violates the Word of God. In other words, when the government violates the other three institutions: family, marriage or your volition—personally and individually—to be obedient to what God says, then what do you do? Acts 5:29.

Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Acts 4:19-20

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

The idea is that you obey God, you don't obey men. But if you are going to obey God, you are going to have to get under the institution, and work within the divine laws of nationalism, because He established it.

Notice some verses. Daniel 3—the three Hebrew children. They don't bow, they don't bend, they don't burn. They don't give up to the government when the government violates what God told them to do in the book of Exodus. Daniel 6—when the decree is passed against Daniel praying. What does he do? He prays, because that is what God told him to do. Acts 4:19-20. Acts 5:29. II Corinthians 11:32-33. You see Paul escaping from an arrest warrant, being let over the city wall of Damascus in a basket, why? The ruler of the city is trying to kill him. If he is going to be subject in the

absolute sense, he would have had to go and turn himself in, not run from the guy. There is that common sense exception. So you want to understand that.

Generally speaking, as far as the institution is concerned, there is no excuse for revolt. Paul is absenting himself; he is getting out. The Hebrew children submit to the penalty. Daniel goes in the lion's den. He used the prescribed political measures of redress; and if there aren't any, then just suffer the consequences. But you do what is right. If it is right to obey the government, then it is right to do it. There comes a time every now and then, not very often, but every now and then, where the government tells you to do something that is wrong, and is going to violate the other institutions. Then you have an exception. But generally speaking that is not true, and you are going to see that in the rest of this passage. In verses 3-7, he is going to amplify verses 1 and 2.

Romans 13:3

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, [Rulers—that is people that hold delegated authority in the echelons of government, whether local, state, or national government. They are not a terror to good works. If good works are able to be identified, then there has to be the existence of a common law in the national entity. There are some common things that are described as good works and bad works. That is one of the characteristics of a nation with a common law; it provides a structure of common law for it's citizens. They are not a terror to good works, but to what?] **but to the evil.** [Evil works—people that violate the law.] **Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:**

What is the government going to do? What is the legitimate function of the government when you are doing good works? To interfere with you? No. To leave you alone; and say, "Hey man, good going, good going. You're doing good." If you see somebody over doing something good, do you stop them, and tell them how to do it differently? No. They are doing it okay. "Hey, that is great." The legitimate function of government is to provide as little interference as possible. You see, as you go through here, you can see the principles involved in these things—not interference by the government, but what? Support of the other institutions: family, marriage, and the individual.

"Do that which is good and thou shall have praise of the same." Do you see that? What are you supposed to do in society? Under nationalism, the believer is responsible to participate in civic affairs, isn't he? Aren't you supposed to do what is good? You, as a believer, are expected to participate in the affairs of the society that you live in—to vote, to have jury duty, pay tax, obey the laws, defend your country, be a participating part of the community that you live in, resisting evil and doing good. Do you know what you ought to be? Christian people ought to be the best citizens in the country. You ought to be the people that do good. You resist evil and you do good. Let me tell you something. When you go out and participate in the community that you live in, and do what is good, you will have an effect. It will be effective.

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. [Did you notice that he is the minister of God? This thing is a divine institution. This is what God set up—the institution of nationalism. He is the minister of God to thee for good.] **But if thou do**

that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Nationalism is the basis of protection—externally and internally. Externally it protects your house through military defense, and military victory. Internally it protects you through proper enforcement, and administration of laws. “If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain.” There is the issue of laws that are executed, administered, and enforced; and evil doers are restrained. If you are doing good, we will leave you alone. We praise you. We say, get on with it man. But if you are going to violate the law, potential violators, and actual violators have to be restrained. How are you going to restrain them? By effective enforcement: fair, skillful administration and enforcement of laws. That is what he is talking about.

“If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” He bears not the sword in vain—that sword brings wrath upon people. The issue there is capital punishment. Listen to me: you can't fulfill the function of keeping law and order without enforcing capital punishment. It is impossible. Capital punishment is a function of the state. Is it a function of the individual? The family? Marriage? No. It is a function of the state. Don't forget that. Personal vengeance is out. Chapter 12 told you that. But the function of the state in executing criminals is that just and proper administration of the laws.

In order to have capital punishment function properly in a society, you have to have justice. You have to know the person that is being punished is guilty. You have to have the skillful administration of the laws. It has to be properly done so everybody has confidence in it, and then it has to be done. The good people have confidence in it, and the bad people say, well I think I'll be good next time. It is a deterrent. The reason that it is a deterrent is because every time justice is violated. Justice responds with execution. If you only half- way administer the law, what happens? It is a joke, and it is no deterrent.

There are three types of killings that are authorized in the Bible. Number one: You are authorized to kill your enemy in battle that is fought for the preservation of a nation's freedom. If you are fighting a battle for the preservation of your national freedom, that is a legitimate war; and you are authorized to kill your enemy because your enemy is threatening your national freedom. Number two: You are authorized to kill in personal defense. If somebody is going to kill you, you have a right to defend yourself. Number three: There is the function of the state in executing the criminal, and that is what we call capital punishment. Verses on that are Romans 13: 4 and Deuteronomy 19:18-21.

I want you to read these verses on your own. We are not going to get to them, and I want to get through this governmental section during this class. Capital punishment is authorized before the law: Genesis 9:5-6. Under the law: Leviticus 24:17. Under grace: Romans 13:4, and Acts 25:10-11. Paul said if I have done anything worthy of death, I don't object to dying; you can go ahead and kill me. Under the kingdom, reign of Christ: Isaiah 11:4. Capital punishment is authorized before the law,

under the law, under grace, and under the kingdom. The intent of capital punishment is the preservation of human life. It is a deterrent.

Write down Deuteronomy 21:18-21 in your notes, and put a note beside it: that will take care of the gang problem on the streets of the city of Chicago. If you do what that passage says to do with a rebellious kid, you will take care of the gang problem in about two hours. It says if Mommy and Daddy have a rebellious kid that they can't handle, take him down to the elders of the city—the authority of the city—and they take him out and publicly execute him. There won't be any more sass in high school. Kindergarten kids would get straight real quick. Do you know why? It is a deterrent. The reason for it is the preservation of human life—protection for other people. Violators have to be stopped by the execution, by the carrying out of laws. Now verse 5.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Believers need to be subject to the law, not only for wrath sake. You need to be motivated to avoid criminal behavior and to be good citizens, not just because you are going to get into trouble when you misbehave, but also for conscious sake. You ought to be motivated to be a good citizen—the best citizen in the country—by the system of norms and standards of sound doctrine that are stored up in your soul. You are to have sound doctrine as the basis of operating your life, and your relationship with the government is to be stabilized in these things. You are not always to be confused, anxious, defeated, and distracted by what is going on in the government. We live in a day where you ought to be able to appreciate that. You need to have the sound doctrine in your soul to understand the issues of nationalism; and understand what internationalism is; and understand how to properly relate to the government under which you function, (no matter what form of government it is), on the basis of the sound doctrine that you have in your soul.

6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: [Taxation is a legitimate function of the government, and it doesn't say if the tax is unjust or if it is burdensome, you have a right not to pay it.] **for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.** [Listen.]

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

My dear friend, the same system that was in effect in Jesus' day and in Paul's day is in effect today. Do you remember the beginning of our study? We are under the times of the Gentiles, aren't we? Isn't the same system still going on today in the government of the world? It sure is; it is the same system that Christ operated under when He said: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesars, and to God the things that are God's—that's separation of church and state, but responsibility to both. The same system that Paul was under is in operation today, and you and I are obligated to function on the basis of it. Render to every man their dues. We are responsible to our nation, folks.

The body of Christ supports good government. How? By teaching the Word of God, and by properly functioning in society. We are going to get into society in just a minute, but folks, never try to become the government. Let me say this to you so that

you understand. Every system of government contains the elements within itself by which it eventually is going to be destroyed. What are those elements?

1. Negative volition toward sound doctrine on the part of the believer—the believer not functioning properly.

2. Rejection of the principles and the laws of divine establishment for your nation by the believer and the unbeliever. Then what happens? Leviticus 26. There are five cycles of judgment for a nation listed. The 5th cycle is destruction by war, because of the rejection of those principles. When you reject the principles, light rejected because lightening. Be sure your sins will find you out. The only way a nation can last for a long span of time is adherence to these rules and these laws of divine establishment for nations. Understand that conflicts are always going to be there. There will always be that constant conflict, because Satan's policy of evil is to destroy the things that God has set up.

Do you remember what evil is? *Evil* is the title of Satan's policy. It is Satan's *modus operandi*. Evil includes human good as well as human bad. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil—remember the very first evil thinking in the garden of Eden after the fall? It was the production of human good—operation fig leaf. The first time that Adam and Eve tried to put their hand forth with evil thinking, they produced something good. Every attempt to solve the problems of life apart from God—human good—is evil. Socialism, Communism, Internationalism, Altruism, Reformation, Humanitarianism, public welfare, government intervention, government coercion, religion, Liberalism, organized Christianity—name it; they are all attacks on the divine institutions. You have to have sound doctrine in your soul, and understand that issue so that you can operate properly and orderly in society. That is why that is there and it is critically important.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-6

Romans 13; I say to you once again that we are covering these verses and this material in much too rapid a pace for me to be giving you all of the information that is there; and yet I am comfortable doing that knowing that you have been thus far instructed in the information and the doctrine. We have been through the first 8 chapters of Romans where we got the foundation stone of justification; and then the issue of walking in the Spirit in chapters 6-8; and then in chapters 9-11 we saw the issue of the dispensation of grace. Now we are studying that last issue, that last foundation stone that you have to get clearly established in your life, and that is the practical application of the doctrines that you have learned—the practical instructions for living in the age of grace. The law has been removed, and you have been placed under the principal of grace; and now Paul gives practical instructions as to how to take all of this position, this standing, this working of God that you have learned about, and put it into effect in your life.

I mentioned to you once before, if we were to write the book of Romans, we would probably go immediately from the end of chapter 8 into chapter 12; but Paul does not do that. He sticks his dispensational setting in there in chapters 9-11. The reason for that is that you have to get all that stuff straight in your mind before you get into the practical aspects. You need to understand what He has made you in Christ, and how He has taken care of the past, and how He has equipped you for the present, and how He has made you to walk, and how God deals with His other purposes. In other words, you have to grasp that we are involved in is what God is doing today.

So he gives you practical instructions. Your service begins in chapter 12, and I encourage you, as I have mentioned before, to be praying earnestly in the days ahead that God would give you wisdom and understanding as you apply the principles and information that you are learning; and begin to give you a grasp and a perception—that renewed mind—so that you will be able to identify in your life just what it is that the Lord would have you to do, and where He would have you to serve.

Now you have come to the place where you are ready to begin to think about those practical things, and to move in those directions. Too often we try to get the cart before the horse, and we try to serve the Lord when we are not yet equipped, we are not stabilized, we don't have the empowerment information inside of us to be motivated properly.

Not having the doctrinal foundation, we aren't able to have the proper motivational foundation in our soul; and we get frustrated. One of the most difficult things that you will ever deal with in your life is the issue of frustrated ambition, and too many of God's people are plagued with the bitter fruits of that root of bitterness that sinks down and grows deep into their heart. That comes about simply from frustrated ambition. Jeremiah says: desire thou great things for thyself, desire them not. And yet there is a temptation in all of us to do those kind of things. We want to serve, and we have that initial motivation, and because we don't get that stability in our soul—that doctrinal basis upon which we can stand and thus be motivated properly—a lot of believers never get to the place where they are able to serve, not because God hasn't

given them the assets, but because they haven't learned the information. They haven't gotten that house of sound doctrine—that edification complex—built up in their soul so that they can properly serve Him motivated by the right things.

Last time we went through the first part of the chapter, and I tried to show you the issues of your relationship to the government. Beginning in verse 8 through the end of the chapter, he deals with how you should relate, not simply to the government, but to society in general around you. The issue here is how you relate to the world around you. First he deals with your relationship with the government in the world, and that fourth divine institution for the establishment of the race. You need to understand those institutions, especially that issue of nationalism, and how we relate to that. You need to understand the proper viewpoint of a nation, and the nation's national relationship, so you know what to expect out of the government, what the proper functions of the government are, and how to be involved in that. But society is also made up of society itself—not just the government, but all the other things in society. So how do you relate to that? That is in verse 8 through the end of the chapter.

Romans 13:8-9

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The new Bibles omit the statement: Thou shalt not bear false witness. If you were in the business of doing that you wouldn't want a command telling you not to do it.

Romans 13:10

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Notice the emphasis on your neighbor, on any man, and on other people. He is beginning to deal with the issue of your relationship with people around you in society and how you should relate to the world around you. The way you relate to it is the issue of having a love relationship. You understand by now what love is; we have talked about it over and over again. Love is a mental attitude of value and esteem—a mental attitude. It is not the emotional warm personal feeling, but it is *agape*—that relationship where you can properly relate to the world. You see the value and the worth that God sees in the world. You see proper value, and you have the proper esteem for other people; so that you can acknowledge their real value, and their real worth before God.

When you look at the world around you, you need to have the capacity to look at it in a love relationship. Don't be in a relationship in the world where you forget to pay that debt of love that you have to the world. Back in chapter 1, Paul says: I am a debtor, therefore I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. Having been given so much from God, you and I owe a debt; not just to Him, but we have a responsibility to other people around us to share with them the life-giving message that

we have—God’s great love for us and for them. So we are to owe no man anything, but to love one another. In other words, you owe them a debt of love; and again, love is the ability to properly value and esteem them so that you can acknowledge and recognize their worth before God—the value that God places on them.

Grace doesn't lead you to sin, folks, that is very obvious here. Understand how God operates today in grace. He isn't imputing the trespasses of the world against itself, but there is value and there is esteem for the world, there is worth that God sees in the world. When you see the worth that He puts there, you are going to be able to deal with your fellow man on the basis of the value that God sees in him. The value that God sees isn't a dollar sign. Do you want me to say that again? The religious system sees people, and do you know what they see? Money, influence, prestige, and that kind of thing.

I was in a place just last weekend preaching, where there were a bunch of preachers, and churches—grace churches—in that area. The pastor of the church is really carrying on a work, preaching the Word rightly divided. He took me around to visit 5 or 6 different grace churches, (so called). We sat and talked with some pastors, and I got stirred up, and the preacher that I was visiting was a little surprised that I would get so stirred up. I talked to some of these grace men, and they aggravated me. I mean I got aggravated, and I said, I don't want to go see any more of these guys. I am getting nervous here; I am just about to walk out on the hayfield a while just to get some steam off. I don't want to go talk to these guys who only see money in a congregation. “I mean to get 250 people in a building and build a big building to hold 250 people.”—it was a church of 50, but they would build this big building. Why? Visitors would come in from a certain denomination, and you get their money, and their attendance, and one of you builds this building.

What do you do when you preach? Do you see the real value and esteem that God places in those people, and preach the gospel to them, and try to help them grow, and try to get the truth to them? Well this guy wasn't thinking that way. Do you know what he was doing? “Well let's not say anything that makes them mad; because they give real well, and it is nice to be able to say that you had 250 this morning,” and that kind of stuff. Listen. Do you know what that preacher was doing? He is in debt and he isn't paying his bills. Do you get what I am saying to you? In your relationship to the world out there, you owe them a debt of love; and God Almighty expects you to love them enough to do for them what He wants done; and don't fail to discharge that debt. He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law—that is the issue.

Romans 13:9-10

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Listen people, grace sets you free to love and to live on the basis of what God values and esteems, and grace won't lead you to sin. If you live in sin, it isn't because you are following grace. Grace teaches you to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to

live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. Grace teaches you to do what those verses are saying. Grace teaches you not to steal. Grace teaches you not to commit adultery. Grace teaches you not to lie. Grace teaches you not to covet, and if there is any other thing that is good for people, it will teach you to do that; because grace never does something that is going to harm somebody else. What does it always do? It does good, that is the issue here. It enables you to properly relate to others in the most wholesome and honorable way. Those verses are talking about clean living, and honest and honorable living. And my dear friend, clean lives honestly and honorably lived is the fruit of grace; and that is the kind of conduct, and lifestyle, and relationship that you are to have with society around you. You are to go do them good. Don't forget that. And when you teach your people in your church, you are to teach them to do society good; and to be good people living honestly and honorably in a community, and doing good in the community. Teach them to do what is right, because you know what grace motivates you to do: what is right.

Romans 13:11-12

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Are you a part of the night or of the day? The day. What do people do in the night? Come over to I Thessalonians 5.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. [In other words, you don't belong to the category of darkness and night. Who belongs to the category of darkness? Satan. Who owns the night? Satan does. That isn't your class. You are not in that family any more. You are in the family of God, and you are children of light—children of God. You are to walk in light, as He is. Therefore, let us not what? Walk in darkness. Isn't that what he just said back over there? It is high time to wake out of sleep. He is saying, it is time that you people lived in the world different from the world. The world is in night. What do people do at night? They sleep. Do you want a good message? Sit down and think of all the things that happen at night. Are buildings full or empty at night? Do people sleep, or are they awake? You can get a list, and that will preach. Do that in your prep and delivery.]

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

That is almost a parallel passage with Romans 13:11-12.

Romans 13:11-12

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Let's not live like unsaved people. Let's not live like the world. Let's put on the armor of light. Paul says don't go to sleep. Going to sleep is just living like the unsaved world out there. Look at I Corinthians 15, and Ephesians 5.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34

33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

Do you see that? Awake to righteousness. In other words, wake up to who you are. Wake up to what is going on. Don't be asleep at the switch. You are people of the day, you are supposed to be alert, you are supposed to be awake, you are supposed to be walking in a certain way. Get on with the program.

Ephesians 5:8-16

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Isn't that a powerful passage? He is saying don't go out there and have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. What is your relationship to society around you supposed to be? You are not to have fellowship—concourse and communion with the world. You are not to be a part of it as though that is who you are. You are not to engage in, or participate in, or drink of its fountain. But you are to go out there as light in the midst of darkness. What does light do? It reprov's darkness. It makes manifest the wicked works of darkness.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

The point that I want you to see is the contrast between walking in the light as a child of light, conducting yourself as one that reflects the light; and walking as a child of darkness—that is, sleeping. Satan and the world system that promotes his policy and his program, desire to have you go to sleep. They don't want you functioning in their midst in the proper manner. So you know what is going to happen to you when you go out and try to discharge your debt of love, and try to share the value and esteem that

God has for people. When you are not walking by their standards, do you know what happens? They shut you off; they oppose you. But you have already dealt with the opposition back in chapter 12. How do you deal with people that oppose you? In chapter 12 he told you about that.

Here, the issue is a little different. The issue here is your inner attitude looking at them, and you begin to figure out how to reach them. How do I live in this neighborhood? How am I to relate to that system out there? He says, don't relate to it. Don't be a part of it. You are there to reprove and rebuke and exhort, and you know what they want to do to you? That society out there wants to affect you. It wants to make you go to sleep. It wants to make you quit shining. It wants to make you be just like it is. It will try to neutralize you, and put you to sleep; and he is saying here, don't let that happen.

Romans 13:12

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Hey folks, what we are involved in here is the issue. Don't let the world put you to sleep. What happens when you go to sleep? Are you conscious? No. If a believer is asleep is he conscious of all that he has in Christ? Isn't he going on human viewpoint, not on divine viewpoint? Is he dreaming? Don't you dream when you sleep? They say you do whether you remember it or not. Are you living in a dream world? How many believers do you know, and how often do you get in a dream world, where what you are doing has absolutely nothing to do with what God is doing. How many Christians do you know whose Christian life is nothing but a dream, a fantasy world, with no reality in it at all?

Do you want to preach? Think about what you do at night, and you will figure out some things. Are you very active when you are asleep? Are you getting any work done? Is that time productive? No. You thrash around in the bed at night, and pull the sheets all out, and in the morning what do you have to do to the bed? You have to make it up again. You have to straighten it out. Your activity would have been better if you didn't have it. It wasn't of any value.

The adversary wants you to be an inactive believer, he wants to put you to sleep, put you out of the battle, put you out of commission. When he says: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," he is saying that the world is soon going to pass, so don't be seduced into being a part of it; because it is not going to last. It is not our thing and it is not who we are. The idea is, don't be a part of it. Separate from it, just as light separate from darkness. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand.

By the way, those are great good passages on Paul's expectation of the rapture in his own lifetime. He didn't expect 2000 years. When you compare that to I Thessalonian 5, he is talking about the rapture, the day of the Lord, and the tribulation. So he expects it to happen sometime soon. Because the night is far spent, and the day is at hand, because the world is soon going to pass; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

There is that replacement principle that we talked about back in chapter 12—put off/put on. That is one of the operative principles of grace, and Paul is saying: Hey, let's go out here in the world, and pay our debt of love to the world, but let's not be a part of it. Let's put off the unfruitful works of darkness, and let's put on the armor—protection. Jesus told his disciples: I send you out a sheep among wolves; be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. That is, have a mental attitude of preparedness. Mr. O'Hare used to say you have to have the heart of a dove, and the hide of a rhinoceros. There is a lot of truth in that.

Romans 13:13

Let us walk honestly, as in the day; [What kind of walk should you have in the world? In society? An honest walk.] **not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.** [That is the way that the world walks, and he says don't do those things.]

Let me ask you something. Did you put on the Lord Jesus Christ when you trusted Him? Positionally you did, (Galatians 3). Then what does he mean when he says put on the Lord Jesus Christ? Put off that conduct in verse 13, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh. He is talking about taking the positional truth that you learned in chapter 6, and making it part of the daily activity and conduct of your life. Make your walk match the position that you have in Christ. Live like who you are.

Experientially, in the details of your life, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and don't make any arrangements to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Do you know what that verse is saying, gentlemen? It means that you have to plan to do the will of God. When you get out there in the world, and you are living in society, and you are working on the job, or you are living in a neighborhood, or you are going to the ballgame with the kids, or you are just trying to make ends meet and pay the bills and make it through the world, or you walk to Sears and look at that brand new color television, or you ride by the automobile dealership and look at those shiny automobiles, or whatever it is, make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Galatians 5:16

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Walk in the Spirit and you shall not have the lusts of the flesh? No, that isn't what that says. It didn't say that the lust of the flesh won't be there. What did it say? Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The lust of the flesh is going to be there; because as long as you carry that carcass around, you are going to have it. The old sin nature is genetically resident in your body. Don't forget that. As long as you have that body of flesh, you are carrying around the body of sin. The old sin nature is not some mystical attitude that runs around somewhere in your cranium that you can purge yourself of. You carry it around as long as you have that flesh, that meat hanging on your bones. It is genetically resident in the nature that you got from Adam. Paul is saying put off what is akin to the world, and put on Christ; and don't make any provisions to fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Do you know what you have to do? You have to plan not to sin. You have to plan to live for God. You have to plan to do the will of God, and not to sin; and that is the key to living in society—in the world. When you just live in the world, and let it carry you up and down, up and down, do you know what will happen? You are going to be just like it. Do you know what grace tells you? You are out there not to be carried up and down, but to pay a debt. You are out there to relate to the world the way God relates to it, and see the value that He has in it, and look at people and situations the way He looks at them. Pay your debt to the world, and don't be a part of it. Be who you are. But it takes planning.

The lusts of the flesh: I ride past a used car lot every day going to work and home. That is the sneakiest bunch of people that you ever met in your life—car salesmen. They shine those cars up with wax. A car may have a paint job that has been dead for 5 years, and they shine it up with wax just long enough for you to see it. They put light bulbs over it—not the smoked ones, the clear bulbs—because the light ricochets off the shiny surface much better. You ride past there, and I would swear they go out there with a pick ax at night, and dig a pot hole in front of their place. That way you bounce over it and say: Man, this thing is getting loud, getting rough. You drive by there going home looking at them, and you look over at those shiny cars and say: Boy, doesn't that look nice. When you get out of your car and the old door goes *squeak*, you say: Boy it is getting old, we will have to replace this thing before long; it's getting bad, getting bad. After a week or two of that, you say: Well, I like that one on the end there. I think I will just stop and look at it.

So you pull over, go in and ask if they will give you a good deal on that one. You say, I'm not buying, I'm just looking. You sit in that thing and you say: Man, it feels good. You start it up, *vroom, vroom*. It has a good exhaust system. You know, my exhaust system will have to be replaced in not too long, and I'll have to put \$150.00 dollars in that. It sure would be nice to put it in a new car instead of an old one—just putting money down a rat hole. And pretty soon you begin to justify your need for that automobile, don't you? You know what I am talking about. Pretty soon you justify your need for the automobile, and pretty soon it just won't do until you own that automobile; because your old car all of a sudden becomes a rattle trap. It won't go, and that new one will fulfill all my desires. Pretty soon you are over there, and you sign on the dotted line, and put your money down, and you are strapped with a \$300.00 payment for 60 months with 8.8% interest. Instead of costing you \$10,000, that car costs you about \$18,000 to \$20,000 with the interest. And when you are paying the bills, you have to sit down and say, where am I going to get this money from? Lord, I tell you what; Lord, I love you, and you understand that Book says to pay your bills. I have a bill here that I have to pay, so there goes the Lord's money paying the bill. It isn't long until the lust of your flesh gets this stuff up around your neck, right around your wind pipe and it goes tight; and it isn't long before you are unconscious and you're just laid out.

Is there anything wrong with buying a new automobile? You are going to see in chapter 14 that if you couldn't do it in faith—something that was in line with what God was doing—it was wrong. You are going to find in chapter 14 that in everything you do, you are to walk how? By faith. Whatsoever is not of faith—not based upon something that God is giving you to do, and the perception that you have with a renewed mind—is

sin. So discern the details, and know whether or not it is something that God would have you to do.

Do you understand why we are getting into these things in Romans 13, and not back in chapter 2? You have gained that renewed mind, and now you apply it to the details of life. I used the illustration of an automobile because that is something that we all deal with. That is where the lust of the flesh works. It justifies a need for something to cause you to do it without any regard to what God would have you to do. It could be a boat, a color television, a trip to the Bahamas, a lustful look, that kind of stuff. The lust of the flesh works that way—whether it is a bottle, a buck, a babe, or a Buick, it all works the same way. With one guy, it may be making money.

The passage says let us walk honest as in the day. It is easy to cheat, and it looked good, and I can get by. Not in rioting and drunkenness—just going out and carousing—not in chambering. That word *chambering* is talking about the bed chamber. What it is talking about is bed-hopping—sexual immorality. Wantonness: that is just being left to it, man—just going on out, and just lasciviousness. Not in strife and envying. Whatever the sin is, the lust of the flesh works the same way. So if you can understand it on an easy thing like getting an automobile, or something else that you all have to deal with, you can understand it.

Romans 13:14

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

What do you do? You put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh. You don't make arrangements to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. You put on Christ experientially. Putting on Christ, (back in verse 12), is putting on the armor of light. He is talking about reflecting Him in your life—reflecting Him with your lips. That is what is going to protect you from sin. If you live for the Lord Jesus Christ in the details of your life, do you know what it is going to do? It is going to protect your life from sin. You might get opposition for your testimony's sake, because you share the gospel and preach the Word, but I tell you what, it will put a pressure on you that will keep you right—that will help you stay right. It will help you in your sanctification.

Remember these two words: service sanctifies. If you will serve the Lord openly, as in the day—like a bright light in the midst of darkness—do you know something, folks? There will be a pressure put upon you just naturally to stay right for Him, and you will be more conscious of what you are doing, and you won't be able to sleep at the switch. How do you relate to society? Separation from the world, and personal holiness is a must. What is my relationship to the world to be? It is to be one of personal holiness, and separation from the system, and going out there and preaching that message, and sharing that value and esteem that God has for them—a positive ministry, not contaminated.

Separation has nothing to do with not having any contact with the world. It has to do with not being contaminated by it, or dominated by it. That is the only way that you can protect yourself and the message that you have to proclaim. If you have not realized it yet, you are going to realize it: there is a battle on, and that is the reason that

it is the armor of light. If Satan can't get you to cut the corner on the message you preach, he will try to contaminate the messenger so that the message isn't listened to.

Titus 2:7-10

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: [The pattern—that form of doctrine that is in you—is to be reflected and demonstrated in the activities of your life. Not just your doctrine, but you are to be a pattern—your lifestyle is to be a pattern of good works.] **in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,**

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; [Why?] **that** [the purpose, the intent] **he that is of the contrary part** [Who would that be? That is your opposition.] **may be** [What?] **ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.**

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may [What?] **adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.**

He says, make the doctrine look good by who you are, by the details of your life being handled in a way that reflects and validates the doctrine. We don't base our doctrine on human experience; but listen, gentlemen, sound doctrine can always be validated and demonstrated in experience, and your experience should be one that reflects it.

We relate to society around us by separation and personal holiness—going out and fulfilling our obligation. And when you live a separated life of personal holiness in your service to God, then you are fulfilling the obligation that you have to society by being who it is that God made you to be in society; because you are validating that message that you are proclaiming to them.

Romans 14:1

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

He has changed gears now, and gone into another issue. Chapter 14, verse 1 through 15:7 is the last issue that he deals with—the issue of how to relate to weaker brethren. You have to understand what he is doing here. There are two extremes that create an artificial atmosphere for the Christian life. One extreme is the issue of no separation from the world: just go out and be like the world. Live like the devil, like you are a child of the night, like you are asleep as far as who you are in Christ, like nothing ever happened to you. That is an artificial atmosphere because that is not who you are. He just dealt with that in 13:8-14.

The other extreme goes the other way—the opposite. Those people reduce the Christian life to a list of do's and don'ts: We do this. We don't to that. We wear this certain kind of clothes. We don't wear those certain kind of clothes. We listen to this certain kind of music. We don't listen to that certain kind of music. We do this. We don't do that. We have a list of “touch not, taste not, handle not,” and so on. Those people are trying to reduce the Christian life to a life of complete separation, and it is an artificial kind of thing that doesn't reflect the way that the Christian life really operates.

When you get off on one extreme—no separation—you are just like the world. When you get off on the other extreme, you begin to get self-centered; and you begin to be real critical; and you get real proud; and that is why he calls them here in the passage *weak brethren*. These people are weak in the faith.

Colossians 2:20-23

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, [Notice how he is asking a question. He says, “if you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world...” Are you dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world? Yes. He is not saying that you are not, and he is not questioning. He is challenging you. He is saying: Look here, if this is who you are...] **why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,**

21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

The point is, here is a bunch of people at Colossi who have a list of commandments and doctrines of men—some “don'ts” and some “do's,” lists of “don't do this,” “don't do this,” “do this,” “do this.” They are trying to control sin, how? By law. What have you learned about that? Can you control sin and please God in your life as a believer by the law? How do you do it? By grace. Isn't that what he is doing in verse 20? He is saying: Think about what you are saying. If you are dead with Christ, if Christ is the one that did it all for you, what in the world are you doing? What is he doing at Colossi? He is telling them to operate on the basis of a renewed mind that understands grace.

Do you know what a weak brother is? He is somebody who hasn't gotten these issues established in his thinking. He is somebody who hasn't matured to the place where he is functioning under grace. Do you know what he hasn't done? He hasn't come to understand Romans 6-8 yet. So Paul gives you some practical instructions in chapter 14, and the first part of chapter 15, about how to deal with brethren who are weak in the faith. The great majority of your ministry is going to be dealing with what kind of people. You have come to the place where you have these foundation stones of doctrine about God's grace and justification, His grace and sanctification, and His grace in the dispensational dealings. You have them all down, and now he says: Look, in your practical living under grace and the application of these understandings, you are going to deal with some people who haven't gotten through all that yet. So what are you supposed to do?

They are going to be mad at you. They are going to think themselves superior to you. Are they superior? No, but they are going to think that they are. Do you know that the weaker brother is one of the most bullheaded dudes that you would ever meet in your life? He is a sanctimonious rascal most of the time. Why? Because he has his little laws and he says, I am keeping it, and I am not touching, and I am not tasting, and I can judge everybody on the basis of that. Phariseeism is what it comes down to. How do you relate to that? How do you deal with that? He is going to tell you.

This passage is critically important. He is taking this doctrinal framework that you have been putting in your soul, and he is saying: these are broad areas that you need to learn to deal with. The first area is your relationship to God, Romans 12:1-3. Then you need to learn to deal with others—your relationship with other members of the body of Christ—that unity and diversity that all works together in the body. Then you need to learn how to deal with your brethren on an individual basis in your service to the Lord. Then you need to deal with opposition; then with the government; and then society around you. And don't forget you are going to be in an assembly; and in that assembly, there will be a lot of weak brothers; and you need to know how to deal with them.

Romans 14:1

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

Receive him—embrace him warmly—but not to doubtful disputations. A disputation is an argument. Receive the brother, but not just to argue with him, and tear him up, and show him how smart you are, and how much you know, and how much better you can talk, and how much smarter you are. Receive him to do what? To help him. Look at verse 19.

Romans 14:19

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may [What?] edify another.

Edify another. What do you receive the guy for? If he is weak in the faith, what does he need? Does he need you to straighten him out? No. He needs to be built up in the faith. So he says, receive him. Follow after things that make for peace. Receive him, and live by his conscience. If eating meat offends him, have peace, don't eat meat. Remember I Corinthians 8-10? If drinking this stuff bothers him, what do you do? Follow things that make for peace. You live your life in consideration of him, and not yourself. Do you have a right to eat the meat offered to idols? Sure you do. Do you have knowledge that lets you know that there is no problem, that the idol is nothing, that beef steak is good, then eat it. But if this brother has a rule that says: “Don't eat things sacrificed to idols,” what are you going to do in your assembly? You are going to live by that brother's conscience. You are going to do things for his good. You are going to think about him, not yourself. You are not going to do what you want to do, just because you want to do it and have a right to do it. You are going to let go of your rights, and do for him. Why? So you can edify him.

How are you going to edify him? With sound doctrine. You are going to edify him by going through that design that he needs in his soul. Your ministry is not going to be self-pleasing, because you are going to be able to see the value that God sees in him. We have no right to give up our dearly-bought liberties, but we do have liberty to give up all these rights that we have. I am going to receive him, but not just so I can puff up myself. I am going to receive him to help him.

That brother is weak in the faith. There are three different issues involved in that expression—faith. There are three different ways that faith is used in the Bible, and

they are exemplified in Galatians 3:22-24. I want you to be able to identify these three types of faith.

Galatians 3:22-24

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

“Faith of Jesus Christ.” The word *faith* there is used in the subjective—in the sense of faithfulness, worthiness to be believed. If you keep faith with me, then you are faithful to what we agree on. That is one way that the word is used. Then verse 23.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

“The faith.” That is a body of truth and information, a system of doctrine that is revealed. Then verse 24.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

“Faith.” That is your activity when you believe in something. You have faith which is believing in something. You have faith which is your faithfulness—worthiness to be believed. And you have faith which is a reference to the body of doctrine that you believe. Each one of those three verses uses *faith* in a different way.

Now in Romans 14:1, “he that is weak in the faith,” what is he talking about? He is weak in doctrine. He hasn't got the information stored up in his soul that he needs to have. He has a weak conscious. His faith hasn't been fortified with sound doctrine. He hasn't arrived at the level of Romans 12-14 yet. He is not stabilized yet; he has not gotten through chapters 1-5, much less 6-8, because he is still thinking that works, and some kind of doing and not doing has something to do with his basic justification, his right-standing, and his pleasingness to God. In the first 8 chapters of the book of Romans, we learned that all of that is not the way God operates today. So here is somebody who doesn't have that information stored up in his soul: he is weak in the faith.

So what are you to do? You are to receive him, but not to doubtful disputation. You are to welcome him, but not just to tear him up, or to show him that you can outthink him, or outsmart him or outtalk him. Receive him in order that you might edify him, build him up; your motive is to be right. There is that mutual concern, consideration, and care—that expediency principle from chapter 12—one of the principles on which grace operates.

By the way, if you take the weaker brother principle that you learn here, you can apply that to everybody else; and if the strong brother applied it to the weak brother and the weak brother applied it to the strong brother, would there be peace? There would. The problem is when we don't do that. Look down at chapter 15, verse 5.

Romans 15:5-7

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

That is putting it pretty clear: think like the Lord Jesus Christ thinks. Do you know how he thought? Look back at verse 3.

Romans 15:3

For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

Do you know how Christ thought? He thought of others first. Didn't He think of you ahead of Himself? If you think like He thought, do you know what the result will be? You will receive one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God. When this weaker brother is contentious, when he is a problem, when he imposes upon your liberty, when he imposes in your life, when he gets in the way in the details of your life, what are you to do? You are to respond to him like Christ responded to us, and deal with him on the basis of that mutual care and consideration that we have as members of the body of Christ.

Next time we are going to go through chapter 14, and you will see the principles of grace operation. All of these things are things that are giving you the capacity to take all these principles of grace, and apply them to details in your life.

Let's read Romans 14:2-4. Now here is the contention.

Romans 14:2-4

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: [Who believes that? The strong guy.] **another, who is weak, eateth herbs.**

There are the two viewpoints; one is right, one is wrong. But the argument in the passage is not who is right and who is wrong. You need to remember that right now. He never deals with who is right and who is wrong. He does that in other places, and if you have the doctrine, you know who is right and who is wrong. He is not dealing with who is right and who is wrong about this stuff, but how you as a strong believer are to relate to the guy that doesn't have all the information yet.

3 Let not him that eateth [Who is that? The stronger guy.] **despise him that eateth not;** [Who is that? The weaker guy. The stronger guy is not to despise the weaker guy.] **and let not him which eateth not judge him** [Condemn him.] **that eateth: for God hath received him.**

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

You see, the problem in the thing is that pride gets involved. Pride gets in the way of the brethren. It gets in the way of the stronger brother—he gets proud, and his pride takes the place of the love that he ought to have. Then rather than by love serving one another, he uses his liberty as an occasion to the flesh. Rather than by love serving one another, they wind up biting and devouring one another, fighting, and fussing. No edification for the weaker brother, and no proper functioning for the stronger brother.

The weak brother gets proud because he feels that he is more scrupulous, more responsible; and that he is doing right, and the other guy is just lackadaisical—he doesn't care that he is eating things that are sacrificed to devils and that kind of thing. And both of those positions can become Phariseeism—that “holier than thou” kind of thing. And he says, “Who aren't thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.” Don't forget that. Folks, sometimes, you can get so hard-nosed against error and against evil that you just get to stomping around on things that God loves, and you don't ever want to do that. There is an old saying that says, you can be disagreeable, or you can disagree agreeably. That's it.

Those who have come to the place where they understand the doctrine are stronger. We who have the doctrine are the ones who have to disagree agreeably. Is the weak brother going to do it? Is he capable of doing it? No. Is he responsible to do it? Sure he is. But you and I have the opportunity to teach him how. You and I have the responsibility of edifying him.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-7

We are going to continue in Romans 14 where we left off last time. I want to point out to you that we are going rather quickly through these passages, and you need to study them more in depth. Generally speaking, all of the books that we have studied so far, and everything that we study in this class, we've gone through too quickly. But if you get the overview, and the general sense of what is going on, you can ferret out the particulars.

You have come to the place now in the book of Romans, where spiritual maturity is being attained. You are getting that foundational information about what God has given you in Christ, and who you are. You understand that simply the intake of Bible doctrine doesn't do it. You have to also have that combination of the Spirit of God's activity in your soul; and building and storing this information in your soul. I trust that you are doing that prayerfully and by faith—taking this information, and making it a part of the operating procedures and principles, making it a part of the conscience of your inner man, storing it in your soul, and operating on the basis of it.

That is what we are doing in Romans 14. We have come to the last section of the book of Romans where he demonstrates practical instructions for living under grace. He demonstrates the renewed mind that we are to have, and that renewed outlook. Here in chapter 14, he is dealing with the issue of the weaker brother.

Romans 14:1

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

He that is weak in the faith—that body of truth that we believe—has not come to the place of maturity. He has not come to the place of having assimilated and built up in his soul, the first eleven chapters of the book of Romans. The brother that is weak in the faith, receive. Don't put him out; welcome him. Heartily and happily receive him, but not to doubtful disputations. Do not receive him just to tear him up, and show him how smart that you are, and how much you know, and how dumb, stupid, and weak that he is. Rather, receive him happily and joyfully. Why? That you might edify him—that you might build him up—not that you might tear him down.

There is a problem when you receive the weaker brother, and he comes in. He is weak, and you are strong, and there will be some problems when you receive him. You have to recognize that; and what is your attitude to be toward those weaker brethren who come in, who by their very presence cause problems. You have to change their diapers. You know why you change diapers—they made a mess, so you have to go behind them, and help clean up the mess. And you have to work toward bringing this brother to maturity—to perfection.

What is your attitude to be toward this weaker brother? In contrast, what is your attitude toward an erring brother, (a brother who is in sin or in bad doctrine and so forth)? There comes a time when you have to separate from him. But what about somebody who is weak in the faith? Doesn't he have bad doctrine? Doesn't he have some bad viewpoints? Sure he does. As we go through the passage, you will see that he

has some real bad doctrine hooked up in him. But what is your attitude toward the guy to be? That is the thing. You are to have this renewed mind and attitude. You are to be able to look at him with the value and esteem that God does, and here is how grace reacts. Watch.

Romans 14:1-4

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: [That is the strong man. He knows that it is okay to eat anything.] **another, who is weak, eateth herbs.** [He thinks that you can't eat anything but herbs, and doesn't understand all the doctrine that is applicable today.]

3 Let not him that eateth [The strong guy.] **despise him that eateth not;** [Don't look down at him; don't despise him. The Pharisee in Luke 18, looked around, and despised the publican. He had that “holier than thou,” righteous, “better than thou” attitude. Don't despise, look down on, cast disparaging things on the guy, or throw him out. Don't be proud and lifted up against him.] **and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:** [In other words, the guy who is weak, and has all these don't do's and do's—do this, and don't do this—don't let that guy judge him that eateth. Don't let him condemn the guy. That is the problem. You get that legalism going, and that list of do's and don'ts; and you are doing it from a weak, unfortified conscience not built up with sound doctrine. The critical spirit begins to come in, and he said, don't do that.] **for God hath received him.**

You know how to have the right attitude toward your brethren. God received him, can't you? You see, under grace we understand that that man is one with Christ, and with us, (with Christ first). Didn't God receive the brother? Isn't God at work in his life? Isn't God trying to build him up? Then can't you receive something that God receives? I mean, who are you anyhow? That is the attitude here. That is what the renewed mind tells you. God has received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? [Who do you think you are anyhow that judges another man's servant?] **to his own master he standeth or falleth.** [Who is his master? God Almighty is. God never called you to be a policeman. Isn't that wonderful to know? That has helped me, brethren, in the ministry through the years. God never called me to be a policeman who tries to run and correct and dictate to the world; and that will help you in your ministry. Sometimes I will deal with something, and deal with it a little while, and then I just quit. Sometimes folks say: Well, he just has a heart attitude; or he just doesn't care, or whatever. But do you know what I know? I know that verse. Who are you to judge, to condemn another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls.] **Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**

God Almighty will take care of him. He is God's. You might let him go, but God won't. So instead of condemning him, and dealing with him that way, build him up. Edify the guy. The issue in the passage is the issue of eating and not eating. Debatable things are the issue. Important doctrinal things are not the issue here. He is talking about things where the Scriptures don't spell out the issue clearly, areas where it takes

that renewed mind's discernment to properly evaluate and understand what to do and what not to do.

The weaker brethren are those who have not yet reached maturity about matters of conscience. They don't yet have that renewed mind to be able to look at an issue, (like meat sacrificed to idols); and to understand that the idol is nothing, therefore it didn't contaminate the meat. He can't understand that, because he hasn't got that strong fortified conscience yet. That system of evaluating isn't there yet. His norms and standards still have human viewpoint, and paganism, and whatever, in his conscience; and so he is a weaker brother, and that is the issue here.

The issue is not the issue of doctrine that is clearly stated in the Word of God, and tolerating violations of that. He is talking about those areas where the Scripture doesn't spell it out, and where you have thorough discernment. "Who by reason of use," (of the Scriptures), "have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." You have that discernment, that exercising of the Word in your soul, that gives you that sense to know what is right and wrong. The weaker brother doesn't have that sense worked out in him yet. He needs to be edified and matured.

So instead of condemning him and tearing him up, help him by bringing him to maturity. And you weak brethren, instead of condemning and tearing up the strong brother, don't judge him; let God do that. It is the strong brother who has to look out there and say: "He is weak, and needs edification," and it is only the strong that will do that. The weak brother never will, and you have the responsibility as a mature believer to help perfect the immature believer; and your attitude is exemplified here.

Romans 14:5

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

There is the thing. One man, (the weak guy), esteems one day above another. Another, (the strong guy), esteems every day alike. When he is talking about esteeming days, he is talking about holy days. The weaker brother hasn't gotten the truth of Colossians 2:16 down yet. Come over to Galatians 4:8-10, and Colossians 2:16-17.

Colossians 2:16-17

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

You see, this weaker brother hasn't come to understand that what we are doing today is not observing the shadows; we have Christ, the true thing to which the shadows point. So he says, don't let anybody judge you in meat, drink or respect of holy days or new moons or Sabbath days, or that kind of thing. In Romans 14, there is a guy who is respecting, (esteeming), days. He does not have that truth of Colossians 2:16 in his soul. What is the matter? Galatians 4:8.

Galatians 4:8-11

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, [So they don't really know Him. They are saved, but they don't understand all that God is doing yet.] how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. [See, they esteem all these days.]

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

The idea there is that the guy hasn't gotten the information. He is not established yet, and he desires to be under the law. Look in verse 9: they turned to “weak and beggarly elements.”

Galatians 4:21

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

They are going back under the legalistic system of the law and the law principle. They are trying to use the law to control sin in their life, and to try to help them please God. You learned in Romans 7 that that will not work. Didn't you? But the weak brother has not learned that yet.

The issue in Romans 14 is the proper viewpoint of those people with the renewed mind. What is the renewed mind's viewpoint toward these brethren who are not yet established in the faith? Remember this: Romans 14 is not a passage, and Romans 14:5 is not a verse, written to excuse the using of days. It is not a verse written to tell you that it is okay for you to esteem one day above another, and thus follow holy days and Sabbaths and new moons and all those things. He is not saying that. He is saying that this passage is describing the attitude that someone with a renewed mind is to have toward those who are weak and not established in the faith. Please don't forget that, because people will use this passage to try to say it is okay for one person to esteem one day and another to not esteem any. He is not saying it is okay for you to do it. He is saying that this is the attitude that you are to have toward those who do this. Verse 5:

Romans 14:5

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man [I love this next thing.] be fully persuaded in his own mind.

In other words, let every man stand on his own feet, so that he will be able to stand. You are to have that renewed mind: stand on your own convictions, on your own feet. You know my friend, you and I as believers should do only what we can give ourselves fully and wholly to without reserve. This verse right here will help you to decide about uncertain and questionable things. If there is any uncertainty in your mind about it, you know what you do. Don't. If you can't do something, what do you do? If somebody says: What about television? What about the movies? What about playing cards? What about this and that and all the questionable things that people do? What about some types of associations that you could have? “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”

Romans 14:23

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

The last verse in the chapter says that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. That is: when in doubt, don't. We should do only what we can give ourselves to fully, positively, without reserve; and anywhere there is any uncertainty in a thing, the standard is don't do it. That is something that you want to remember in the details of your life. Watch this passage carefully: verses 6 through 9.

Romans 14:6-9

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; [You ought to pray over your food and tell God thank you for it.] and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

They both thank God for the food. In their hearts, both sincerely desire to do what most pleases the Lord. One of them has more understanding of what pleases the Lord; the other one doesn't understand much about what pleases the Lord. But they are both trying to focus on what pleases the Lord; their heart is doing it for the Lord. The weak brother doesn't have all the details, but his heart is aiming toward the Lord. By the way, in verse 6 when he talks about doing that, the sincere believer is always going to want to do one thing, and that one thing is the thing that most pleases God.

Now here is one of the greatest passages in the Bible on the Lordship of Christ:

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. [Notice.]

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

The Lord Jesus Christ is your Lord; and that is why He saved you. That is why He went to the cross and died for you. That is why He was raised from the dead. That is the reason that He saved you. He is author of eternal life to you. When you trust Him, He gives you His life, and the reason that He did it is so that He could be your Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord in the life of a believer; not the denomination, not some preacher, not some elder, not your mother, not money, not you, but Christ. And you need to take your stand for the Lord. You need to hold to your convictions for the Lord, not because some preacher gave them to you, not because some denomination gave them to you, not because your Mom and Dad gave them to you, not because you just decided that it was something that you thought you ought to have a right to do, but because God has given it to you to do. Operate on the basis of that renewed mind, and my friend, you and I can't live apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. We are one with Him. You can't live apart from Him. That is what he is saying here. Now watch him ask some really penetrating questions. Verse 10:

Romans 14:10

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

He asks these questions, and they are searching questions indeed, to try to make them think. Why? Because you are supposed to be using the renewed mind that you have, and he wants them to think especially in view of the judgment seat of Christ. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:11-12

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of [What is that next word?] himself to God.

You are not going to give account of me, and I am not going to give account of you. You are not going to give account of the weak brother, and he is not going to give account of you. You are going to give account of yourself. Therefore when that weak brother comes in, your responsibility is to respond to him in the proper way. Christ is your Lord, not all the stuff: the baskets, bottles that he is shaking up, the denomination, the church, Mom and Dad, money, tradition, position, circumstances. Christ is the Lord. He is my Lord, and He is his Lord, and the Lordship of Jesus Christ is to determine my attitude toward that weak brother; because He is the one that I am going to give account to. He is the one who is Lord and Master to whom I am accountable. The Lord has given me everything that I have, and I am to respond to that weak brother before the Lord. I am going to do what the Lord wants done with the weaker brother. That is what he is saying.

The issue of the judgment seat of Christ is very important. We are going to give account of our conduct and our service as sons and His servants. We haven't been through much of a detailed study of this yet, so we are going to take about 15 minutes on it. Come with me to I Corinthians 4:5 and II Timothy 4:8. The judgment seat of Christ takes place after the rapture. We are the body of Christ in the dispensation of grace in a parenthetical period between Time Past and the Ages to Come. [See Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth brochure.] One day the Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven with a shout, catch the body of Christ up to meet Him in the air; and that meeting is not just to gather the body together. There is also a planned meeting there, at which time we face the judgment seat of Christ. After the judgment seat of Christ, we go back into the third heaven to be presented to God the Father. But the judgment seat of Christ takes place at the rapture. The rapture is called the day of redemption, (Ephesians 4), and at that time when we meet Him in the air, we face the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

**7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.**

“That day” is the day of His appearing, the judgment seat of Christ, when Paul is looking forward to getting the crown.

1 Corinthians 4:5

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Notice. The time to judge things is when the Lord comes. That is the rapture, and then men are going to get their praise of God. You don't have to go around figuring out who is going to praise you and who not to praise you, and that kind of thing. When He comes, and you stand there, you are going to get the praise that you deserve; and you are going to get it from God. A whole lot of your ministry is not going to get praised. Men are not going to think a whole lot of your ministry. When you preach grace, you need not worry about that; because the praise is going to come at the judgment seat of Christ—at the rapture. The results are going to come there. God never called you to get results. Don't forget that.

We are going to talk more about that another time when we get in the pastoral epistles, and in our ambassadorship class. But you need to understand that you are going to face the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ. The judgment seat of Christ in Romans 14 is an important motivational facet of the Christian walk. It's very important. What he is telling them in Romans 14 is: we are to live with the judgment seat of Christ in view.

I want you to understand this term, *the judgment seat of Christ*, because there is a great deal of misunderstanding about it. A lot of folks think of judgment only in the sense of going into a court room, standing before a judge, and being pronounced guilty or innocent, acquitted, or condemned of a criminal act. The term there is called *forensic*. There was a show on TV called *Quincy*. The fellow was a coroner, and he talked about the aspect of forensic medicine: the study of medicine to take into a court of law, and adjudicate innocence or guiltiness, acquit, or condemn someone. That isn't what is involved here. That isn't what every judgment is, and the judgment seat of Christ is not a court room scene. You know it isn't, because we have already been through Romans 3.

When you get to Romans 14, you understand that you have been before the bar of God's justice, and you have been declared righteous—not just acquitted, but declared right before His justice bar through the propitiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know that God's justice, as far as the court room aspect, has been completely and totally satisfied, so you don't fear going into court. You are not going to fear having to face your sins at the judgment seat of Christ, and be declared in the family or out, guilty or innocent. Your sin debt has already been taken care of, already been dealt with, and that isn't the issue. But you know there are other kinds of judgment. I Corinthians 9.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

When you go to a sporting event, don't they have judges? When you go to the Olympics, (and that is the metaphor used there: the Olympic games), they have judges who watch and evaluate the performance of the runner, or the boxer, or the gymnasts, or whatever—they evaluate the performance. It is not a condemnation of the performance; they are not there to condemn or to acquit. They are there to evaluate, and discern the measure of the performance as it meets a perfect standard. That is the kind of judgment here. They run in a race, but only one gets the crown. He said we run, and we can all get the crown. So the judgment seat of Christ is a rewarding, a reviewing stand like in an athletic event; but that doesn't mean that it isn't serious. There are two passages that you want to get: I Corinthians 3, and II Corinthians 5.

1 Corinthians 3:9-13

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work [What work? The work of building on the foundation. What is the foundation? Back in verse 10, Paul laid the foundation. What did he lay? He laid a form of sound words. He laid out some doctrinal truth about the Lord Jesus Christ; and if any man build on that foundation of doctrine, every man's work, (the work of building the doctrine of the truth—building that edifice of sound doctrine in your soul and in the soul of others) **shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it,** [That day is the day of redemption.] **The day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what** [Notice the next word.] **sort it is.**

Not how much, but what sort it is: whether it is gold, silver, precious stones; or wood, hay, stubble. You can have a \$1000.00 piece of gold, and hold it in one hand without any trouble. But I tell you what; you can not take \$1000.00 of wood, hay, or stubble, and fit it in this room, let alone hold it in your hand. There is a tremendous correlation, (and there always will be, no matter what inflation is), between gold, silver and precious stones, (those precious inflationary hedges), and wood, hay, and stubble. Gold, silver, and precious stones will always be small in quantity, but valuable in quality. Wood, hay, and stubble will always be large in quantity to make up the same value in quality. He is going to try out what sort it is. Is it going to be gold, silver, precious stones, something God makes; or is it going to be wood, hay or stubble: man-made, dead stuff. What sort is it?

1 Corinthians 3:14-15

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The issue in the passage is not your eternal salvation, but your workmanship. It is your service as builders on the foundation, and the issue is sound doctrine. In verse 15, what you are going to lose is the rewards. You lose that crown that you could have had. You lose it because you didn't build the right doctrine. It has to do with capacity that you build into your soul, and into the souls of those to whom you minister. Paul says in I Thessalonians 2:19, when I see you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and you get rewards, you are going to be my crown of rejoicing. What is that? That is, you got saved under my ministry, and you got built up in the faith, you got established, you went out and reproduced my ministry in you in other people. When you get to the judgment seat of Christ, and you are getting yours, you are going to be my joy; you are going to be my reward when I see you prosper.

Remember that in your preaching ministry. You don't want all your rewards now. You want them at the judgment seat of Christ. You want to do good to these people down here now. Do that weaker brother good now, and that is going to be for his good out there. He might not look at it now like it is any good for him; he might think that you are being ornery, mean, nasty, and rebuking him. You might have to admonish him, but do to him now what is going to be for his edification; so when he gets over there, then God's glory is going to be there. Live with that in view. That is what Romans 14 is talking about.

2 Corinthians 5:8-9

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

In other words, that our conduct might be something that pleases Him. This passage in 2 Corinthians deals with our conduct: how you respond to this brother. How do you handle the details of your life? When the weaker brother comes in, do you receive him just to tear him up? Or do you receive him to edify him? Your conduct is the issue here.

(I Corinthians 3 deals with your service. You are building as a builder. Corinthians 3 deals with what you are building in the guy. Are you teaching him sound doctrine, or are you teaching him human viewpoint? Are you teaching him things that are going to edify him? What are you teaching him?)

2 Corinthians 5:10

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; [Why?] that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

There are some things that you do that God accepts, and there are some things that you do that God doesn't accept; and you are going to receive for the things done in your body. Your conduct is going to determine the rewarding that goes on at the

judgment seat of Christ. Let me show you. Come to Colossians 2, and Galatians 5. Your conduct as sons is going to be reviewed.

Colossians 3:23-25

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward [Do you see that? Do it unto the Lord, because He is the one that is going to pay you. You should receive the reward of what?] **of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.** [He pays off. It might not look like it right now, but you by faith in God's Word can walk by faith, and know that He will reward you.]

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

What does he receive for the wrong which he hath done? Listen people: sin pays off. What it pays off with is a blank check: death. Galatians 5. Let me show you. It pays to serve Christ; He pays off, people. You serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will receive the reward of what? What does it say in Colossians 3:24? You shall receive the reward of the inheritance. There is an inheritance for you and me to share in the ages to come—in the heavenly places—as the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, takes up His inheritance in the heavenlies, (Ephesians 1). We will have a part in that, and we will get the reward of the inheritance. But my friend, there are also those things in our life that are not rewardable, and we suffer the situation of losing what we could have had if we receive for the wrong that we have done. What does that mean? Look for a verse that explains it to you. Here it is: Galatians 5.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Do you see that? When you walk in the flesh, the works of the flesh will cost you positions of rank and authority in the inheritance that is ours as members of the body of Christ through Him. You can walk in the flesh, and you can build your ministry on the flesh and the things of the flesh, and the systems of the evaluating system of the flesh, and you will come up short at the judgment seat of Christ. You can build your relationship with the weaker brother, (Romans 14), on the flesh, and tantalize him, and please him to get money, and to get his support, and to get his activity, and build buildings, and ministries, and monuments, and movements off of him. But if you don't build sound doctrine in his soul that makes him become independent of you, and operate independently of the necessity of you, preach yourself out of a job so to speak, then you are building on the flesh.

That brother should be able to go out and reproduce your ministry in him into other men, who produce it in others. If you do produce a successful ministry in that man, it might not look like it is much down here. Up there it will be good, and there will

be some reward. But if you don't, and you do what happened in Galatians 6:12-13, do you know what you are going to have out there? Zilch. You are going to be one of the "every name that is named," (Ephesians 1:21). You are not going to be a principality, power, might, dominion, and throne. You will be down yonder, and that will be what your capacity is going to be.

It is important that you understand that it pays to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Somebody said: "Wait a minute, that is not grace if you are looking for rewards at the judgment seat—if you are just serving Christ for rewards." Go back to Romans 14. "That is not grace, that is crass." "That is not grace, that is trying to get something." That is nuts, do you know that? "He can't be rewarding your service when He says He is, because it defies grace." That is just a bunch of baloney. People don't understand grace.

Look here, God Almighty saved you. Did you do anything to get saved? No, you didn't. God Almighty saved you by His grace, freely, on the basis of all that He did for you through the cross. God saved you by grace, salvation is a free gift. Then you go out here, and you want to serve Him, and you say: "Lord, in me, I can't." "In me dwells no good thing."

"It is not me, but it is the grace of God," Paul says, "that labored abundantly in me," and Paul gets to the end of his life, and looks back, and says: "All that work out there wasn't me, but God doing it in me. That is God working in me, both to will and to do His own good pleasure. That is God's grace that made it possible. If it were left up to me, I would have never done it."

So you get to the judgment seat of Christ, and you say: "Lord, you saved me by your grace. I served you on the basis of grace, and now you are going to reward me? I don't deserve it."

He says: "That's right. That is grace." Sure you don't deserve it. The nature of grace is to give you what you don't deserve. If you don't see that yet, you need to go back to Romans 1, and start again. Isn't grace wonderful? On the basis of Him showing the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness, the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ in the ages to come, he says, deal with this weaker brother with that in view.

By the way, 2 Timothy 2:12 says, if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. Write down by that verse, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Romans 8:18, and 2 Corinthians 4:17. You will see that our sufferings as soldiers will be rewarded, our conduct as sons will be reviewed, and our service as servants is going to be inspected. You have three classes of metaphors describing your activity here, and the reward that you get out there, and it is all based on grace.

2 Timothy 2:12

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

2 Timothy 4:7-8

**7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.**

Romans 8:18

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

2 Corinthians 4:17

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

There is a technical point that I want you to notice about Romans 14:10 before we get out of it. It says we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The new bibles change that, and say that we will stand before the judgment seat of God. The reason they change *Christ* to *God* is because of verse 11 .

Romans 14:11-12

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

It says that every tongue shall confess to God. So everyone will give account of himself to God, so they change verse 10 to match verse 11 and 12. But when they do that, they do two things. Number 1, they knock out a verse on the deity of Christ. If you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and you are going to confess to God and give account to God, who does that make Christ? It makes him God. So that is a great text on the deity of Christ. But wait a minute. The Authorized Version exalts Christ, and secondly, is also dispensationally correct.

Satan is bound in the bottomless pit after the tribulation when Christ comes. The Great White Throne judgment occurs in the Ages to Come after the Millennial Kingdom, the thousand year reign. [See Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth brochure.] Every man faces God there. So what they do is make verse 10 the Great White Throne judgment by changing it from Christ to God. Dispensationally, the new Bibles are incorrect, and the Authorized Version is correct. It is a great doctrinal verse on the deity of Christ if you leave it like it is. So you need to be aware that the new Bibles change that without any reason. When I say without any reason, I don't mean they don't have reasons for what they do, you know that by now. You had better stick with the text that you have.

Romans 14:13

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: [“any more:” how prone we are down here to respond to others on the basis of our old human viewpoint, and condemn them; rather than on the viewpoint of remembering who we are in Christ, and Who it is we serve. With God's program in view, let's not judge one another; let's not condemn one another any more.] **but judge this rather,** [Discern—judge in the sense of discerning there—and figure it this way.] **that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.**

Here is how to look at things. Don't just look at that guy and condemn him because of what he is doing, but think about yourself. In other words, don't judge him, judge yourself. Be responsible to react to him the way the Lord would have you react, because the Lord is your Lord. "Judge this rather," and again, we are so prone not to do this, and we constantly have to be reminded. That is the reason that it says "the renewing of your mind." "Judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." He is talking about this renewed mind toward the weaker brother. Judge yourself. Don't judge your brother. Don't put a problem in the guy's way. People, you can cause offense to others just by trying to have your own way. And you can avoid some of that by being thoughtful of the other guy. The renewed mind tells you to think of whom? Others.

Romans 14:14-20

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, [He is talking about what he knows. He says, here is my renewed mind speaking.] **that there is nothing unclean of itself:** [I have this understanding: I know that there is nothing unclean of itself. He is talking about things in the context. He is not talking about adultery, liquor, fornication, robbery, and rape being unclean. In the context, he is talking about eating and drinking, (verse 2, and 21). Eating and drinking is the context. A text out of context is a pretext. So you want to keep it in the context.] **but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.**

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

You see, that passage is talking about living by the other man's conscience. Live by the other man's welfare. I realize, and I have told you before, that is high ground. The average believer today, you and I, are so far away from this kind of a standard that if Paul showed up today, he wouldn't even know what we were doing. But that is the standard: living by the other's conscience, for the other's welfare. "If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." Walk with the proper value and esteem for what God is doing, walk with that renewed mind. Over in I Corinthians 13, he says love seeks not her own.

1 Corinthians 13:5

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Romans 13:10

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Walk charitably, walk looking out for the other guy's best interest. Destroy not him with thy meat—with our liberty to eat meat—for whom Christ died. What does he mean, "destroy him"? He is not talking about sending the guy to hell. He is talking about destroying that edifice of sound doctrine that God is building up in his soul. He is talking about destroying his faith, destroying him experientially. Notice verse 20, "Destroy not the work of God"—that work of building up this brother, edifying the brother in verse 19. Don't destroy that edification process just to have your way, just to

have what you want. For meat sake, destroy not the work of God for him for whom Christ died. Don't value your food, your self will, or what you want to do more than Christ valued his life. Don't value what you want in your life more than Christ valued his life. What should you value? You should value the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 14:16

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

What a disgrace it is when our liberty becomes license. Liberty doesn't mean license. We are to use our liberty, not to abuse it. By self will—pleasing ourselves rather than looking out for the other brother's best interest—we can abuse them. The point in the passage, of course, is our attitude toward the weaker brother. That attitude is to be one of: lay down my liberty, and do for them what is necessary to do for them. Receive them so you can edify them, and put up with all the shenanigans, and all the crying, and all the squawking, and the carrying on that they do, and respond to that in a proper way.

If they teach false doctrine, what do you do? You take the Word of God, go to them, and edify them. Most of the time what they are doing is like the Corinthians, and they need to be reproved; or the Galatians, and they need to be corrected. But my attitude toward them is to be one of charity: one where I walk valuing and esteeming what God is doing; having that renewed mind; seeking not my own, but every man his neighbor's profit.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-8

Romans 14. We are going to begin at verse 16. The context is discussion about the weaker brethren; and the heart attitude, and the heart motive that you and I have as believers, especially the believer who has the renewed mind. He is giving instructions about how the believer with the renewed mind is to react, to respond, and to handle the details of various situations.

One of them is the issue of weaker brethren, other brethren who are not yet established in the faith. They do not yet have their feet established on that foundation. Therefore, they do kooky things; they do unscriptural things sometimes: for example, esteeming one day above another, or refusing to eat. He is dealing with areas where the Scripture doesn't plainly and clearly say what is to be done. He is dealing in those areas where the things are not clearly spelled out. What about smoking, watching TV, or driving Cadillac automobiles, and that kind of thing? What about bell bottom pants, or this kind of hair cut, or that kind of suit, and all the different things that are involved?

People have questions about those things; and until you have that renewed mind, until you have your senses exercised by reason of use of the doctrine of the Word, your senses exercised to discern on your own the details of your life, (what is good and bad), you are going to have those questions. What is your attitude to be toward those kinds of people? That is what he is dealing with here. We have gotten to verse 16, so we are going to pick it up in the context, and continue.

Romans 14:16-19

16 Let not then your good [That is your strength in the faith.] **be evil spoken of:** [You are strong in the faith, but don't give occasion for this brother that is weak in the faith to speak evil of you. Too often we despise them, and cause contention. He said think about that guy's good.]

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; [Eating meat and drinking drink is not the issue in the kingdom of God.] **but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.** [That is the issue today. That is what God focuses on today. That is what is of interest to God.]

18 For he that in these things, [in righteousness, peace, and joy] **serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.**

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Again, the issue in the passage is edifying the guy. Do you understand how you serve Christ today? Is it by meat and drink? Don't eat this, don't drink that, a list of do's and don'ts? No. You serve Christ in the Spirit, you walk in line with what the Spirit of God is doing, understand what the program of God is today: righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Those are things that the Spirit of God is interested in. When you understand how to serve Christ today, then you have the ability to follow after peace, and pursue the things that make for edification.

You see, it is not by exercising my rights to do this or that; but by yielding my rights, God is going to use me to edify, and to build up my weak brother; and not only the weak individual, but the whole assembly. How often do I share with you, (especially

at communion time), the fact that what we do there is demonstrate our oneness. We submerge our self, and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. We make Him the object of all of our activity, and by all of us focusing on Him, we are one. There isn't any other way to have oneness, because we are all different. There is diversity among us, but oneness, in that we all point toward Him; and that is the issue. There isn't any way to do that except to put my rights down.

Somebody said: "We have no right to give up our dearly bought liberty, but we do have the liberty to give up our rights." The whole issue here is, don't be self willed. Again I point out to you that the context of the passage is Christian liberty among brethren: things that I have liberty to do. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. Do you remember those two verses in Corinthians? These are things that I have liberty to do.

I want you to understand he is not talking about doctrinal issues. Colossians 2:16. He is not saying it is okay to go eat meat, because it isn't; it is detrimental, it is hindering to your spiritual growth. When this weaker brother observes days, and months, and meats, and all these things, it is retarding his spiritual growth. What he is doing is not right; and he is not telling you that it is right. What Romans 14 is urging is not doctrinal defection, or tolerance of wrong doctrine. He is urging your self denial, rather than a refusal to be judged in matters of liberty. Rather than slapping the guy down, he is saying I am going to be patient with the guy. He is saying I'll not do something that I have liberty to do if it is going to help the assembly to have peace, and be edified. You see, it is your heart attitude, not doctrine.

This passage is not doctrine about days and meats. It is doctrine about the weaker brother who does not yet know how to handle these issues properly. Art asked me the other evening, what the difference is between when you do this and it looks like you are striving with people, and the verse in Timothy that says a servant of God must not strive. That weaker brother might consider it to be striving. But do you know what I have learned about that? The verse in Jude says earnestly contend for the faith. In Galatians 2, Paul said we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour that the truth of the gospel might continue. He is contending for the faith. How do you tell the difference between when you are contending for the faith, and when you are striving?

The difference is the heart attitude and motive with which you are doing it. You are to have a renewed mind. You are to have perception so that you do it with a right attitude, and the right motive; and the motive is not to prove me right and him wrong. It is not to put him down and me up, and it is not to be impatient with him. It is to preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Romans 14:16-17

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

That is an important passage about the kingdom of God; and it is a great verse to use in contrasting the program today and the prophecy program. Come back to Luke 14, and let me show you a direct contradiction. Romans 14:17 says the kingdom of God is not meat and drink. Compare Luke 14:15 with Romans 14:17.

Luke 14:15

And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Now tell me something. Is somebody going to eat bread in the kingdom of God and be blessed? Then does the kingdom of God have something to do with eating? It sure does. Then in Romans 14:17 how can he say that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink? The word *meat* there is solid food. The difference between the two things is the difference between the prophetic program and the mystery program. If you don't rightly divide the Word of truth, you are never going to get that Bible straight. You never will be able to understand the Word of God if you don't rightly divide it. Look at Luke 22:18.

Luke 22:18

For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

Is he going to drink with them in the kingdom? He flat is. Does Paul say that isn't the issue? He sure does. Then what is the difference? The difference is the prophetic program and the mystery program. The kingdom of God in Romans is a reference to the moral, righteous, spiritual aspect that is in effect today; not the literal, physical, visible, earthly aspect that will be in view in the prophetic program; and you need to notice that.

Romans 14:18

For he that in these things [The things in verse 17. If you properly recognize what it is that God is doing today...] **serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.**

The passage has to do with the details of our walk. Christ isn't served by eating and drinking today; but He is served by righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The only way that you can serve Him is by serving in the Spirit.

Romans 14:19

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Again, the context has to do with not exercising my rights, with not doing everything that I have a right to do. I have a right not to do something if I don't want to do it; and I can choose not to do something that I have a right to do, if my doing it is going to cause contention with my brethren. That is what he is talking about.

“The things which make for peace.” He is not talking about compromising doctrine. He is not talking about putting doctrine out, and compromising doctrine.

And that is a verse that people will use on you to tell you that you ought not teach doctrine: you ought to follow things that make peace, compromise. Listen, he is not talking about this lily-livered soft-soaped sellout, this old saccharine-sweet sob sisters that don't care anything about truth. That isn't what he is talking about. He is saying I can let go of things that I might like to do if they are going to cause a problem, and I won't press the issue. I'll give up my right to eat something if this brother thinks that I can't, so that I will have the opportunity to sit down with an open Bible, and teach him truth that is going to edify him, and build him up in the faith.

Romans 14:20

For meat [For meat: for what I have a right to do, insisting on having my own way, self indulgence, self will.] **destroy not the work of God.** [I tell you again, that is a rough passage. I Corinthians 8 & 10, study it closely. He said if meat make my brother offend, I won't eat meat as long as the world stands, lest I sin against Christ—against another member of the body, or the body at large. That is rough, brother, that is a rough passage. Christianity today is so far removed from Paul and his instructions. Grace believers are so far away from where Paul tells us we ought to be, that if he showed up today, he wouldn't recognize any of us. He might hear some of the things we say, and say: “Well they got that from me.” But he wouldn't watch the way most of us act, and know who we were. Do you know how he says to act? There it is.] **All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.**

The context of *all things* is identified in verse 21. A text without a context is a pretext. I say that to you because I have had people use the passages to say homosexuals are okay, and getting drunk is okay, and smoking cigarettes is okay. I had a guy do that to me not too long ago. He said, it says in Timothy that He gave us all things richly to enjoy, and that means tobacco. I can quit anytime; I have quit ten times.

I said, doesn't that verse in I Corinthians 6:12 say “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Hey, brother, if it has it's bony little fingers around your throat; and it's choking the life out of you; and has you coughing, and spitting, and sputtering like a twelve cylinder car with 8 valves out on it, listen, for you it's sin. You are going to find out in a minute that if you can't do it, and do it before the Lord with a conviction that God says is right for you to do, it's sin. It is something that you had better leave alone.

The context is meat and drink. He is not trying to excuse anything. He is saying, I know that I can do whatever, and God isn't going to hold it against me, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. If he thinks it is a shameful thing to eat it, then it is a problem for him. The strong guy has the knowledge; the other guy is weak. There is a strong man, and a weak man in verse 20.

Romans 14:21

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

If what you are doing is going to cause your brother to stumble; that is, if it is going to impede his progress, or slow his growth, or cause him to be offended, or if it is going to be an embarrassment to him, or put him on the spot, or if it is going to make him weak, or if it is going to shake him, or if it is going to make him less stable, it is good not to do whatever that thing is. It is easy to disrupt the spiritual life of young, weak believers by our example. That is the reason that your life ought to be an example of holiness; absolute, total, complete personal holiness in conduct, in conversation, in spirit, and in word.

You see people, you are an adult. When you get to Romans 14, you are an adult with a renewed mind. You are to operate on the basis of your adult position; and adults are to have some sense of responsibility for others. An adult is to feel responsible for weaker brethren. If you really are an adult, you are not going to have so much trouble with self indulgence; because you will have a natural sense of responsibility for those who are weak, and less fortunate than you. I Timothy 6 says they are destitute of the truth. They are just like some less-fortunate family down the street that hasn't got a job. They get out of work, and they can't pay their bills, and they can't buy groceries; and we say that they are destitute. This weaker brother has the same situation with regard to truth, and the edification of his soul. An adult is going to have that same kind of responsible attitude toward him.

Romans 14:22-23

22 Hast thou faith? [Question] have it to thyself before God. [Are you strong? Well, he says, okay, if you have faith, have it before God. Don't go out here and flaunt your strong faith. Have it before God. Do you know what you would do if you have your strong faith before God? You wouldn't call it very strong, you know that? You might be strong in comparison to another, but they that compare themselves among themselves are not wise. When you compare yourself with the Lord, what are you? You have to confess that you could never compare to Him in His weakest moment. That keeps a proper perspective. Do you have faith? Then understand what is going on; you have reached maturity; you're an adult. Just have it before the Lord. That will keep you humble, and keep you in a right place.] **Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.** [This brother over here can be happy; he can be assured if he doesn't condemn himself in the thing that he allows himself to do.]

23 And he that doubteth is damned [That word *damned* just means to condemn. Look it up in the dictionary.] **if he eat, because he eateth not of faith:** [If you can't do the thing because you have a conviction that it is right, do you know what happens? You are always wondering if it is right, or if it is not right. And if you don't do it of faith, you do it on the basis of presumption. You do it on the basis of self will, and he says] **for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.** [Whatsoever you do on the basis of presumption, or your own self will and indulgence is sin.]

When a weak brother looks out and sees a strong brother doing something—eating the meat sacrificed to idols, (or whatever that would be in our context in the details of our life)—and he wants to be strong; so he says I know how to be strong: the way to be strong is to eat meat. So he goes and gets himself some meat at the meat market that has been offered to idols; and he says, I saw John do it, so I'm going to do it. The only thing that he has to base his actions on is the example of the guy that he is

following. So he gets going, and then all of a sudden doubt arises, and the guy stands condemned. Why? Because his faith doesn't stand in the power of God; he is looking at a man. So the guy is torn up inside, and tossed to and fro. Listen gentlemen and ladies, any line of conduct, any action that doesn't flow out of faith, becomes sin for the believer. That is the Holy Spirit's answer for your life to the questionable things. As a believer, how are we to walk? Remember this: II Corinthians 5:7.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

I am to walk, not watching this guy over here doing something and then doing what he is doing, or watching the circumstance and responding to it. I am to **walk by faith**. I am to walk by that positive volition toward sound doctrine. That is grace's definition of sin: anything that you can't walk with God in, under grace, is sin. Don't tell me that living under grace will cause you to live in sin. Do you know what grace does? Grace elevates the issue of sin; it doesn't excuse sin; it shows sin to be exactly what it is, and it puts you on the spot. Grace will determine why you are doing what you are doing. In that passage, why you are doing what you are doing won't ever be what it ought to be, unless you are doing it for the Lord. You will never be able to deal with a weaker brother, except you do it under the Lord. As a believer, we are to walk by faith; and anything less than that is failure, missing the mark. That is the way grace looks at it.

So you see, when you have that strong faith, you can look at it that way; and all of a sudden you begin to discern the will of God in the details of your life, and you begin to know where He wants you to go, and you begin to have a sense of purpose and direction. His working, and what He is doing begins to flow out of you. Understanding and direction of the ministry comes, because growth comes. With growth comes movement, and with movement comes ministry, and the work of the ministry begins to take on some shape. Then as you get into a relationship with a weaker brother, or the government, or society, or opposition, or other members of the body of Christ, what do you do? You know how to respond, and you respond properly.

Romans 15:1

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, [What is "the infirmities of the weak"? The guy doesn't know what he ought to do; he has the problem in verses 20 and 21. He will do something not by faith, and it condemns him; it tears him up. So you and I ought to bear with that weakness.] **and not to please ourselves**.

Notice what he says: "we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." Underline that, would you? We ought to do this. We should be conscious of a profound obligation. If you have a renewed mind, you will gain that sense of obligation to your fellow brethren to bear with them; to bear them up. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Have the value and esteem for them that He has for you. See it live in your life. "and not to please ourselves." You see people, we shouldn't just merely tolerate the guy; we should be interested in helping him. Notice the example.

Romans 15:2

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

The edification there is not just the edification of the believer. It is that, but it winds up being the edification of the whole assembly. In verses 6 and 7, you will see that the whole assembly is in view. Folks, when you have that kind of thoughtfulness for other believers, the work of the Lord, as well as the individual in the work will be built up.

Romans 15:3

For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

“Christ pleased not himself.” There is an absolute absence of self pleasing in the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done. He tells the Father what is on His heart: Let this cup pass, but not my will, but yours be done. Don't please me, please yourself, Father. We should take our place with our Savior. Beside that verse, write Philippians 2:1-8.

Philippians 2:1-8

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Please study that passage in this regard: Christ had the right to please Himself. We do not in ourselves, and yet He bore even the reproaches of His enemies. How much more can we bear with weaker brethren and with others?

Romans 15:4

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Paul inserts a statement about the principle of the Old Testament's application to the believer. He does it because of the illustration that he quoted in verse 3 from Psalm 69 about Christ. He says those things that were written aforetime were written for our learning. By that passage, write down I Corinthians 10:11.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

He says the things that were written, were written for our admonition, to teach us, to instruct us. All of the Word of God is for you. It may not all be written directly to you, or written about you; but it is all written for our admonition and learning. It is all written to impart learning, patience, comfort, and hope. When you learn, and get the profit out of the Word that God put there for you, (and you have to rightly divide it to get it, but you need to get it), then you are going to have patience, comfort, and hope. The patience and comfort of the Scripture gives you hope. I hope you understand that. All of that Book is for you; and the example of Christ, in Psalms 69, is where the quote is. Great Messianic Psalms, (Judas is identified back there, and so forth), illustrate that.

Romans 15:5

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

You are to have the mind of Christ toward each other. That is what Philippians 2 says: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” You are to have the mind of Christ toward others. Notice “the God of patience and consolation.” The patience and comfort of Scripture, (verse 4), gives you hope. “The God of patience and consolation” is the same issue. The God of the Scriptures grant you to be likeminded. Think about “the God of patience and consolation.” Look back in the Word, and see how patient God was with Israel. Read and see how patient He was with Gentiles, and contrast that with what little patience we exercise one with another. He says “the God of patience”, the God who Scripture declares to be a God of patience and consolation— Paul prays that as you see God’s character in the Scripture, that He would grant you to be likeminded. He prays that as you store up that understanding of how He views things, you will have His mind one toward another.

Romans 15:6

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How are you going to glorify God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? Be of one mind and one mouth. He is talking about the assembly being likeminded one toward another. He is talking about the oneness of that assembly in action; in fact, it is the fellowship of the mystery in action. It is God being manifest in the flesh of the body of Christ; and in that one mind and one mouth all speaking the same thing, and all having the same viewpoint in our relationships one with another. In responding to one another the same, and preaching the same doctrine, we glorify God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:7

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

That is some statement; but that is the issue. Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us. How does He forgive us? Forgiving one another as God for Christ's sake forgave you. Are we to receive one another just to make the other measure up to our standard, to make him perform, or put our expected performance level on him? No. We receive him as Christ received us. Let me ask you something. Does your church do that? Do you know what you are going to find? You are going to find that carnal brethren won't receive you as Christ received you for the glory of God. They are going to put their performance systems on you. How about your association? Did they receive other brethren that way? Do you? That is the point; that is the way that the renewed mind looks at it.

He is going to go on into a great passage on the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the reason he does this is the context that he just came out of.

Romans 15:8-13

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

That verse, if you put it with verse 4, shows the whole thing to be one context. The point in bringing up the ministry of Christ here is not simply to point out that the Lord Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision. He also had the purpose of receiving Gentiles to the glory of God. Israel was God's people, but the Gentiles were going to be included. Then you can receive the weaker brethren, and thus be filled with abounding hope. If Christ could receive him, you could receive him. If Christ could receive them when there was a barrier between them, and the Gentiles were on the wrong side of the middle wall of partition; you can receive everybody now that the wall is gone, and we are all one, can't you? Notice verse 8, and again, this is a great passage on the ministry of Christ.

Romans 15:8

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Jesus Christ came to show that God keeps his promises, and he came as a minister to Israel. In His earthly ministry, (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), He is the minister of God to Israel to confirm the promises, to show that God Almighty keeps His promises. The promises are made unto the fathers. We have studied these passages dispensationally, and you know how they relate.

Romans 15:9

And that the Gentiles might glorify God [Notice.] **for his mercy;** [There hasn't been any promises made directly to the Gentiles. What they get is not the promises. They get mercy, and mercy came as a result of the promises made to Israel.] **as it is written,** [In other words, God has written this down, and He is going to do it.] **For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.** [That is Israel talking.]

Romans 15:10 **And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.**

Is that happening today? No. Israel is fallen. We are rejoicing in spite of Israel, in the absence of Israel today. But during the ministry of Christ, He had the Gentiles in view in that they would be brought to God through Israel. That is the prophetic program. Here is another quote.

Romans 15:11

And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

Folks, never let anybody say that the kingdom won't include the Gentiles. The day of great Gentile salvation is the kingdom, but it is always through Israel.

Romans 15:12

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

Is He reigning over the Gentiles today? Is Israel reigning as the salvation of the world through the rise of Israel? That is the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 22:18, and those are the promises God made to Israel, and when Israel gets her promises fulfilled, the Gentiles can glorify God for His mercy to them based on the promises He made to Israel. Christ came to confirm that God keeps His promises; yet even in exalting Israel, the Gentiles were going to get mercy and be received. Then can't you receive the weaker brother? Sure you can.

Romans 15:13-15

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace [You learn some things from the Scriptures that give you the capacity to have patience, comfort, and hope: know how to walk.] **in believing,** [In believing what? In believing the doctrine taught to you in the book of Romans.] **that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. [You are able to deal with one another.]

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, [He said I have a right to instruct you because of who I am, the position that I have, the special ministry and favor that God gave me to make me a minister. Verse 16: here is a great passage on the ministry of the Apostle Paul.]

Romans 15:16

That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. [Notice verse 8.]

Romans 15:8

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision. In verse 16, Paul is a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Look here, folks, God laid the Gentiles on Paul just as He had laid Israel on the Messiah, on Christ. Colossians 1, Ephesians 3, Romans 11, I Timothy 2:7, I Corinthians 3: you know the passages about Paul's ministry, being the apostle of the Gentiles, being sent by God as His representative to the Gentiles with a message of grace.

Somebody says, why does he use the term “the gospel of God” there? “The gospel of God” is a general term, a term that can be used to cover all of the ages, and Paul uses it here to show these people that all men are now acceptable to God. “That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable.” It is. God takes anybody from any place. The middle wall of partition is down: there are no big ones, no little ones; everyone is acceptable. “Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” They are accepted on the basis of the way God does it today—through the gospel. There isn't any acceptance today except through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:17-19

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. [He has a position, and a status that God gave him.]

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, [That is better than a lot of preachers do. He said I am not going to tell you that God did something, when He didn't do it. I am just going to tell you what happened.] to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Notice that the Gentiles were made obedient by word and deed “through mighty signs and wonders.” They were made obedient, not just by the preaching of the Word, but by the signs and wonders that Paul did. Wait a minute, you say, I thought signs and wonders were for Israel, and the passage says that they are for the Gentiles. What is that?

2 Corinthians 12:12

Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. [Paul said he did the signs of an apostle. Watch what he says in chapter 11.]

2 Corinthians 11:5

For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

Folks, he had the signs of an apostle that caused the Gentiles to listen to his word, and believe, and get saved. The signs of an apostle are given to establish his apostolic authority. Mark 16:20 talks about the signs of Israel's apostles.

Mark 16:20

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

The purpose of the signs was to confirm the Word, and to confirm his apostolic authority, who he was.

Acts 14:3

Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Acts 19:11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

Romans 15:19-22

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, [From Jerusalem, all the way up through Palestine, Turkey, and Greece. So from there all the way through Asia, Macedonia, and Illyricum, which is the last Province next to Italy: all the way over to Italy. In other words, he had not quite gotten to the Romans, but that is next.] **I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.**

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

He is not saying there that it was wrong to preach where somebody else had preached. He did that again and again. The point is that he desired to preach, to reach out to as many people as possible; and to do it in the spirit of Isaiah 52:15, which he quotes in verse 21.

Verse 20: "lest I should build upon another man's foundation." The indication is that the church at Rome didn't have apostolic foundation. It wasn't established by an apostle, or he wouldn't have gone there. The idea is the church at Rome evidentially was established by Christians that migrated there and got going.

Verse 22: "For which cause also I have been much hindered." In other words, taking care of the ministry from Jerusalem to Illyricum has kept me from getting there. I have taken care of the immediate territory where I was first, gotten this obligation down, and taken care of this before I move on.

Romans 15:23-24

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, [Now you talk about a goal for a ministry, brother, he is going to get all the way to the whole northern Mediterranean territory.] I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.

I am not going to stay with you. I am going to be there for a little while, and I am going to let you help me go on; but I still want to meet you. I want to be filled with your company, and fellowship with you a while. Somebody said, did he get to Spain? The scholars say no. But you know I Timothy 4, where he says I finished my course; and he has Spain on the itinerary. So I wouldn't put it past him to have gotten there.

Romans 15:25-26

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

Recall why there are poor saints in Jerusalem: because of the change in the program. Luke 12: sell what you have and give alms, seek the kingdom of God, and all that stuff will be added to you. In Acts 2 and Acts 4 they sell out, and they have all their needs met. In Acts 11 there is a great famine, and there is relief having to be sent. The program is already breaking down. It begins to break down in Acts 7; and in Acts 11 you see Paul out among churches taking up offerings on the basis of what he does in 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, on the basis of grace giving, according to the way God has prospered. He is out there taking up offerings from Gentile churches; and in Romans 15 he has the offering, and is going to take it to the poor saints at Jerusalem. There has been a tremendous change in the Pentecostal program; and Paul says, you Gentiles have benefited from that change. God has turned from Israel to the Gentiles, and you people who have benefited from the change in the program owe an obligation to help those people out. They have lost out, and we have benefited; so we have an obligation. It is our duty to minister unto them in carnal things. It is our duty to contribute to them.

Romans 15:28-29

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

That is a touching term: "The fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." He said I'm sure that I will be able to come there; and all this stuff in Romans that I have been telling about is going to live, and is going to be in full bloom in your midst.

Romans 15:30-33

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God

for me; [He said I want you to pray for me. But don't just pray; I want you to strive and agonize with me; I want you to press hard in yours prays to God for me.]

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; [His intention is to go up there, and hand deliver that gift to the saints at Jerusalem. What Paul wants to do is demonstrate the value and the esteem that he and the Gentile churches have for God's people, even through they have been set aside.]

32 That I may come unto you [Three things: That I be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men, (he says in Thessalonians), that my service maybe accepted; and three] **That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.**

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Come over to Philippians 1. Remember that Paul went to Jerusalem, and what happened to him. He got put in jail. He tried to preach to the Jews there, and they let him talk a minute; but then they pounced on him, and he wound up in custody, then he wound up in Rome in jail.

Philippians 1:12

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

Paul went to Jerusalem, and he said you guys pray for me that everything will work out okay, that we will win the victory, the gospel will be preached, and these people will get the testimony; and then I can come back and go on to Spain. He went there, and he didn't get what he expected. He wasn't delivered from wicked and unreasonable men, and those who don't believe. They had him put in jail. Then it took him a long time to get around to Rome. He is there finally, but he is there in chains, standing in the Roman dungeon; and he writes from the Roman jail. He writes to those Philippians about the things that had happened to him; and he says, I can look back at it now, and they have happened for the furtherance of the gospel. In Romans 15, he thought the furtherance of the gospel was for him to be free, and go to Rome on his way to Spain. Now he writes and says something else. How do you reconcile that? That is Romans 8:26-28 in operation.

Romans 8:26-28

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

We don't know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helps our infirmities. Right there is a prayer that God the Holy Spirit put in the Book that doesn't come out. But it is expressing the heart of the Apostle Paul. That is the duality of inspiration: the human side and the divine side. The instruction there is, we don't know what to pray

for as we ought. But we do know that all things work together for good. The idea is that as we walk, we walk on the basis of the knowledge that we have; and our renewed mind tells us that when we don't have the best knowledge. There are some things that we don't know, so we do on the basis of what we know, make decisions, make our plans, and make our prayers; and as things come along, and reactions come, even the ones that we don't anticipate, God works those things together with His purpose in our lives, and God Almighty isn't defeated.

The God of peace be with you all, or as I would say, y'all. Amen.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-9

There is something that we didn't get last time in chapter 15 that I want to call to your attention. When you read through that passage, especially the last part of that chapter, notice how Paul was aware that God was involved in directing his ministry. He is aware of the fact that he is going to go there by the will of God, and go over here by the will of God. You want to notice that, because by the time that you get to this point in Romans, you should be able to begin to have an understanding, and a level of maturity, where you are able to discern the will of God in directing your ministry.

I want you to understand something about God directing your ministry, and God directing Paul's ministry. First, Paul's journeys to Spain, Rome, Jerusalem, here, there, or where ever he went, were not just random wanderings. Paul was not just by chance going from here to there, wandering randomly. He didn't just decide, I think I would like to minister in Hawaii, and went to Hawaii. He didn't just decide, I am in Berea today, I think I will go to Philippi. Paul was conscious of the fact that what he was doing was directed by God. The way that God directed him is the issue; not **did** God do it, but **how** He did it. His ministry was not the random wanderings of personal viewpoint, or human desire. It was God's ministry, and God was directing it.

Secondly, it was not hyperpredestination. That is, Paul was not ordained and fixed before the foundation of the world to be in such and such town, at such and such time. God, before the foundation of the world, did not decree that Paul was going to be in such and such place at such and such a time at such and such day, and say so and so words to somebody else. The hyperpredestination idea is that everything is predestined. It is the old idea that that wasp was predestinated before the foundation of the world to fly around that light at this time. It wasn't that God was fixing everything ahead of time. It was neither of those two extremes. Do you understand what I am saying?

What it is, and please understand this, is the proper functioning of that adult sonship walk as an ambassador for Christ. It was the ability to discern the will of God in the details of Paul's life and ministry.

Again, there are two hyper tendencies: two extremes that people get in to. One is that God controls everything, and that there is nothing that you can do; all is controlled. The other extreme is that God doesn't do anything. The problem is that both of those are wrong. God does work, and God does direct. The issue is how He does it; and by now you understand that He works through your adult sonship status, your walking by grace. There are no extra blessings for extra effort; you all have the same status. You have gained, by the residence of the doctrine in your soul, the capacity to discern the thing that God approves in the details of your life. The details of life are circumstantial things; and you are equipped through sound doctrine, to know how you can go and serve Him.

We are going to study that issue more in detail next year in our class on ambassadorship. Remember in the last class that I was going pretty fast trying to get through, and there was no way to cover all of that now. We will cover it in just a few weeks in the Ambassadorship class, but I wanted to point it out to you here.

When I tell you that this level of understanding is reached now that you have this information, I am not expecting you to be able to function with a complete instinctive awareness and activity of all these doctrines. What I am saying to you is that when you get to the Romans 15 level, if you have gotten the doctrine in your soul as you should have, you have the foundation for the super structure.

What you have to do is let the things work, and function, and operate; and become familiar with how they work, and function, and live. The more you do that, and the more you serve, and the more you function on the basis of the doctrine that you know, the more familiar you will be with these things; and the more skill there will be. But now the capacity, the equipping, the information, and the knowledge is there.

Alright, let's go on to chapter 16 where Paul finishes the book.

Romans 16

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

Cenchrea was a harbor, the harbor of the city of Corinth. Phebe is from Corinth, and she is a servant of that church. There are twenty-seven people named in this closing chapter of the book. Twenty-seven people are named, and nine of them are women. The first one is a woman. You are going to find in your ministry that women are going to play a tremendously important part in the work of the ministry. I have heard people say that Paul was a chauvinist, and a woman hater, and all that kind of business.

I tell you Gentlemen, you will never get the work of the ministry done, if not for good, faithful, godly women. It will never get done; and the minute that you depreciate them, or their place in the ministry, you are outside of the realm of proper understanding of how God's work is carried forth. God doesn't put them in the position of leadership and responsibility. That is where you are supposed to be; and if you will take that position, I will guarantee you that they will give it to you. I have seen ladies do what the men wouldn't do, and then they would get into it, and get going that way. But I have also seen them have to do it, and if you will go and be who God wanted you to be, and who He gave you to be, then you will find the ladies that work with you are a tremendous asset. He put this letter into the hand of a lady, and she took it to Rome. By the way, six of the people listed here are Paul's relatives.

Romans 16:7,11,21

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

See, he has some relatives there, and, that is good. It is always good to have some of your relatives in the work of the ministry, and in the work of the Lord. There is one famous fellow in verse 13.

Romans 16:13

Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

His mother was very dear to Paul. Rufus is an important guy. Do you remember when Jesus was going to the cross, He fell, and a fellow picked up his cross? Come to Mark 15:21.

Mark 15:21

And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

The probability is that this Rufus in Romans 16 is the one whose Daddy carried the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very possible, in fact, it is most probable that that is who this guy was. You have a number of women mentioned. You have some of Paul's relatives mentioned. But who is the one guy that isn't mentioned? Peter. If Peter was at Rome, like they say he was, who do you think that Paul would have tipped his hat too? Rufus? Some relatives? Some ladies? Maybe all of those, but certainly he would not have omitted dear brother Peter. The indication is that Peter was not at Rome.

Romans 16:1-3

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer [a helper, somebody who comes along and helps] of many, and of myself also. [She has shown hospitality, and has been helping people out, and she helped Paul out.]

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

As you read through this passage, it is interesting to identify the things that people did, the different kind of ministries that people have that get commended here. Here is a lady that is helping folks out. Sometimes you get the idea that the ministry of a local church is what? All preaching, and passing tracts, and giving money, and writing to the missionaries, and all that kind of stuff. But there are all kinds of ministries, and things that have to be done to make that local church grow, and Paul commends all of those things here. If a guy is good at witnessing, and good at passing tracts, and the Lord gives him a real avenue and an opportunity that way; then he goes with that because he has those capacities. That fellow shouldn't vaunt himself, and boast himself against the guy that is sweeping the floor. That fellow usually is the fellow who can't sweep the floor very well. Did you ever think of that? There are some things that I am real good at. There are some things that I am terrible at. What is the best thing to do? The things that I am terrible at? No, I appreciate the guy that is good at them. Boy I do; because brother, I appreciate somebody who can do something that I can't do. That is the idea.

Romans 16:3-4

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: [We say, he put his neck on the line, or he stuck his neck out, that is it. In other words, they hazard their lives.] **unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.**

That is an important statement, very significant. The churches of the Gentiles: Paul's Acts ministry. A little verse like that comes along and whacks the 28ers in the head. Paul's ministry isn't just among Israel. He is out with the churches of the Gentiles.

Romans 16:5

5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. [Notice: the church that is in Priscilla and Aquila's house. A house is the only place that you ever see the church meet in the Bible; they don't meet in church buildings. They don't own property. Notice too that there are several local assemblies at Rome. There is one in verse 5.] **Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.** [verse 14]

Romans 16:14-15

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

Do you see that there is an assembly in verse 15, an assembly in verse 14, and an assembly in verse 5? In the city of Rome, there are at least three local churches. There is one body of Christ, but it manifests itself in different localities. So when Paul writes the book of Romans to the saints that are at Rome, he is writing to at least 3 local assemblies. You want to remember that. Verse 5.

Romans 16:6-7

6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

You are reading along, reading all these nice personal things, and then you hit a verse that just goes *wang*. That verse right there is a verse that the brethren that want to try to prove the body of Christ began before Paul are going to use on you. They were in Christ. Who is the *they*?

Romans 16:7

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who [Who is the *who*? It could be Andronicus and Junia, or it could be the apostles. Do you see that? It could be that Andronicus and Junia were "in Christ before me," or it could be the apostles who were "in Christ before me." Either way, it doesn't help you out a bit.] **also were in Christ before me.**

There is somebody in Christ before Paul, right? Well, that isn't the half of it. Come over to I Thessalonians 2, and Galatians 1. Listen, I have told you time and again that if you want to believe something in the Bible, if you want to believe you are right, and prove your doctrine, God has a verse written down in your Bible. You can break

your theological neck on it, and go around and quote Scripture, and prove you are right, and be just as wrong as if you claimed the sun came up in the west. You need to remember that.

I'll show you the explanation for the passages if you want to see it; but if you want the church to start in Acts 2, here is how you can demonstrate conclusively to anybody who wants it to begin in Acts 2, that it begins in Acts 2. Or if you want to prove conclusively to somebody that just wants to know what God says, that is something else. But if you want to prove it begins conclusively, positively, to anybody with an open mind to the Acts 2 position, here you go. Romans 16:7. They are "in Christ before me." They are in Christ before Paul.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, [Now look at verse 14. The churches of God, which are in Judea, are in Christ Jesus. Were the churches that the apostles founded in Judea, in Christ? Was the Jerusalem church in Christ? Jerusalem? Judea? Samaria? Were they in Christ before Paul? They sure were. So if I want to say to you the body of Christ began before Paul, I have two verses. What I am going to do is get one on one side, and one on the other of your neck, and pin you to the wall; and then I am going to take Galatians 1:13, and push.

Galatians 1:13

For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted [What?] the church of God, and wasted it:

What does Paul say in I Corinthians 10:31-32?

1 Corinthians 10:31-32

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

Don't the textbooks say that there are three classes of people in the earth? There is the Jew, the Gentile, and the Body of Christ. That is what they say: Larken, Scofield, and so forth.

I have seen grace preachers take that verse and say, "See;" and when they do, my Acts 2 brethren, take that stuff and say, "See." There are a lot of good brethren, good in the Word, and they take that stuff. I spent about a year of my life trying my dead level best to be a Baptist; and I told the Lord: "Lord, I can be one if I can start the body of Christ before Paul, and I've got the verses; there they are." How many verses do you need? Ten? One will do. I read those things, and I said, hmm. I just kept reading them, and saying hmm. Then I kept reading them, and I said, hmm; because it won't work. But wouldn't it save a lot of problems being a Baptist? Don't you reckon it would? Sure. If you could be a Baptist, that would be wonderful, wouldn't it? It

would save a lot of problems. It would get you in good with a lot of people. There are a lot of good Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Christ-loving Baptists in the world. But wouldn't it be a lot easier? Put that shingle out there, and people in the community like you automatically.

Are the Gentiles following the churches in Judea? Is that what I Thessalonians 2:14 says? "Ye became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus." Are there churches in Judea in Christ? And the church at Thessalonica, (Gentiles that get saved), are they following them? That is what the verse says. Therefore something special and unique and absolutely different doesn't begin with Paul. What begins with Paul is just the revelation about some information about what really began in Acts 2 in Judea. Right? Wrong.

Look at I Thessalonians 2:14. What do they become followers of them in? Followers in what way. Suffering. You "became followers of the churches of God, which are in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:"

"For ye also have suffered like things." They didn't become followers of their doctrine. He is saying: you guys suffer like the churches in Judea suffered. The Jews down there in Judea persecuted them, didn't they? You can't read the first seven chapters of the book of Acts, and think that they didn't. And he said: Hey, you guys in Acts 17 at Thessalonica suffered from the hands of the Jews in Thessalonica just like those people over there. He is saying those Jews out there are guilty. They persecuted the church of God in Judea, they persecuted the church of God at Thessalonica, and you guys are one, in the fact that the Jewish opposition has been raised to both of you.

Well, you say, but it is still the church of God. That is right. People, God has had His church in every age. Just because something is said to be *the church* doesn't mean that it is the body of Christ. Come with me to Acts 7:38 talking about Moses in the wilderness.

Acts 7:38

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness...

Israel out of Egypt, in the wilderness, is called a what? A church. In the Old Testament you see the word is translated *congregation*. The reason the word *congregation* is used, and the word *church* is not back there is because the Hebrew word is *congregation*. The Greek word is *church*, and yet they are the same interchangeable idea and work. Don't we talk about our congregation, and our church, and it is all the same idea? Every time you read about a church in the Bible, you are not reading about the body of Christ. God has always had His called out group of people, and that is what the word *church* means. So when you read about *persecuting the church of God*, you have to find out which church of God is being talked about. The same thing is true of the phrase, *in Christ*. Get I Corinthians 15:22.

1 Corinthians 15:22

For as [Notice the next two words.] in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

“In Adam all die.” What does that mean? Romans 5:12:

Romans 5:12

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

“In Adam.” You are born in Adam, and in Adam, what do you do? Die.

1 Corinthians 15:22-24

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

He goes into the kingdom there in verse 24-27; he is talking about the redemptive issue. In the Word of God, being in Christ often is a redemptive issue. You can be in Christ according to prophecy, and you can be in Christ according to the mystery; and it is only the people that are in Christ that God is going to resurrect, and take in to His program. The people that are in Adam die, and spend eternity in everlasting torment—conscious, everlasting destruction, and torment.

By the way, do you understand what he is doing there? Do you see how he uses the term *in Adam*? The term *in Christ* is being contrasted, (not with being in the body of Christ or being in Israel); but with being in Adam, or in Christ. Do you see the contrast? *In Christ* doesn't mean *in the body* as opposed as to being *in the kingdom*. It means being in Christ as opposed to being in Adam. You can be in Christ according to prophecy, and you can be in Christ according to the mystery.

Come with me to Genesis 22, and Galatians 3. In Genesis 22, Abraham takes his son, Isaac, on the mountain and is going to kill him. God told him to go and sacrifice his son. He starts, and God stops him. Then in verse 17 God says to Abraham:

Genesis 22:17-18

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Where are the nations going to be blessed? In Abraham's seed. Who is that seed? The nation Israel. Is it any part of the nation Israel? It is a special part. Who are the remnant? Aren't they the believers? Who are they identified with in faith? In Christ. In thy seed. Galatians 3:16:

Galatians 3:16

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, [Genesis 22:18] which is [What?] Christ.

You see, salvation isn't in just any people in Israel. "All they that of Israel are not Israel." Salvation is in Christ and all of Israel that is identified with Him. "In the Lord is our righteousness," Isaiah says. Now look here. Can you be in Christ according to prophecy? Yes, if you get the blessing in the seed of Genesis 22:18, (the seed in Genesis 22:18 is Christ). "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Then you can be in Christ in the prophetic program. When they come to God through redeemed Israel, they are in Christ, (in the seed), getting the blessing. Israel and the seed, the Gentiles coming through the seed.

Question: They didn't know they were in Christ?

Answer: They don't understand the issue until He comes; but after He comes, He is the issue. Do you see how you can be *in Christ* according to prophecy? Do you see how he can say to those disciples in John 14, "I am in you and you are in me"? In John 17 He says, "I am one with them." What is He talking about? That is it.

Then you can be *in Christ* according to the mystery. Has there been any promise that a bunch of idol worshiping Gentiles like you would get in the promise over there? How did you get in that promise back there in Genesis 22? How did you get in the seed, and get the blessing that God put in Abraham, and in Christ for you? "Them that bless thee, I will bless. Them that curse thee, I will curse." Did you get in Christ by blessing Israel? You know better than that; you didn't have anything to do with Israel. You are getting in Christ according to mystery; Ephesians 3. Do you follow that? That is the issue there.

So Paul doesn't bat an eye. Being in Christ is not synonymous with being in the body of Christ. Everybody that is saved in the kingdom program, and in the body program are in Christ. The contrast of that is being in Adam.

Romans 16:7-14

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. [Urbane: do you see the word *urban* in there? Do you know what *urban* means? It means *city*. Mr. Stam says that they might have been calling him a city slicker. He is a city dweller, a guy that lives in a city. I have talked with some of you guys that say you are city people. You understand the city; you live in the city. That is what kind of guy Urbane was. He was a city man; he lived in town, a city slicker.]

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. [Notice what he called these guys: approved in Christ, my beloved, our helper, my beloved, my fellow prisoners, my well beloved. What titles! How would you like Paul to call you something like that?] **Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.**

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

I get to reading those chronologies back in the Old Testament and I tell you, honestly as the day comes, one after another, if I had a name like those, I'd change my name. The classic illustration about name changing is, Willy Stinks. You know the joke about Willy Stinks. He went to the court and told the judge: Judge, I want to change my name. The judge said, what is your name? He said, Willy Stinks. The judge said, I can understand wanting to change that; what do you want to change it to? He said, Joe Stinks. Some people just don't do enough good with their good intentions. Verse 16.

Romans 16:16

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Now that issue of a holy kiss: come over to I Corinthians 16, and notice it again. He is not talking about necking in the parking lot, or on the front lawn of the church, or in the vestibule. What he is talking about there is a custom in their day, and men kissed men, and women kissed women. It wasn't a wife swapping, and husband swapping kind of routine. If you go to France or a lot of the Eastern European countries, they do that. If you ever see the news reels, you know they play up the Russians, and the Cubans; and they put a big smacker on each other. And you go, *yuck*, because it is not our custom; and it doesn't look real clean and appetizing to me; but with these people, it is their custom. It is something that they did; they understood that. You go over to Italy today, and Turkey, and Greece, and that part of the world; they still do that, and that is what he is talking about.

1 Corinthians 16:20

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

You find that in Paul's epistles. Now what he would say to you and me in the 21st century America, when you greet one another, give each other a good hearty handshake; give each other a good hearty greeting. It is a demonstration of strong love for one another; be sure and greet each other.

“The churches of Christ salute you.” That expression, *the churches of Christ*: do you know what a Campbellite is? One who follows Alexander Campbell. They call themselves *Church of Christ*, and they say that we just use Bible things, and Bible names. When you meet one of those water dogs, you just tell him: you use an unscriptural name for your church. And he will turn you to that verse. You point out to him that it says the *churches of Christ*, (plural), salute you. And there is not one of them that has that name on the church. They all say *church of Christ*, (singular). So you just blow smoke in his face, and laugh at him when he gives you this thing. The reason that you do that is because that is what they are doing to you. They say: we just use the Bible, go by the Bible, and do what the Bible says. We don't have a piano,

because the Bible doesn't say that we can have a piano, and we don't have this or that or the next thing.

I went to one of those churches one time in Alabama. They sing, but don't have instruments. The guy gets up, and uses a little pitch pipe to hit the first note; he has them all on tune, and they sing. Later on a guy was asking me: Why do you have that heathen instrument—a piano—in your church? I said: Well, the same reason that you have that heathen instrument—a pitch pipe—in your church. He said: we don't have an instrument. I said: yeah, you do. I said: the thing is you guys are better singers than we are. You just need to hit the first note. Our folks need somebody to hit every note for them to sing. If you don't want any instruments, don't have a pitch pipe. Be consistent, see.

I went to school one time where the guy was on the radio every Saturday morning, and right after him was a Campbellite preacher. Campbellites talk funny. Cults do that, you know, talking about the *Holy Ghooost*. A Campbellite doesn't say, *baptize*; he says, *buptize*. They say, *I buptized him*. The reason that he does that is because they all go to the same school, and get the same training, and it is more of a Greek pronunciation than English. This guy that I was going to school with in Pensacola is on the radio talking about Campbellites, and boy, he is just calling them *water dogs* and *thump heads*, and you name it. He was talking about Campbellites, saying: This Campbellite preacher says so and so, and they don't have any sense. He was just carrying on like crazy.

So this Campbellite is going to be real smart, and he gets on there, and says: “The dear doctor talks about Campbellites; what is a Campbellite?” It insults them to call them a Campbellite, because they say: we just go by what the Bible says. They didn't want you to know that they know anybody else. So the doctor got on the radio, and he said: A Campbellite, there is no trouble telling anybody what a Campbellite is. A Campbellite is somebody that always says *bup, bup, bup, bup, buptizing people*. You know for three weeks after that, that rascal said: baptize, baptize; and then he slipped back into it and went on, because it was a habit. But you have a lot of fun with people if you do it with the right attitude; if you are not mean, nasty, critical, and hard on them. It all has to be in fun.

Romans 16:17-19

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

Underline that verse, would you. Be wise concerning that which is good, and simple concerning that which is evil.

Verses 17 and 18 are very important verses about the doctrine of separation, and the warning. “Now I beseech you, brethren.” Do you see how he does that? Now look guys, I beg of you, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the

doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. He said: I have given you all this information; I have laid the foundation for you; now I want to tell you something. I want you to be motivated on the basis of grace to do something. And he warns them; because gentlemen, Christian love is not the saccharine sweetness of sob sisters. It is not just a bunch of soft compromised sell out.

Christian love is dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the standards and the values that he sets. And when you understand how much He values individuals, enough to die for them; then you are willing to value them as much as He does. He is willing to sacrifice Himself for them. You will be willing to sacrifice yourself for them, and not use them. Some use good words and fair speeches just to get something for their own belly. But you be willing to spend and be spent for them. Paul said to the Galatians: “Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” You know what is going to happen: you tell people the truth, and you are going to become their enemy at some point. What he is doing here is he wants them to understand some things about bad doctrine.

Notice what verse 17 says, and you want to write this down. These two verses are about divisive brethren. There are things that you need to understand about divisive brothers, so that you know how to deal with them. These are not people who are unsaved people. These are brothers in Christ who cause division and offense—scandal.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them.” That word *mark* simply means *to openly identify them so that you can easily see who they are*. Take a magic marker, and put a mark on their forehead. It is a verb. Mark them. Identify them. Make it easy to know who they are. How do I know who he is? (Pointing at a man.) Who is he? That is Mary's husband. That is the fellow in the blue shirt. Does that help you? Well, he is Mary's husband. Now I have a problem. You give him a name, don't you? You give him a mark. That is Greg. Mark them. Identify them. Name them. Make it clear who they are. Paul names some guys.

1 Timothy 1:20

Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2 Timothy 1:15

This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

2 Timothy 2:17-18

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

2 Timothy 4:14

Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

He names people, identifying them. We have studied the issue of separation thoroughly, and you have seen how you are to do that kind of thing. You want to understand that. Notice: mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned. Who is it that causes the division? The guy that marks the fellow, or the guy that teaches bad doctrine? The guy that teaches the bad doctrine. You need to remember that on the basis of that verse. Somebody will come up to you and say: You are just causing trouble, making division. Please point out that verse of Scripture to them.

I sat in a cafeteria in New Jersey one day with a preacher. He sat down, and the first thing that he said was, I want to know why you are trying to divide the brethren all the time? I said: I'm not. He said: yes, you are. I said: how do you mean that? He said: Here. And he showed me a couple of articles in the Searchlight. I said: Brother, don't you know who is causing the division? He said: yeah, you are. I took that verse of Scripture, and turned his Bible around, and set it in front of him. I said: read to me Romans 16:17, and on the basis of what God says, tell me who is causing the division. That fellow took that Bible and read it. Then he took that Book and shut it, and went to eating his eggs and sausage, and the conversation was over with.

The thing is, you want to know who is doing it, and not be intimidated by those people. When people come in and bring in divisions and offenses by teaching contrary doctrine, what are you supposed to do? Mark them, and avoid them. Identify them. See who they are. Say who they are, and then stay away from them. That is the issue of separation. Avoid them.

Verse 18: "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly;" They are just serving their own self interest.

Galatians 6:12-13

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

They desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, why? That they might gain, see?

We have studied this, but I want this to be in this lesson. There are basically three areas of separation in this context. (There is a fourth, but not in this context.) There is separation from the world.

Romans 12:2

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Then there is separation from the religious system in II Corinthians 6:14-18. That is a passage about separation from the religious system around us. Another verse you can write down by that is 2 Timothy 3:5.

2 Timothy 3:5

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The third category is separation from erring brethren. Separation from the world, from the religious system, and from erring brethren. There are two categories of error that brethren fall into that you are to separate from. The first one is errors of deportment; that is, their behavior.

1 Corinthians 5:1

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

That is, there is open, known, public sin—deportment—immorality in this case, and that open sin is to be separated from. We have been studying this, and we studied it at the retreat. Get the tapes on that, and study them. In verse 11, he lists a number of different sins, he isn't just talking about immorality, but sinful erring conduct, sinful habits, and that kind of thing: open sin. It is open sin, not the private things, and it isn't yours to bring the private into the public to begin with. If it is private sin, you deal with it on the basis of Galatians 6:1-2, (going and restoring their brother). You can be sure that it will become open, if it isn't gotten right. Be sure your sin will find you out. The passage in Galatians said:

Galatians 6:7

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

It is going to get out if the guy doesn't get it right. But erring brethren are to be separated from. They are to be put out of the assembly. I Corinthians 5:1-13. You are to excommunicate them, withdraw fellowship from the assembly, put them out of the assembly that they might be ashamed, and they might change their conduct.

The second type of erring brethren is doctrinal error, and that is Romans 16:17, contrary doctrine, somebody that teaches false doctrine and refuses correction. Now you don't separate from somebody just because he is teaching something wrong, because the guy who is teaches something wrong might learn what is right if you will teach it to him. Understand I am not talking about just running around head hunting,

looking for somebody that is wrong, and saying, I have to get away from you. That is not the issue. That is not the issue with the other type either. You are to go to the guy, and on the basis of grace seek to correct them. Seek to restore them. Seek to work the thing through. You work it through, and if he refuses to get right, he refuses to correct it, there comes a point where you can't go anymore. You have gone as far as you can go, and you can't go anymore. It isn't that you are going around on the basis of a rumor or something just throwing the guy off the cliff. You shouldn't separate from somebody like that.

Now I am talking about in the local church. This is local church instructions. He is talking to three assemblies in Romans 16. When you are in a local church, you have a system of authority. Pastor and elders. You have ways to work through these things, and they should be worked through. You don't just throw people out. When you get outside of the local church, when you get into larger categories than the local church, the same principles apply, but they are more difficult to apply.

You go by the same principles, but it is more difficult to apply principles when you are in the broader scale outside of the local church; because outside the local church, in that broader fellowship, there aren't any authorities to help you work through the thing. In the local church, you have the pastor and the elders to confront, and to deal, and to work through the thing. Outside of that, in fellowships and associations, you don't have any authorities like that, scripturally established. So it is a little more difficult to work through the things, but the same principles apply. You go to the guy, confront him, deal with him, and show him. You deal with him, identify the problem, and work through it; and when the point comes where there isn't any reception, any desires for correction; then there isn't anything to do but to move away from him.

Now I want you to notice some passages. "Mark them and avoid them." Again I say to you, marking them has to do with identifying them; and when you have to separate from them, you have to identify them, publicly, and clearly, both who they are, and what they have done. That is the reason that John said to you over and over, the other day, you better have the information. First, so that you know you are correct. Second, so that you can prove that you are correct in the public forum. Do you understand that? That is all involved in marking them. Come to Galatians 5:7.

Galatians 5:7-12

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. [A little leaven: a little false doctrine that makes you not obey the truth. What is the doctrine here? Putting them back under the law system.]

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. [What is the judgment that he is going to bear? Doesn't Galatians 1:8 say let him be accused?]

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even [notice] cut off which trouble you.

He is not saying that he wishes they were dead. He is saying separate yourself from the dudes: cut them off, get away from them, get shed of them; because they are going to ruin you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. So when there is bad doctrine being taught, the thing that you do is cut the line. You cut it off, just as when there is bad conduct. You as an individual are to be separated from the world. When the world begins to come in and entice you, what do you do? You cut the line; you cut the association; you get separated from it. Send it on down the road. Don't make any provisions for the flesh, the religious system, unbelief, and that kind of thing. You send them on down the road. Separate. Erring brethren, same issue, cut off. Come to I Timothy 6. I won't get all the passages, but I will get some of them here.

1 Timothy 6:3-5

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

What are you supposed to do? Withdraw yourself from people who are destitute of the truth, and who won't consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:15-21

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; [Who teach false doctrine.]

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, [from these false doctrine teachers that get into the assembly.] he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

You are not prepared for every good work until you get the false teachers out of your midst, and the issue there is the local assembly.

Titus 1:9-13

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

Titus 3:9-11

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [Do you think this is something that you ought to do? You get that idea, don't you?] that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Where did you get the tradition from Paul? Look back at 2 Thessalonians 2:15.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

He said, if a man doesn't take the things that I have been teaching you, not the traditions of Rome and the church and a body of tradition and scholarship received from your elders, but the doctrine that I teach you in these books. If he doesn't go by that, and he doesn't walk consistently with that, and he walks in a disruptive manner by refusing to submit himself to my authority, what do you do? Withdraw yourself. Get away from him. You can't have fellowship with that guy in the local church.

2 Thessalonians 3:14

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, [Does that sound like "mark him" in Romans 16? Identify him, and what?] and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

You can not have happy companionship in a local assembly with people who are teaching doctrine contrary to the doctrine that you have received from the apostle Paul, that he may be ashamed. You can not cooperate with him, or with his doctrine.

Bad doctrine produces bad conduct. In this passage these people have not submitted themselves to Paul's doctrine, and their walk is affected as a result. So the two really go together eventually; but on either or both of those things, you have to be careful. Erring brethren, whether it is in deportment, or public open sin, it has to be separated from. Contrary doctrine, that has to be separated from. In our next lesson, I want you to see, in Romans 16, the attitude with which that is to be done. Didn't he just tell you in Romans 16:16 to salute one another with a holy kiss? First he tells you to have a strong love one for another, then in these next two verses he is not turning around and telling you to be hateful to one another, is he?

The doctrine of separation is to be exercised in the spirit of grace and love. It is the doctrine of a broken heart, and the doctrine of a weeping heart. No man ever preaches separation, and no man ever practices separation, doing it for the Lord, to make a name for himself, or a mark for himself, because it is too costly. There are a lot of folks who are just ornery, mean, nasty, insecure, and all that; and I am not talking about that. I am talking about doing it for the Lord. It is a heavy doctrine. I can tell you personally, as an individual my spirit rebels against it; and yet it has to be done. So we have to do it as unto the Lord.

GRACE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE
Romans 203-10

Romans 16:17

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

The idea there again is separation. You are to mark them. You are to identify them. You are to know who the divisive brethren are. You are to mark them, and avoid them, and come out from them, and reprove them. Identify them, withdraw from them, turn away from them, rebuke them, don't receive them, purge them, and cut them off. That is a list of eleven different things that I wrote down. I went over most of the verses with you earlier, of things that you are to do. The idea in all those things is separation.

Look, gentleman, sound doctrine produces healthy believers. It produces well-rounded, stable believers. It produces godly living. Anything less than sound doctrine is going to produce the opposite: unhealthy, sick, weak Christians, unstable, tossed to and fro. Anything less than sound doctrine is going to produce bad behavior. So you want to be careful, and you want to be jealous of these issues.

Now the attitude with which you conduct this is very important. Look at Titus 3 with me. Here is a passage that to me is very interesting in this regard, because of what it says.

Titus 3:9

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

He says avoid these things: foolish questions, just dumb questions that you can't get answers for. Look, if you ask a question, and there isn't an answer to the question, and you keep asking the same question over and over, and you keep arguing about it, and there isn't any answer; then it is just a question. Is the question profitable? No. It doesn't mean that the question is bad, and it doesn't mean that the question can't be asked, or you can't speculate about it; but if you can't come to an answer, it is a question that you don't want to make the basis of what you do. I told you in prep and delivery, you never base a doctrine on a verse that asks a question. Common sense tells you that. He says avoid them; don't allow these kinds of things to dominate your congregation. The way that you do that is teach your people not to do this.

Now I didn't say that you don't teach them to ask questions that are difficult, and that you don't know the answer to. That is not what he is saying. He is not saying that you are going to get away from things that you don't know. He is talking about things that are unprofitable because they are just questions that you never get to the bottom of. It is okay to have an opinion, but can you dogmatically answer the question? Well, no. We have those in the grace movement, don't we? Don't you have questions in the grace movement? There are three of them that people want to argue and fuss and break fellowship about. And do you know what you get? Hey, it is interesting to talk about them in a good spirit, but you don't want to allow those things to dominate what you are doing.

What are they? Are the twelve in or out of the body? Who wrote Hebrews? And nine, eleven or thirteen? That is it. Those are questions that most everyone outside the grace movement doesn't even have sense enough to ask. How do you answer the questions? Mid-Acts—that is where to take your stand. When you start taking a dogmatic position about Acts 9, 11, or 13, do you know what you just did? You just screwed up, because you just added instability. You can bounce it off somebody's head until they don't believe anything else, but you are not going to help. Don't let questions dominate.

Who wrote Hebrews? God wrote Hebrews, no matter who the human agency was. Are the twelve in or out of the body? Didn't Paul say whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth? Hey, I believe that all of those questions have answers that satisfy me, some of which are very important to me. But understand what I am saying. Avoid foolish questions. Don't let those things dominate the congregation, for they are unprofitable and vain. They don't get the job done. A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject. A heretic is somebody that causes division with contrary doctrine. The heretic is the guy in Romans 16 who is causing division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned. After the first or second admonition, reject. In other words deal with the guy; and if he refuses to be corrected, then separate, avoid him. Mark him. Identify him.

Talk to him, and find out what he thinks. Don't find out what I believe from somebody else, understand? It doesn't mean that you can't discuss what I believe with somebody else, but look, get it from me. If you hear that I am teaching a deviant doctrine, where are you going to get it from? Me. Deal with it, and then if the man refuses correction, then deal with that refusal too.

Titus 3:11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Here is what you know: that he that is such is subverted. In 2 Timothy 2:18, those who have erred overthrow the faith of some. See, the guy sinneth, and what? Being condemned. Notice those last two words. You are not condemning the guy; thy guy condemned himself. Do you see that? You are not standing there whacking him in the head. Who caused the division? He did. You are recognizing what he has done. He is the one that has departed. He is the one that has gone away. He is the one who caused the division. He is the one that won't heal the breach with sound doctrine. Therefore he, not you, caused division. You don't have to exercise the doctrine of separation with a stick. And if in your life the issue of separation isn't a doctrine of a weeping heart, then you need to forget the doctrine. Romans 16:16

Romans 16:16

Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Romans 16:17

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Don't forget the context of Romans 16:17. Go back to Romans 12, and notice how he says that you are to deal with one another.

Romans 12:10

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

If there be an erring brother, can I be kindly affectioned one toward another? Can I be kindly affectioned toward that guy, as a brother in Christ? Can I love him and esteem him as my brother, and deal with him on the basis of brotherly love, and still seek to correct him? Sure I can. Can I, in honor, prefer him above myself? I sure can, while I am trying to correct him, while I am ministering to him. Verse 15:

Romans 12:15

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Can I weep over the guy's mistakes? I sure can. Verse 18:

Romans 12:18

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Can I live peaceably with the guy, even though I disagree with him? As far as I am concerned, I can. If he won't let me, that is tough apples. We went through the passage. Don't let the conflict arise from your side.

Romans 14:1

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

"Him that is weak in the faith." Isn't that what the guy is? What do you do? Receive you, but not to doubtful disputations. Don't just deal with the guy to tear him up and show him how much you know. That isn't the issue. Verse 10:

Romans 14:10

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Do you try to tear the guy up, and make nothing out of him? That isn't the issue. What do you want to do? You want to restore him. Verse 15:

Romans 14:15,20

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

Don't destroy. What is he talking about: destroying the guy? We talked about that. It has to do with tearing up that edification complex going on in his soul. Don't destroy what God is doing in his soul. You understand that. God wants this edifice of sound doctrine built up in him. He doesn't yet have a foundation laid, he doesn't yet

have the things in order. Don't go out there and jerk out what is there, and destroy the work of God. Build him up, and help him build that edifice in his soul.

Romans 15:2

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

That doesn't mean just go out and do what the neighbor wants to do. If he wants to go out and get drunk, are you going to go out and get drunk with him? I mean, grow up. He is talking about going out and doing what is going to be for the good of that guy's edification.

Romans 15:5

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

Think about that guy the way Christ thinks about him. That is it.

Romans 15:7

Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

You see, the issue in the passage here about separation, is a context of you doing everything that you can as a member of the body of Christ for another brother in the body of Christ. And only when it comes to the place where they won't, and even when you have to separate from them, you do it out of a heart of love and compassion and brotherly affection. Did you notice when we had the retreat, how much emphasis Pastor Beckemeyer placed on that issue? Do you remember the letters that he read to you, and how often in those letters that he expressed the affection of brethren? Have brotherly love, and call them Brother or Sister. I have an opportunity to write a lot of letters like that, and have read dozens of letters like that, that Mr. Stam wrote. One of the things that I have noticed in his correspondence, and that has to be true in mine, when you take that approach of brotherly affection for an erring brother, it takes the bitterness and the sarcasm out of even the hardest things that you have to say.

I talked to a fellow one time about some problems, and got through them, and went away, and his wife called up my wife and said: Brother Rick was being so sweet when he was being nasty. You know that? Do you know what I found? When I sit down and just get mad and angry in the flesh, and bang out a letter, and shoot it off, you know what happens? I guarantee you I am going to get the same kind of response back. I guarantee it. I have never sent a mad letter off to anybody that I didn't get a mad response back. But I have gotten mad letters, (just in the last two weeks, I have gotten a mad letter), and if I or you send back a response that indicates hearty warmth toward them personally, uncompromising about the issue and the doctrine, do you know what you get? You get a similar response. So you want to remember that.

A doctrine of separation is a doctrine that you have to maintain. You can't let the guard down, but you have to exercise it from a heart of love and appreciation for the brethren.

Romans 16:18

18 For they that are such [The people that are causing division and offenses contrary to the doctrine.] **serve not our Lord Jesus Christ**, [If they served the Lord Jesus Christ, what would they be teaching? The truth. So what is their problem? They are serving themselves. They have their own self interest in mind.] **but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.**

People can be deceived, folks. Gentlemen, your people, when you preach to them, can be deceived; and by the way, you can deceive them; and by good words and fair speeches, they are going to be deceived. You are going to find, (it is going to be the strangest thing that you ever saw), some slicker will come in, and put on a good show, and they will just go for it. And you will say, how could they go for that? But they will. Paul says, Oh foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Do you know what you do when you bewitch somebody? You cast a spell over them.

1 Corinthians 2:1,4-5

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: [Why?]

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Don't forget that. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly." Come to Philippians 3, and notice a comparison passage that is a contrasting passage to the one in Romans. Romans 16 says mark them that cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. You are to be able to identify people that teach things contrary to what Paul taught you. But there is another group of people that you are supposed to identify.

Philippians 3:17

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them [Same word. See it? Mark them.] **which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.**

Who do you mark in Philippians 3:17? People that preach the right doctrine, people that follow Paul, people that walk as you have us for an ensample. In Romans 16:17, you mark people that teach bad doctrine, contrary doctrine. In Philippians 3, you mark people, and identify them by name, and let people know who he is: a guy that teaches right doctrine. Do you see that? Isn't that interesting? You see verse 18 is a parenthesis. You see verse 19, the end of the parenthesis? That means you connect verse 17 and 20. So let's do that.

Philippians 3:17,20

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

20 For our conversation is (In heaven.) **in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**

What kind of conversation, what kind of doctrine, what kind of lifestyle did the apostle Paul have? He had a heavenly calling, a heavenly hope, a heavenly conversation, a lifestyle that reflected his position in heaven. Set your affection on things above, Colossians 3. He said mark people who in their walk reflect their position as members of the body of Christ, and are functioning like members of the body. Identify them, tell people about them, mark them, and follow them. Now look at verses 18 and 19.

Philippians 3:18

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even [What?] weeping, [Please remember, it is the doctrine of the weeping heart. I tell you even weeping] that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: [Underline that.]

These are saved people who have become enemies of the cross of Christ. How do you become an enemy of the cross of Christ? Come to Galatians 5:11.

Galatians 5:11

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross [what?] ceased.

The thing that gives the value to the cross is destroyed if I preach circumcision. You go back under the law, and what do you do? You fall from grace. Are you the friend of the cross, or are you the enemy of the cross? Doesn't the law frustrate the grace of God? Do you see what he is saying there? These people teach doctrine contrary to grace doctrine, and what happens? They actually become enemies of the Lord. They are not serving the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly.

Philippians 3:19

19 Whose end is destruction, [Didn't he say in I Timothy 1, to deliver such to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme?] whose God is their belly, [Doesn't he say in Romans 16 that they serve their belly?] and whose glory is in their shame, [What do they glory in?] who mind earthly things.)

Galatians 6:12

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

They desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. They glory in their shame. Do you know what Jesus said in Luke 16:15? Here is a verse that you ought to memorize.

Luke 16:15

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Do you see that negative view toward man, and positive view toward God? Look back at verse 19.

Philippians 3:19-20

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who [Do what?] mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

“For our conversation is in heaven.” They are not paying attention to the program that God has in effect today, and bad doctrine produces bad conduct every time. So Romans 16:16-18 fits together with Philippians 3. You are to mark those that cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned. You are to understand why they are doing what they are doing; so that when it comes time for you to deal with them, you deal with them on the basis of sound understanding. You can warn them about what is happening to them, and the course of their activity: where it is going to lead them. Paul said, teaching and warning every man that we might present every man perfect in Christ.

And you are to identify people that have sound doctrine, and be identified with them. Just like you are not to be identified with people that teach bad doctrine, you are to be identified with people that teach sound doctrine. I want to tell you that when it says “by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple,” there are so many passages that you need to write down by that verse, I couldn't even start telling you. Spend some time studying the book of Proverbs in relation to that verse. Do yourself a favor, and look up Proverbs 14:15, Proverbs 23:3, 6 to 8, and on and on you go. Proverbs is full of good instruction.

Proverbs 14:15

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

Proverbs 23:3,6,8

3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.

6 Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

8 The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

Romans 16:19

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. [They are being obedient to the doctrine, and this has come abroad to all men.] **I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good,** [Be informed about sound doctrine.] **and simple concerning evil.** [Don't be contaminated by bad doctrine and bad conduct. Be separated.]

Romans 16:20

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Where is that a reference to? There are two ways to take that passage, and I tell you how to do it. If you obey verses 17 -19, then verse 20 takes place. If you have practiced separation, and have a wise concern to that is good, and simple concerning that which is evil, is Satan's policy of evil against the body of Christ destroyed? Does it work? No. It does not work; it is destroyed, isn't it?

Prophetically, it is Colossians 1:15-20, that issue of the reconciliation of the heavenly places, and that future reconciliation program that we studied so much about.

Colossians 1:15-20

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Ephesians 3:9-10 says that right now, as the fellowship of the mystery functions, the principalities and powers in heavenly places see the manifold wisdom of God.

Ephesians 3:9-10

9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

So right now as you function, you have an impact where they see Satan's ministry destroyed, and his policy of evil against the body of Christ frustrated. Seeing that, they have a present testimony of the future bruising of Satan in the Ages to Come. So what you are doing is, you are raising up a testimony and standard, even into the heavenly places. You are going to understand that issue more as we get into studying Ephesians. The impact of your ministry is not just all right here, but it is also in the heavenly places against Satan's policy and program of evil against the body of Christ.

Romans has been getting you equipped to understand all that God has done for you, placed you into this body, made you an adult son in His family, equipped you to function here on the planet, in time, right now, in an encapsulated environment where you are self-sustained and self-sufficient; and you have everything that you need in the Lord Jesus Christ. You are spiritually equipped with all the divine operating assets that you need, and you learned about that in Romans. You get your feet on the foundation, and he says, now if you will be separated from anything that is going to move you away from that, and just stand here on the doctrine, and stick with the doctrine, and don't be

deceived, and don't be mixed up with all that other stuff, Satan's attempt to destroy you won't work.

All of a sudden he begins to bring up subjects that he hasn't covered with you very well yet. So you don't really understand, if all you have is Romans, the issue of the reconciliation of the heavenly places, do you? So that tells us that here is more for us to understand, and learn, and that is what he does in the rest of the book. He sets you up now to move from Romans, the foundation, to Ephesians, the super-structure.

Notice verse 20: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." What does that sound like? It sounds like he concluded the book, doesn't it? Now he adds another couple of things.

Romans 16:21-24

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord. [Who wrote the epistle? Tertius. I thought Paul wrote it. We have been over that passage. Do you see how important that is?]

23 Gaius mine host, [I Corinthians 1:14] and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother. [What he is doing here in verse 21-24? See Verse 24.]

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

He quit one time in verse 20, and then the Corinthians, (that is all those people in verses 21-23 are Corinthians). They say Paul said goodbye from us, so he says goodbye again from them. Now verse 25:

Romans 16:25-27

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

We have studied that passage in detail about the stability of the believer. What he does there, in essence, is he says okay guys, go on to Ephesians now. So we are going to do is that. We will study the book of Ephesians, and what you are going to see is that Ephesians takes up where Romans leaves off. Romans lays the foundation, and we have been through that. You have had the four foundation stones laid for you, and you have the foundation, the interchange, and the interplay established.

Now we are ready to build up that super structure of Ephesians, and go up and build us a little look out up here so that we can see the overall dispensational program of God. We have not come to the place where you have got the information that equips you to understand who you are in Christ, and how God has equipped you to live and

serve Him, and how God works on the basis of grace in an age of grace, and that is for the purpose of stabilizing you.

As I thought about how to conclude the class, and I looked in Mr. Stam's book. At the end of every chapter in the book we had some space left, and Rick Kurth had the idea of putting a poem at the end of each chapter. So Mr. Stam went back and did that, and that is how every chapter in his book ends: in a poem. Let me read to you the poem with which he closes the book of Romans. It is written by Isaac Watts.

Great God, my eyes with pleasure look on the dear volume of this book.
There my Redeemer's face I see and read his name who died for me.
Let the false raptures of the mind be lost and vanished in the wind.
Here I can fix my hope secure. This is Thy word and must endure.

Thus far the book of Romans demonstrates that to be an eternal truth.

ROMANS 203 - TEST
Lesson 11

On a separate sheet of properly headed paper answer the following questions using complete sentences where appropriate. You may use and unmarked Bible to answer the following questions on a separate sheet of properly headed paper. This is your last Romans test – glory!!!.

1. What is the main thrust of Romans 12-16?
2. Why is it that Paul waits until Romans 12:1 to focus on our service and dedication to the Lord?
3. Explain the importance of the use of “beseech” in 12:1.
4. What is meant by “the world” in 12:2?
5. Explain how “the renewing of your mind” takes place.
6. Identify and explain the four Operative Grace Principles for the Sonship Walk set forth in the opening verses of Romans 12.
7. Identify and explain the following categories of knowledge:
 - a. Conscience
 - b. Faith
 - c. Hope
 - d. Love
8. What two verses in I Corinthians give the proper basis for testing and evaluating whether an activity is expedient or not?
9. The standard of grace is objectivity. T or F?
10. How has God given to each of us “the measure of faith”?
11. What makes the body relationship so appropriate for our sonship walk?
12. How does Romans 12:4,5 refute the Acts 28 position?
13. List Paul’s three passages on gifts, and identify the main thrust of each.
14. Romans 12:9 ff focus on the practical application of the renewed mind to the details of our lives. T or F?
15. How do you explain the comparison between Rom. 12 and the Sermon on the Mount (e.g., Matt 5:44 with Rom 12:14)?
16. Romans 12:14-21 focus especially on the attitude of the believer in response to what issue?
17. Identify and briefly explain the four Divine Institutions for the establishment of the human race.
18. What is meant by “the powers that be are ordained of God”?
19. Why does Paul deal with this issue in 13:1-7?
20. What is the Scriptural view of Capital Punishment?
21. How are we to relate to society in general about us as per 13:8-14?

22. Romans 14:1-15:7 deals with the relationship between what two groups of believers?
23. What is the proper attitude these two groups are to maintain toward each other?
24. Explain the contrast between Luke 14:15 and Rom. 14:15.
25. How can a brother be “destroyed” (14:15,20)?
26. Explain Romans 15:8-12 – especially the inclusion of Gentiles in these promises.
27. Who is the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles in 15:16?
28. To what distant city did Paul plan to travel in Romans 15?
29. What is the significance of the “poor saints which are at Jerusalem”?
30. Explain how 16:7 says that some were “in Christ” before Paul.
31. Romans 16:17,18 set forth what important Bible truth?
32. For your very last Romans question: Identify and describe the state of the foundation of the edification complex you are building in your soul.

P.S. Take a vacation!