

NT Survey – Romans
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
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Title and Author

This book's name is derived from its original recipients: the members of the church in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire (1:7). The authorship of the apostle Paul is undisputed (Rom 1:1).

¹**Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ...**
⁷**to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom 1:1, 7

Paul was born a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37; 22:25) in Tarsus (Acts 9:11) about the same time as Jesus. Paul's father was a Pharisee (Acts 23:6) and he studied under the famous rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He was ...⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless (Phil 3:5-6). He was physically unimpressive (2 Cor 10:10; Gal 4:14).

Paul was a persecutor of the early church being present at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 6:8-7:60). He was on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians when he was confronted by the Lord Jesus and bowed before Him. He immediately began proclaiming the gospel and eventually became the great missionary through whom the Holy Spirit spread the gospel throughout the Mediterranean during three missionary journeys. He was arrested in Jerusalem and eventually ends up in Rome where he preaches the gospel for two years before being briefly released. He was eventually arrested again and according to tradition, was martyred outside Rome on the Ostian Way during Nero's reign (AD 54-68) about AD 65-67.

Date of Writing

Paul wrote Romans from Corinth toward the end of his third missionary journey (most likely in AD 56) as he was on his way back to Jerusalem with an offering for the poor believers.

Introduction

For the most part, the NT epistles are organized by author: Paul, James, Peter, John, Jude. Most likely, Paul's epistles came first because he wrote the most letters. It appears that Paul's letters are arranged first by those written to churches and then those written to individuals. Within these two groups, they are apparently, generally arranged by length (number of words).

The gospel was probably carried to Rome by the Jerusalem visitors who were chosen to be believers on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10).

⁷They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
⁸And how is it that we each hear *them* in our own language to which we were born? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, **and visitors from Rome**,
both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our *own* tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God." Acts 2:7-11

Paul had a systematic plan to take the gospel the remotest part of the earth. He must have known that a healthy church in Rome would impact the entire Empire because he wrote a careful, systematic foundation for the doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith and its meaning for Christian living. The letter also introduced him to a church that did not personally know him.

Romans is considered by many to be the most doctrinal book in the Bible. It has been beloved of many through the life of the church.

William Tyndale, the great English reformer and translator, referred to Romans as "the principle and most excellent part of the New Testament." He went on to say the following in his prologue to Romans that he wrote in the 1534 edition of his English NT: "No man verily can read it too oft or study it too well..."

Like many of Paul's writings, it has a deep theological teaching followed by the practical implications of that theology. The theme is the righteousness that comes from God: Chapters 1-11 present the theological truth while 12-16 detail its practical outworking in the lives of individual believers and the life of the whole church.

Outline

- I. Greetings and Introduction (1:1-17)
- II. Sin (1:18-3:20)
- III. Justification (3:21-5:21)
- IV. Sanctification (6:1-8:39)
- V. Sovereignty (9:1-11:36)
- VI. Practice (12:1-15:13)
- VII. Conclusion (15:14-16:27)

Summary

Greetings and Introduction (1:1-17)

1:1-15 – The letter begins typically Pauline. Paul identifies and describes himself and in the process describes the gospel and then identifies the recipients.

Paul calls himself a “bond-servant”. He has chosen to humbly serve Christ Jesus out of love; he will never go free (Ex 21:5-6). He was called as an apostle – one who is sent. Paul was not an apostle by choice, but by divine calling. He was also set apart for the gospel of God.

Paul calls the Romans the “called of Jesus Christ”, “beloved of God in Rome”, “called as saints.”

Paul “first” wants the believers in Rome to know that he prays “unceasingly” for them. Paul was a man of prayer (Eph 1:16; Phil 1:4; Col 1:3, 9; 1 Thess 1:2; 2 Thess 1:11; Philemon 1:4).

❖ **Am I a bond-servant of Christ?**

❖ **Do I unceasingly pray for others?**

1:16-17 – Paul was under obligation (v14) and eager (v15) to preach the gospel. In these thematic verses, he also declares that he is “not ashamed” of the gospel. These three attitudes drove Paul to be a powerful gospel proclaimer.

❖ **Am I under obligation to share the gospel; am I eager to do so; am I unashamed?**

Here is the theme of the letter:

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Salvation is through faith alone and Paul will now spend 16 chapters explaining and applying this important doctrine.

Sin (1:18-3:20)

Paul begins by explaining there is a universal need for the gospel because of sin (lack of righteousness).

1:18-32 – Condemnation of All People – Man is guilty and without excuse because God clearly revealed Himself to them in their inner man and in creation but they chose to worship the creature rather than the creator. As a result of their willful ignorance, God abandoned them allowing all the vile result of their arrogance to work its evil.

³²and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, **but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.**
Rom 1:32

❖ **Do I give hearty approval of sin?**

2:1-16 – Condemnation of the Moralists – Those who judge others are guilty themselves because they practice the same sins. Do you suppose this, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, for there is no partiality with God.

2:17-3:8 – Condemnation of the Jew – The Jews are guilty because they have the Law and trust in the Law, yet do not keep the Law.

3:9-3:20 – Condemnation of the All – Both Jews and Greeks are all under sin:

- No one is righteous
- No one understands
- No one seeks after God
- No one does good
- No one fears God

No one deserves God's salvation. By their sinful nature and sinful acts all are condemned.

❖ **What do I think about my own sin?**

Justification (3:21-5:21)

3:21-3:31 – Righteousness Explained – “The righteousness of God has been manifested.” This is God's method of bringing people into a right relationship with Himself which is apart from Law through faith in Jesus Christ. It is needed because there is no distinction among people, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Since salvation is God's doing by grace through faith there can be no boasting. Because “We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.”

4:1-25 – There is only one way of salvation – faith. It was this way in the OT and is that way in the NT. God has always justified people by faith alone. Paul's example of this is Abraham. Abraham could not have been saved by keeping the Law, it was not written yet. He could not have been saved by circumcision, it was not observed yet.

³For what does the Scripture say? “ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Rom 4:3

Abraham's faith resulted in glory being given to God. Abraham's example was recorded for us.

²⁰yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Rom 4:20-21

²³**Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, ²⁴but for our sake also,** to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, Rom 4:23-24

5:1-21 – Results of Justification – “Therefore” signals that what follows rests on what has preceded. Paul showed that justification was by faith, now he describes the benefits of that justification.

1. Peace with God (5:1)
2. Access into God's grace (5:2)
3. Exultation in the hope of glory (5:2)
4. Joy in tribulation (5:3-5a)
 - a. Tribulation brings about perseverance
 - b. Perseverance brings about proven character
 - c. Proven character brings about hope
 - d. Hope because it demonstrates that we belong to God

❖ **What do you allow to take away your joy?**

5. The indwelling Holy Spirit (5:5b)
6. Recipients of amazing love (5:6-8)

7. Deliverance from future condemnation (5:9-10)
8. Present reconciliation with God (5:11)
9. Overcoming the effect of Adam's sin (the inherited sin nature) (12-21)

Original sin (or inherited sin or sin nature) is the sinful state that man is born in. We inherit the sin nature from Adam (Rom 5:12). The sin nature is the corruption of our whole nature and is that which inclines us to sin. The corruption of sin extends to every aspect of our being (Rom 1:18-3:20) including intellect (2 Cor 4:4), conscience (1 Tim 4:2), will (Rom 1:28), and heart (Eph 4:18).

Man's entire nature is affected by sin; he is totally incapable of moving on his own toward God.

All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psa 14:1-3; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12). The MacArthur Study Bible

Sanctification (6:1-8:39)

6:1-21 – Dead to Sin; Alive to God – Paul explains that the believers union with Christ in His death and resurrection is the basis of deliverance from sin and how that union affects our progressive sanctification. The believer must present themselves to God as those alive from the dead, and our bodies as instruments of righteousness to God for we are “freed from sin and enslaved to God.” We have changed masters. We were slaves to sin, now we are slaves to God, separated for His service.

❖ **To what do I present myself to and why?**

7:1-13 – United to Christ – Paul continues the thought of the believer's union with Christ. We are joined to Christ in order that we might bear fruit for God. Before Christ, we were in the flesh and our sin nature (to which we were enslaved) bore fruit unto death. The problem is not the rules (God's standard of righteousness presented in the Law); the problem is the sin that indwells us.

7:14-24 – Conflicting Natures – Paul uses himself as an example of the believer's daily battle against the flesh. He wants to live righteously and fulfill the demands of God but is frustrated by sin that still indwells him. God has set the believer free from the power of sin through union with Christ and then given us the resources to live in a way that glorifies God.

¹³³Establish my footsteps in Your word, And do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.
Psa 119:133

❖ **What iniquity have I allowed to have dominion over me?**

8:1-39 – The Holy Spirit – The power to live a separated life is supernatural. It comes through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Paul's focus moves off of “I” in chapter 7 (mentioned ~30 times) and moves to the Holy Spirit (mentioned 17 times) in chapter 8. This section begins with “therefore”. Everything that has been mentioned up to now about sanctification comes to a head – sanctification requires the believer to live Spirit filled (“Above the Line”). Even though we battle daily with sin, it is critical to know that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” And since we have the Spirit living in us (8:13) we should also walk by the Spirit (Gal 5:25). This is not a new concept – Paul taught this in his letter to the Galatians (written ~AD 49, ~7-8 years earlier).

¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. ¹⁹Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Gal 5:16-25

Paul's excitement about the Spirit's work in sanctification causes him to detail other works of the Spirit. The Spirit internally testifies that we are saved (8:15-17), helps us in prayer(8:26-27), provides peace in difficulty (8:28-30), and seals us to God (8:37-39). The Spirit gives us power to live a free, obedient, expectant, exciting life to such a super-abounding extent that "We overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

³⁷But **in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.** ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 8:37-39

❖ **Am I walking in the Spirit or in the flesh (living above the line)?**

Sovereignty (9:1-11:36)

If man is so sinful that he cannot bring himself to God, then how does he get to God and if God is so loving and faithful then why is Israel rejecting Him? This portion discusses the faithful and sovereign nature of God.

9:1-33 – Sovereignty in Salvation Part 1 – Within this tightly packed teaching on God's sovereignty in salvation, there is a the apostle's heart for the lost.

¹I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ²that **I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart.** ³For **I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen** according to the flesh, Rom 9:1-3

❖ **What do I feel about those I meet who are lost?**

Paul's sovereignty argument...

1. so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, (v11)
2. so then it *does not depend* on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. (v16)
3. so then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. (v18)
4. who are you, O man, who answers back to God? (v20)

²¹Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? ²²**What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?** ²³**And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,** ²⁴**even us, whom He also called,** not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. Rom 9:21-24

❖ **Who grateful am I?**

10:1-33 – Sovereignty in Salvation Part 2 – God is sovereign in salvation, but He uses the means of the gospel to bring people to himself (see Cornelius in Acts 10).

⁸But what does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART”—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, ⁹that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”

¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; ¹³for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” ¹⁴**How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?**

¹⁵**How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!”** Rom 10:8-15

❖ **I have been sent. Am I preaching the message of salvation?**

11:1-35 – Israel’s Future – God has not abandoned Israel because the “gifts and calling of God are irrevocable” (10:29). During the church age, God is dealing with the Church which includes the remnant Israel as well as the gentiles. Israel is hardened at this time until the rapture, when God will again pick up His plan with Israel in the 70th week of Daniel.

⁵In the same way then, **there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.** Rom 11:5

²⁵For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;** ²⁶and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, Rom 11:25-26

Paul ends this doctrinal section of his letter with an incredible anthem of praise to God:

³³Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? ³⁵Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? ³⁶For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen. Rom 11:33-36

❖ **Do I stand in awe of God like that?**

Practice (12:1-15:13)

Paul concludes his letter with the practical application of the doctrines of salvation. We are not only saved from something but we are saved to something.

12:1-2 – Filled of the Spirit – The Christian life is not lived in our own strength. It is a life lived filled with the Spirit as the life of Christ flows through us. Paul describes this spiritual reality in several ways through his letters.

“Filled with the Spirit”

The classic passage that describes the filling of the Holy Spirit is Eph 5:18.

¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for this is dissipation, **but be filled with the Spirit,** ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ... (²²Wives..., ²⁵Husbands..., ^{6:1}Children..., ⁴Fathers..., ⁵Slaves..., ⁹Masters...) Eph 5:18-6:9

The contrast is clear; someone who is drunk is under the influence of alcohol – they have surrendered control to alcohol. Believers should only be controlled by the Spirit. The Greek for “filled” (pleroo) is a passive, present tense imperative (something that we are commanded to let happen to us on a continuous basis). It is literally *let yourselves be kept being filled with the Spirit*. We are commanded to allow the Spirit to fill us. The implication is that **the usual, expected position of the believer is to be filled with the Spirit**. The believer in a right relationship with God will be filled with the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit is the surrendering of every area of our life to God so that the Holy Spirit is controlling our words, worship, reactions, and relationships.

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you”

Being filled with the Spirit is equivalent to letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you (Col 3:16) and likewise produces Christ-like words, worship, reactions, and relationships (Eph 5:18-6:9 and Col 3:16-22 c.f. Gal 5:22-23).

¹⁶**Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you**, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. ...(¹⁸Wives..., ¹⁹Husbands... ²⁰Children..., ²¹Fathers..., ²²Slaves..., ^{4:1}Masters...)

“Abiding in Christ”

³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. ⁵**I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.** ... ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. John 15:1-11

“Setting Apart Christ as Lord in your heart”

¹⁵but **sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts**, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 1 Pet 3:15

“Living by faith in the Son of God”

²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; and **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Gal 2:20

And now, here in Romans, Paul describes it as “present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.”

¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.** ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Rom 12:1-2

The filling of the Spirit is required for putting off sin and putting on righteousness as Paul also describes in Ephesians.

²⁰But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, ²²that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³and that you **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, ²⁴and **put on the new self**, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Eph 4:20-24

❖ **Am I consistently filled with the Spirit; what do I allow to control me?**

12:3-21 – Conduct in the Church – Being filled with the Holy Spirit results in living out the love of Christ within the body of believers. The first principle Paul gives for body life is humility – do not think more highly of ourselves than we ought.

Humility moves us to use the Holy Spirit’s gift to serve the body of Christ. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly.

¹⁰**As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.** ¹¹Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; **so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever.** Amen. 1 Pet 4:10-11

❖ How am I serving the body?

Paul then gives a hard hitting list of attitudes/behavior within the body:

- let love be without hypocrisy
- abhor what is evil
- cling to what is good
- be devoted to one another in brotherly love
- give preference to one another in honor
- not lagging behind in diligence
- fervent in spirit
- serving the Lord
- rejoicing in hope
- persevering in tribulation
- devoted to prayer
- contributing to the needs of the saints
- practicing hospitality
- bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse
- rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep
- be of the same mind toward one another
- do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly
- do not be wise in your own estimation
- never pay back evil for evil to anyone
- respect what is right in the sight of all men
- if possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men
- never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God
- do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good

❖ Which one of this list am I doing well? Which am I not?

13:1-21 – Submission – Romans 13 explains the believer's civil responsibilities (see also Mark 12:17; John 18:33-38; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-17). Spirit Filled believers willingly come under those who God has placed over them. They will submit. It is interesting that Paul did not simply say “obey”. Submission also includes an attitude from which obedience springs; an attitude of compliance and deference that is not necessarily present in obedience.

⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. ⁸Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the law*. Rom 13:7-8

Paul ends this section with a reminder that the time to be with the Lord is sooner than when we first believed (a reminder for every day). Therefore, live in a way that honors Him. “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.”

❖ **Do I submit to my governing authorities?**

14:1-15:13 – Principles of Conscience – This section deals with Christian conduct in the area of freedom – when God does not specify exactly what we should do in every situation (cf. 1 Cor. 8). In these times, some Christians will do one thing and others another, both within God's moral will. Paul describes how Christians are to treat each other in these situations.

A person who is “weak in faith” is someone who has placed restrictions on himself beyond what God's word says because he would violate his conscious partaking in the activity. Each person must be fully convinced in their own mind that what they are doing is right. Those who are not “weak in faith” are to accept the one who is “weak in faith”.

³The one who eats (not “weak”) is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat (“weak”), and the one who does not eat (“weak”) is not to judge the one who eats (not “weak”), for God has accepted him. Rom 14:3 with explanation

The one who is not “weak” is to **determine** to not put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way (v13).

¹⁸For he who in this *way* serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹So then we **pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.** ²⁰Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense. ²¹**It is good not** to eat meat or to drink wine, or **to do anything by which your brother stumbles.** ²²The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *his eating is* not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin. Rom 14:18-23

Self-limitation to not put a stumbling block before a brother is love. It is bearing the weakness of others, placing them before ourselves. We are act for our neighbor's good for his building up.

❖ **Do I put stumbling blocks in brothers' way?**

❖ **Do I easily self limit my freedoms out of love?**

The ultimate example of service and the OT quote of that service moves Paul to explain the OT.

⁴For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Rom 15:4

The purpose of accepting one another was that God would be glorified which is the reason that the Gentiles had been called to be children of God.

Conclusion (15:14-16:27)

15:14-33 – Paul concludes his letter by looking at his life as an apostle as an example to the Romans.

¹⁷Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸**For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me,** resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, Rom 15:17-18

❖ **What do I boast about?**

Paul's plan was to visit the Romans on his way to Spain after he delivered the offering from Macedonia and Achaia to the poverty stricken church in Jerusalem.

16:1-27 – Greetings and Love Expressed – In this personal chapter, Paul named 36 persons. In the midst of greeting those who are in Rome and the group he is with sending greetings, he gives a warning:

¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, **keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.** ¹⁸For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. ¹⁹For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. ²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Rom 16:17-20

❖ **Are there ways that I am causing dissensions and hindrances?**

Paul concludes with an amazing doxology :

²⁵Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, ²⁶but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading* to obedience of faith; ²⁷**to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever.** Amen. Rom 16:25-27

❖ **Does my life glorify God or profane His name?**

Homework

Read 1 Corinthians.