

Outline of Romans

The How and Why of Remaining in Christ

Theological Foundations of the Faith

OVERVIEW

- Chapters 1-4 - The Milk of Salvation: Who is Jesus Christ and what did he accomplish?
Chapter 5 - The effect of knowing God's Plan of Salvation: Peace and Joy
Chapters 6-8 - Dealing with Sin in our lives: Acquiring the Mind of Christ
Chapters 9-11 - The Sovereignty of God and the calling of His chosen ones from all nations
Chapters 12-13 - How shall we then live? The way of Christ is love and service.
Chapters 14-15 - Maintaining unity in the Body of Christ - avoid comparing with others
Chapters 15-16 - Pursue discipleship and evangelism as a Body - protect the flock

Chapter 1 – The Gospel

1. *Paul writes to the Romans to present them with the Gospel, the “Good News”*
 - a. The gospel is powerful, bringing salvation to those who hear and believe it
 - b. The gospel contains God's plan to make us “right” in His sight
 - c. Becoming right in His sight is a process begun by and maintained through faith
2. *God is angry with mankind because of their sinfulness*
 - a. They don't acknowledge His existence even though evidence of Him is plain
 - b. They worship other men or created things instead of their creator
 - c. They exchange lies for the Truth - having given up on God, He gave up on them
 - d. Their rejection of God was intentional and deliberate
 - e. By rejecting God they enslaved themselves to their own sinfulness
 - f. They are deserving of death - they have rejected the source of Life who is God

Chapter 2 – Sinning brings Judgment

1. *God alone is the Judge of men and He is impartial, just and righteous when He judges us*
 - a. The standard of judgment is conformity to the Law
 - b. No one obeys the law, and therefore no one can judge another impartially
 - c. Being a chosen one of God is no release from Judgment
 - d. Knowing the Law isn't enough - we need to obey it
 - e. Obedience even in ignorance of the Law shows it is written on hearts (conscience)
2. *The chosen of God know the Law, but tend to be complacent about it - they are judged too*
 - a. Knowledge of the Law should lead to teaching the Law to those who don't have it
 - b. Knowledge of the Law without obedience to the Law is hypocrisy
 - c. Hypocrisy leads the heathen to despise God, to think of Him as of no consequence

3. *Those who belong to God are those who behave like it, not those with the title*
 - a. God's people are circumcised of the heart, not of the flesh
 - b. Circumcised hearts are devoted to God
 - c. Circumcised hearts seek God's approval, not the approval of men

Chapter 3 – Salvation by grace, not works

1. *God chose His people for a purpose which brings honor - but avoid pride*
 - a. God's purpose in choosing His people is to have a message-bearer to mankind
 - b. Being chosen is a privilege and carries honor but also responsibility
2. *Obedience to the Law doesn't bring salvation - but it can bring pride*
 - a. Being chosen for many leads to pride and arrogance - a sense of being better
 - b. No one is better - all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
 - c. Where there is pride and arrogance, there is no Fear of God
3. *Salvation comes by Grace - but Grace doesn't do away with the Law*
 - a. God has a new message: salvation will come by grace, not works
 - b. The Law still defines right behavior and is good - but it doesn't save
 - c. Grace (justification) will instead come by faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice
 - d. There is no more room for pride - Grace comes by believing, not achieving
 - e. This offer of acquittal and salvation is now made to all men
 - f. The Jews have carried God's light of salvation to the gentiles - God's mystery

Chapter 4 – Grace comes by Faith

1. *Abraham believed God and therefore God considered him righteous*
 - a. If Abraham *worked* for his righteousness, then God *owed* him a promise
 - b. But instead Abraham *believed* God, and God gave him the gift of the promise
 - c. By contrast, the wages of our sinful works is death - and everyone earns death
 - d. But the gift of righteousness (salvation) is an unearned blessing from God
2. *Circumcision follows faith - it doesn't precede it - therefore faith is a prerequisite*
 - a. Circumcision is a sign, an indicator of pre-existing faith (like baptism)
 - b. Circumcision, rather than being a work, was established by God to seal His promise
 - c. Abraham believed 1st, then God promised, and then God sealed and delivered
 - d. When you believe, the facts don't count - God will overcome the facts

Chapter 5 – Milk to Meat

1. *Knowledge of our salvation produces 2 tangible effects in our life: Peace and Joy.*
 - a. Peace is external - it means the war with God is over
 - b. Peace is internal - it means the war with our conscience is over
 - c. Joy is always found in the context of suffering, conflict and reconciliation

2. *Christ's sacrifice reconciles us with God. Because we are justified we are reconciled.*
 - a. Christ's atoning sacrifice fulfills the Law and reconciles us to God (removes our sin)
 - a. Reconciliation means the barrier between us and God has been removed
 - b. Without the barrier, the benefits of God's grace can freely flow to us

3. *The purpose of justification is to produce obedience which comes through sanctification.*
 - a. Knowledge of salvation (milk) produces peace and joy leading to obedience (meat)
 - a. Obedience identifies us as children of God and glorifies God
 - b. Sanctification provides opportunities to obey and sets us apart from the world
 - c. Sanctification makes us progressively Christlike - it is a rite of purification

4. *Sanctification comes by trial - the outcome of any trial can be joy and triumph.*
 - a. Trials are the means by which God purifies us and conforms us to the image of Christ
 - b. When we have gone through the trial, if we have been obedient, we have joy.

5. *Sanctification leads to character which produces hope - hope stimulates Godly love.*
 - a. If we truly understand God's love for us, we have peace and joy despite suffering
 - b. If we have peace and joy we can persevere through the trials God brings to us
 - c. If we persevere and do not give up, trials will produce character (moral strength)
 - d. With character, we can experience hope: the confident expectation of things to be
 - e. Hope is focusing on the eternal, not the temporal, and it makes Godly love possible
 - f. That love spurs us on to participate in the ministry of reconciliation, an eternal goal
 - g. Love is laying down our life for others to reconcile them to God, like Christ did for us

6. *Love cannot coexist with fear and therefore love glorifies God*
 - a. We need to *feel* significant - but the Law identifies sin and makes us fear failure
 - b. We need to *feel* secure - but sin offends God and makes us fear death and punishment
 - c. Christ's sacrifice frees us from sin and therefore removes our fear of failure
 - d. Christ's sacrifice removes the penalty of sin and therefore removes our fear of death
 - e. Christ's sacrifice demonstrates God's love for us and thereby glorifies God
 - f. When we imitate Christ's sacrificial love, we too can glorify God
 - g. Because we are free to serve God, we acquire purpose, meaning and value
 - h. Because we are free and now understand God's love, we can truly love others
 - i. Because love is an attribute of God, when we exhibit His love, we glorify Him

7. *Trials are the means by which God sanctifies us and by which we can glorify Him*
 - a. Because God sanctifies us through trials, we need to joyfully embrace them.
 - b. We can embrace our trials if we keep our eyes on the goal, which is God's glory.

Chapter 6 – Jail Break: From Death to Life

1. *Our old self died with Christ - how then shall our new self respond to God's mercy?*
 - a. We cannot continue in willful sin
 - b. The tyranny of sin in our lives is over and done with
 - c. We live in Christ and death has no hold over Him nor over us!
 - d. If the power of sin over us is broken, then if we sin, we do it willingly

- e. We must not permit sin to be our master again - we are *free*. We must act like it!
 - f. We must not permit Satan to make use of our services for his own gain
 - g. Instead, in thankfulness, we can now devote our services to God for His glory
2. *Just because we're not under the condemnation of the Law we don't have to break it*
- a. We don't have to continue our sinful habits - get a new habit of right behavior
 - b. We belong to whom we choose to obey - we can obey sin or we can obey God
 - c. We used to be enslaved to sin - the prison gates are now open for us - *why remain?*
 - d. Sin pays with death, but God gives the gift of eternal life - *why remain?*
 - e. If we are free to serve another who will reward us with life, peace and joy, then GO!

Chapter 7 – The struggle between the Mind and the Sinful Nature

1. *The claim sin had to us under the Law is now rendered void to let us bear new fruit*
- a. When controlled by sin we bore sinful fruit after its kind
 - b. Freed from sin, we can now freely serve God in a way that bears Godly fruit
2. *The Law merely identifies sin, it isn't the source of it - I need Christ to be free of sin*
- a. Without the Law there is no sin - it brings knowledge of sin
 - b. Sin forces me to choose between the Law and my desires, bringing me death
 - c. The commandment was intended to bring life, but brought me death instead
 - d. The commandment of God is holy and good, but I am not.
 - e. The Law is spiritual (existing apart from the tangible), but I am not.
3. *Christ covers me and protects me and sets me free from the law of sin and death*
- a. I am incapable of doing good on my own because my very nature is sinful
 - b. I know the difference between right and wrong intellectually, but it's not enough!
 - c. I have the will but not the power to do what is right and I succumb to my desires
 - d. My evil desires are always right there with me - how can I overcome them?
 - e. There seems to be an ongoing contest between my body, mind and spirit...
 - f. The conflict we sense is good news! It indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit.
 - g. Do NOT fall into dualism: the belief that physical is bad and spiritual is good.
 - h. Do NOT fall into dualism: the belief that the resurrection is only spiritual.
 - i. Do NOT fall into dualism: the belief that Satan brings bad and God brings good.
 - j. Do NOT fall into dualism: the belief that flesh is of the devil and spirit is of God.
4. *If I have free will, why can't I exercise it? How do I master sin in my life?*
- a. We have 2 wills: a volitional will which tends to fail us, and a moral will born of God.
 - b. Christ is my savior - by his spirit my volitional will is conformed to God's moral will.
 - c. As God conforms me, I will increasingly exercise my volitional will to overcome sin.

Chapter 8 – Living in the Spirit: A New Law

1. *Those who are not under condemnation are those who are in Christ Jesus*
 - a. There is no condemnation under the law of the Spirit
 - b. The law of sin and death could not save me - instead it killed me
 - c. Christ became a sin-offering to satisfy that law and save me (make me lawful)
 - d. We satisfy the law of sin and death when we live according to the Spirit
 - e. Our mind-set determines which law we live by (do not be double-minded)
2. *Living “in the Spirit” means abiding in Christ and that requires a change of mind.*
 - a. The mind of sinful man is death and hostile to God - it cannot submit to God’s law
 - d. The mind of the Spirit desires what God desires
 - e. If you don’t have Christ’s Spirit (his mind - 1Cor.2:7), you don’t have Christ.
What is like-minded? Spirit of Elijah (Mat. 14:11)? see Philipians 2:5...
 - f. If the Spirit of Christ lives in you, he brings life to your dead body
3. *Therefore, we have an obligation to live in harmony (accord) with the Spirit in us.*
 - a. Allow yourself to be led by Christ’s Spirit living in you (or you will grieve Him).
 - b. Do not allow yourself to be led again into slavery by sin - that’s who you *were*.
 - c. Instead, realize who you already *are*: a child of God, co-heir with Christ!
4. *The suffering we endure for Christ’s sake is not without purpose*
 - a. We share in Christ’s suffering so that we can share in his glory
 - b. Suffering and our response to it reveals who we are and reveals God’s glory
 - c. Creation itself suffers for our sin, but as we were freed, so too will creation be free
 - d. As our bodies will be redeemed physically, so too will creation be redeemed
 - e. The redemption of our bodies is our hope - not just a fantasy - we *will* have it
5. *In the same way the Spirit leads us to right thinking and right behavior, he helps us endure*
 - a. The Spirit helps us in our weakness, because He is our comforter and intercessor
 - b. The Spirit does just what God wants, guaranteeing our inheritance (Eph. 1:14)
 - c. The Spirit reveals Christ’s mind in us (he renews our mind, Rom. 12:2)
6. *We know that God works for our good in all things - What is our good?*
 - a. “We know” means from experience, which produces unwavering confidence
 - b. We know because that’s why God called us to Himself and gave us His name
 - c. We know because God predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of His son
 - d. We know because God wants Christ to be the first-born of many brothers
 - e. We know because God sacrificed His only son to redeem us from His wrath
 - f. We know because if Satan accuses us, Christ defends us. Satan *cannot* have us back.
7. *What God has put together, no one can separate - He gave us His love and His Son*
 - a. Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, danger - for Christ’s sake we endure it all
 - b. In all these things we are *more* than conquerors!

Chapter 9 – Children of the Promise

1. *God's promise was to Israel, but not all who descend from Israel are Israel.*
 - a. Physical Israel and Spiritual Israel are not identical
 - b. Physical Israel had all the privileges and knowledge afforded a chosen race
 - c. Privilege and knowledge aren't enough - you must be the object of the promise
 - d. Only Spiritual Israel is the object of the promise
2. *God has established two peoples - One he favors and the other he overlooks*
 - a. God's favor doesn't depend on works or birthrights
 - b. God loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born - He elected Jacob
 - c. God is not unjust for electing Jacob - He has been merciful, not biased.
3. *If God elects us, then how can he condemn those He doesn't elect?*
 - a. God has created us for a purpose - some for noble, some for common purposes
 - b. God's mercy in preserving some is to be praised - He could have condemned us all
 - c. God has preserved some to reveal Himself to them in His mercy and show His glory
4. *God reaches out to the Gentiles through the Jews - and preserves a remnant in each*
 - a. The Gentiles, like the Jews are elected into sonship
 - b. Though Jacob's offspring are numerous, only a remnant will be saved
 - c. If God had not preserved a remnant, we would have destroyed ourselves in our sin
5. *The distinction between the Elected and the Non-Elected is faith*
 - a. The Gentiles without privileges are preserved because of their faith
 - b. The Jews with their privileges are destroyed because they trusted in their works
 - c. Jesus Christ is the rock over which men stumble when they do not trust in him

Chapter 10 – The path to Salvation hasn't changed

1. *Zeal is not enough if it isn't based on the knowledge of God's Provision in Christ*
 - a. Righteousness comes from God, not from our works - God doesn't "owe" us
 - b. If we try to earn salvation, we reject God's provision for salvation
 - c. There is only one provision for salvation: profess Jesus Christ as Lord
2. *There is one people and one purpose, not two peoples and two purposes*
 - a. There is no difference in the requirements between Jew and Gentile
 - b. God blesses those who call on Him - who are not ashamed of Him
 - c. To call upon God, the lost must first be told of Him and what He has done
 - d. The knowledge of God's grace is good news! Bring it to everyone!
 - e. Israel was told the good news; Israel heard it --- but not all Israel accepted it.
 - f. If some of physical Israel did not accept it, then that is the will of God
 - g. Perhaps acceptance by Gentiles will lead to acceptance by some of Israel

Chapter 11 – Salvation comes by Grace to a Remnant

1. *God did not reject His people Israel*
 - a. God preserves His people - but not all who are Israel are God's people
 - b. Physical Israel sought to justify itself by self-righteous works and remains unjustified
 - c. Spiritual Israel was elected by God and saved by grace, not by works - so it's justified
2. *Physical Israel was hardened and could neither see nor hear the good news*
 - a. They treated God's Son with contempt and scorn
 - b. The very offering for their salvation now becomes a reason for their destruction
3. *Israel has provided the means for salvation to all the world*
 - a. Verse 11:11 reads literally, "I say therefore, did they not stumble in order that they might fall? May it not be; but by their trespass salvation came to the Gentiles."
 - b. Paul hopes to save some in Israel who are part of the elected remnant v.14
4. *If Gentiles without privileges can be grafted in, then so too may repentant Israelites*
 - a. Because Israel is the source of salvation for the Gentiles, Gentiles shouldn't gloat
 - b. If natural children can be cut off, then we'd better work out our salvation in fear
 - c. If unnatural children can be grafted in, then don't boast or look down on Israel
5. *All Israel will be saved - that is, Spiritual Israel - the children of the promise*
 - a. Israel was defined in chapter 9 verses 6-8 as, "the children of the promise."
 - b. Physical Israel or non-Spiritual Israel is the enemy of the church
 - c. Spiritual Israel or the remnant of the elect, are loved by God (and sought by us)
 - d. God's gifts and His call are irrevocable - but they were given to the elect only

Chapter 12 – In light of all this, how then shall we live in the sight of the World?

1. *Attitude 1: Think highly of God and His ways*
 - a. Offer yourselves as a body to God - be holy and pleasing to Him as a group
 - b. A people who serve God participate in a form of worship
 - c. Choose God's pattern to conform to, not the current pattern of the world
 - d. We can be transformed if we're willing to obtain a new mind (knowledge & attitude)(see Col.3:9-10)
 - e. If we conform to God by testing (applying) his way, we will speak with favor of it (test and approve what God's will is, v. 12:2)
2. *Attitude 2: Don't think too much or too little of yourself*
 - a. Maintain a sober judgment about yourself in proportion to your faith
 - b. Exercise your gifts as a special grace given to you for the needs of others in the Body
 - c. Practice your gifts as fully as your faith will allow that they might grow and strengthen (see Philippians 1:9, 2:3-4,12,3:12-16,4:8-9; 2Thess. 1:3; 1Pet.4:10-11; 2Pet.1:5-10)

THE GIFTS:

With every gift comes a weakness if it is carried to excess (maintain balance)

With every gift comes a limitation on our practice; it requires God's grace to empower it

1. Prophecy - everyone must proclaim God's Word to the extent he knows it.
 2. Serving - it doesn't matter what the context or the attitude, just do it.
 3. Teaching - the ability to impart the knowledge of God cannot be laid down (see 1Tim.3:1-13,6:1-5; 2Tim.2 - you cannot teach what you do not know or do).
 4. Encouraging - encouraging isn't an option; do it at every opportunity.
 5. Contributing - acquiring more than you need ought to lead to generous giving.
 6. Leading - leadership carries greater accountability; govern diligently.
 7. Showing Mercy - don't let compassion lead to despair; remain cheerful. Be sympathetic, not empathetic or you will be unable to show proper mercy.
3. *Attitude 3: Think of others as much as you think of yourself*
- a. Love (offer charity) sincerely (i.e. don't ignore evil or participate in it)
 - b. Hate what is evil and cling to what is good (call sin: sin; praise obedience)
 - c. Make yourself available for the benefit of others lovingly
 - d. Honor others before you seek honor for yourself
4. *Attitude 4: Be enthusiastic and outgoing!*
- a. Never, never, never give up - Be zealous and fervent in serving the Lord
 - b. Be visibly joyful in looking forward to the good God has in mind for us
 - c. Be patient when you are afflicted (see 1Pet.1:6-7) - Patient means willing to put off judgment until all the facts are in; willing to put everything in an eternal context.
 - d. Enthusiasm comes from prayer - be faithful in prayer and watchful (see Isa.56:7; Matt.21:13,26:40-41,45; Mk.9:29; Act.1:14; Col.4:2; Rev.5:8)
 - e. Enthusiasm comes from giving, not from withholding: share with the needy
 - f. Enthusiasm needs to be imparted to others: pursue hospitality
5. *Attitude 5: Give blessings, not curses so that you create a winsome community*
- a. Bless your enemies, not just your supporters (see Mt.5:43-47)
 - b. Be sympathetic with others so they may be blessed by your compassion
 - c. Seek harmony, not disunity; Seek common ground, not differences.
 - d. Don't be so proud that you refuse to associate with some people
 - e. Don't be so conceited that you drive others away from you
 - f. Don't be vengeful, but forgiving - God repays evil, not you
 - g. Be as careful to do what is right in the eyes of the heathen as in those of the Brethren
 - h. Live in peace with everyone or you will drive away the lost
 - i. By blessing the lost and the enemy, we make it impossible to ignore God's love
 - j. Don't let evil overcome you so as to imitate it; instead, overcome evil with good

Chapter 13 – Be *in* but not *of* the World

1. *Attitude 6: Living under Authority - Be submissive to those in authority over you*
 - a. God establishes authority - He is sovereign even over who and when
 - b. Everyone must submit to governing authorities
 - c. Rebelling against authority is rebelling against God

2. *Attitude 7: Fear of Authority - Keep your conscience clear*
 - a. If you do what is right, fear is absent
 - b. If you do what is wrong, fear is justified
 - c. Authority is God's agent for your protection or for your punishment

Civil disobedience is justified when government perverts its role (Acts 5:29) and exercises its power contrary to God's intended purposes. When man's law conflicts with God's law, then we are duty-bound to obey God instead of man.

3. *Attitude 8: Honoring Authority - Perform your civic duties and responsibilities*
 - a. Authorities govern full-time and deserve your support
 - b. Taxes pay for full-time government [similar to the tithe for the Levites]
 - c. Taxes are owed like any other debt incurred for goods and services
 - d. Authorities can be honored and respected - without gossip or slander

4. *Attitude 9: Love your neighbors - Have consideration for others*
 - a. Pay everyone his due - let others see you appreciate and respect them
 - b. Love your neighbor as your obedience to God - it fulfills the law
 - c. Do no harm to others

Do not desire or take what rightfully belongs to another

1. Adultery - rejecting God's covenant of marriage
2. Murder - rejecting God's image in another
3. Theft - rejecting God's grace toward another
4. Coveting - rejecting God's personal provision for you

5. *Attitude 10: Love what is right - Exercise self-control*
 - a. Judgment is coming soon for you - be prepared
 - b. Put aside your old ways and adopt new ones - don't leave a vacuum
 - c. Don't please the sinful self at others' expense

Do not despise others as if they had no worth apart from you

1. Orgies - using another's body as an unholy object
2. Drunkenness - demanding another's attention by becoming a spectacle
3. Sexual Immorality - ignoring another's need to remain chaste
4. Dissension - attacking another's dignity and desire to belong
5. Jealousy - controlling another's actions by making yourself the focus

6. *Pursue a Proper Role for Yourself*

- a. Clothe yourself with Christ (Gen. 3:21; Zech.3:3; Mt.22:11) Ring, Robe & Crown
- b. Don't gratify or equip your sinful desires (Gen.39:10; Gal.5:16; 1Pet.2:11)

Chapter 14 – Maintaining Unity in the Body – through 15:13

1. *Accept those with weaker faith without passing unnecessary judgment*

- a. Some things aren't worth arguing over
- b. There is a natural difference of opinion based on your stage of development
- c. Don't compare yourself with others if all you want is superiority
- d. Others in the Body are not *your* servants, but *God's* servants...
- e. God is at work in the lives of others – concern yourself with His work in your life

2. *Your goal is to be convinced in your own mind of the Truth of things as God sees them*

- a. Your job is not to persuade the world that you have all the answers
- b. Your desire must be to conform yourself to Christ, not to conform the world to you
- c. You are not the Lone Ranger – you belong to Christ as his ambassador

3. *Christ's purpose in dying and returning from the dead was to be your Lord*

- a. You are not your own; you were purchased at a price – honor God with your life
- b. You cannot behave as if you were your own master or the master of another
- c. If you are not the master, then you cannot sit in judgment of your brothers

4. *If you are to give an account of yourself to God, then you need to be mindful of others*

- a. Make up your mind (choose) not to put a stumbling block in your brother's way
- b. Take into account how other people might feel about a particular subject
- c. In consideration of others, don't distress them – it's an unloving way to behave
- d. Don't be so demanding of your rights that you help destroy another's faith
- e. Disregarding the impact of your actions and speech condemns your own beliefs

5. *The Kingdom of God isn't about rules but about righteousness (godliness)*

- a. Righteousness comes from God and reflects His holiness
- b. Knowledge of God and what He has done brings joy and peace
- c. If you are the bringer of joy and peace, you serve Christ, and please God and men

6. *To please God and serve Christ, you need to be a peace-maker*

- a. The burden is on you to do whatever it takes,
 1. to bring peace to others and maintain it in the body
 2. to practice and encourage mutual edification – build each other up
- b. Don't argue over piddling stuff – it destroys the work of God in another's life!
- c. The work of God is more important than your rights and therefore,
 1. set aside your rights and Christian liberties rather than oppose God's work
 2. whatever you believe about your piddling stuff, keep between you and God!

Def. piddle: to trifle, to wander aimlessly - and yes, to urinate... it's all a waste

7. *The burden is on the stronger brother with the greater faith to give way*
 - a. Put up with the infirmities of the weaker brother graciously for *his* good
 - b. Be exemplary to lead the weaker to the stronger position and build *him* up
 - c. Don't always try to please yourself - even Christ didn't have that luxury
 - d. When we insult others by looking down on them, we insult Christ himself

8. *Everything in God's word is provided to teach us what we need to know to be successful*
 - a. When we read God's Word we gain not only knowledge, but encouragement
 - b. When we act to obey God's commands we gain not only faith, but endurance
 - c. Thus, with knowledge and action we also gain hope by *exercising* our faith

9. *God is the source of our endurance and encouragement*
 - a. When we endure and encourage others, we speak God's love to them
 - b. When we all follow Christ instead of our pet theories, we enjoy a spirit of unity
 - c. The purpose of unity is to gain like-mindedness with God and thus glorify Him

10. *Acceptance of one another reflects the acceptance Christ had for us- even in our sin*
 - a. Christ's purpose in accepting and redeeming us was to praise His Father
 - b. Our purpose in accepting each other's weaknesses is also to praise God
 - c. Christ was submissive to Jews to redeem Gentiles so they could all praise God

11. *Suffering each other's weaknesses is an expression of trust - God chose us all*
 - a. Trusting God by accepting His choice of others yields joy and peace in our life
 - b. The purpose of joy and peace is to produce enough hope to overflow into others...

Chapters 15 – Pursue Discipleship and Evangelism

1. *The Church needs to fulfill its roles in the Kingdom - it must,*
 - a. Be full of goodness - holy and loving and generous in the world
 - b. Be complete in knowledge - to teach sound doctrine (see 1Tim.4:16)
 - c. Be able to pass on its knowledge: to make us competent to instruct one another

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, [why?]

1. to prepare God's people for works of service,
2. so that the body of Christ may be built up
3. until we all reach unity
 - a. in the faith and
 - b. in the knowledge of the Son of God
4. and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

*Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.
Eph. 4:11-14*

2. *The Church has a duty to missions - it must send out its priestly servants to the world*
 - a. We have a priestly duty to proclaim the gospel to those who don't know Christ
 - b. We have a duty to raise them up in the faith so they will be pleasing to God.
 - c. We must lead them to obey God by word, by example and by His power
 - d. We must be scrupulous to give glory to Christ for his accomplishments in us
 - e. We must be ambitious to fully proclaim the gospel everywhere we go

3. *The Church has a duty to serve as a base of operations for missions*
 - a. Missionaries have the right to call upon church resources
 - b. Churches have an obligation to Christ to assist missionaries in their journeys
 - c. Churches should provide and missionaries should expect hospitality and fellowship

4. *The body of Christ which we serve and support is world-wide, not local*
 - a. It is a pleasure to provide monetary and tangible support to other churches
 - b. That support is a debt we owe because we too are recipients of other's blessings
 - c. Support for missions is a fruit of God's work in a church body

5. *Missionary work creates the ties that bind*
 - a. When missionaries visit, they bring the full blessing of Christ with them
 - b. The love of Christ and of the Spirit compels us
 1. to join missionaries in their struggle however we can
 2. to pray to God for them
 - a. to be rescued from unbelievers
 - b. to render acceptable service to the saints wherever they go
 - c. to abide in God's will
 - c. If we have all been faithful in these things, both churches and missionaries, then
 1. when missionaries visit they can come with joy in their hearts
 2. they can be refreshed and refresh us as well

6. *God is the God of Peace (Rom. 16:20; Phil.4:9; 1Th.5:23; Heb.13:20)*
 - a. God's peace can abide with us all and should be the blessing we give to others
 - b. By inference, missionary work and its support bring joy and peace
 - c. The Greek for peace here is "eirene." It always indicates outer reconciliation or harmony with another, never the inner quiet and stillness of solitude although that may flow from being at peace with another. "Eirene" can only have meaning in community.

Chapter 16 – Protecting the Flock

1. *The church, like family, has to be a safe and familiar haven for travelers*
 - a. There is an expected behavior of the saints when visitors come calling
 - b. There is a duty to help travelers who are valued servants of the Lord
 - c. There is special honor due to those who risk their lives for the cause of Christ
 - d. There is a debt of gratitude owed to those who harvest the Lord's fields
 - e. There is a need to treat strangers as family when they belong to the Lord

2. *We need to watch out for those who cause divisions in the church*
 - a. Keep away from those who are argumentative and divisive
 - b. Watch out for those who cannot suffer a weaker brother or causes him to stumble
 - c. Watch out for those who alter the basic teachings of the church
 - d. Watch out for those who serve their own appetites (for fame) instead of Christ
 - e. Watch out for the smooth talkers and flatterers who deceive the weak and naive

3. *Joyfully encourage and praise those who are obedient*
 - a. Exhort them to wisdom about doing good (practical application)
 - b. Exhort them to avoid evil but not to condone it by inaction (be innocent)
 - c. Our labors in the Lord are not in vain - Satan will be crushed soon by God
 - d. Bestow the grace of Christ on others as a blessing (how?) Here are some hints:

Grace is the Greek *charis* meaning gratifying; it is a divine influence on the heart that is reflected in an attitude of gratitude; it is a favor, a gift, something inducing joy, pleasure and hopefully thanksgiving. It denotes generosity, helpfulness and good will. It carries mercy and clemency with it. It is a favor given when it needn't be; it is an indulgence. It is divine love and protection bestowed freely. It is being sanctified by God's favor. It is an excellence or power granted by God. *How do you use your gifts?*

4. *God is able to establish us -*

The word for "establish" (Gr. *steridzo*) means to set fast, to fix, to confirm or to strengthen; it means to turn resolutely in a certain direction.

 - a. He establishes us by the sharing of His Gospel
 - b. He establishes us by the proclamation of what Jesus Christ has done for us
 1. Jesus is the fulfillment of the mystery that the Gospel is for the Gentiles too see 1Cor.2:7; Eph.1:9, Eph.3:4-12; Col.1:25-27
 2. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies
 3. Everything that has come to pass has been by the command of God
 - c. He establishes us so that all nations might believe and obey Him
 - d. He establishes us to bring Himself glory through Jesus Christ whom we proclaim

Some Closing Thoughts

Paul's letter to the Romans is a foundational document in Christian Theology. It lays down every major doctrine of the Faith, establishes our duties and roles in the church, and calls us to exercise our faith in the world in very specific ways. The letter is written to the church collectively, rather than calling for individual action - in that sense it governs the church as a community. It defines the church in a way that demands cohesiveness and unity of purpose. It places the church in the path of God's redemptive plan and identifies it as His chosen instrument to effect that plan. The primary theme of Romans is this: We are Christ to the world, not only as individuals through faith, but as a Body through harmonious action.

Because the church is a family with bonds of blood and bonds of love, it is appropriate to consider behavior in the family of God analogous to behavior in our home. That means you should love others in the Body as much you should love your own kin. It also means you should

love your own kin as much as Christ loves you, and in the same sacrificial way. Raising up children in the faith is the same whether raising them up in the home or in the church. There are progressive stages either way. We need to take those stages into account when dealing with children at home or with children in the church. At no time should we be looking at children in the faith as inferior. Nor should we expect them to get their act together (see things our way) before we'll accept them as worthy of our love and service. Practice mutual forbearance in the home and in the church. Accept people as they are, because that's what God does for them... and for you. Put them in an appropriate harness and allow them to grow to the challenge or fail.