

The Epistle to the Romans

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Righteousness Perfected

Reading assignment: Romans 8

Introduction

We now come to the latter part of the greatest chapter in the Bible. In Romans 3:21-5:11, Paul was concerned with our JUSTIFICATION and in Romans 5:12-8:17, with our SANCTIFICATION. In Romans 8:18, he turned to the subject of our future GLORIFICATION.

In Romans 8:1-17 we saw **Righteousness Realized**. We learned that the righteous will of God, which we could never do in the flesh, is fulfilled in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Romans 8:18-39 we shall see **Righteousness Perfected** in the fulfillment of God's *Promise, Purpose, and Presence*.

Pray earnestly as you study the lesson that God will give you understanding. Approach it as though you are on Holy ground.

Importance of this Lesson

- ❑ It is important to understand that our redemption is not complete. The best is yet to come.
- ❑ It is important to learn that when you have no words to express the longings and burdens of your heart, there is Someone who perfectly understands and expresses your need to the Father.
- ❑ It is important to realize that God had predestined us who believe to a glorious and eternal purpose and that He will protect us, provide for us and preserve us until that purpose is fully realized.

THE LESSON

- Outline:**
- A. God's **PROMISE** of Future Glory – verses 18-25
 - B. The Spirit's Intercessory **PRAYER** – verses 26-27
 - C. God's Eternal **PURPOSE** for All Believers – verses 28-30
 - D. God's Unfailing **PROTECTION** – verses 31-34
 - E. God's Complete **PROVISION** – verses 35-37
 - F. God's Inseparable **PRESENCE** – verses 38-39

I. **THREE GROANINGS – Romans 8:22-27 – Before proceeding with a verse-by-verse commentary, we call attention to the three groanings mentioned here.**

- A. The groaning of Creation – verse 22
 - 1. God's curse is on all the earth because of Adam's sin – Genesis 3:17-19.
 - 2. Until *NOW* – There has been no surcease, no let up, no evolutionary progress. Man, beast, and all creation are dying. Every destructive hurricane or tornado, every devastating earthquake, every drought, or wintry blast, every fierce flood or dread disease is part of this groaning.
 - 3. But not forever – not without hope. Creation will share in the complete redemption of the children of God – verse 21.

- B. The groaning of a Christian – verse 23
1. Paul here stated that all believers share *the first fruits of the Spirit*. These *fruits* are the things we have learned in this chapter that the Holy Spirit has done and is doing for us. (**Know these for your exam.**)
 - a. He has made us free from the ... *law of sin and death* – verse 2.
 - b. He assures us of our salvation – verses 9,16.
 - c. He enables us to live righteously – verse 4.
 - d. He mortifies the deeds of the flesh – verse 13.
 2. These wonderful *first fruits* are but a foretaste of the complete redemption of our bodies – verse 23.
 3. Every knowledgeable Christian knows that as long as he is in his body his redemption is not complete.
 4. He anticipates that glorious event when Christ will “...change our vile (lowly) body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body...” (Philippians 3:21).
 5. Until then, every Christian experiences the aches, pains, weaknesses, and diseases common to all people. ...*we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption...* – verse 23
- C. The groaning of the Spirit – verses 26-27
1. Here we are taught that whenever we endeavor to pray but find we have no words to express the yearning and burden of our hearts, the Holy Spirit intervenes. He knows exactly what we mean and what we need and He expresses that need perfectly to God the Father with such intensity Paul says it is *with groanings that cannot be uttered*.
 2. God fully understands for He *knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit* – verse 27.
 3. These verses emphasize the need to be so yielded to God’s will when we pray that we actually pray “in the Spirit” who makes ...*intercession for the saints according to the will of God*.

II. GOD’S PROMISE OF FUTURE GLORY

- A. Bear in mind our over all outline, here is **glorification** as **righteousness perfected** – verses 18-25.
1. Verse 18 – All of us know something about physical suffering. Christians, through the ages, have been buffeted, beaten, burned at the stake, and beheaded for Christ’s sake. Even today, you might know the meaning of being rejected, despised, and hated because of your devotion to Christ. In this verse, Paul was teaching us that compared to our future inheritance and glorification with Christ, present suffering, regardless of its severity, is as nothing. It has no weight, no comparison. Regarding this, please refer to such passages as 1 John 3:1-2; Colossians 3:4; Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Revelation 22:5; and of course, Romans 8:17.
 2. Verses 19-22 – These interesting verses have puzzled many commentators but they are not so difficult if the following facts are kept in mind:
 - a. Paul wrote poetically, giving all of nature a personality.
 - b. The word “creature” should be translated “creation” and apparently, in this passage, refers to this earth. Compare Colossians 1:23 where the phrase “to every creature which is under heaven” should read, “in all creation,” and Genesis 3:17-18 where God said “cursed is the ground for thy sake...Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth.” In other words, all plant and animal life and all the created world, (earth) bears the curse of Adam’s sin.
 - c. The material universe does not share in the liberty of grace (Galatians 5:1) experienced by every born-again child of God. For its own redemption and deliverance, it must await the time when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, this mortal shall have put on immortality”(1 Corinthians 15:54), when we shall shine as the stars (Daniel 12:3), be transformed into Christ’s likeness (1 John 3:2), and “glorified together” with Him (Romans 8:17).
 3. In verse 19, the words, *earnest expectation* means “eagerly awaits.” All creation waits in suspense for the manifestation, the full realization, the unveiling ...*of the sons of God*.

4. Verse 20 says that God, because of Adam's failure, subjected creation to vanity. The word *vanity* here means futility, frustration, or unattainable fulfillment. All creation groans and travails in pain (verse 22) and is under *...the bondage of corruption...* or decay (verse 21).
5. All creation is conscious of its Creator and is aware of God's redemptive program and purpose for His children (verse 21).
6. While God subjected creation to futility, He did not leave it despairing and hopeless. He *...subjected the same in hope* (verse 20). All creation is to be delivered from the curse, the frustration, and the *...bondage of corruption*. Some day "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb," "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp," and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:6-10).
7. Verses 24-25 – *...we are saved by hope....* Hope is a blessed part of our salvation. It keeps us steadfast, like an anchor (Hebrews 6:19). Christ in us is indeed "the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Naturally, hope that is seen or realized is no longer hope, but we have within us a "lively hope" (1 Peter 1:3), which enables us to wait patiently for its full manifestation.

III. **THE SPIRIT'S INTERCESSORY PRAYER** – verses 26-27

- A. Verse 26 –*Likewise*– Just as the Spirit helps us to identify with creation in its groaning (verses 22-23), so He helps us in our prayer life to pray in harmony with the will of God. *...helpeth our infirmities....* or weaknesses. Actually the word *infirmities* is singular and should read "infirmity." We are totally characterized by infirmity. *...we know not what we should pray for as we ought....*
- B. It is not that we don't know for what to pray. It is that we don't know HOW to pray. This is why it is so vital to pray "in the Spirit." He knows where the greatest needs are and how to express those needs *...according to the will of God* (verse 27).

IV. **GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE FOR ALL BELIEVERS** – verses 28-30

- A. Verse 28 is one of the most widely quoted and best loved versed in the entire Bible. Much commentary is probably unnecessary but here are some things to consider.
 1. This promise is not for everyone. It is for all whom love God...who are the called according to his purpose.
 2. This is a promise of which every believer should be absolutely certain. Notice the "and we know."
 3. All of life's experiences, the good and the bad, must be reviewed as a whole for only then can we see that God's plan and purpose are for our good. Things in process, such as a painting or a rug, seldom resemble the finished product.
 4. Notice that the Word does not say that all things work together for our health or wealth, but for our "good." God knows what is best for all of us.
- B. Every believer is a child of God by divine calling (Romans 1:6-7; Hebrews 3:1; 2 Timothy 1:9).
- C. God has a glorious purpose for all that love Him and that purpose is unfolded in verses 29-30.

V. **GOD'S UNFAILING PROTECTION** – verses 31-34 – In this amazing portion, we ascend to the apex of the Christian's security and position.

- A. Verse 31 – *...What shall we then say to these things?...* What things? Most likely Paul was referring to all the things God has done for us as revealed from Romans 3 onward. Our justification, as made known in Romans 3-5, our sanctification as explained in Romans 6, our future glorification promised in Romans 8, and now even God's sovereign election and eternal purpose for those He foreknew and called.
 1. What CAN we say to such "things?" To question them is to deny them and demonstrate our unbelief. These "things" are to be accepted in faith. In them, we should greatly rejoice.
 2. *...If God be for us, who can be against us?...* Almighty God protects and preserves us with His omnipotence. Who can reach us to harm or destroy us if God is our defense? "God is our refuge and strength...therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed..." (Psalm 46:1-2). Who would dare challenge the power of our great God?

- B. Verse 32 – If God so loved us that He was willing to share His own Son and offered Him up as a sacrifice for all of us and for all our sins, surely His grace will supply “all your need according to his riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19). In Christ we are complete, needing nothing else (Colossians 2:10).
- C. Verse 33 –Who can charge anything to someone whom God has chosen? All we need for glory is God’s approval and we are approved and accepted by Him “in the beloved” (Ephesians 1:6). Remember, in Christ, God has declared us to be justified – free of guilt and blame. We need not fear anyone’s accusations.
- D. Verse 34 – Who is going to condemn us? Surely not the One who died for us and is even now defending and making intercession for us at the right hand of God.
- E. Before continuing, have you noticed that the last four verses are a continuous series of questions? Let’s take one more brief look at them:
- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. <i>If God be for us, who can be against us?</i> | <i>No one.</i> |
| 2. <i>How shall He not, with him (Christ), freely give us all things?</i> | <i>He does and He will.</i> |
| 3. <i>Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?</i> | <i>No one can.</i> |
| 4. <i>Shall God that justifieth?</i> | <i>Certainly not.</i> |
| 5. <i>Who is he that condemneth?</i> | <i>No one is able.</i> |
| 6. <i>Shall Christ who now makes intercessions for us?</i> | <i>Never!</i> |

VI. GOD’S COMPLETE PROVISION – verses 35-37

- The primary verse in this brief section is verse 36. *Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
- A. In and through our blessed Lord Jesus, God provided complete deliverance from the “things” that Satan might use to turn us or tear us from His love.
- B. Paul often made use of the numeral seven (7) because it is the number of perfection and completion. Here, in verse 35, he listed seven things Satan endeavors to use to “separate us from the love of Christ.”
1. *Tribulation* – the trials, troubles and afflictions saints have known throughout the ages for the Gospel’s sake. See 1 Thessalonians 1:6,3:4; John 16:33; Acts 14:22.
 2. *Distress* – that which causes misery, suffering, pain, and sorrow and anguish of heart.
 3. *Persecution* – suffering at the hands of those who reject the Gospel. See John 15:20; 2 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Timothy 3:12.
 4. *Famine* – In Philippians 4:12-13, Paul wrote, “I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ...” Read also 2 Corinthians 11:27.
 5. *Nakedness* – Christians have often been shamed for Christ’s sake. Read 1 Corinthians 4:11.
 6. *Peril* – Even today, millions of Christians live amid life-threatening dangers. Paul knew every kind of peril. Read 2 Corinthians 11:26.
 7. *Sword* – Old Testament saints were slain by the sword (Hebrews 11:37). Throughout the ages many saints have been killed by the sword, some in the name of religion. Verse 36 is a quote of Psalm 44:22. The saints are viewed as being *killed all the day long* and are looked upon as *...sheep for the slaughter*. The early church, many that suffered martyrdom, experienced this verse. If Christ tarries, Christians may have to endure this again at the hands of a Christ-hating, truth-despising world.
- C. The glorious truth is that while Satan may make use of all these things in his fierce and vicious attack upon us, he cannot sever us from the love of Christ. We are gloriously, eternally, irrevocably bound to Him.
- D. In fact, “we are MORE that conquerors” in all these things. “...God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ...” (2 Corinthians 2:14).
- ◆ *We are in the hands of OMNIPOTENCE and none can prevail against us!*

VII. GOD'S INSEPARABLE PRESENCE – verses 38-39 – In the final verses of this incomparable chapter, Paul soared to the height of inspired eloquence as he presented yet more things that can never separate us from the love of God.

- A. *...I am persuaded...* – Paul wrote with absolute confidence and assurance in his heart that these things were so. He had personally experienced all the things mentioned in verses 35-36. Through Christ, he had triumphed. He was more than a conqueror. He knew from experience God's inseparable love and presence.
- B. *...neither death, nor life...* – Death, for every believer, is a conquered enemy (Hebrews 2:14; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57). Life with all its disappointments, sorrows, adversities and pain can do nothing to separate us from the love of God.
- C. *...nor angels...* – Evidently, as “the anointed cherub” (Ezekiel 28:14), Satan was head of a great many angels who followed him in his rebellion. Read Ezekiel 28:14-19; Isaiah 14:12-15; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4. Like Satan, these angels are sentenced to eternal judgment, but today they may yet do Satan's evil bidding.
- D. *...nor principalities, nor powers...* – The Bible recognizes the existence of mysterious, evil, and unseen principalities and powers. As Christians, we “wrestle” against them (Ephesians 6:12). For the believer, victory over them is sure since Christ died to “triumph over them” (Colossians 2:15). These powers, whether benevolent or cruel, cannot remove us from our gracious God.
- E. *...nor things present, nor things to come...* – We need not fear any present or future circumstance of life. We are being “kept by the power of God” (1 Peter 1:5) and nothing now or ever shall be able to separate us from Him.
- F. *...Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature (created thing)...* Remember that before Christ “ascended” into heaven, He “descended first into the lower parts of the earth” (Ephesians 4:8-9). He is the creator and the controller of all things in this universe (Colossians 1:16-17). Nothing in all creation can ever separate us from the Creator!
- G. *...which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* – The love of God finds its focus “in Christ.” And, as believers, that is where we are, “chosen... in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4).
- *This remarkable chapter began with “no condemnation” for those who were “in Christ.” It climaxes with the hallelujah that there is “no separation” from the love that is “in Christ.” Amen!*

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
EXAM - LESSON 15

Name _____

Address _____

-
1. An important fact about redemption that we must know is: (Value 4 points)
 - a. our redemption is not perfect.
 - b. our experience of redemption is yet to be completed.
 - c. our redemption is complete.

 2. When the believer is unable to express himself in prayer to God, he is helped by: (Value 4 points)
 - a. the Holy Spirit.
 - b. the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. other believers.

 3. Creation groans: (Value 4 points)
 - a. to be made perfect again like in the Garden of Eden.
 - b. to be without any kind of natural disasters.
 - c. for the curse of Genesis 3 to be lifted.

 4. The first fruits of the Spirit are the: (**Mark two**) (Value 8 points)
 - a. presence of the Spirit.
 - b. assurance of salvation.
 - c. foretaste of redemption.
 - d. enablement to live right.
 - e. protection of God.

 5. According to Romans 8:24 the part “hope” plays in our Christian lives is that: (Value 4 points)
 - a. maybe we will be saved or maybe not.
 - b. like an anchor, it keeps us steadfast.
 - c. it is just another name for Christ.

 6. The promise in Romans 8:28 may be claimed by: (Value 4 points)
 - a. backslidden believers.
 - b. every person.
 - c. all who love God and are the called according to His purpose.

 7. In Romans 8:28 the meaning of “all things” is: (Value 4 points)
 - a. all the things a believer possesses.
 - b. all the things a believer would like to have.
 - c. all experiences of life, good and bad.

 8. Romans 8:29-30 defines God’s good purpose as: (Open Bible) (Value 4 points)
 - a. that which makes people feel good.
 - b. that which develops believers in likeness to Christ’s character.
 - c. what is true and kind.

9. The answer to the question, *If God be for us who can be against us?* is: (Value 4 points)
- a. nobody.
 - b. the unbeliever.
 - c. those of other religions.

10. In Romans 8:33, *lay anything to the charge* means: (Value 4 points)
- a. charging believers with money.
 - b. threatening believers with jail.
 - c. accusing believers that they are not in Christ.

11. By principalities and powers Paul meant: (Value 4 points)
- a. the Roman Emperor.
 - b. power that we cannot see, from a kingdom we cannot see.
 - c. the Jewish government in Palestine.

12. **Fill in the words.** (Open Bible) (Value 10 points)

Romans chapter 8 begins with the word _____ and ends with the word _____.

13. In what verse is each of the three groanings found? **Fill in the verse** in the blank space.
(Open Bible) (Value 12 points)

The groaning of creation _____

The groaning of a Christian _____

The groaning of the Spirit _____

14. In Romans 8:35, Paul listed seven things through which Satan tries to separate the believer from the love of God in Christ. (Open Bible) (Value 30 points)

Explain the following:

a. Tribulation _____

b. Distress _____

c. Persecution _____

d. Famine _____

e. Peril _____

f. Sword _____