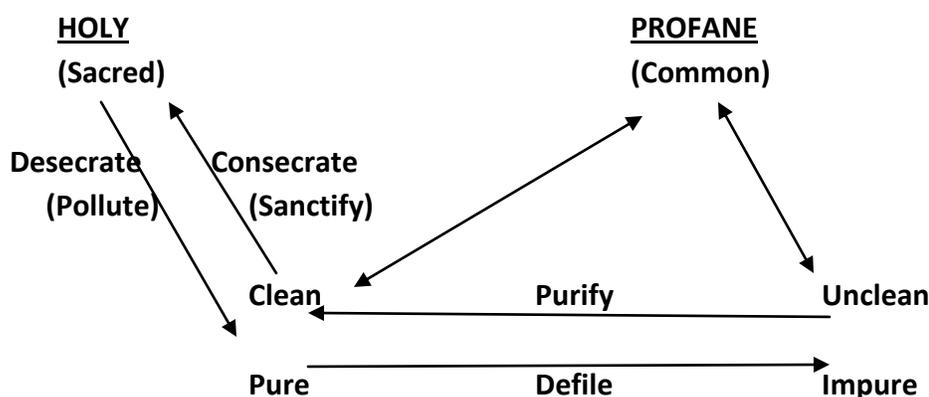


ROMANS PART 1 - INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTERS 1-8:

- A. Theological Introduction - 'Justification' and 'Sanctification': How do these notions play out in the life of a disciple? Is one more important or foundational than the other? Some avow, "*The more I understand 'Justification' the less concerned I am about 'Sanctification'.*" Both deal with the inherent problem of impure, imperfect & Fallen humanity before a Pure, Perfect & Holy God.
- a. Justification is the term that means we have been placed into right-standing with God.
 - i. It is initially the result of the Atonement of Jesus, and a person's appropriation and application of the God provided benefit of Grace for humanity. In this '*Original Sin*' context justification is a onetime event of the initial work of the Spirit resulting in personal conviction, remorse, and repentance of the individual and their Spirit Indwelling birth as children and heirs of the Kingdom of God.
 - ii. There is also an ongoing aspect of justification with the Spiritual formation practice of '*Examine*' and '*Confession*' - which encourages us to regularly stand before the scrutiny of the Spirit as we allow Him to bring to light any aspect of our life that misses the mark [sin] in our relationship with God. The ongoing process of this personal '*Illumination*' on the basis of confession - where we agree with God's conviction and confess that we are remorseful [agree with God in understanding our failure], and repentant [that we desire to change and do things differently in the future.
 - b. Sanctification is the term that relates to the lifelong process of *Spiritual Formation*, where the heart and mind of Christ are gradually formed within us, and we are incrementally transformed into His reflection as saints of the Kingdom of God.
 - i. **God's action - Philippians 1:4-6 confirms that when authentic Spirit Life is initiated, God will see that the sanctification process will continue to its fruition...** In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
 - ii. **Humanity's action - John 15:4-10 confirms we have a reciprocal relational responsibility** - "Abide 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. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."
- B. General Background for the Text:
- a. The Book of Romans continues in the flavor of the New Testament – It is all about faith in Jesus the Messiah.
 - i. Jesus is the fulfillment of OT prophesies - both for the problem of sin initiated in the Fall, and the fruition of the Sinai and Davidic Covenants.
 - ii. Messiah delivered spiritual redemption at His 1st coming; however the physical [material] redemption is postponed until His 2nd Coming.

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- iii. The Old Covenant has been superseded by the greater New Covenant is now in effect – where the Old Covenant was exclusive to Jews, the New Covenant is inclusive of Jews and Gentiles.
 - iv. Messiah is the fulfillment of the Sinai Covenant – which was for Jews alone. When the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah, this opened the door for all to enter into the Kingdom. Good News [Gospel] indeed!
 - v. All New Covenant Kingdom citizens are 1st class citizens, there are no 2nd class citizens. It is all about equality in Jesus. In the Old Covenant, the King was served by the people; in the New Covenant, the King serves His people.
 - vi. NC elevates the spiritual reality as the primary concern – understanding that mankind [humanity] are spiritual/physical beings. OC was all about the present physical/material reality. OC blessings/curses were temporal, NC blessings/curses are eternal.
 - vii. OC/OT was looking forward to the coming of Messiah; NC/NT is looking forward to the 2nd Coming while also looking backward on His 1st Coming.
- b. Difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant [see Leviticus]:
- i. In the OC – If someone was unclean and they touched someone who was clean, the clean is rendered unclean. The unclean always degrades the condition of the clean, while the reverse is not true.
 - ii. In the NC – when Jesus came in contact with the unclean, He rendered them clean... such as the woman who touched Jesus cloak and was healed. Her unclean state was transformed by Jesus. This demonstrates a vastly superior covenant mediated by a vastly superior individual... Moses as prophet could only acknowledge what was clean or unclean, Jesus as God can render the unclean clean.
- c. In the Old Covenant, the material world was divided into 2 groups Holy [Sacred] and Profane [Common]. The following diagram shows how the Old Covenant world view played out in the material world and the movement between the Holy and the profane [see diagram below]:



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- C. Paul – is a complex individual with a complex identity, and to more properly understand him, he needs to be thought of as a complete person... as a Jew, a Roman, and a Christian.**
- a. Paul as a Jew:**
 - i. He was from the tribe of Benjamin and was named for the tribe’s most famous individual – King Saul.**
 - ii. He was a rabbinic disciple of Gamaliel – one of the greatest rabbis of that age. He was accepted as a man of great scholarship and learning.**
 - iii. He was an up and coming Pharisee – very zealous about the law and the nation.**
 - iv. His zealous nature caused him to approve of the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1), and of arresting and imprisoning of any Messianic Jews [“fallen Jews” in terms of the nation] (Acts 9:1-2) who had abandoned the nation for the “Way.” On his way to arrest fallen Jews in Damascus, he met Jesus who redirected his life and purpose.**
 - b. Paul as a Roman:**
 - i. He came from an important city and probably an important family as well.**
 - ii. He was born a citizen in an influential orthodox family in a university city know for its learning.**
 - iii. Roman citizens were accorded rights and guaranteed protections under the Roman law that did not apply to non-citizen members under the Roman authority.**
 - iv. To be born a Roman citizen attests to his family wealth and possibly to it being part of the aristocracy. Many people outside of Rome labored long and hard to earn their citizenship... which Paul received as a birthright.**
 - c. Paul as a Christian:**
 - i. The Gospel Paul preached was not taught him by men, but was supernaturally revealed [given] to him directly by Jesus, who also called Paul as an apostle.**
 - ii. The magnitude of his personal guilt in persecuting the church must be seen in contrast to God’s Mercy and Grace and in light of Jesus’ Revelation... which helps account for his zeal and tenacity.**
 - iii. He underwent a radical supernatural conversion. God stepped in and changed the trajectory of his life.**
 - iv. He spent 14 years as a disciple after his conversion experience until he entered public ministry.**
 - v. His initial teaching of Christology [theology of Jesus] came from Jesus Himself.**
 - vi. Paul understood better than others [including Peter and James] the unique change from the closed Jewish system under the Law to the open Christian system under Grace.**
 - vii. Paul spent 10 years in public ministry – primarily to Gentiles but also to non-Christian Jews, and also to Jewish converts to Christianity that wanted to combine Law and Grace.**
 - viii. The special offering collected to respond to the suffering/need of the Christian brothers in Jerusalem in the spring of 57 AD is covered in Thessalonians.**
 - ix. He was ultimately executed along with Peter in Rome by Nero. Paul was beheaded which was customary for Romans, while Peter was crucified which was customary for non-Roman outlaws and political enemies.**

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- d. Once you get your mind around all three aspects of Paul's identity, you need to wrap them up together because he saw things through this combined perspective, with Christ being central and over-riding all else.

D. Chronology of Paul's Ministry and writings:

a. <u>Preparation and Ministry</u>	<u>Occasion/Place</u>	<u>Year AD</u>
i.	Pentecost Jerusalem	33
ii.	Conversion Damascus Road	34
iii.	Discipling Turkey & Antioch	34-37
iv.	1 st Jerusalem visit	37
v.	11 year span & 1 st Missionary journey	37-48
vi.	2 nd Missionary Journey-1 st Macedonia	49-50
vii.	18 months in Corinth	50-51
viii.	2 nd Jerusalem Visit, Antioch incident	51
ix.	Ephesian ministry	52-55
x.	Final Macedonian ministry, Jerusalem	56-57
xi.	Final Jerusalem visit, imprisonment at Caesarea	57-59
xii.	Trial before Festus, voyage to Rome	59-60
xiii.	Roman imprisonment	60-62
xiv.	Final ministry in the East	62-64
xv.	Return to Rome and execution	64-65
b. <u>Epistles – Letter</u>	<u>Occasion</u>	<u>Time</u>
xvi.	Galatians 1 st missionary	48-49
xvii.	1-2 Thess 2 nd missionary	51-53
xviii.	1-2 Corinthians 3 rd missionary	54-57
xix.	Romans 3 rd missionary	54-57
xx.	Eph, Col, Phlm, Phil 1 st Rom imprisonment	60-62
xxi.	1Tim – Titus Liberty	63-65
xxii.	2 Tim 2 nd Rom imprisonment	66-67
c. <u>Acts – Chap</u>	<u>Occasion</u>	
xxiii.	13 & 14 1 st missionary journey	
xxiv.	16-18 2 nd missionary journey	
xxv.	19 & 20 3 rd missionary journey	
xxvi.	28 1 st Roman imprisonment	
xxvii.	Not included in Acts Liberty & 2 nd Roman imprisonment	

d. Paul the letter [*Epistle*] writer

- He wrote 13 known epistles - see list above.
- Paul's letter format was borrowed from the Greco-Roman cultural norm of communication. He didn't invent a new means of communication, but instead communicated within the norm of the culture he lived.
- Letters were "occasional" correspondence - meaning he wrote to address a specific issue raised at a particular time or occasion with a specific group in mind; rather than "casual" correspondence – meaning an arbitrary letter in which he wanted to

share some relevant information. Obviously, to one degree or another other churches had to deal with similar issues and received great value in the circulation of the epistles.

- iv. Paul's letters ran the gamut from personal to general, coolly logical to hotly agitated, and from legal treatise to homily. However, Paul's burning passion was to see Jesus exalted as Messiah, and to see individuals set free from sin and degradation into eternal glory with God.
- v. Letters were expository in genre rather than merely literary – he wrote to address people and issues, not for art's sake. Artistic composition was certainly a feature that accompanied all Hebrew writings, but Paul was less concerned about this. As such, his letters were directed and purposeful.
- vi. Epistolary Form:
 1. Typical – sender to receiver, greeting, body, farewell.
 2. Atypical [Heb & 1 John] – Intro, message, conclusion.

E. Importance of the Book of Romans:

- a. The 1st of the canon epistles and arguably the 'granddaddy' of them all. It is the longest of the epistles, with 1&2 Corinthians being next.
- b. Romans contains the most detailed development of Pauline Theology. Because Paul had not yet visited Rome and because he was writing to redirect the Church which suffered from internal disunity and dysfunction, Paul painstakingly develops the theological rationale for Jesus as Messiah. This illuminates Paul's theological approach in his other letters.
- c. Romans had a huge impact on the church fathers and on church history which still resonates today:
 - i. Martin Luther – rediscovered the principle of "Justification by Faith" which fueled the reformation.
 - ii. John Calvin – carried the protestant theological movement forward with his "Systematic Theology" – which based his thought upon the legal concept of Justification [right standing] with God.
 - iii. The Christian life is demonstrated as not being "performance based" - instead it is "Faith Based." This is one of several fundamental distinctions that separates Christianity from the performance or "Works" based faiths. Though some fundamentalist Christian theologians promote a "Faith plus Law [works]" based approach, this is not what Paul taught.
- d. Jewish Christians had the greatest amount of Biblical [OT] training and likely dominated as leaders and teachers in the early church.
 - i. Jews in Rome and elsewhere in the Greco-Roman Empire were tolerated, but usually considered socially inferior. The Jews of course, considered themselves religiously superior. This created a tension that provided a backdrop of the emerging Christian faith that began as "Messianic Jews" - Jews who came to believe that Jesus was their Messiah.

- ii. True equality among the Jewish and Gentile Christians was generally lacking – equality maybe not being something actively encouraged if not actively discouraged.
- iii. Because of the racial bias and tensions against Jews in Rome and elsewhere in the empire, Jews relished their position due to their strength in Biblical knowledge over the Gentiles. They tended to see one another less as equal brothers and more as competing friends. This is a practical matter Paul is speaking into with Romans.
- iv. The emergence of the Messiah and the age of the Spirit had been foretold in OT – Joel 2, and Ezekiel 36. OT prophecy was now borne out in Jesus – this was GREAT NEWS!
- v. Unlike the early Christians – today the church is the most highly educated, and generally the wealthiest in history.
 - 1. We also have more discretionary time to pursue discipleship than ever before.
 - 2. It is ironic that modern believers tend to spend less time in pursuing discipleship because we don't realize its importance. Paul would have been greatly distressed over this.
 - 3. For Paul and the early Christians it would have been axiomatic that if you know the Truth, you believe the Truth, and your life conforms to the Truth.
 - 4. They likely would have seen our half-hearted worship and discipleship as apostasy.

- F. Contents - What is the book of Romans about? What are the primary concerns it is addressing?
- a. Problem Paul was responding to - the conflicts that were dividing Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Roman Church.
 - i. There was likely enough conflict and undercurrents in the Roman church community where a movement was building toward a church split. The unity of the Church is an extremely important issue... divisions and negative undercurrents are almost always due to sin and demonic spiritual attack.
 - ii. Paul undoubtedly had Roman friends who apprised him of this crisis and Paul was uniquely able to speak into this crisis as he was a renowned Jew as well as the apostle to the Gentiles. Thus, Paul could speak to both Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians.
 - iii. Paul writing in AD 54 was undoubtedly aware of the persecution and ouster of Jews from Rome in AD 49 by the Roman emperor. By AD 52 the Jews were returning to Rome.
 - 1. The repatriating Messianic Jews were most likely ready to resume their position of influence and authority as teachers and leaders of the congregation, only to find that their Gentile brothers had fared well in their absence and had become adept and comfortable with their own leadership.
 - 2. It is easy to understand that the returning Messianic Jews wanted to go back to the way things had been before, while the Pagan Christians were comfortable in their new leadership situation.

- iv. Paul's theology expressed throughout his Epistles is that "Faith and works" are the antithesis of each other.
 - 1. Faith = belief => Life
 - 2. Works = deeds & practices => death
- b. Theological Themes:
 - i. Righteousness = justification - being made acceptable before God.
 - ii. Faith = belief - Jesus is the only means of salvation and justification before God.
 - iii. Life – death - it the matter at stake.
 - iv. Sanctification - Spiritual life transformation is the gift of Grace in the Spirit resulting from faith in Jesus.
 - v. Law [Sinai] was a works covenant based upon:
 - 1. Blessings & curses for obedience & disobedience.
 - 2. Blessings & curses are only for those alive on earth and in the land.
 - 3. Law is thus both earthly and temporal.
 - vi. Faith is a grace covenant that is vastly superior to the Law, as Jesus is vastly superior to Moses:
 - 1. Can't earn faith, and we definitely don't deserve it – it is all blessing and no curses [Matt 5ff - Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount].
 - 2. Faith is Spiritual... being both Heavenly and permanent – these blessings are for eternity and are not [necessarily] linked to earth.
 - 3. Judgment is eternal for those who reject Messiah; Blessing is also eternal for those who receive and obey Messiah.
 - vii. Deut 28 - the Law is works based on blessings & curses. Note that Deut 30 is a N.C. prediction of the Grace to come.
- c. Content Structure:
 - i. Chapters 1-8 are mainly about the state of humanity - it discusses the universality of sin and humanity's great need of redemption.
 - 1. 1-4 deals with problems resultant from the Fall:
 - a. 1:18-3:20 – the general problem of human sinfulness and humanities need for a Savior.
 - b. 3:21-4:25 – Justification is by faith for both Gentiles and Jews.
 - 2. 5-8 – the reality of life & death – life of the justified both Gentile and Jew.
 - ii. Chapters 9-11 are all about Israel.
 - 1. 9 deals with the past of Israel – specifically of "election" doctrine.
 - 2. 10 deals with the present state of Israel – specifically their faithless defection from God and the unity in the Spirit.
 - 3. 11 deals with the future of Israel – it will experience restoration. The restoration of Israel is not a return to the Law and Temple sacrifice as many conservatives presume. God will fulfill His covenant promises to Israel, including His promise of Blessing through Israel in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant: ^{GE 12:3} "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."
 - 4. Paul teaches hopefulness from faith:

- a. Israel having rejected the Messiah was a horrible occurrence.
- b. Israel's rejection led to Gentile inclusion – something promised to Abraham, which was a wonderful occurrence.
- c. If God could make such a wonderful outcome from such a seemingly horrible occasion, just imagine what will happen when the Jews finally respond to Jesus in faith believing.
- d. Therefore:
 - i. We should accept one another – 15:7.
 - ii. We should accept the one who is weak – 14:1
- iii. Chapters 12-15 – are all about what constitutes acceptable Christian worship & service.
- iv. Chapter 16 – are Paul's final greetings & commendations.

G. Message of Romans - Paul's teaching and Theology explored:

- a. Chapters 1-4 are introductory chapters that set the stage for Paul's argument about humanity's need [both Gentile and Jew] and God's provision of Grace.
 - i. 1:2-6 - Introduction of Messiah and Paul's commissioning.
 - ii. 1:8-15 - The Gospel of faith is available to all... Jew and Gentile
 - iii. 1:16-17 - Problem of Sin and the need for justification – most of chapter 1 is a schematic condensation of Genesis 1-11... demonstrating how humanity just continually degrades going from bad to worse. This is the main purpose of these stories following the Fall that result from humanity's choice of self absorption and the rejection of God. [See note on viii 1 below]
 - iv. 1:18-20 - God's Presence was apparent to all of humanity through General Revelation [Ps 19]. The point of all humanity being aware of God's existence and His Presence means that every person is responsible and accountable to God for our failure to acknowledge Him, seek Him, and love Him.
 - v. 1:21-23 - God's judgment of faithless humanity is just and right... from which we get justification and righteousness as conditions of Spirit life.
 - vi. 1:24-25 - Degradation 1 - sexual impurity.
 - vii. 1:26-27 - Degradation 2 - sexual confusion, perversion and consuming lusts. Sexual impurity was bad, but this state is bestial... indicating how far humanity has Fallen.
 - viii. 1:28-32 - Degradation 3 - depraved mind... choosing what is known to be wrong and approving when others choose likewise. Think of these 3 degradations as a sinkhole to hell... going from bad to far worse.
 - 1. The rapid degradation of humanity in Romans 1:21-32 reflects the degradation detailed in Genesis 3-11:
 - a. Gen 3:7 - awareness of nakedness means that innocence has been lost, and shame and fear have stepped into their minds.
 - b. Gen 3:19-20 - frustration, pain and death have been added to humanities experience.
 - c. Gen 3:23 - humanity is banished from the Garden of Perfection into the world where toil and struggle are normative.

- d. Gen 4:8 - Cain adds murder to the growing list of human pain when he kills his brother Abel out of jealousy.
 - e. Gen 4:23 - Lamech kills a man and brags about it for the minor infraction of having wounded him.
 - f. Gen 6:1-2 - human women and “sons of God” intermarry - this is a great displeasure to God. Sons of God may refer to the Fallen Angels cast down upon earth. Whatever was going on, it was really bad.
 - g. Gen 6:3 - God muses that He will not contend with humanity as it is much longer, and the Flood is the result.
 - h. Gen 9:23-27 - Noah’s drunkenness and Canaan’s salacious sexual curiosity earns him his father’s curse.
 - i. Gen 11:3-4 - The Tower of Babel was humanities quest for self recognition and striving against God. The confusion of languages separated and weakened humanity. Pentecost had the counter effect in unifying and strengthening humanity as the Church through the Spirit.
2. Paul’s argument in Romans is that since the Fall, humanity’s degradation is sure and swift. When one’s moral and ethical compass is bent by bad choices, it does not take long for it to be broken and lost. Even with the Law, as a standard by which to guard humanity, sin confuses the mind and heart and moral and ethical failures result. Guarding our moral and ethical compass is an important endeavor for all Christians; as well as guarding and encouraging our love and passion for God.
 3. Paul’s conclusion is that all of humanity - both Gentile and Jew need a Savior. Bent and broken people cannot stand before a Holy and Righteous God... the righteousness imparted by faith in Jesus is the only antidote for sin.
- ix. 2:1-16 - the nature and existence of the Gentile’s sin is apparent to the Jew under the Law... they understand what God’s expectations are for the Law discloses them. However, the Gentiles understand enough under General Revelation [AKA common Grace]... they know what is right and proper. The Gentiles live apart from the law where there is no restraint on their natural appetites other than their conscience... and for most their conscience had been seared by years of abuse and neglect. On the other hand, the Law was the moral/ethical restraint for the Jews... who misinterpreted and misapplied it. The result... both groups are guilty.
1. 2:1-2 - ‘you have no excuse’... Paul is arguing that there is no rationalizing that you didn’t know right from wrong... the truth of God’s existence and the knowledge of what is right and wrong is hard wired into each person’s conscience... that is the meaning of being created in the Image of God [Imago Dei] and General revelation [common grace]. As you observe creation you see the evidence of God in order, beauty, and interdependence of life communities. These things are obvious and demand a response, ignorance is no excuse.

2. 2:3-4 - Passing judgment on others 'doing the same things you do' only proves that you know your guilt. This demonstrates they know what's right because they observe it in others. This teaching flows out of Jesus teaching on the 'log in your eye' and the 'speck in your brother's eye' (Matt 7:3-5). Their hypocrisy indicates that they are so bad and detached from God that they don't even realize they are doing the same things they're criticizing.
3. 2:5 - At the heart of humanity's problem is stubbornness and rebellion against God, which both groups prefer rather than humility and submission to God.
4. 2:6-11 - Persistence in doing what is good will lead to life; persistence in doing evil and wickedness will lead to death.
5. 2:12-16 - This is one of my favorite passages in Romans... as an anthropologist turned Christian, I pondered how God would condemn Gentile's who through no fault of their own did not have the benefit of God's "Specific Revelation" of Scripture. It seemed reasonable to me that if I'd been born in India I'd be a Hindu... if in Arabia a Muslim... etc. The God I know is not capricious nor is He unfair... and in the end when God judges humanity, no one will be able to say of God that He wasn't fair. The answer revealed here is that these Gentile nations are instead under "General Revelation" which is part of all humanity being created in the "Image of God" [*Imago Dei*]. Although Gentiles were apart from the Jewish Law of Moses, they had the restraints of conscience.
 - a. On some level of our conscience, we know what is right and wrong. Ignorance is no excuse, because we can choose to do what we inherently know to be right. God's judgment against the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah preceded the Law of Moses. It is another example of General revelation and *Imago Dei*.
 - b. As we listen to our conscience and do what is right, our actions galvanize us to hold faithful to what we know to be right in future actions. Our conscience is strengthened and obedience patterns develop as we become more obedient to the Truth God has implanted in humanity. God's witness is decreed through nature, spiritual insights, or Scripture... the latter being the only authoritative revelation.
 - c. Right actions and choices are at the heart of the Law... and the desire to seek God and please Him is inherent in humanity. Gentile's that act accordingly without the Jewish Law are blessed... being a Law unto themselves, and will be judged accordingly. The Law was given and applied only to the Jews.
 - d. It is helpful to understand 'Gentile' as meaning 'the nations' - those who are not Jews; and 'Pagan' as meaning those who worship false gods. In Paul's theology, Jew and Gentile are on equal footing in the

Gospel; while Christian and Pagan are faiths that are fundamentally at odds with each other.

- x. **2:17-26** - This passage speaks to the Jew's whose sin is demonstrated by their failure to keep the Law [Mosaic/Sinai Covenant].
 1. The Law provided a standard to which the Jews should live, but it gave them no power to do live it. In essence, the Law would convict individuals of their sin, and condemn individuals for their failure. Grace on the other hand, has the transformational power of the indwelling Spirit to lift believers beyond their normal tendency toward sin to righteousness. The Law was a custodian that prepared the Jews for the Messiah and the Grace He would reveal in the Gospel. Those who hear and believe the Gospel message of Jesus are blessed and are no longer under the Law, but under Grace.
 2. Jewish sacrificial rituals gave those who did wrong a means to cleanse themselves from their sin by faith, but these only applied to what they *unknowingly* did wrong and did not cleanse from *deliberate* wrong doing. Also, these sacrifices were a means of cleansing that applied only to their past offenses, and not their present or future.
 3. This dependence upon 'ritual cleansing of sin' [OT - sacrifice; NT - confession] was much the same conundrum Martin Luther had as a monk with the Catholic rite of confession... Luther feared he may commit a sin between confessions and be damned if he died suddenly. Luther's solution was to remain for long periods in the confessional in fear. Ultimately, Luther was convinced that the Scriptures are the only authority and they taught that believers find salvation by Grace alone through faith in Jesus. This became the central part of the Reformation.
 4. The law brought judgment and condemnation; it could not save, empower or transform individuals.
 5. The Law identified and convicted Jews of their need and their failures, and it provided a means for temporary dealing with minor past occurrences.
 6. Grace brought through Messiah is another matter altogether.
 7. One of the great truths of redemptive history is that there will always be a small group or remnant who would be passionate enough about God to desire to know Him, please Him, and worship Him. Being a descendant of Abraham or Moses did not mean that a person was right with God; anymore than attending a church, praying a prayer, or giving money guarantees you are right with God. Christians love and follow their Lord, they have His nature forming within them... this is Spiritual Formation demonstrating the life of the Spirit within.
- xi. **2:28-29** is the key for setting up Paul's theological argument in Romans - "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God." **Paul continues Jesus' condemnation the faithlessness and**

hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders. Paul takes dead aim at the heart of their problem... their problem wasn't a lack of knowledge or even incorrect theology, their problem was they didn't love and obey God. They placed their personal and corporate interests above God's interests... much is applicable in the church today to our shame.

- xii. **3:1-8** - Paul concludes that the Jews were blessed to be God's chosen vehicle to carry the Law, but they failed in being conformed to it. As a result, Jews and Gentiles have been given equal footing on the basis of Grace, and Grace is no license to continue in sin.
- xiii. **3:9-20** - States that Gentiles and Jews are in the identical position of condemnation... which had to be a hard thing for most Jews to accept.
 - 1. They held to the notion that being of the lineage of Abraham and under the Law of Moses gave them a preferred position in the world. Out of this notion came the mistaken concept that God would come to their rescue if they were worthy enough and reinstate the Davidic Monarchy as Vice-Regents of the Kingdom of God.
 - 2. Paul had to repeatedly castigate the Jews to get his point across that they were no better than the Gentiles... in fact they were worse because they knew better they were accountable to do better.
- xiv. **3:21-26** - Justification before God is by faith [3:21], as such the law was a works instrument... what you did rendered you righteous or unrighteous.
 - 1. Justification [right standing] before God is provided as a gift from God as Grace... something unearned, and something I don't deserve.
 - 2. Redemption [deliverance] was purchased by Jesus – in the Covenant of His Blood and Life... something I had no ability to accomplish or purchase.
 - 3. Deliverance is redefined by Paul as humanity being under the bondage of sin... with Grace being the only antidote.
 - 4. After Joseph, Israel being the 12 tribes descended from Jacob's 12 sons were enslaved as a nation in Egyptian captivity – they were a slave to the kingdom of Pharaoh. God miraculously intervened and delivered them through Moses.
 - 5. In New Testament times, the nation of Israel was slave to Rome. The Zealots desired to throw off this yoke of bondage, but their real problem was their slavery to sin. Their notion was that Israel's expected Messiah would deliver them from Rome and reestablish the primacy of the nation of Israel. However, the real mission of Messiah was to accomplish deliverance from sin, which God miraculously accomplished in Jesus 1st coming.
 - 6. The disciples and believers during Jesus lifetime expected that the Kingdom would be restored to Israel (Acts 1:7ff), and Jesus didn't deny that the Kingdom would be re-established, but He corrected their thinking because that was not His mission at this time. The result is that believers in Jesus enjoy spiritual redemption now, while they look forward to physical redemption at Jesus' 2nd coming.

7. Justification and Righteousness are cognates of the same root word, it is not therefore unexpected that there would be some misunderstanding of the difference between these terms:
 - a. Jews and the Catholic fathers taught we are “made righteous” by our own effort – it is through the good works, doing what is right, and correctly performing the sacraments.
 - b. Protestant fathers taught we are “declared righteous” by the work of Jesus and no effort on our own. This is the nature of Grace by faith alone... it is a work given by and completed by God, though we partner with the Spirit in submission.
 - c. The Jews and Catholic understanding has to do with the transformational activity, that doing right changes who we are. The Protestant understanding has to do with the legal disposition [standing] before God, we are adopted as children and heirs of the Kingdom of God... it is a transactional matter. The problem is that BOTH understandings are true simultaneously... they are different sides of the same coin.
 - d. Scripture teaches that Christians are a “new creation” – meaning my spirit HAS already been perfected. God looks upon us as the children He loves.
 - e. Christians are “alive in Christ” – we have the ultimate life now and forever. God sees Christ in us... the saint we will become, not merely the sinner we know we still are.
 - f. Christian righteousness is not by works [doing] but by faith [being] – it has to do with our relational identity in Jesus. Good works demonstrate the faith transformation we have received, but doing good works does not necessarily demonstrate faith transformation.
 - g. Christian spiritual righteousness is a perfect tense reality – it is now and continues into the future – it has been delivered as a result of Jesus’ 1st coming. Material redemption is postponed unto Jesus’ 2nd coming.
- xv. 3:27 – “Law of works” = Sinai [OT] covenant, while it remains the “law of Faith,” Grace by Faith is the New Covenant.
 1. “Antinomianism” is a theological term meaning absence of law or anarchy; this is a sin of rejecting God’s rule. However, this is not what Paul is talking about.
 2. Jesus taught that He IS the fulfillment of the Law. The problem that the faithless Jewish leaders had is they failed to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah. They knew the Scripture, but failed to understand it. Some did understand it, but refused to submit to their Messiah, but many faithful Jews and far more Gentiles did.
 3. For the latter who submit to Jesus, the Law is no longer in affect; they are free of condemnation and have entered into the redemption of Spiritual life... Life in the Spirit.

- xvi. Chapter 4 is the final piece of Paul's argument on Justification by Faith:
1. 4:1-5 - Paul teaches here that Abraham demonstrated his righteousness by his faith, and that is what God commended him for in the OT.
 2. 4:6-8 – “lawless deeds” or sins have been “covered” by Jesus sacrifice – this is OT Temple Sacrifice imagery.
 3. 4:9-17 deals with Abraham's faith being totally separate from circumcision and the Law.
 4. 4:18-22 is the positive counterpoint to the last section... Abraham's justification was his simply believing God at His word.
 - a. It may be useful to consider two common uses of the term: “Sin” [capitalized for our purposes] is “wrong being” - meaning there is something fundamentally wrong with our inherent nature that works cannot correct. On the other hand, “sin” [small case] we use to refer to transgressions which are wrong behavior... these are things which we are responsible to correct.
 - b. Where there is no law, there is no transgression [sin] – this pertains to Israel who has the law as custodian.
 - c. Sin as rebellion against God [Sin] is a universal human terminal defect, for which Grace is the only cure.
 - d. 2 Peter 2:1-22 is another teaching regarding this aspect of Law and Grace.
 5. 4:23-25 – Jesus died because of our sin - Justification was God's cure for the Fall; and Jesus was raised because of our need for sanctification – the indwelling Spirit was the only solution for change in the innerman. Thus our faith gives meaning to Jesus' sacrifice, our hope is His glory.
 - a. Real faith believes God in light of the intellectual improbability or even impossibility of the physical evidence. This was the quality of Abraham's faith who believed that God would do what He said regarding offspring.
 - b. Real faith is relational and experiential – there is a real context in which faith operates and it is not merely a hypothetical or theoretical exercise of the mind/will.
 - c. Abraham held tenaciously to God's promise to him that he would have progeny who would become a nation. Abraham held to this because he had experienced God... his experience changed everything.
 - d. “Children of the Promise” believe God as Abraham did – their faith answers God's invitation/calling in the same manner as Abraham did.
 - e. Surface doubts and fiery darts will always come; this is the essential nature of Faith amid Spiritual warfare. Doubt is not a once and done matter, and perseverance [this is “abiding” - John 15:1-11] is a necessary element of continuing in Faith. However, the hope is what we cling to which is based on a real relationship with a real

God. Paul's point in Romans is dealing with God in the context of relational intimacy. Appeals to logic and reason alone are helpful, but insufficient.

xvii. The relevance of Paul's long argument on the nature of Gentile-Jew being equal in their sin-cursed standing before God has significant application in the church today. There are those who having been raised in the church look down upon those who come to faith from a tainted worldly background. On the opposite side of the problem, there are those who come to faith after being in the world who have impressive testimonies who think they are superior to those who were raised in the church and never strayed far from her. Cutting against both sides are those who like to think they've never really done anything wrong, that they are a "good person" because they stayed away from significant trouble. The truth of the matter is that we all have one flavor or another of brokenness and sin-curse.

Paul's theology in Romans speaks to everyone:

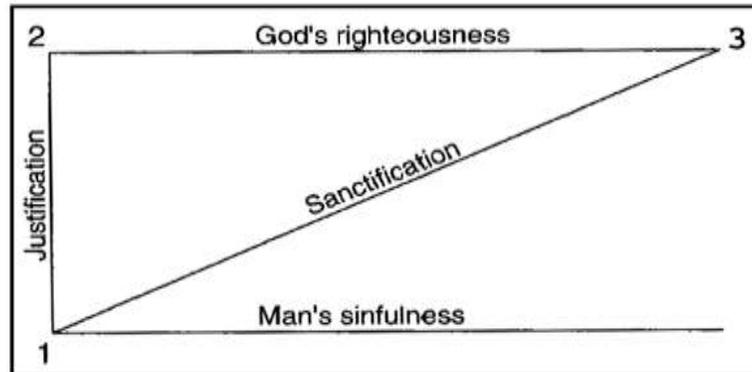
- 1. All have sinned - 3:9.**
- 2. No one is righteous - 3:10.**
- 3. No one truly understands their own need - 3:11.**
- 4. No one really seeks God as they should - 3:11.**
- 5. All have turned away from what God requires - 3:12.**
- 6. All have become worthless on our own merit - 3:12.**
- 7. No one really does the good we should - 3:12.**
- 8. The words of the unredeemed prove we are dead - 3:13.**
- 9. We deceive ourselves and others as a normal practice - 3:13.**
- 10. The result is that we speak poisonous thoughts from a polluted heart and mind - 3:13.**
- 11. The normal language of the unredeemed is cursing and bitterness rather than the praise and joy that God desires - 3:14.**
- 12. Because of our broken hearts and fallen mind we don't see the inherent value in others... being more than content that they should suffer loss if it brings us gain - 3:15.**
- 13. As a result, our communities are full of ruin and misery - 3:16.**
- 14. Our moral and ethical compasses are broken, and we know no peace because we all desire our own self-interest, well being, comfort, and pleasure - 3:17.**
- 15. Our minds are so clouded and our hearts so damaged that we fail to see ourselves as we truly are in juxtaposition to an altogether righteous and Holy God - 3:18.**

xviii. The picture Paul paints here is pathetic... even more so because we don't even realize how bad off we are. We think ourselves wise, good or maybe not that bad, etc. By way of comparison... imagine the person on earth today that you admire most. We may see this person as attractive, wealthy, and well intentioned, in essence they have it all and are everything we wish we could be! Now imagine standing beside that person and taking inventory of yourself... most of us pale by comparison. Now imagine this person as wonderful as they are looking into the

eyes of a perfectly Good and Holy God. As far short as we fall in comparison to the person we admire, we all fall short and more to God.

- xix. Notice that Isaiah - one of the godliest men of his generation as well as the Apostle John - the beloved disciple of Jesus -- they both despair and are rendered as good as dead before God. With this in mind, Paul now launches into a teaching on life and death.
- b. Chapters 5-8 – Are about life & death - obviously people want to live, but the concept Paul is emphasizing has to do with eternal life [in heaven] with temporal life [on earth now]:
 - i. 5:1-2 - Justification by faith means peace with God and means life for the faithful believer. We “have” peace with God both now in the present, as well as in the future.
 - 1. In this verse, the term for peace is future & present tense plural – this means it is for the church and for all believers throughout the Church age - from Pentecost until Jesus return and material world renewal.
 - 2. Peace is our guaranty of life... this peace changes how we see and act in the world. Even though we continue to have obstacles, troubles and tribulations... peace sustains us into eternity.
 - ii. 5:3-11 - If God has this much love for those considered by the Law as His enemies, how much more will His love be demonstrated to His friends and His family. The result of justification and sanctification is reconciliation with God... this means the return to the ideal state we lost in the Garden. Reconciliation is real and when properly realized must result in joy and praise.
 - iii. 5:12-21 - is Paul’s forensic argument that all of humanity necessarily fell on account of Adam’s Sin, but now all humanity may be blessed in receiving eternal life as a choice of our acceptance of Jesus sacrifice.
 - 1. This argument deals with the theological notion of “Election” meaning chosen. Election has two different aspects:
 - a. On one hand as Israel was chosen to carry the Law in the world, Christians are chosen to carry Grace in the world. Election or chosen in this context resolves the problem of justification and carries with it the idea of conscription... we are lords and ladies of the Kingdom of God.
 - b. However, there is on the other hand a voluntary nature to this choice - we need to accept and appropriate God’s provided remedy for Sin personally and individually, and cooperate with the Spirit in the life-long process of Sanctification.
 - 2. Sanctification is not forced down our unwilling throats, but God will compel us slowly and deliberately rather than leave us imperfect. God’s preference is that we willingly partner and cooperate with the Spirit.
 - 3. Sanctification is the term used to describe the process where we are progressively transformed from the inner-man where the nature of Jesus grows in us.

4. The result of justification and sanctification is our conformity to God's Nature as revealed in Jesus.
- iv. 6:1-8:39 is Paul's argument on the impartation of Righteousness through Sanctification looks something like this... Justified = Sanctified = Glorified. God is concerned not only about humanity's "Fallen nature," but also our "Imperfect condition" as His children and heirs.
 1. Salvation takes us from point 1 to 2 as justification is a one time event. Sanctification on the other hand is progressive and incremental from 1 to 3 where we increasingly become God's righteousness. [See diagram below]



2. Paul's theology holds that if justification has occurred, then sanctification must necessarily be occurring... therefore you cannot continue in a sinful lifestyle. Moreover, there should be some tangible evidence of sanctification. Our values, our ethics, our priorities should be progressing from our former worldliness toward Godliness... not that we will achieve perfection in this life, that will not occur until we are in eternity. Then, in Heaven we will be perfectly who God created us to be. Here on earth, we will only be progressing toward this ideal. Nor is this merely behavioral modification or life improvement techniques, but real transformational life change... our nature has changed with justification, our condition is changing with sanctification - this is the essence of "Spiritual Maturity."
3. Paul's theology presents a problem for those who claim they have received Jesus by faith, affirming they have accepted His offer of eternal life... but then demonstrate no Spiritual change in that direction. Those who remain with their old values, continuing in their old behavior... Paul would question their faith. They may talk the talk, but they don't walk the walk.
4. As Christian leaders, we should be modeling Christlikeness, and the justification we claim should have the evidence of sanctification demonstrated in our life choices, values, etc. Christians should want to be like their Lord, they should want to spend time with Him, and doing the things that He thought were important. Christian Discipleship it is an integrated life of faith and practice driven by the Spirit. This is not legalism... as this was part of the problem of the Pharisees.

5. **A life like this is not for show or the praise of observers, or to curry favor, but rather because it is the desire of our heart... it is a reflection of who we are becoming in Christ. As a result, the fruit of the Spirit should be manifest and it also provides a window into the heart of our Lord (Gal 5:18-26).**
- v. **6:12-23 - in Paul's theology you are a slave or servant to something. Those who continue as slaves to sin, love wickedness and pleasure. Those who purpose to serve God, love righteousness and holiness. Paul's theology is much like John's in this matter, being dualistic - it is one way or the other... it cannot be both.**
 1. **The Gentile world had access to sin and wickedness through Pagan temple worship, which included ritual prostitution. This seems to be one place where restraint was never encouraged, and excess the norm.**
 2. **To break the yoke of sin in this culture, Paul uses the notion of becoming a slave to something else... to God. These were terms Romans in particular and Gentiles in general understood.**
- vi. **7:1-25 Paul expounds his theology in terms of the Old Covenant that both Gentiles and Jews would understand. The intention is to forge a unity in the Church:**
 1. **7:1-6 - Being alive in Christ means to be dead to the Law... again demonstrating Paul's preference for duality.**
 2. **7:7-13 - sin results in death not that sin is inherent in the Law, but it arises in humanity as a result of our failure to constrain our passions and desires.**
 3. **7:14-23 - demonstrates the nature of the Spiritual and the worldly in humanity - we can be justified and still have a desire to sin. The desire to do good and wickedness coexist in the justified human heart on sin-cursed earth... it is a miserable condition to those who truly want to love and honor God.**
 4. **7:24-25 - is one of the most often quoted passages - "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin." The difference is a choice... we can learn to rule our body [imperfectly on earth] through sanctification. Paul explains the conundrum of being "a sinner saved by grace" who longs to be "a saint who sometimes sins." Paul's theology again shows his dualism - Jesus 1st coming brought us justification and the process of sanctification. Jesus 2nd coming will restore creation to perfect... the sin-curse on earth will be removed. Then we will be perfect in spirit and body just as Jesus is.**
- vii. **8:1-39 Paul resolves the problems he has discussed:**
 1. **8:1-4 - believers have the ultimate victory over sin.**
 2. **8:5-11 - believers produce the life they desire by living by the Spirit [New Covenant] rather than the flesh [Old Covenant].**
 3. **8:12-17 - our responsibility is to live by the Spirit in hope of the material world perfection that will come at the end of days [apocalypse].**
 4. **8:18-25 - Our future material redemption is assured resulting in Glory.**

“Creation waits in eager expectation of the revelation of the sons of God” - what an amazing image! This is not mere rhetoric, but fundamental reality. This begs the question... “how would our lives be different if we truly believed and acted as such?”

5. **8:26-37 - the Spirit lifts and empowers us to a counter-cultural life now on sin-cursed earth, and a perfect eternity that waits as our Spiritual birthright... where we are more than conquerors... meaning we overwhelmingly conquer the world through Christ - this is Paul’s statement of the eternal security of believers.**
6. **8:38-39 is the logical conclusion - there is nothing to fear: “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

H. Theological Summation of this section:

- a. **Note that “In Christ Jesus” and “In Christ Jesus our Lord” are structural markers in the text that Paul employs to shape and direct his thought process. Note the occurrences of these terms in the text:**
 - i. **“In Christ Jesus” – 3:24; 6:11; 6:23; 8:1; 8:39; 15:17; 16:3**
 - ii. **“In Christ Jesus our Lord” – 6:23 & 8:39**
- b. **Life & Death are the major themes in this section:**
 - i. **Life:**
 1. **2:7**
 2. **4:17**
 3. **5:10,18, 21**
 4. **6:4, 10, 22, 23**
 5. **7:10**
 6. **8:2, 6, 11, 38**
 7. **11:3, 15**
 8. **16:4**
 - ii. **Death:**
 1. **1:32**
 2. **5:10, 12, 14, 17, 21**
 3. **6:3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 16, 21, 23**
 4. **7:15, 10, 13, 24**
 5. **8:2, 6, 13, 36, 38**
- c. **The “Just” shall live by faith – Habakkuk 2:4 is the background for Paul’s Justification & faith dialogue, along with Genesis faith that was credited to Abraham as righteousness – Gen 15:6; RO 4:3, 5, 9,22.**
- d. **Dead to sin & alive in God – versus slaves to sin and dead in sin [Chap 6].**
 - i. **We have the option to be slaves [servants] to sin [death] or to Messiah [life].**

- ii. “Physical birth” associated us with Adam and the Fall on sin-cursed earth; whereas “Spiritual Birth” associates us to Jesus [the 2nd Adam] and the Life He lives in eternity.
 - iii. Adam’s one unrighteous act doomed humanity; how much more has Jesus one righteous act [death on the cross] liberated humanity.
 - iv. Adam’s transgression led to judgment and death [sin/death/condemnation].
 - v. Jesus righteous act leads to freedom [no condemnation], and eternal life.
 - vi. All who fail to chose/be chosen by Messiah as sons of Adam are subject to death and condemnation.
 - vii. “Judgment” as a legal proceeding can clear one of guilt, but cannot provide justification and blessing. This is why Jesus atonement was necessary, because the Passover atonement was insufficient to save humanity.
- e. As sons of Adam we are doomed as heirs of the earth – as sons of the new Adam we are heirs of the King of the universe.
- i. Truth is that we are both – we live as sons of earth and sons of Heaven.
 - ii. But we have the choice to whom we will identify with, and which will determine our life choices and actions.
 - iii. Accordingly, we are responsible for our life or death.
 - iv. We have a choice each day to identify with Jesus or Adam.
- f. Chap 5 – 2nd half is the Adam logic
- g. Chap 6 – is an expansion on the life-death dialogue with personal identification with the death of Jesus and resurrection into life through baptism.
- h. Chap 7 – “I am speaking to those who know the Law – those with Jewish backgrounds and “God-Fearing” Gentiles.
- i. Those who were under Sinai Law were under it for as long as they lived.
 - ii. Death freed them from the Law, but ushered them into judgment and condemnation to the extent that faith was not their focus – and works was.
 - iii. When you died with Messiah – that is you identified with Jesus’ death, you died to the Law as well.
 - iv. When you were resurrected with Messiah – that is you were born into the Spirit, you entered into eternal life with him as well.
 - v. Major themes are – sin, Law, command, I, evil, life, death, spirit [pneuma], flesh [sarx], body [soma].
 - vi. 7:7-28 – Paul’s “I” statements are his personal confession and is connected to his understanding of flesh and sin [7:14-25]. This testimony is typical for all believers.
 - 6. Sin is a parasite – an alien thing feeding on our life, it is in me and is killing me.
 - 7. The body [soma] is not redeemable until Jesus comes again.
- i. Chap 7 & 8 are about dealing with the physical fallen nature – we all have to deal with the law of sin in our lives. While chapter 7 is sobering, chapter 8 is encouraging - Paul did this deliberately:
- i. There is no condemnation [curse] for Christians.
 - 8. Jesus took our judgment upon Himself.

9. **We are now free to live in the Spirit... not only is the door open to fellowship with God, Jesus Himself is continually knocking and asking to be invited in Rev 3:19-22 - "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."**
 - ii. **The law [nomas] is dense in this chapter.**
 10. **The "Law" includes Sinai covenant, oral tradition, Scripture, and the principles in the "writings of the elders," etc.**
 - iii. **Sons of God [8:14]**
 11. **Notice that these are the most honored beings in God's throne room.**
 12. **This is hard to accept because in the outer-man we are no different from the non-redeemed. Partly why they could put to death the Author of Life is because He looked no different – He looked no different from any other man.**
 13. **8:19 – the creation is anxiously awaiting for physical redemption and the revelation of the sons of God.**
 14. **8:12-13 is pivotal – we choose how we live before God – as sons of His Kingdom, or sons of earth... and bear responsibility for the outcome of that choice.**
- I. Critiquing Pauline Theology: it is apparent that Israel is one of the main subjects in Paul's writings – Israel was the chosen people, having been given the Scripture so they would recognize their Messiah when He came. The Bible says they knew who He was, and yet they rejected Jesus because they preferred their position as leaders of the nation over submission to God. This creates a bit of a conundrum because calling/election has always been thought of as God's purview. So how can the Jewish leaders reject Jesus? Reformed theology takes 2 major tracks in this matter, and it is probably very helpful and useful to summarize these approaches now - Reformed theology is typically thought of as Calvinism defined by the acronym TULIP, however Arminianism is another main form of reformed theology. The differences between Calvinism and Arminianism may be summed up as follows:**
- a. **T = Total depravity –**
 - i. **Calvinism: Humanity can make no decision for good apart from the calling of God. God is completely sovereign – this questions the existence of free will, and at worst makes God the author of the Fall and responsible for evil in general.**
 - ii. **Arminianism: Depravity of sin clouds judgment and the Holy Spirit is necessary to quicken the choice to do good, such as accepting Grace. Wesley called this "Prevenient Grace" given to all to allow one to respond to God's offer.**
 - b. **U = Unconditional election –**

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- i. **Calvinism:** Salvation of humanity is strictly the purview of God as Sovereign Lord who creates some for heaven and others for hell. The choice is God's and is final, and man has no role to play in it... in essence there is no free will.
 - ii. **Arminianism:** Salvation of humanity is God's work in man, but man must cooperate with God. Humanity has a role to play... it is a modified free will position.
- c. **L = Limited atonement** –
- i. **Calvinism:** Only the elect are atoned for, the rest are doomed to hell since before the beginning of time. Essentially some people were created for the purpose of populating hell.
 - ii. **Arminianism:** Christ's salvific act benefits all of humanity, and sparks the opportunity for good in man to respond to God's offer of grace. While God knows [prescience] who will respond and who won't, it is none the less man's unencumbered choice to make.
- d. **I = Irresistible Grace** –
- i. **Calvinism:** Humanity cannot resist God's call to saving faith. Some are called, and some are not – the choice is part of God's sovereign plan. Once called, you cannot fall from grace.
 - ii. **Arminianism:** God's call goes out to all, and the Spirit enables humanity to know and to choose, but the choice is man's to make and he bears the resultant responsibility. It is possible that some may fall from grace, though the question would arise if they had been saved in the 1st place.
- e. **P = Perseverance of the saints** –
- i. **Calvinism:** Since all salvific activity is God's, once called you have no choice but to persevere. If someone falls away it likely means they were never really called.
 - ii. **Arminianism:** Free will makes it possible for some to choose to persevere in their faith or to fall away, though the later may be said to have never been called. Humanity has a part to play in pursuing God, and in maintaining the relationship.
- f. The main reformed alternative to TULIP Calvinism is Arminianism - the main difference being that humanity is seen to have a part to play in accepting God's Grace and working out their salvation based upon the dignity of humanity being made in the Image of God. Arminians hold that we are able to hear and respond to God with our "free will" through prevenient Grace [the internal nudging of the Spirit] that is essentially known as common grace, which gives humanity the opportunity and responsibility to hear and respond to God instead of being compelled to believe. Wesleyan theology is the primary Arminian representative in modern thought.
- g. **Summary theological thoughts:**

- i. Arminian theology never accuses God of being unjust – because they hold that humanity has the responsibility to either choose or refuse God’s call.
 - ii. Calvinist theology has to defend against the claim that God is unfair – because they hold that God’s call is personal and irresistible. A strict Calvinist friend wrote that God’s Sovereign Will is so completely in charge of creation that the exact footprints of each caterpillar walking across a leaf is directed and choreographed.
 - iii. While some would say that Paul was more Calvinist as he defends God’s right to choose, it seems that Paul also believes it is equally true that man must participate with God’s call in justification, and with His Spirit in sanctification. Though Paul would agree that humanity can add nothing to the equation, Paul also argues that we can deny, ignore, or cooperate with God.
- h. It would seem that there are elements of truth in both of these theological systems... Calvinist and Arminian.
- i. Israel was chosen, but they also rejected their Messiah. Their rejection was considered sin, but their curse was a blessing to the Gentiles.
 - ii. Some argue that it is unfair for God to hate evil and wrong doers – however, seeing God as the Great King who judges His enemies it is obviously correct for God to hate evil people both for the damage they have caused against the Godly, and also for what they are... wicked and unrepentant.
- i. There are contemporary scientific theories that actually may help shed light on this dilemma where scientific principles may be correlated to spiritual principles, thus quantum mechanics may be applied to the spiritual reality of election:
- i. Light is both energy and matter... as a wave or a particle it takes its identity at the point at which it is measured.
 - ii. The same can be said to apply to calling/election – it can be both God’s purpose and an individual’s choice.
 - iii. Man’s arrogance presumes it must be one or the other – however, there is no reason to doubt God’s ability for both to be equally true at the same time.
 - iv. It is arrogance for humanity to presume to understand all of the mysteries of God presented in Scripture. Though He allows us to reason out much of His word, it is best to keep an open mind, hold to the known truths, and allow God the option to illuminate us as we progress in maturity... striving for unity in the Body of believers.

For more information on theology, please see the “Biblical Literacy/Theology” section of authenticdiscipleship.org.