

ROMANS

As we study Romans, let the Holy Spirit teach us. We can experience revival in our hearts, homes and church if the message of Romans controls us.

In the opening verses of the letter, Paul introduces himself to the believers in Rome. Some of them must have known him personally, because he greets them in the final chapter, but many of them he had never met. In these first 17 verses, Paul tried to find a connection between himself and the Roman readers in three ways.

READY FOR ROME

1. He described his qualifications (1:1-7)

Romans 1:1-7 From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus. God called me to be an apostle and chose me to tell the Good News. ² God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures. ³⁻⁴ The Good News is about God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. As a man, he was born from the family of David. But through the Spirit of holiness he was declared to be God's Son with great power by rising from the dead. ⁵ Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle, which was to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. I do this work for him. ⁶ And you who are in Rome are also called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷ To all of you in Rome whom God loves and has called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. He expressed his concern (1:8-15)

Romans 1:8-15 First I want to say that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because people everywhere in the world are talking about your faith. ⁹ God, whom I serve with my whole heart by telling the Good News about his Son, knows that I always mention you ¹⁰ every time I pray. I pray that I will be allowed to come to you, and this will happen if God wants it. ¹¹ I want very much to see you, to give you some spiritual gift to make you strong. ¹² I mean that I want us to help each other with the faith we have. Your faith will help me, and my faith will help you. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I want you to know that I planned many times to come to you, but this has not been possible. I wanted to come so that I could help you grow spiritually as I have helped the other non-Jewish people. ¹⁴ I have a duty to all people—Greeks and those who are not Greeks, the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵ That is why I want so much to preach the Good News to you in Rome.

3. He made it clear that he was confident (1:16-17)

Romans 1:16-17 I am not ashamed of the Good News, because it is the power God uses to save everyone who believes—to save the Jews first, and then to save non-Jews. ¹⁷ The Good News shows how God makes people right with himself—that it begins and ends with faith. As the Scripture says, "But those who are right with God will live by faith."

WHEN GOD GIVES UP

1. The Gentile world is guilty!

a. Intelligence – the Gentiles knew the truth

Romans 1:18-20 God's anger is shown from heaven against all the evil and wrong things people do. By their own evil lives they hide the truth. ¹⁹ God shows his anger because some knowledge of him has been made clear to them. Yes, God has shown himself to them. ²⁰ There are things about him that people cannot see—his eternal power and all the things that make him God. But since the beginning of the world those things have been easy to understand by what God has made. So people have no excuse for the bad things they do.

b. Ignorance – the Gentiles rejected the truth

Romans 1:21-23 They knew God, but they did not give glory to God or thank him. Their thinking became useless. Their foolish minds were filled with darkness. ²² They said they were wise, but they became fools. ²³ They traded the glory of God who lives forever for the worship of idols made to look like earthly people, birds, animals, and snakes.

c. Indulgence – the Gentiles went deeper into sin

Romans 1:24-27 Because they did these things, God left them and let them go their sinful way, wanting only to do evil. As a result, they became full of sexual sin, using their bodies wrongly with each other. ²⁵ They traded the truth of God for a lie. They worshiped and served what had been created instead of the God who created those things, who should be praised forever. Amen. ²⁶ Because people did those things, God left them and let them do the shameful things they wanted to do. Women stopped having natural sex and started having sex with other women. ²⁷ In the same way, men stopped having natural sex and began wanting each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and in their bodies they received the punishment for those wrongs.

d. Unrepentant – the Gentiles refused to repent or show any sorrow

Romans 1:28-32 People did not think it was important to have a true knowledge of God. So God left them and allowed them to have their own worthless thinking and to do things they should not do. ²⁹ They are filled with every kind of sin, evil, selfishness, and hatred. They are full of jealousy, murder, fighting, lying, and thinking the worst about each other. They gossip ³⁰ and say evil things about each other. They hate God. They are rude and conceited and brag about themselves. They invent ways of doing evil. They do not obey their parents. ³¹ They are foolish, they do not keep their promises, and they show no kindness or mercy to others. ³² They know God's law says that those who live like this should die. But they themselves not only continue to do these evil things, they applaud others who do them.

2. The Jewish world is guilty!

a. The Jews were not any better than the Gentiles

Romans 2:1-3 If you think you can judge others, you are wrong. When you judge them, you are really judging yourself guilty, because you do the same things they do. ² God judges those who do wrong things, and we know that his judging is right. ³ You judge those who do wrong, but you do wrong yourselves. Do you think you will be able to escape the judgment of God?

b. God's blessing were given to the Jews

Romans 2:4-11 He has been very kind and patient, waiting for you to change, but you think nothing of his kindness. Perhaps you do not understand that God is kind to you so you will change your hearts and lives. ⁵ But you are stubborn and refuse to change, so you are making your own punishment even greater on the day he shows his anger. On that day everyone will see God's right judgments. ⁶ God will reward or punish every person for what that person has done. ⁷ Some people, by always continuing to do good, live for God's glory, for honor, and for life that has no end. God will give them life forever. ⁸ But other people are selfish. They refuse to follow truth and, instead, follow evil. God will give them his punishment and anger. ⁹ He will give trouble and suffering to everyone who does evil—to the Jews first and also to those who are not Jews. ¹⁰ But he will give glory, honor, and peace to everyone who does good—to the Jews first and also to those who are not Jews. ¹¹ For God judges all people in the same way.

c. God's law was given to the Jews

Romans 2:12-24 People who do not have the law and who are sinners will be lost, although they do not have the law. And, in the same way, those who have the law and are sinners will be judged by the law. ¹³ Hearing the law does not make people right with God. It is those who obey the law who will be right with him. ¹⁴ (Those who are not Jews do not have the law, but when they freely do what the law commands, they are the law for themselves. This is true even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that in their hearts they know what is right and wrong, just as the law commands. And they show this by their consciences. Sometimes their thoughts tell them they did wrong, and sometimes their thoughts tell them they did right.) ¹⁶ All these things will happen on the day when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge people's secret thoughts. The Good News that I preach says this. ¹⁷ What about you? You call yourself a Jew. You trust in the law of Moses and brag that you are close to God. ¹⁸ You know what he wants you to do and what is important, because you have learned the law. ¹⁹ You think you are a guide for the blind and a light for those who are in darkness. ²⁰ You think you can show foolish people what is right and teach those who know nothing. You have the law; so you think you know everything and have all truth. ²¹ You teach others, so why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but you steal. ²² You say that others must not take part in adultery, but you are guilty of that sin. You hate idols, but you steal from temples. ²³ You brag about having God's law, but you bring shame to God by breaking his law, ²⁴ just as the Scriptures say: "Those who are not Jews speak against God's name because of you."

d. Circumcision was given to the Jews

Romans 2:25-29 If you follow the law, your circumcision has meaning. But if you break the law, it is as if you were never circumcised. ²⁶ People who are not Jews are not circumcised, but if they do what the law says, it is as if they were circumcised. ²⁷ You

Jews have the written law and circumcision, but you break the law. So those who are not circumcised in their bodies, but still obey the law, will show that you are guilty. ²⁸ They can do this because a person is not a true Jew if he is only a Jew in his physical body; true circumcision is not only on the outside of the body. ²⁹ A person is a Jew only if he is a Jew inside; true circumcision is done in the heart by the Spirit, not by the written law. Such a person gets praise from God rather than from people.

e. Paul's summary

Romans 3:1-8 So, do Jews have anything that other people do not have? Is there anything special about being circumcised? ² Yes, of course, there is in every way. The most important thing is this: God trusted the Jews with his teachings. ³ If some Jews were not faithful to him, will that stop God from doing what he promised? ⁴ No! God will continue to be true even when every person is false. As the Scriptures say: "So you will be shown to be right when you speak, and you will win your case." ⁵ When we do wrong, that shows more clearly that God is right. So can we say that God is wrong to punish us? (I am talking as people might talk.) ⁶ No! If God could not punish us, he could not judge the world. ⁷ A person might say, "When I lie, it really gives him glory, because my lie shows God's truth. So why am I judged a sinner?" ⁸ It would be the same to say, "We should do evil so that good will come." Some people find fault with us and say we teach this, but they are wrong and deserve the punishment they will receive.

3. The whole world is guilty!

Romans 3:9-20 So are we Jews better than others? No! We have already said that Jews and those who are not Jews are all guilty of sin. ¹⁰ As the Scriptures say: "There is no one who always does what is right, not even one. ¹¹ There is no one who understands. There is no one who looks to God for help. ¹² All have turned away. Together, everyone has become useless. There is no one who does anything good; there is not even one." ¹³ "Their throats are like open graves; they use their tongues for telling lies." "Their words are like snake poison." ¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and hate." ¹⁵ "They are always ready to kill people. ¹⁶ Everywhere they go they cause ruin and misery. ¹⁷ They don't know how to live in peace." ¹⁸ "They have no fear of God." ¹⁹ We know that the law's commands are for those who have the law. This stops all excuses and brings the whole world under God's judgment, ²⁰ because no one can be made right with God by following the law. The law only shows us our sin.

FATHER ABRAHAM

1. Justification explained

a. Without the law

Romans 3:21 But God has a way to make people right with him without the law, and he has now shown us that way which the law and the prophets told us about.

b. Through faith in Christ

Romans 3:22a God makes people right with himself through their faith in Jesus Christ.

c. For all people

Romans 3:22b-23 This is true for all who believe in Christ, because all people are the same: ²³ Everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's glorious standard,

d. By grace

Romans 3:24 and all need to be made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift. They need to be made free from sin through Jesus Christ.

e. At great cost to God

Romans 3:24b-25 They need to be made free from sin through Jesus Christ. ²⁵ God sent him to die in our place to take away our sins. We receive forgiveness through faith in the blood of Jesus' death. This showed that God always does what is right and fair, as in the past when he was patient and did not punish people for their sins.

f. In perfect justice

Romans 3:25-26 God sent him to die in our place to take away our sins. We receive forgiveness through faith in the blood of Jesus' death. This showed that God always does what is right and fair, as in the past when he was patient and did not punish people for their sins. ²⁶ And God gave Jesus to show today that he does what is right. God did this so he could judge rightly and so he could make right any person who has faith in Jesus.

g. To establish the law

Romans 3:27-31 So do we have a reason to brag about ourselves? No! And why not? It is the way of faith that stops all bragging, not the way of trying to obey the law. ²⁸ A person is made right with God through faith, not through obeying the law. ²⁹ Is God only the God of the Jews? Is he not also the God of those who are not Jews? ³⁰ Of course he is, because there is only one God. He will make Jews right with him by their faith, and he will also make those who are not Jews right with him through their faith. ³¹ So do we destroy the law by following the way of faith? No! Faith causes us to be what the law truly wants.

2. Justification illustrated

a. Abraham was justified by faith, not works

Romans 4:1-8 So what can we say that Abraham, the father of our people, learned about faith? ² If Abraham was made right by the things he did, he had a reason to brag. But this is not God's view, ³ because the Scripture says, "Abraham believed God, and God accepted Abraham's faith, and that faith made him right with God." ⁴ When people work, their pay is not given as a gift, but as something earned. ⁵ But people cannot do any work that will make them right with God. So they must trust in him, who makes even evil people right in his sight. Then God accepts their faith, and that makes them right with him. ⁶ David said the same thing. He said that people are truly blessed when God,

without paying attention to their deeds, makes people right with himself. ⁷ “Blessed are they whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned. ⁸ Blessed is the person whom the Lord does not consider guilty.”

b. Abraham was justified by grace, not law

Romans 4:9-17 Is this blessing only for those who are circumcised or also for those who are not circumcised? We have already said that God accepted Abraham’s faith and that faith made him right with God. ¹⁰ So how did this happen? Did God accept Abraham before or after he was circumcised? It was before his circumcision. ¹¹ Abraham was circumcised to show that he was right with God through faith before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the father of all those who believe but are not circumcised; he is the father of all believers who are accepted as being right with God. ¹² And Abraham is also the father of those who have been circumcised and who live following the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. ¹³ Abraham and his descendants received the promise that they would get the whole world. He did not receive that promise through the law, but through being right with God by his faith. ¹⁴ If people could receive what God promised by following the law, then faith is worthless. And God’s promise to Abraham is worthless, ¹⁵ because the law can only bring God’s anger. But if there is no law, there is nothing to disobey. ¹⁶ So people receive God’s promise by having faith. This happens so the promise can be a free gift. Then all of Abraham’s children can have that promise. It is not only for those who live under the law of Moses but for anyone who lives with faith like that of Abraham, who is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written in the Scriptures: “I am making you a father of many nations.” This is true before God, the God Abraham believed, the God who gives life to the dead and who creates something out of nothing.

c. Abraham was justified by resurrection power, not human effort

Romans 4:18-25 There was no hope that Abraham would have children. But Abraham believed God and continued hoping, and so he became the father of many nations. As God told him, “Your descendants also will be too many to count.” ¹⁹ Abraham was almost a hundred years old, much past the age for having children, and Sarah could not have children. Abraham thought about all this, but his faith in God did not become weak. ²⁰ He never doubted that God would keep his promise, and he never stopped believing. He grew stronger in his faith and gave praise to God. ²¹ Abraham felt sure that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² So, “God accepted Abraham’s faith, and that faith made him right with God.” ²³ Those words (“God accepted Abraham’s faith”) were written not only for Abraham ²⁴ but also for us. God will accept us also because we believe in the One who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ Jesus was given to die for our sins, and he was raised from the dead to make us right with God.

LIVE LIKE A KING

1. The blessings of our justification

a. Peace with God

Romans 5:1 Since we have been made right with God by our faith, we have peace with God. This happened through our Lord Jesus Christ,

b. Access to God

Romans 5:2 who through our faith has brought us into that blessing of God's grace that we now enjoy. And we are happy because of the hope we have of sharing God's glory.

c. Glorious hope

Romans 5:2b And we are happy because of the hope we have of sharing God's glory.

d. Christian character

Romans 5:3-4 We also have joy with our troubles, because we know that these troubles produce patience. ⁴ And patience produces character, and character produces hope.

e. God's love within

Romans 5:5-8 And this hope will never disappoint us, because God has poured out his love to fill our hearts. He gave us his love through the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to us. ⁶ When we were unable to help ourselves, at the right time, Christ died for us, although we were living against God. ⁷ Very few people will die to save the life of someone else. Although perhaps for a good person someone might possibly die. ⁸ But God shows his great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

f. Salvation from God's anger in the future

Romans 5:9-10 So through Christ we will surely be saved from God's anger, because we have been made right with God by the blood of Christ's death. ¹⁰ While we were God's enemies, he made us his friends through the death of his Son. Surely, now that we are his friends, he will save us through his Son's life.

g. Brought back into right relationship with God

Romans 5:11 And not only that, but now we are also very happy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we are now God's friends again.

3. Where our justification comes from

Romans 5:12-14 Sin came into the world because of what one man did, and with sin came death. This is why everyone must die—because everyone sinned. ¹³ Sin was in the world before the law of Moses, but sin is not counted against us as breaking a command when there is no law. ¹⁴ But from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, everyone had to die, even those who had not sinned by breaking a command, as Adam had. Adam was like the One who was coming in the future.

a. Adam's sin is contrasted with Christ's free gift

Romans 5:15 But God's free gift is not like Adam's sin. Many people died because of the sin of that one man. But the grace from God was much greater; many people received God's gift of life by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ.

b. The effect of Adam's sin is contrasted with the effect of Christ's obedience

Romans 5:16 After Adam sinned once, he was judged guilty. But the gift of God is different. God's free gift came after many sins, and it makes people right with God.

c. The two "rules" are contrasted

Romans 5:17 One man sinned, and so death ruled all people because of that one man. But now those people who accept God's full grace and the great gift of being made right with him will surely have true life and rule through the one man, Jesus Christ.

d. The two "one acts" are contrasted

Romans 5:18-19 So as one sin of Adam brought the punishment of death to all people, one good act that Christ did makes all people right with God. And that brings true life for all. ¹⁹ One man disobeyed God, and many became sinners. In the same way, one man obeyed God, and many will be made right.

e. Law and grace are contrasted

Romans 5:20-21 The law came to make sin worse. But when sin grew worse, God's grace increased. ²¹ Sin once used death to rule us, but God gave people more of his grace so that grace could rule by making people right with him. And this brings life forever through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DYING TO LIVE

1. Know

Romans 6:1 So do you think we should continue sinning so that God will give us even more grace?

a. The believer is dead to sin

Romans 6:2-5 No! We died to our old sinful lives, so how can we continue living with sin? ³ Did you forget that all of us became part of Christ when we were baptized? We shared his death in our baptism. ⁴ When we were baptized, we were buried with Christ and shared his death. So, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the wonderful power of the Father, we also can live a new life. ⁵ Christ died, and we have been joined with him by dying too. So we will also be joined with him by rising from the dead as he did.

b. The believer should not serve sin

Romans 6:6-10 We know that our old life died with Christ on the cross so that our sinful selves would have no power over us and we would not be slaves to sin. ⁷ Anyone who

has died is made free from sin's control. ⁸ If we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. ⁹ Christ was raised from the dead, and we know that he cannot die again. Death has no power over him now. ¹⁰ Yes, when Christ died, he died to defeat the power of sin one time—enough for all time. He now has a new life, and his new life is with God.

2. The believer should consider yourself dead to sin

Romans 6:11 In the same way, you should see yourselves as being dead to the power of sin and alive with God through Christ Jesus.

3. Yield

a. How we are to yield

Romans 6:12-13 So, do not let sin control your life here on earth so that you do what your sinful self wants to do. ¹³ Do not offer the parts of your body to serve sin, as things to be used in doing evil. Instead, offer yourselves to God as people who have died and now live. Offer the parts of your body to God to be used in doing good.

b. Why we are to yield

Romans 6:14-23 Sin will not be your master, because you are not under law but under God's grace. ¹⁵ So what should we do? Should we sin because we are under grace and not under law? No! ¹⁶ Surely you know that when you give yourselves like slaves to obey someone, then you are really slaves of that person. The person you obey is your master. You can follow sin, which brings spiritual death, or you can obey God, which makes you right with him. ¹⁷ In the past you were slaves to sin—sin controlled you. But thank God, you fully obeyed the things that you were taught. ¹⁸ You were made free from sin, and now you are slaves to goodness. ¹⁹ I use this example because this is hard for you to understand. In the past you offered the parts of your body to be slaves to sin and evil; you lived only for evil. In the same way now you must give yourselves to be slaves of goodness. Then you will live only for God. ²⁰ In the past you were slaves to sin, and goodness did not control you. ²¹ You did evil things, and now you are ashamed of them. Those things only bring death. ²² But now you are free from sin and have become slaves of God. This brings you a life that is only for God, and this gives you life forever. ²³ The payment for sin is death. But God gives us the free gift of life forever in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHRISTIANS AND THE LAW

1. The authority of the law

Romans 7:1-3 Brothers and sisters, all of you understand the law of Moses. So surely you know that the law rules over people only while they are alive. ² For example, a woman must stay married to her husband as long as he is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law of marriage. ³ But if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, the law says she is guilty of adultery. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law of marriage. Then if she marries another man, she is not guilty of adultery.

- a. We died to the law

Romans 7:4-5 In the same way, my brothers and sisters, your old selves died, and you became free from the law through the body of Christ. This happened so that you might belong to someone else—the One who was raised from the dead—and so that we might be used in service to God. ⁵ In the past, we were ruled by our sinful selves. The law made us want to do sinful things that controlled our bodies, so the things we did were bringing us death.

- b. We are delivered from the law

Romans 7:6 In the past, the law held us like prisoners, but our old selves died, and we were made free from the law. So now we serve God in a new way with the Spirit, and not in the old way with written rules.

2. The ministry of the law

- a. The law shows us our sin

Romans 7:7 You might think I am saying that sin and the law are the same thing. That is not true. But the law was the only way I could learn what sin meant. I would never have known what it means to want to take something belonging to someone else if the law had not said, “You must not want to take your neighbor’s things.”

- b. The law stirs up sin

Romans 7:8-9 And sin found a way to use that command and cause me to want all kinds of things I should not want. But without the law, sin has no power. ⁹ I was alive before I knew the law. But when the law’s command came to me, then sin began to live,

- c. The law kills

Romans 7:10-11 and I died. The command was meant to bring life, but for me it brought death. ¹¹ Sin found a way to fool me by using the command to make me die.

- d. The law shows the sinfulness of sin

Romans 7:12-13 So the law is holy, and the command is holy and right and good. ¹³ Does this mean that something that is good brought death to me? No! Sin used something that is good to bring death to me. This happened so that I could see what sin is really like; the command was used to show that sin is very evil.

3. The inability of the law

- a. The law cannot change you

Romans 7:14 We know that the law is spiritual, but I am not spiritual since sin rules me as if I were its slave.

- b. The law cannot enable you to do good

Romans 7:15-21 I do not understand the things I do. I do not do what I want to do, and I do the things I hate. ¹⁶ And if I do not want to do the hated things I do, that means I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But I am not really the one who is doing these hated things; it is sin living in me that does them. ¹⁸ Yes, I know that nothing good lives in me—I mean nothing good lives in the part of me that is earthly and sinful. I want to do the things that are good, but I do not do them. ¹⁹ I do not do the good things I want to do, but I do the bad things I do not want to do. ²⁰ So if I do things I do not want to do, then I am not the one doing them. It is sin living in me that does those things. ²¹ So I have learned this rule: When I want to do good, evil is there with me.

c. The law cannot set you free

Romans 7:21-25 So I have learned this rule: When I want to do good, evil is there with me. ²² In my mind, I am happy with God's law. ²³ But I see another law working in my body, which makes war against the law that my mind accepts. That other law working in my body is the law of sin, and it makes me its prisoner. ²⁴ What a miserable man I am! Who will save me from this body that brings me death? ²⁵ I thank God for saving me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So in my mind I am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful self I am a slave to the law of sin.

FREEDOM AND FULFILLMENT

1. Freedom from judgment – no condemnation

Romans 8:1 So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty.

a. The law cannot make you a prisoner

Romans 8:2 Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you free from the law that brings sin and death.

b. The law cannot judge you

Romans 8:3 The law was without power, because the law was made weak by our sinful selves. But God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that others use for sin. By sending his Son to be an offering for sin, God used a human life to destroy sin.

c. The law cannot control you

Romans 8:4 He did this so that we could be the kind of people the law correctly wants us to be. Now we do not live following our sinful selves, but we live following the Spirit.

2. Freedom from defeat – no obligation

a. Without the Spirit – controlled by the sinful self

Romans 8:5-8 Those who live following their sinful selves think only about things that their sinful selves want. But those who live following the Spirit are thinking about the

things the Spirit wants them to do. ⁶ If people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, there is death. But if their thinking is controlled by the Spirit, there is life and peace. ⁷ When people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, they are against God, because they refuse to obey God's law and really are not even able to obey God's law. ⁸ Those people who are ruled by their sinful selves cannot please God.

b. Ruled by the Spirit – made alive in Christ

Romans 8:9-11 But you are not ruled by your sinful selves. You are ruled by the Spirit, if that Spirit of God really lives in you. But the person who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ Your body will always be dead because of sin. But if Christ is in you, then the Spirit gives you life, because Christ made you right with God. ¹¹ God raised Jesus from the dead, and if God's Spirit is living in you, he will also give life to your bodies that die. God is the One who raised Christ from the dead, and he will give life through his Spirit that lives in you.

c. The Spirit in you gives true life

Romans 8:12-17 So, my brothers and sisters, we must not be ruled by our sinful selves or live the way our sinful selves want. ¹³ If you use your lives to do the wrong things your sinful selves want, you will die spiritually. But if you use the Spirit's help to stop doing the wrong things you do with your body, you will have true life. ¹⁴ The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them. ¹⁵ The Spirit we received does not make us slaves again to fear; it makes us children of God. With that Spirit we cry out, "Father." ¹⁶ And the Spirit himself joins with our spirits to say we are God's children. ¹⁷ If we are God's children, we will receive blessings from God together with Christ. But we must suffer as Christ suffered so that we will have glory as Christ has glory.

3. Freedom from discouragement – no frustration

a. Creation is waiting with excitement and pain

Romans 8:18-22 The sufferings we have now are nothing compared to the great glory that will be shown to us. ¹⁹ Everything God made is waiting with excitement for God to show his children's glory completely. ²⁰ Everything God made was changed to become useless, not by its own wish but because God wanted it and because all along there was this hope: ²¹ that everything God made would be set free from ruin to have the freedom and glory that belong to God's children. ²² We know that everything God made has been waiting until now in pain, like a woman ready to give birth.

b. We believers are waiting with excitement and pain

Romans 8:23-25 Not only the world, but we also have been waiting with pain inside us. We have the Spirit as the first part of God's promise. So we are waiting for God to finish making us his own children, which means our bodies will be made free. ²⁴ We were saved, and we have this hope. If we see what we are waiting for, that is not really hope. People do not hope for something they already have. ²⁵ But we are hoping for something we do not have yet, and we are waiting for it patiently.

- c. The Holy Spirit is waiting with excitement and pain

Romans 8:25-30 But we are hoping for something we do not have yet, and we are waiting for it patiently. ²⁶ Also, the Spirit helps us with our weakness. We do not know how to pray as we should. But the Spirit himself speaks to God for us, even begs God for us with deep feelings that words cannot explain. ²⁷ God can see what is in people's hearts. And he knows what is in the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit speaks to God for his people in the way God wants. ²⁸ We know that in everything God works for the good of those who love him. They are the people he called, because that was his plan. ²⁹ God knew them before he made the world, and he chose them to be like his Son so that Jesus would be the firstborn of many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ God planned for them to be like his Son; and those he planned to be like his Son, he also called; and those he called, he also made right with him; and those he made right, he also glorified.

4. Freedom from fear – no separation

- a. God is for us

Romans 8:31 So what should we say about this? If God is for us, no one can defeat us.

- b. Christ died for us

Romans 8:32 He did not spare his own Son but gave him for us all. So with Jesus, God will surely give us all things.

- c. God has justified us

Romans 8:33 Who can accuse the people God has chosen? No one, because God is the One who makes them right.

- d. Christ intercedes for us

Romans 8:34 Who can say God's people are guilty? No one, because Christ Jesus died, but he was also raised from the dead, and now he is on God's right side, appealing to God for us.

- e. Christ loves us

Romans 8:35-39 Can anything separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can troubles or problems or sufferings or hunger or nakedness or danger or violent death? ³⁶ As it is written in the Scriptures: "For you we are in danger of death all the time. People think we are worth no more than sheep to be killed." ³⁷ But in all these things we are completely victorious through God who showed his love for us. ³⁸ Yes, I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor ruling spirits, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, ³⁹ nothing above us, nothing below us, nor anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

DID GOD MAKE A MISTAKE?

1. God's faithfulness

Romans 9:1-5 I am in Christ, and I am telling you the truth; I do not lie. My conscience is ruled by the Holy Spirit, and it tells me I am not lying. ² I have great sorrow and always feel much sadness. ³ I wish I could help my Jewish brothers and sisters, my people. I would even wish that I were cursed and cut off from Christ if that would help them. ⁴ They are the people of Israel, God's chosen children. They have seen the glory of God, and they have the agreements that God made between himself and his people. God gave them the law of Moses and the right way of worship and his promises. ⁵ They are the descendants of our great ancestors, and they are the earthly family into which Christ was born, who is God over all. Praise him forever! Amen.

a. God's people are not the natural descendants of Abraham

Romans 9:6-10 It is not that God failed to keep his promise to them. But only some of the people of Israel are truly God's people, ⁷ and only some of Abraham's descendants are true children of Abraham. But God said to Abraham: "The descendants I promised you will be from Isaac." ⁸ This means that not all of Abraham's descendants are God's true children. Abraham's true children are those who become God's children because of the promise God made to Abraham. ⁹ God's promise to Abraham was this: "At the right time I will return, and Sarah will have a son." ¹⁰ And that is not all. Rebekah's sons had the same father, our father Isaac.

b. God's people didn't do anything to earn God's favor

Romans 9:11-13 But before the two boys were born, God told Rebekah, "The older will serve the younger." This was before the boys had done anything good or bad. God said this so that the one chosen would be chosen because of God's own plan. He was chosen because he was the one God wanted to call, not because of anything he did. ¹³ As the Scripture says, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."

2. God's righteousness

Romans 9:14-18 So what should we say about this? Is God unfair? In no way. ¹⁵ God said to Moses, "I will show kindness to anyone to whom I want to show kindness, and I will show mercy to anyone to whom I want to show mercy." ¹⁶ So God will choose the one to whom he decides to show mercy; his choice does not depend on what people want or try to do. ¹⁷ The Scripture says to the king of Egypt: "I made you king for this reason: to show my power in you so that my name will be talked about in all the earth." ¹⁸ So God shows mercy where he wants to show mercy, and he makes stubborn the people he wants to make stubborn.

3. God's justice

a. Who are we to argue with God?

Romans 9:19-21 So one of you will ask me: "Then why does God blame us for our sins? Who can fight his will?" ²⁰ You are only human, and human beings have no right to

question God. An object should not ask the person who made it, “Why did you make me like this?” ²¹ The potter can make anything he wants to make. He can use the same clay to make one thing for special use and another thing for daily use.

b. God has His purposes

Romans 9:22-24 It is the same way with God. He wanted to show his anger and to let people see his power. But he patiently stayed with those people he was angry with—people who were made ready to be destroyed. ²³ He waited with patience so that he could make known his rich glory to the people who receive his mercy. He has prepared these people to have his glory, ²⁴ and we are those people whom God called. He called us not from the Jews only but also from those who are not Jews.

c. All of this was prophesied

Romans 9:25-29 As the Scripture says in Hosea: “I will say, ‘You are my people’ to those I had called ‘not my people.’ And I will show my love to those people I did not love.” ²⁶ “They were called, ‘You are not my people,’ but later they will be called ‘children of the living God.’” ²⁷ And Isaiah cries out about Israel: “The people of Israel are many, like the grains of sand by the sea. But only a few of them will be saved, ²⁸ because the Lord will quickly and completely punish the people on the earth.” ²⁹ It is as Isaiah said: “The Lord All-Powerful allowed a few of our descendants to live. Otherwise we would have been completely destroyed like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.”

4. God's grace

Romans 9:30-33 So what does all this mean? Those who are not Jews were not trying to make themselves right with God, but they were made right with God because of their faith. ³¹ The people of Israel tried to follow a law to make themselves right with God. But they did not succeed, ³² because they tried to make themselves right by the things they did instead of trusting in God to make them right. They stumbled over the stone that causes people to stumble. ³³ As it is written in the Scripture: “I will put in Jerusalem a stone that causes people to stumble, a rock that makes them fall. Anyone who trusts in him will never be disappointed.”

THE WRONG RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. The reasons God rejected the Jews

a. They did not recognize their need for salvation

Romans 10:1 Brothers and sisters, the thing I want most is for all the Jews to be saved. That is my prayer to God.

b. They were passionate for God

Romans 10:2 I can say this about them: They really try to follow God, but they do not know the right way.

c. They were proud and self-righteous

Romans 10:3 Because they did not know the way that God makes people right with him, they tried to make themselves right in their own way. So they did not accept God's way of making people right.

d. They misunderstood their own law

Romans 10:4-13 Christ ended the law so that everyone who believes in him may be right with God. ⁵ Moses writes about being made right by following the law. He says, "A person who obeys these things will live because of them." ⁶ But this is what the Scripture says about being made right through faith: "Don't say to yourself, 'Who will go up into heaven?'" (That means, "Who will go up to heaven and bring Christ down to earth?") ⁷ "And do not say, 'Who will go down into the world below?'" (That means, "Who will go down and bring Christ up from the dead?") ⁸ This is what the Scripture says: "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart." That is the teaching of faith that we are telling. ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we declare with our mouths that we believe, and so we are saved. ¹¹ As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disappointed." ¹² That Scripture says "anyone" because there is no difference between those who are Jews and those who are not. The same Lord is the Lord of all and gives many blessings to all who trust in him, ¹³ as the Scripture says, "Anyone who calls on the Lord will be saved."

2. The way to be accepted by God

Romans 10:14-17 But before people can ask the Lord for help, they must believe in him; and before they can believe in him, they must hear about him; and for them to hear about the Lord, someone must tell them; ¹⁵ and before someone can go and tell them, that person must be sent. It is written, "How beautiful is the person who comes to bring good news." ¹⁶ But not all the Jews accepted the good news. Isaiah said, "Lord, who believed what we told them?" ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing the Good News, and people hear the Good News when someone tells them about Christ.

3. The results of their rejection

a. Israel is guilty

Romans 10:18 But I ask: Didn't people hear the Good News? Yes, they heard—as the Scripture says: "Their message went out through all the world; their words go everywhere on earth."

b. The message goes to the Gentiles

Romans 10:19-20 Again I ask: Didn't the people of Israel understand? Yes, they did understand. First, Moses says: "I will use those who are not a nation to make you jealous. I will use a nation that does not understand to make you angry." ²⁰ Then Isaiah is bold enough to say: "I was found by those who were not asking me for help. I made myself known to people who were not looking for me."

- c. God still wants His people to return to Him

Romans 10:21 But about Israel God says, “All day long I stood ready to accept people who disobey and are stubborn.”

GOD IS NOT THROUGH WITH ISRAEL

- 1. Paul himself

Romans 11:1 So I ask: Did God throw out his people? No! I myself am an Israelite from the family of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.

- 2. The prophet Elijah

Romans 11:2-10 God chose the Israelites to be his people before they were born, and he has not thrown his people out. Surely you know what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he prayed to God against the people of Israel. ³ “Lord,” he said, “they have killed your prophets, and they have destroyed your altars. I am the only prophet left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.” ⁴ But what answer did God give Elijah? He said, “But I have left seven thousand people in Israel who have never bowed down before Baal.” ⁵ It is the same now. There are a few people that God has chosen by his grace. ⁶ And if he chose them by grace, it is not for the things they have done. If they could be made God’s people by what they did, God’s gift of grace would not really be a gift. ⁷ So this is what has happened: Although the Israelites tried to be right with God, they did not succeed, but the ones God chose did become right with him. The others were made stubborn and refused to listen to God. ⁸ As it is written in the Scriptures: “God gave the people a dull mind so they could not understand.” “He closed their eyes so they could not see and their ears so they could not hear. This continues until today.” ⁹ And David says: “Let their own feasts trap them and cause their ruin; let their feasts cause them to stumble and be paid back. ¹⁰ Let their eyes be closed so they cannot see and their backs be forever weak from troubles.”

- 3. The Gentiles

Romans 11:11-15 So I ask: When the Jews fell, did that fall destroy them? No! But their failure brought salvation to those who are not Jews, in order to make the Jews jealous. ¹² The Jews’ failure brought rich blessings for the world, and the Jews’ loss brought rich blessings for the non-Jewish people. So surely the world will receive much richer blessings when enough Jews become the kind of people God wants. ¹³ Now I am speaking to you who are not Jews. I am an apostle to those who are not Jews, and since I have that work, I will make the most of it. ¹⁴ I hope I can make my own people jealous and, in that way, help some of them to be saved. ¹⁵ When God turned away from the Jews, he became friends with other people in the world. So when God accepts the Jews, surely that will bring them life after death.

- 4. The Patriarchs

- a. The piece of bread

Romans 11:16a If the first piece of bread is offered to God, then the whole loaf is made holy.

b. The olive tree

Romans 11:16b-24 If the roots of a tree are holy, then the tree's branches are holy too. ¹⁷ It is as if some of the branches from an olive tree have been broken off. You non-Jewish people are like the branch of a wild olive tree that has been joined to that first tree. You now share the strength and life of the first tree, the Jews. ¹⁸ So do not brag about those branches that were broken off. If you brag, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹ You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I could be joined to their tree." ²⁰ That is true. But those branches were broken off because they did not believe, and you continue to be part of the tree only because you believe. Do not be proud, but be afraid. ²¹ If God did not let the natural branches of that tree stay, then he will not let you stay if you don't believe. ²² So you see that God is kind and also very strict. He punishes those who stop following him. But God is kind to you, if you continue following in his kindness. If you do not, you will be cut off from the tree. ²³ And if the Jews will believe in God again, he will accept them back. God is able to put them back where they were. ²⁴ It is not natural for a wild branch to be part of a good tree. And you who are not Jews are like a branch cut from a wild olive tree and joined to a good olive tree. But since those Jews are like a branch that grew from the good tree, surely they can be joined to their own tree again.

5. God Himself

a. God's timing

Romans 11:25 I want you to understand this secret, brothers and sisters, so you will understand that you do not know everything: Part of Israel has been made stubborn, but that will change when many who are not Jews have come to God.

b. God's promise

Romans 11:26 And that is how all Israel will be saved. It is written in the Scriptures: "The Savior will come from Jerusalem; he will take away all evil from the family of Jacob.

c. God's covenant

Romans 11:27-28 And I will make this agreement with those people when I take away their sins." ²⁸ The Jews refuse to accept the Good News, so they are God's enemies. This has happened to help you who are not Jews. But the Jews are still God's chosen people, and he loves them very much because of the promises he made to their ancestors.

d. God's nature

Romans 11:29 God never changes his mind about the people he calls and the things he gives them.

e. God's grace

Romans 11:30-32 At one time you refused to obey God. But now you have received mercy, because those people refused to obey. ³¹ And now the Jews refuse to obey, because God showed mercy to you. But this happened so that they also can receive mercy from him. ³² God has given all people over to their stubborn ways so that he can show mercy to all.

f. God's wisdom

Romans 11:33-36 Yes, God's riches are very great, and his wisdom and knowledge have no end! No one can explain the things God decides or understand his ways. ³⁴ As the Scripture says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been able to give him advice?" ³⁵ "No one has ever given God anything that he must pay back." ³⁶ Yes, God made all things, and everything continues through him and for him. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS MEAN RIGHT LIVING

1. Our relationship to God

a. You give God your body

Romans 12:1 So brothers and sisters, since God has shown us great mercy, I beg you to offer your lives as a living sacrifice to him. Your offering must be only for God and pleasing to him, which is the spiritual way for you to worship.

b. You give God your mind

Romans 12:2a Do not be shaped by this world; instead be changed within by a new way of thinking.

c. You give God you will

Romans 12:2b Then you will be able to decide what God wants for you; you will know what is good and pleasing to him and what is perfect.

2. Our relationship with other believers

a. Honest evaluation

Romans 12:3 Because God has given me a special gift, I have something to say to everyone among you. Do not think you are better than you are. You must decide what you really are by the amount of faith God has given you.

b. Faithful cooperation

Romans 12:4-8 Each one of us has a body with many parts, and these parts all have different uses. ⁵ In the same way, we are many, but in Christ we are all one body. Each one is a part of that body, and each part belongs to all the other parts. ⁶ We all have

different gifts, each of which came because of the grace God gave us. The person who has the gift of prophecy should use that gift in agreement with the faith. ⁷ Anyone who has the gift of serving should serve. Anyone who has the gift of teaching should teach. ⁸ Whoever has the gift of encouraging others should encourage. Whoever has the gift of giving to others should give freely. Anyone who has the gift of being a leader should try hard when he leads. Whoever has the gift of showing mercy to others should do so with joy.

c. Loving participation

Romans 12:9-16 Your love must be real. Hate what is evil, and hold on to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other like brothers and sisters. Give each other more honor than you want for yourselves. ¹¹ Do not be lazy but work hard, serving the Lord with all your heart. ¹² Be joyful because you have hope. Be patient when trouble comes, and pray at all times. ¹³ Share with God's people who need help. Bring strangers in need into your homes. ¹⁴ Wish good for those who harm you; wish them well and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and be sad with those who are sad. ¹⁶ Live in peace with each other. Do not be proud, but make friends with those who seem unimportant. Do not think how smart you are.

3. Our relationship with our enemies

Romans 12:17-21 If someone does wrong to you, do not pay him back by doing wrong to him. Try to do what everyone thinks is right. ¹⁸ Do your best to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹ My friends, do not try to punish others when they wrong you, but wait for God to punish them with his anger. It is written: "I will punish those who do wrong; I will repay them," says the Lord. ²⁰ But you should do this: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. Doing this will be like pouring burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not let evil defeat you, but defeat evil by doing good.

4. Our relationship with the government

a. Because of fear

Romans 13:1-4 All of you must yield to the government rulers. No one rules unless God has given him the power to rule, and no one rules now without that power from God. ² So those who are against the government are really against what God has commanded. And they will bring punishment on themselves. ³ Those who do right do not have to fear the rulers; only those who do wrong fear them. Do you want to be unafraid of the rulers? Then do what is right, and they will praise you. ⁴ The ruler is God's servant to help you. But if you do wrong, then be afraid. He has the power to punish; he is God's servant to punish those who do wrong.

b. Because of respect and honor

Romans 13:5-7 So you must yield to the government, not only because you might be punished, but because you know it is right. ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes. Rulers are working for God and give their time to their work. ⁷ Pay everyone, then, what you owe. If you owe any kind of tax, pay it. Show respect and honor to them all.

c. Because of love

Romans 13:8-10 Do not owe people anything, except always owe love to each other, because the person who loves others has obeyed all the law. ⁹ The law says, “You must not be guilty of adultery. You must not murder anyone. You must not steal. You must not want to take your neighbor’s things.” All these commands and all others are really only one rule: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” ¹⁰ Love never hurts a neighbor, so loving is obeying all the law.

d. Because of Jesus

Romans 13:11-14 Do this because we live in an important time. It is now time for you to wake up from your sleep, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The “night” is almost finished, and the “day” is almost here. So we should stop doing things that belong to darkness and take up the weapons used for fighting in the light. ¹³ Let us live in a right way, like people who belong to the day. We should not have wild parties or get drunk. There should be no sexual sins of any kind, no fighting or jealousy. ¹⁴ But clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and forget about satisfying your sinful self.

WHEN CHRISTIANS DISAGREE

1. Accept one another

a. God has accepted us

Romans 14:1-3 Accept into your group someone who is weak in faith, and do not argue about opinions. ² One person believes it is right to eat all kinds of food. But another, who is weak, believes it is right to eat only vegetables. ³ The one who knows that it is right to eat any kind of food must not reject the one who eats only vegetables. And the person who eats only vegetables must not think that the one who eats all foods is wrong, because God has accepted that person.

b. God helps His own

Romans 14:4 You cannot judge another person’s servant. The master decides if the servant is doing well or not. And the Lord’s servant will do well because the Lord helps him do well.

c. Jesus Christ is Lord

Romans 14:5-9 Some think that one day is more important than another, and others think that every day is the same. Let all be sure in their own mind. ⁶ Those who think one day is more important than other days are doing that for the Lord. And those who eat all kinds of food are doing that for the Lord, and they give thanks to God. Others who refuse to eat some foods do that for the Lord, and they give thanks to God. ⁷ We do not live or die for ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we are living for the Lord, and if we die, we are dying for the Lord. So living or dying, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ The reason Christ died and rose from the dead to live again was so he would be Lord over both the dead and the living.

d. Jesus Christ is Judge

Romans 14:10-12 So why do you judge your brothers or sisters in Christ? And why do you think you are better than they are? We will all stand before God to be judged, ¹¹ because it is written in the Scriptures: “‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘Everyone will bow before me; everyone will say that I am God.’” ¹² So each of us will have to answer to God.

2. Improve one another

a. Christians affect each other

Romans 14:13-15 For that reason we should stop judging each other. We must make up our minds not to do anything that will make another Christian sin. ¹⁴ I am in the Lord Jesus, and I know that there is no food that is wrong to eat. But if a person believes something is wrong, that thing is wrong for him. ¹⁵ If you hurt your brother’s or sister’s faith because of something you eat, you are not really following the way of love. Do not destroy someone’s faith by eating food he thinks is wrong, because Christ died for him.

b. Christians must have priorities

Romans 14:16-18 Do not allow what you think is good to become what others say is evil. ¹⁷ In the kingdom of God, eating and drinking are not important. The important things are living right with God, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Anyone who serves Christ by living this way is pleasing God and will be accepted by other people.

c. Christians must help each other grow

Romans 14:19-21 So let us try to do what makes peace and helps one another. ²⁰ Do not let the eating of food destroy the work of God. All foods are all right to eat, but it is wrong to eat food that causes someone else to sin. ²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that will cause your brother or sister to sin.

d. Christians must not force their opinions on others

Romans 14:22-23 Your beliefs about these things should be kept secret between you and God. People are happy if they can do what they think is right without feeling guilty. ²³ But those who eat something without being sure it is right are wrong because they did not believe it was right. Anything that is done without believing it is right is a sin.

3. Please one another

Romans 15:1-7 We who are strong in faith should help the weak with their weaknesses, and not please only ourselves. ² Let each of us please our neighbors for their good, to help them be stronger in faith. ³ Even Christ did not live to please himself. It was as the Scriptures said: “When people insult you, it hurts me.” ⁴ Everything that was written in

the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures give us patience and encouragement so that we can have hope. ⁵ May the patience and encouragement that come from God allow you to live in harmony with each other the way Christ Jesus wants. ⁶ Then you will all be joined together, and you will give glory to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Christ accepted you, so you should accept each other, which will bring glory to God.

BELIEVERS ON THE MOVE

1. The ministry of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles

Romans 15:8-13 I tell you that Christ became a servant of the Jews to show that God's promises to the Jewish ancestors are true. ⁹ And he also did this so that those who are not Jews could give glory to God for the mercy he gives to them. It is written in the Scriptures: "So I will praise you among the non-Jewish people. I will sing praises to your name." ¹⁰ The Scripture also says, "Be happy, you who are not Jews, together with his people." ¹¹ Again the Scripture says, "All you who are not Jews, praise the Lord. All you people, sing praises to him." ¹² And Isaiah says, "A new king will come from the family of Jesse. He will come to rule over the non-Jewish people, and they will have hope because of him." ¹³ I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy and peace while you trust in him. Then your hope will overflow by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Paul's ministry to the Gentiles

a. It was received by grace

Romans 15:14-15 My brothers and sisters, I am sure that you are full of goodness. I know that you have all the knowledge you need and that you are able to teach each other. ¹⁵ But I have written to you very openly about some things I wanted you to remember. I did this because God gave me this special gift:

b. It was centered in the gospel

Romans 15:16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to those who are not Jews. I served God by teaching his Good News, so that the non-Jewish people could be an offering that God would accept—an offering made holy by the Holy Spirit.

c. It was done for God's glory

Romans 15:17 So I am proud of what I have done for God in Christ Jesus.

d. It was done by God's power

Romans 15:18-19 I will not talk about anything except what Christ has done through me in leading those who are not Jews to obey God. They have obeyed God because of what I have said and done, ¹⁹ because of the power of miracles and the great things they saw, and because of the power of the Holy Spirit. I preached the Good News from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, and so I have finished that part of my work.

- e. It was according to God's plan

Romans 15:20-24 I always want to preach the Good News in places where people have never heard of Christ, because I do not want to build on the work someone else has already started. ²¹ But it is written in the Scriptures: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard about him will understand." ²² This is the reason I was stopped many times from coming to you. ²³ Now I have finished my work here. Since for many years I have wanted to come to you, ²⁴ I hope to visit you on my way to Spain. After I enjoy being with you for a while, I hope you can help me on my trip.

3. The Gentiles' ministry to the Jews

Romans 15:25-33 Now I am going to Jerusalem to help God's people. ²⁶ The believers in Macedonia and Southern Greece were happy to give their money to help the poor among God's people at Jerusalem. ²⁷ They were happy to do this, and really they owe it to them. These who are not Jews have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, so they should use their material possessions to help the Jews. ²⁸ After I am sure the poor in Jerusalem get the money that has been given for them, I will leave for Spain and stop and visit you. ²⁹ I know that when I come to you I will bring Christ's full blessing. ³⁰ Brothers and sisters, I beg you to help me in my work by praying to God for me. Do this because of our Lord Jesus and the love that the Holy Spirit gives us. ³¹ Pray that I will be saved from the nonbelievers in Judea and that this help I bring to Jerusalem will please God's people there. ³² Then, if God wants me to, I will come to you with joy, and together you and I will have a time of rest. ³³ The God who gives peace be with you all. Amen.

4. The believers' ministry to Paul

- a. Some friends to greet

Romans 16:1-16 I recommend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a helper in the church in Cenchrea. ² I ask you to accept her in the Lord in the way God's people should. Help her with anything she needs, because she has helped me and many other people also. ³ Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, who work together with me in Christ Jesus ⁴ and who risked their own lives to save my life. I am thankful to them, and all the non-Jewish churches are thankful as well. ⁵ Also, greet for me the church that meets at their house. Greetings to my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first person in Asia to follow Christ. ⁶ Greetings to Mary, who worked very hard for you. ⁷ Greetings to Andronicus and Junia, my relatives, who were in prison with me. They are very important apostles. They were believers in Christ before I was. ⁸ Greetings to Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord. ⁹ Greetings to Urbanus, a worker together with me for Christ. And greetings to my dear friend Stachys. ¹⁰ Greetings to Apelles, who was tested and proved that he truly loves Christ. Greetings to all those who are in the family of Aristobulus. ¹¹ Greetings to Herodion, my fellow citizen. Greetings to all those in the family of Narcissus who belong to the Lord. ¹² Greetings to Tryphena and Tryphosa, women who work very hard for the Lord. Greetings to my dear friend Persis, who also has worked very hard for the Lord. ¹³ Greetings to Rufus, who is a special person in the Lord, and to his mother, who has been like a mother to me also. ¹⁴ Greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and all the brothers and sisters who are with them. ¹⁵ Greetings to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas,

and to all God's people with them. ¹⁶ Greet each other with a holy kiss. All of Christ's churches send greetings to you.

b. Some enemies to avoid

Romans 16:17-20 Brothers and sisters, I ask you to look out for those who cause people to be against each other and who upset other people's faith. They are against the true teaching you learned, so stay away from them. ¹⁸ Such people are not serving our Lord Christ but are only doing what pleases themselves. They use fancy talk and fine words to fool the minds of those who do not know about evil. ¹⁹ All the believers have heard that you obey, so I am very happy because of you. But I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. ²⁰ The God who brings peace will soon defeat Satan and give you power over him. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

c. Some faithful servants to honor

Romans 16:21-27 Timothy, a worker together with me, sends greetings, as well as Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives. ²² I am Tertius, and I am writing this letter from Paul. I send greetings to you in the Lord. ²³ Gaius is letting me and the whole church here use his home. He also sends greetings to you, as do Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus.

[²⁴ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.]

²⁵ Glory to God who can make you strong in faith by the Good News that I tell people and by the message about Jesus Christ. The message about Christ is the secret that was hidden for long ages past but is now made known. ²⁶ It has been made clear through the writings of the prophets. And by the command of the eternal God it is made known to all nations that they might believe and obey. ²⁷ To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.