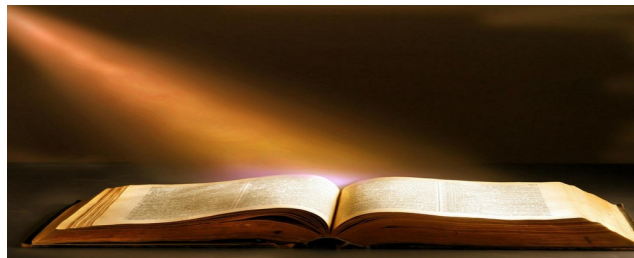




**GROWING UP  
IN CHRIST  
TO BECOME A MATURE  
BELIEVER**

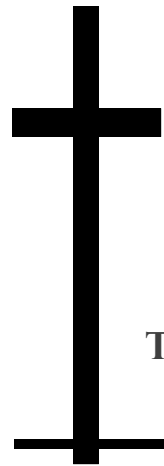
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“But speaking the truth in love, may **grow up into him** in all things,  
which is the head, even Christ.”  
Ephesians 4:15

Written by Brian and Deborah Johnson  
July, 2016





**GROWING UP  
IN CHRIST**

**TO BECOME A MATURE  
BELIEVER**

Written by, Brian and Deborah Johnson

This book is dedicated to  
all those who desire to find the Truth:

“If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for  
hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord,  
and find the knowledge of God.”  
Proverbs 2:5-6

Contact Information:  
**Christian Life Coach Support Services**  
Brian and Deborah Johnson  
(804) 519-1210  
lifecoachesdjb@yahoo.com  
www.christianlifecoachsupport.squarespace.com

July, 2016

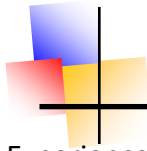


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*\*Note: The King James version of the Bible is used for all references.  
At times, words may be highlighted for clarity.*



## Introduction

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Experiences similar to the one below, prompted the writing this book: “I pray regularly and go to church, waiting and hoping God will help or provide answers. As I sit in church every week and look around, I see it’s filled with Christians, yet I feel SO alone. I’m not growing and don’t know how to stop sin in my life. Am I the only one with problems? I’m afraid to ask for help at church, everyone is so busy. I also feel like I ‘should’ understand, but sometimes I even wonder if I’m saved. Please... Help me! Where are you God?”



This book, “**Growing Up In Christ,**” is a glimpse of ‘how to mature’ through the basics of being a Christian. It’s aim is to help students understand and apply Scripture, especially foundational Truths in the book of Romans. The booklet also includes practical, easy to use study keys and insights.

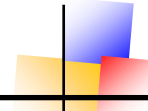
There are answers! God loves you and if you trust that the blood of Christ paid for your sin, you are ‘a believer’ and the Spirit of God lives in you. God the Father wants to speak to you by His Spirit, using the Scriptures (God’s Word). As people become adults, they tend to think, “I already know; I’m fine without God,” of course, until life challenges overwhelm them. Christ longs to help by teaching you His ways. Decide today to grow in your faith.



Be patient to find the important details God placed in the Bible (Scriptures) to help you on your ‘journey of life.’ For example, He chose one man, Paul, to be the Apostle to teach believers in the Church. (Rom. 11:13) This makes his writings, Romans through Philemon, especially practical for you. “**Growing Up In Christ**” can assist you to understand ‘where’ and ‘how’ to find answers. Read each chapter of this book, thinking about the verses provided to learn how to finally fit ‘the puzzle pieces’ together.

\*If you are a believer with little Bible study experience, you can also benefit from this book. Take the time to use the Glossary of Terms and be patient with yourself, think on each section and progress slowly. You may need to read things more than once. It can also be helpful to ask a mature Bible student some of your questions as they arise. **Page 6**

## Glossary of Terms



*\*Preview this glossary and refer to these definitions as you read. It will make review of this book easier and help you to understand and study the Bible.*

1. **Bible/Word/God's Word:** Names for Scripture. (God's instruction manual)
2. **Blood:** The living fluid in the veins of the Lord Jesus Christ. He shed His blood for mankind, when He died on the cross. (Leviticus 17)
3. **Doctrine:** Specific teaching found in the Scriptures.
4. **Epistles:** Scripture written in a letter; it is God's inspired Word.
5. **Exalt:** To reverence or honor, to elevate.
6. **Faith:** Belief of the Truth; resting on the authority of the Scriptures.
7. **Gentiles:** This refers to all the nations of the world. Only in this time of Grace today, does it also include Israel. (Genesis 10:5)
8. **Glory:** Brightness/splendor of God's character shining. (Exodus 33)
9. **God/Father/Lord/Creator:** A few of the many names of God.
10. **God is three-in-one:** God is a 'triune' God: He has three parts: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost (Spirit).
11. **Grace:** This is free, undeserved favor or kindness. It is also a system of living, being under God's grace and released from the law.
12. **Imputed:** Credited to your account; a given attribute.
13. **Israel:** God's own nation. (Located in the Middle East; began in Genesis 12.)
14. **Judgment:** Evaluation of a person's life, with a just ruling: Punishment or reward. All mankind stands before God. Believers are 'justified by Christ's blood' by believing and receive reward. (1 Cor. 3) Unbelievers are weighed according to their works. (Romans 2/Rev. 20)
15. **Justified/Just:** Made righteous; without guilt. (Made right with God)
16. **Law:** Often refers to Moses' Law, but can be any man-made rule/expectation. A way of living, focused on performance. (Blessing/curses)
17. **Meditate:** To dwell on, think, or turn over in the mind; consider.
18. **Prayer:** Talking to God; asking favor or requests; communing.
19. **Reconcile:** To bring together again; to reunite in harmony.
20. **Renew:** To restore, teach, or rebuild to a good or godly state.
21. **Righteous:** Just, holy; a pure heart and life. Can refer to believers.
22. **Satan/Devil:** Names for God's adversary; a fallen angel who wants to be God. He temporarily rules the earth, until Christ's return.
23. **Saved:** Preserved/delivered from danger: God's judgment of sin.
24. **Sin:** Describes man's nature; breaking of God's divine law/ways;
25. **(Free) Will:** God gave man the ability to choose his own way.
26. **(His) Will:** God's purpose/desire; what He wants accomplished.
27. **(This) World:** The earth with all its beings. Now, it is a sinful/rebellious place toward God. Satan rules, as he took it from Adam in Genesis 3. Christ will take it back when He returns in Revelation.



## CHAPTER 1

---

# God's Wonderful Love to You



### 'Justified' in God's sight

The Father loves you deeply.


Patiently, He waits, longing for every individual to believe in Him. Each person has a choice. Have you trusted Christ; are you confident you're forgiven all your sin, living forever in heaven with God? Isaiah 45:22 says, "Look unto me, and *be ye saved*, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

What does the word saved mean? Being 'saved' refers to being preserved or delivered from danger: God's judgment of man's sin. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God..." (Romans 3:23) All God desires is that you respond to Him and His Word (Scripture) by faith.

### What stops man from having faith?

A 'faith response' is simply believing: "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17) The Scripture teaches that God is the Creator, the one who provides all good things. On the other hand, men are imperfect and sinners; they "...glorified him not as God, neither are thankful...". (Romans 1:21) No person is 'just'; they are not perfect in thought or behavior. This may seem a bit harsh, but it really isn't. It is just difficult to hear. The world and sin will entice man to reject this Truth: God is the Creator and all are sinners.





---

Man can be side-tracked by making up 'his own belief system' in his mind; it is often mixed with *some* Truth. This is religion and NOT God's way. A 'faith response' is the only way to be justified (made righteous). Scripture is to be our authority.

### What is God's way?

God preserved every word of Scripture; you can be confident and trust it is Truth. "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6-7)

God loves you unconditionally, knowing you are a sinner. Since His righteous (perfect) character can't look upon sin, in great love He provided His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die and suffer in your place. (Isaiah 64:7) ***His shed blood*** paid for every one of your sins! (To Do: Read Romans 3:19 through 4:25, it is the gospel!)



If you have not done so yet, believe it! Then, God can give you the gift of 'His righteousness' and eternal life: "Even the righteousness of God *which is by faith of Jesus Christ* unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference...". (Romans 3:22) When you trust this, you are saved from the debt and penalty of sin and are made 'just' (righteous). Now you have 'peace with God' and eternal life. (Romans 5:1-2)



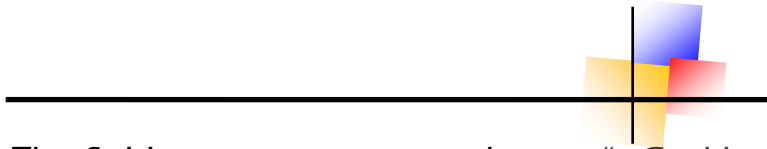
To review, Christ died for your sins, was buried, and rose again. Believe this so you can be 'just' (made righteous). "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:21-25) You are then given His Spirit, which helps you know 'God's mind' on things. (I Cor. 2:10) The next step is important: realize God has a *new purpose* for you.

### **Once a believer, what does God want?**

God desires that you 'grow up' in the faith and learn about what He has provided for you in His Word (Scripture). Be 'persuaded' that God loves you without measure and is all-knowing and all-powerful, 'fully able' to help you make this journey. In time, Abraham learned a 'faith walk:' "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being *fully persuaded* that, what he had promised, *he was able* also to perform." (Rom. 4:20-21) God will help you!

### **The goal: God's will for you**




There is so much more to 'being a Christian' than becoming saved. God desires that you make the time each day to grow by personally **reading and believing His Word**. This enables you to please Him, deal with problems wisely, and prepare for your future life in heaven.



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The Spirit uses verses to teach you: "...God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God...Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (I Corinthians 2:10,12)

**To Do:**

-  Once you trust Christ as your payment for sin, continue to 'walk by faith,' learning about Him and how He has empowered you. (Romans 6-8)
-  Set time each day to pray, read, and meditate on Scripture, trusting it is Truth. Apply what you learn, so God can help you with life challenges.
-  As a believer, a new perspective can open to you. Start this faith journey by reading Romans. Realize that being 'saved' is... *just the beginning.*



**Goal:** God's will (desire) is to 'conform' you to Christ's image. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image** of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8:29) 'Conformed to His image' means to be transformed and able to think and live like Christ. (I Cor. 2:16) You may wonder, 'Well, how can this be done?'




Your mind is to be changed by Scripture, according to Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." Reading the Bible places God's Word in your mind and heart, replacing ungodly, worldly thinking.

When you read Scripture 'by faith,' you are 'yielding' and being renewed (matured). God's Word is 'proved' (shown to be true) by its power shining within your life, such as in godly thinking, choices, and living. Romans 12:2 continues: "...that ye may *prove* what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will, of God."

**How to Yield:** God's Word is to be your strength to live the Christian life! It is NOT to be an imitation of 'you trying hard.' The way it is done is to read and focus on Bible verses through the day. Exalt God's powerful Scripture by believing '**it is able**' to work. Choose daily to live it by faith, putting it to practice in your life. "Neither *yield* ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but *yield* yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Romans 6:13)

To 'yield' means to allow or submit. As you yield, you submit and exalt God, believing Him. You set 'your feelings and will' aside to 'allow' the Word to change how you think and behave. Christ can then live through the details of your life, producing true godliness.



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The great challenge is resetting priorities, that is, letting go of 'your worldly focus' and instead, exalting (honoring) God. He will empower and motivate you to serve Him. Do what is needed to put aside 'other things' to read Scripture. Christ in you is your power, but your responsible to perform 'what He asks' in His Word. As this is done, you're conformed to Christ's image.

Paul was taught 'the mind of Christ.' He lived according to what he knew in God's Word, using it to deal with life issues. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20) Christ desires to help you learn also. You can relinquish your right to live for 'self,' in order to let Christ renew (teach) your mind, so you can live for Him.



There are two things important 'to know' in order to progress: 1. Know God desires that you 'grow up' to maturity. 2. Know how to locate sound Bible doctrine (teaching to the Church today), realizing it is laid out in an organized manner in Scripture. Christians are often uneducated in these two issues. Once saved, they tend to sit back and wait to go to heaven, 'trying' 'to be a good person.' These are 'works of self-righteousness,' which exalts oneself and actually is unacceptable to God. To begin to do God's will, start reading the book of Romans.



---

## Chapter 1 Study Page

### To Do

- ⇒ Find a good Bible study group, ideally someone who understands Paul's distinct ministry to the Church, the Body of Christ. (Use the resources on Page 54 if you can't locate a study group or someone wise in the Scriptures.)
- ⇒ Reflect on God and your life; are there changes needed?
- ⇒ Look up verses referenced so far and meditate on them.
- ⇒ Personal study: Read Romans 1-3 several times and prayerfully answer the questions below. (Don't be discouraged if you don't understand. God's way takes time. He is storing Scripture inside to be used later as you mature. Progress slowly, learn what you can, and be thankful.)



### Answer the Questions

1. What happens to man when he does not 'glorify (exalt) God, and is not thankful' in Romans 1:21-23? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What does Romans 1:32 and 2:1-2 teach about man's responsibility for his sin? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

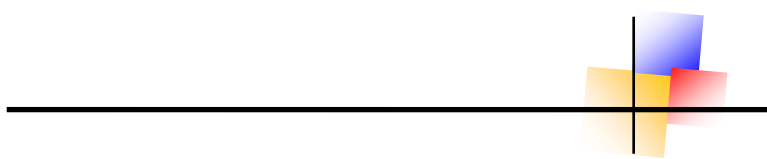
3. Describe man's hopeless condition without God in Romans 3:19-20. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Romans 3:21-26 describes the basic gospel. What do the verses teach you about how to be 'just' before God?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Study Notes



## CHAPTER 2

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# Why Start in Romans?

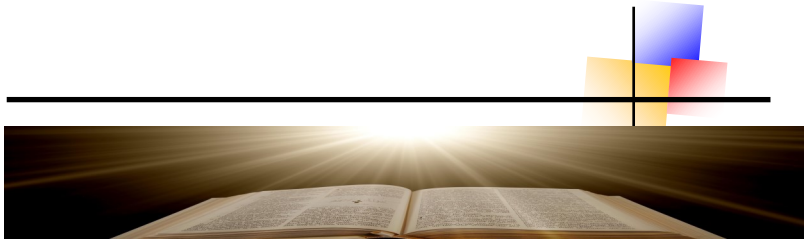
## God has a plan

Paul was a man chosen by God to write a 'form of doctrine' (teaching plan) to mature believers today. This plan is found in Romans through Philemon. The first book, Romans, provides *exactly* what you need to begin growing from a young Christian to a 'spiritual adult' believer. God's plan in Romans will begin to teach you to live His will, 'conformed to the image of Christ,' thinking and functioning like Him.

The Lord God's desire is for you to respond as the Romans did: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that **form of doctrine** which was delivered you." (Romans 6:17)


The book of Romans begins Paul's teaching to the Church (also called the Body of Christ). This 'form of doctrine' is designed to *establish* you in the basics of the faith. In Romans, Chapter 1, Paul relays his goal for writing the book. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be **established**." (Romans 1:11)






## A preview: Romans will establish you

\*Note: Romans is highly organized, much like a curriculum, one concept is taught and builds upon the next. Prayerfully, study each of the chapters to understand as a detailed explanation of each is beyond the scope of this book.

 **Romans, Chapters 1-5:** This first group of chapters in Romans provides clarity and depth as to how a person is justified (made righteous) and can have eternal life with God:

Chapter 1: Man's unrighteousness and ungodliness. Chapter 2: God's judgment. Chapter 3: Justified by faith alone. Chapter 4: God's righteousness is 'imputed' (given or credited to your account) once you believe. Faith is also clearly defined. Chapter 5: Peace and a grace standing with God; eternal life.

 **Romans, Chapters 6-8:** These three chapters reveal how God has changed you as a believer. Paul teaches about your 'new identity' in Christ and 'how' to live a holy life unto God:

Chapter 6: New choices, because you are 'dead to sin' and 'alive unto God.' Chapter 7: Now, you are also 'dead to the law,' and 'sin in the flesh' is separate from your new, 'inward man.' Chapter 8: A process to mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, and you can be 'led by the Spirit' as a spiritual adult. Paul concludes with a reflection: Do you have confidence in God and His love, trusting Him completely?



**Romans, Chapters 9-11:** This section builds your confidence, knowing God made prior promises to Israel and will be faithful to fulfill them. However, His work with the Body of Christ must be accomplished first. One underlying issue in these chapters is 'selfless love.' This quality helps to prepare you to be a servant and living sacrifice, as taught in Romans 12-16:

Chapter 9: God's shows great love, mercy, and longsuffering as He answers Israel's questions about why He has not set up His Kingdom on earth yet. Instead, Israel was aside for a time, while He offers grace to the Gentiles. Chapter 10: Israel is accountable as they had Scripture. Chapter 11: God has not forgotten His Nation; He will fulfill all promises, but has something to do first.

**Note:** The Church, the Body of Christ is an interruption to God's relationship with Israel. Now is a Mystery time of grace (Undeserved favor or blessings), with a focus on the Gentiles (all nations of the earth). The Church being formed today has a grace relationship with God.



**Romans, Chapters 12-16:** This final group of chapters instructs believers (saints) in their worship and service to God:

Chapter 12: A 'living sacrifice,' with guidelines to teach grace and reverence, serving God in day-to-day living. Chapter 13: Authority and 'the grace law.' Chapter 14 - 15: Gracious dealings with weaker saints by strong believers. Chapter 16: Godly companions working together in grace, yet there is a warning.



## Life application: Romans 6-8

### What are you minding?

Paul was chosen to be a minister to the Gentiles (all nations), providing doctrine for the Body of Christ. His teachings are guidelines for the Body of Christ to live by, but also are 'real' answers to deal with life challenges. Understanding 'his doctrine' teaches you Christ's mind.

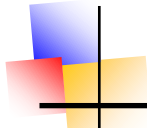
Once thinking is changed by the Spirit in you, behavior will follow. So then, God desires that you yield, allowing Him to instruct you. It's important you trust He has the answers and begin reading to 'renew' (educate) your mind.

(To Do: If Paul's ministry is unfamiliar, stop here to study his unique role as our Apostle. These are just a few of many verses: Acts 9:1-15 & 28:28, Rom.1:1 & 16:25, Eph. 3: 1-12)

Romans 6-8 teaches about many things that changed once you trusted Christ's blood (were made righteous). Understanding these new aspects of your 'identity in Christ, enables you to 'mind spiritual things' and effectively deal with sin.

A few examples:

- ◇ You're alive to 'God's power' being stored in you, as you read and yield, believing Scripture. (Romans 6:11)
- ◇ Your 'new mind' can choose to live godly. Sin no longer 'has' to control you. (Romans 6:13-14)
- ◇ You are 'dead to sin' and 'dead to the law' in Romans



## Practical example: Sin Cycle in Romans 7

Believers often find themselves in a cycle of sinful behavior they are unable to change. Whether it is yelling at your kids, gossiping, chronic lying, or drug addiction, sin habits are hard to break! To be honest, all believers have controlling sin patterns. (Think on Romans 6-8 as it uncovers this sin problem, but also provides the solution.)



Your bondage to sin will remain as long as you continue in your own energy or effort to 'try' to live godly to gain God's approval. You will need to realize *you are weak* and unable to live unto God by 'your works'; it ends in failure: "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24) The exalted belief that 'you can do it' produces the Sin Cycle.

### \*Stages of the Sin Cycle



1. You try to keep a law, but sin starts. (Vs. 7-10)
2. 'Trying' develops self-pride and the belief that, 'I can do it myself' and don't really don't need God. (Verse 7:11)
3. The result is failure, self-condemnation, and guilt. So you take a break to reflect on your behavior. (Vs. 7:11-15)
4. Re-motivated, you try again, but harder. (Vs. 7:16, 21)
5. Deeper failure/self-condemnation/guilt eventually result. (Verse 7:24)

\*This cycle is a spiral downward developing hopelessness. It will only produce functional spiritual death. Most Christians live here... Ever trying. (Vs. 7:22-24)



## Romans 8 Grace Process

At any time, you can step off 'the road of sin' to live in grace, believing and trusting God: "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, *he was able* also to perform." (Romans 4:21) What really holds you back is your own exalted thinking.

Romans 8 contains the Grace Process to deal with the grievous bondage of the cycle of sin. First, take the focus off 'your efforts' and 'the behavior' and exalt God, His Word, and 'His power.' Then, be thankful. (Rom. 1:21-23) Remember, you are forgiven; don't condemn yourself. Decide to live unto God, even when painful or difficult. Prayer is crucial. \*(If you're unable to put this into practice, some things in Romans 6-8 aren't yet understood. Keep studying.)



### The Grace Process of Romans 8:

1. You want to change & stop this Sin Cycle. (Vs. 7:7-11)
2. Pray to think differently. Put faith in God, not yourself. Yield unto God's power in you. (Verses 1:21-23, 8:1-3)
3. Walk after the Spirit, *humbly* staying in the Word, with prayer and meditation. Focus above. (Verses 8:4-8)
4. Be led by the Spirit in the Word. Become so *consumed with God's Word*, (Romans-Philemon) the desire to sin, pales, denying Satan and sin a place in your mind. This mortifies (puts to death) ungodly deeds. (Vs. 8:9-14)
5. The sin cycle ends here. Sin no longer has control and you are free. Now you are living your convictions, as who you are in Christ! (Verses 8:18-28)





## How to proceed


Knowing how God works, read, read, read! Begin by studying Romans as this will renew your mind and develop confidence. Some suggestions:





### To Do

 1. Review what you are learning, thinking about it through the day. This will enable you to make wise decisions and yield. Start a few new habits: regularly read, meditate, and stay in prayer.

 2. Come to the same conclusion as God the Father: Sin no longer controls you (Romans 6), yet what you 'mind' affects your physical members. Stay in the Word so you are prepared for difficult situations. Renewing your mind in Scripture affects your behavior.

 3. Trust in what God is teaching you by the Scripture. Plan ahead of time to stay far from sin, avoiding ungodly and unwise situations. Instead, position yourself with people and in activities that promote godliness. (Proverbs 4:10-27) Choose friends carefully.

 4. Walk 'circumspectly,' that is, observe all around. You will then begin to know yourself and your weak areas. When you're in ungodliness, stop this Sin Cycle immediately, pray, and yield to God's power. (Review the Grace Process on page 21 again, if needed.)

 5. Be open to be perfected (refined) by the Word; listen to the Spirit's teaching and correcting. Your mind will be transformed (changed) and the sinful doctrine of this world will be purged. As you learn, you gain confidence as a believer, which affects your behavior.

---



## Chapter 2 Study Page

### To Do

- ⇒ Be sure to obtain a King James Bible and a good dictionary. When you read and study, keep Scripture as your final authority, proving all things with the Word.
- ⇒ Where to start: Begin with prayer and read Romans 1. Simply read and reread a section, a few verses at a time, pausing to reflect. Write down what you notice, along with questions that arise. Continue this process, slowly reading/meditating on Romans 1-4.
- ⇒ As you read these chapters several times, answer the following questions. Be patient for the words to sink into your mind/heart; understanding comes in time.



### Answer the Questions

1. After reading Romans 1, list the topics you noticed and key words (terms repeated). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did man do in Romans 1:18-20 to make himself 'without excuse?' \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who will be judged according to Romans 2:6? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In your own words, what is the conclusion made in Romans 3:28? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Read Romans 4:17-21. Use these verses to write a definition of 'faith.' \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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## Study Notes



## CHAPTER 3

# Walking by Faith in Grace

## Examples of 'grace'



Clarity in this term is important. Grace can be defined as free favor, mercy, and 'unconditional' loving kindness. God's attitude toward you today is grace: To be justified, you simply believed Christ's payment for sin and received the gift of God's righteousness and eternal life. NO work was involved, it was faith alone. This is grace!

As a believer, God desires to give you all things requiring nothing in return; you have the privilege to learn about them. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) This too is grace!

In order to live a life pleasing to God, you have to be perfect. Yet, this is impossible because of "...sin that dwelleth in me..." (Romans 7:17) God knows 'your flesh' contains sin; it didn't change at all once you 'believed.' He simply desires that you 'yield,' and walk by faith, allowing God to work in the inward man: "...yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Rom. 6:13) God's work in you is also a facet of grace; unconditional and free!




Romans 7 relays man's tendency to keep 'trying hard' to do good to 'keep' God's favor. But recall, God 'has given' you His grace and total favor; it's never taken away! "...If God be for us, who can be against us...Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." (Rom. 8:31, 33) This is an aspect of grace! (Pause here to study these verses on grace for yourself.)

### How to walk by faith in grace

1) Stop focusing on 'doing,' rely on God's power in you. Be thankful, exalt God, and rest in His gracious love. Read, be consumed with the powerful Word; it works mightily as you trust and are stirred into action to yield.

2) How? Decide to live what you learn in faith: a) *In Love*: Be motivated by His love and 'all He has freely done' for you. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead..." b) *Godly walk*: Now submit 'your will' to live God's, doing His work by faith, motivated in grace. "...And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (II Cor. 5:14-15)

 However, you 'can' take advantage of God's grace and choose to serve 'your own self.' "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." (Romans 6:15) Instead, in thankfulness and a love response to the Father, be excited, even driven to serve 'God's desires,' not 'your own flesh.' When mistakes happen, use *grace* to forgive yourself and then, keep growing.

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## A grace walk can have challenges

### The flesh

The part of man's makeup that reacts to the physical world is the flesh (Man's corrupt thinking, desires and lusts). "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing..." (Romans 7:18) This sinful thinking affects how you live and make decisions. Yet, as you trust the Truth of the verses stored inside you, God empowers you to think with Christ's mind and then, live according to the Spirit's teaching.



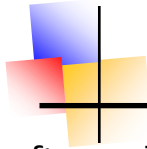
When a believer decides to live godly, the flesh will NOT like to be told 'No;' it enjoys 'being in charge.' "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Galatians 5:17)



As a baby, 'the flesh' will scream for what it wants. Be ready for resistance when you change habits. Stay focused and push through it, realizing your complete provision is in Christ the Word. God is all-powerful and your strength! You no longer 'have to sin.'

### The world around you (Satan's evil system)

Since Adam and Eve, the world has been controlled by Satan. It conforms man to accept sin,



often without consciously knowing. Sin permeates all aspects of 'this world.' As you allow Christ to change you, His light shines in your life and may cause those around you discomfort. (Romans 12:2) Be ready for this also. "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2) Some may be offended and feel convicted by your life changes. Count it all joy as they are not rejecting you, but Christ in you. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance for ye serve the Lord Christ." (Col.3:23)

Note: Reflect upon people in your life. Do they follow ungodly ways, "...according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in *the children of disobedience?*" (Eph. 2:2) This can be true of believers also; choose friends wisely.



**Legalism** (This is not grace!)

Living 'under' a formal or informal system of expectations or rules with consequences, is legalism. For example, **if you obey** your parents, all will be well, **if you don't obey** and are rebellious, there is punishment. Whether it's the 'Ten Commandments' or a personal set of rules, man never measures up. Failure pushes God away: 'the law works wrath.' (Romans 4:15)



In contrast, God desires for you to live by grace, according to your convictions as an adult believer. Avoid feeling 'coerced' to yield to what any person or religious institution says. You are free, "...for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14) Keep the Scripture as your authority: What it says is always Truth. Prove all things by comparing it to the Word. (Including this book.)

You may feel 'pressure' to believe or do 'religious things;' this comes from 'expectations' within yourself or others. Avoid the trap of 'trying hard' on your own to please God. 'You' are exalted (honored) as you perform 'under the law.' "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ..." (Romans 7:4) God desires to do the work in you, so yield (submit) in grace. (Romans 6:8-14)

### **Our walk is all about choices!**

At times, you will make a mistake or find yourself on the 'ungodly road of life.' In grace, simply step off that 'path of thinking' to serve God, without guilt or condemning yourself for mistakes. You **are** forgiven! "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1)





Many things can entice and distract you from God's purpose. Each day and moment there can be a 'Y' in the road, with a decision to be made. Go to the left to serve your flesh, but to the right to serve God. Which way will you travel? Be wise!



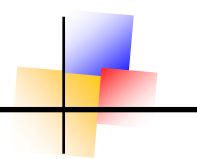
**The Flesh**

**Unto God**



Think on these things, as they can motivate a strong desire to stay focused in love to live unto God in spite of obstacles. Stay driven in this and separate from ungodly influences. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." (Colossians 3:2)

The doctrine in Romans provides concrete answers to deal with 'real' life problems. It teaches 'how' God changed you, so you can make wise choices. God's power that now lives in you is practical help. However, it may not be clear 'how' it can help, at first. Your mind needs to think differently, God's way. Make the time to learn and grow. This is a glimpse of walking by faith in God's grace; it takes time and diligence. Trust God and stay in the Word. Next, gain awareness of some study insights and tools.



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## Chapter 3 Study Page

### To Do

- ⇒ Make a plan: Set priorities before the day starts. Place God first, then read, pray, and meditate on verses.
- ⇒ Find a wise friend or mentor in the Word. Study together, problem solve, and enjoy godly fellowship.
- ⇒ What you are minding? Your thoughts will motivate behavior. Regularly read and meditate on verses to renew your mind. Read Romans 5-6 to answer questions below.



### Answer the Questions

1. Use a dictionary to define 'tribulation.' Read Romans 5:3-5. What is the purpose for tribulation, according to the verses?

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2. Reflect on Romans 6:8-14. How can you live your life unto God? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What are your two options in life, according to Romans 6:12-13? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What things in your life distract you from godly living and reading the Word? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Study Notes



## Insights, Keys, and Study Tools

### Personal study insights

A few things to keep in mind

1. **Lifelong learning:** There's no 'quick pill' to become mature. Be patient to read and study the basic doctrine of Romans 1-16, yet keep progressing through all of Paul's epistles. As the physical growth of a baby is slow, expect spiritual growth to take time. 'Forming Christ (the Word) in you' will be a gradual life journey of learning. Paul realized this, needing to re-teach the basics to Galatians saints: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you..." (Galatians 4:19)



God is building a storehouse of doctrine within your inward man: your heart, mind, spirit, soul, and conscience. There may be little 'noticeable' change, at times. The reason is that God is doing invisible, but powerful construction inside you. God is faithful. He will do His part! Your job is to read and study so God can renew (teach) your mind. Also, avoid storing 'just information' (head knowledge). Instead, use what you learn to apply the doctrine in your life.



What is your responsibility? Patiently, trust God. The 'store' of sound Bible teaching that you learn in Romans is necessary to walk by faith, "...*walk* in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham..." (Romans 4:12) You can expect periodic mistakes; see them as opportunities to learn.

Your inward man is able to mature over time. Everyone starts as a 'spiritual babe.' You have the great opportunity to 'grow up' in understanding and wisdom to be an 'adult,' spiritually. Not everyone 'chooses' to progress or even knows God desires it. "But speaking the truth in love, may **grow up into him** in all things, which is the head, even Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)

God wants you to advance to spiritual adulthood. How? Progress daily, studying Scripture; begin in Romans-Galatians (milk doctrine), and move on to the rest of Paul's epistles (strong meat). "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:13-14) What is sometimes challenging for believers is to stay focused over time. Pray to stay in the Word.



## 2. Time is liquid gold

Life includes an undisclosed amount of time to be on earth. Once you trust Christ, view your time as 'liquid gold.' Use every moment wisely; time passes so quickly. The busyness and unpredictability of this world throws many unexpected things your way, using up this valuable resource. You'll need to make God your priority to keep Him 'front and center.'

Think in a new way; your time is really God's. "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph. 5:16) Move away from living 'for **your** earthly desires,' to serve God. Yet in grace, as you live and serve Him, "...eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is a gift of God." (Eccl. 3:14)



## 3. God cares what you do

Once you become a believer, God desires to live His life in and through you to help others grow by sharing Scripture. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" Now, you have *such* opportunity to glorify God (allow Christ to live in you). What you choose to do, matters to God. Paul continues: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore *glorify God in your body, and in your spirit*, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)



What you do with your time and resources has an impact on many things. There is a 'sowing and reaping principle' that God put in place.



God deposits the light of His Word, called 'treasure,' to live in your physical body so He can show His power in your life. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (II Corinthians 4:7) Living what you learn in Scripture profits you now and into eternity. Yet, it also affects people you touch as you walk by faith. So, wherever you are in your growth as a believer, yield to live life for God's purpose?

I Corinthians 3:13-15 states the quality or 'sort' of work that saints (believers) do is judged by God. They will 'reap what they sow.' "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of *what sort it is.*" Build wisely on the foundation, (the gospel) that Paul lays. Focus your study in his epistles (letters), written for the Body of Christ. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: *but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*" (This is a reward system, no one loses eternal life.)


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## Keys to understand the Bible

(To do: Study these issues for yourself)

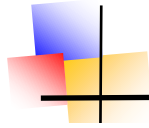


 **Interactive learning:** God desires for you to be involved, actively examining God's wisdom in Scripture. Read and study interactively, not 'only' listening passively to teachers. Maturity comes as you explore passages, seeking the Truth. Personal time is needed directly in Scripture: "If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures..." you will then, "...understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." (Proverbs 2:1-6)





 **Consider Context - Rightly divide the Word:** God wrote Scripture according to how He dealt with man over time. So, consider 'context' as you read. (Who wrote it, to whom, the subject) All Scripture is not written directly 'to you:' "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth.*" (II Tim. 2:15)

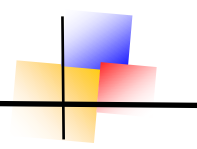
In the past, from Genesis 12 to Acts 8, God's focus was Israel. This part of Scripture is direct instructions to them. In Acts 9, Paul became the Apostle of the Gentiles, as the Nation Israel was set aside, *for a time*. Now, the Lord directs instruction 'to the Church, the Body of Christ,' in Romans-Philemon. (God will again deal with




Israel in Hebrews to Revelation.) Thus, it is important to consider the context when applying the Word. (To Do: Gain conviction about this issue. Read Acts 9-28 and Romans 9-11 to see the setting aside of Israel. God 'cut Israel out' of their 'olive tree' to deal with the Gentiles, 'grafting them in' to receive blessings. This Mystery time of the Gentiles will end at the Rapture of the Church. (I Thes. 4) God will then resume dealing with Israel, fulfilling all prophecy.


 **A 'form of doctrine:'** God is an organized Creator. He wrote His Word in a precise way, in a curriculum format.  He progressively teaches one concept at a time, slowly building upon what came before. Isaiah 28:10 teaches, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little..." Each word, verse, chapter, and book builds on the one before.

The Lord also provides assurance that, what He desires in His Word, will be accomplished and prosper. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:11) Begin your study in Romans and be determined to progress slowly through Paul's epistles, chapter by chapter, book by book. Be patient, in time your questions will be answered.



 **Being 'led by the Spirit:'** As you grow in your faith, it is important to understand how God Himself desires to teach you. He wants to lead you by His Spirit to be a mature believer (adult son or daughter). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14) God desires your trust.

The process is NOT done in a haphazard way. God the Spirit personally takes you through His 'form of doctrine' (Romans-Philemon), teaching you one-to-one exactly 'what you need,' according to 'where you are.' He is able to progress you to a spiritual adult, from milk to meat doctrine. This walk of faith is done by relying on Christ in you to do the work. (Read, study, yield)

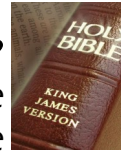
 Succinctly, the Spirit leads you to think like God the Father, live like Him (Christ in you), and mature you to do the labor needed for His service. (This is being a living sacrifice, ministering to others in Romans 12.) Be sensitive to *listen* to the Word in you, motivating 'how' you respond and function as a Christian. You are 'a work in progress.' So, as you apply the Word and gain experience, adjust and grow. When 'under God's construction' practical experiences, even mistakes, can teach.





## Does it matter which Bible you use?

Of course, this is an important issue affecting your growth and attitude about the Word. Of the many versions, strongly consider the **King James Version**, perfectly preserved. The more precise, Older English is used providing clarity in study. Every word matters!



Is there one book you can always count on? Yes! Would God write the Scriptures particularly for you, then not protect its integrity? God, Creator of all things, is *fully able* to preserve His Word. To Him, there is but one Truth: "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalm 119:89) How can you know which Bible to use?

Read Psalm 12:6-7, and then compare this small sample of verses changed or omitted in other Bibles. It will be obvious, one Book clearly glorifies the Lord above all others!



Mark 15:28: (Scripture was fulfilled)-Omitted  
Mark 15:39: (the Son of God)-Changed to 'a son of God'  
Mark 16:9-20: (12 verses)-Omitted  
Luke 24:6: (He is not here, but is risen)-Omitted  
Romans 1:16: Gospel (of Christ)-Omitted  
Romans 3:25 and 5:9: (Blood)-Omitted  
I Corinthians 6:20: (in your spirit, which are God's)-Omitted  
Colossians 1:14: Redemption (through his blood)-Omitted  
I Timothy 1:17: The only (wise) God-Omitted  
Hebrews 1:3: (by Himself) purged our sins-Omitted  
I John 5:7-8,13: The concept of the Trinity/words-Omitted or changed.





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A decorative graphic consisting of overlapping colored squares in blue, yellow, and red, with a black crosshair overlaid on them.

## A few helpful study tools

1. **Read Scripture slowly each day in meditation and prayer:** To begin a habit of reading, it can help to have your study time at a consistent time and place. Avoid rushing through verses and chapters. Read and re-read a section, being interactive and thinking about what the Spirit is teaching. Reflect on words, topics, questions and what you're learning. Ask God for help, being patient.
2. **Every word is important:** God wrote each word for a distinct purpose. When trying to understand a passage, look at words, asking: 'Why is it here' and 'What does it mean?'
3. **Define/study 'Key' words:** Terms used repetitively in a section are 'flags.' These are essential terms; define and meditate on them.
4. **Context is critical:** Context is the setting in which a verse is found. Before applying verses, look at them within the passage. Notice 'who it is written to,' 'who wrote it,' and 'the topic' at hand.' Rightly divide the Word. (Some of the Bible was written directly to Israel, not specifically 'to you,' the Body of Christ. Be careful applying these sections.)
5. **Look for application:** God's Word is practical. Purpose to see how it applies, noticing context. Is it instruction for your life? How, and are you living it?



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## Chapter 4 Study Page

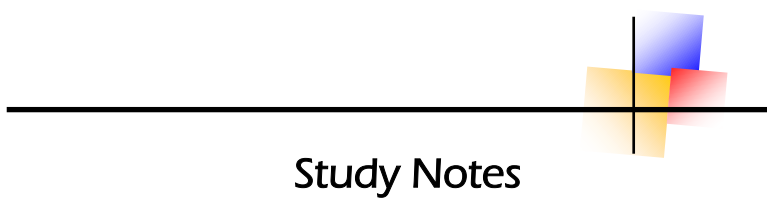
### To Do.

- ⇒ Use a morning each week to meditate on a passage, new word, or study insight. Progress in understanding.
- ⇒ Find a spiritual mentor who can address your unanswered questions about verses or application in life. Also, ask about studying: How to use a concordance or the cross reference system in your Bible, or even new topics to research in the Bible. You can also seek help to purchase a concordance that will best meet your needs.

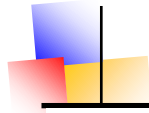


### Answer the Questions

1. Notice differences in God's instructions to Israel, as compared to the Body of Christ today.
  - a. How to preach the gospel:  
Matthew 10:5-7:(Israel) \_\_\_\_\_  
Romans 16:25-26:(Today) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Are they living 'under the law' or 'under grace'?  
Exodus 20 (Israel) \_\_\_\_\_  
Romans 6:14-15 (Today) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Look up these verses. How do they help you study?  
Acts 17:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
I Thessalonians 2:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
Hebrews 4:2 & 12-13 \_\_\_\_\_  
II Peter 1:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_
3. I Corinthians 3:10-11 relays something important about how you grow and build doctrine in your soul. What does it teach you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Read Deuteronomy 4:2 and Revelation 22:18-19. How does God feel about those who add/take away from His Word? How does this affect choosing your Bible? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Study Notes



## CHAPTER 5

# Going On to Maturity

## All Scripture is profitable

Read all the Bible with special emphasis on the epistles of Paul. Jesus Christ name is 'The Word of God' (John 1:14/Rev. 19:13) and every word is living and has power. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12)

II Timothy 3:16-17 states, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and *is profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..." God has a particular reason He designed His Word the way He did. Paul continues, "That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."



Pause for a moment to think and meditate upon this verse. There is benefit to every single word and verse in Scripture. This is how:

- 1) **Doctrine:** God unveils strategic instruction and confirmation of Truths within His Word.
- 2) **Reproof:** This is an expression of blame or censure for a fault, to be seen as a help.
- 3) **Correction:** The term here refers to an act of bringing one back from an error.
- 4) **Instruction in righteousness:** Teaching to conform one's heart and life to sound doctrine.



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## A glimpse: Maturing to an adult son

In Romans 8:14, an important issue is brought up: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Being considered an 'adult son' led by the Spirit is a wonderful aspect of your identity in Christ. As you desire this intimate relationship and yield, the Father develops a close, one-to-one way to educate and communicate with you.



When you mature through Romans 1-8, you can choose to be a part of this new aspect of your identity. Romans 8:14-30 prompts reflection. In thankfulness, you can 'step up' to accept increased responsibility and a new position as an 'adopted' adult son or daughter. Personal study and meditation helps a student to see the offer.



As a brief review, Romans 1-8 readies you to realize that this is a type of promotion, but more, an attainment to the status of a spiritual adult. Walking by faith prepares you to leave the 'child status.' Now, the Father can lead you Himself through the rest of Paul's doctrine to train you to work with Him in the ministry. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (I Timothy 2:4) The very basis for the decision to be a son is **your desire** to leave 'fleshly things' to learn to be a 'spiritual adult' to serve God.

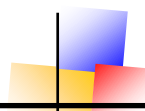


Galatians 4:1-7 provides clarity: As a child you're a servant, taught and supervised by others: "...under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." Once matured in Romans 1-8, the Father clarifies His desire for you to function as a spiritual adult son to learn and labor directly with Him in the ministry. It's a choice to function this way, deciding to set aside the flesh.



From the time you were saved, God desired to adopt you. This 'adoption' declares a status change from a 'child' to an 'adult.' Now, you proceed much like an apprentice son alongside his carpenter dad, to learn the business. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Galatians continues, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, **Abba, Father.**" This is precisely what God's Son cried in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Mark 14:36/Rom. 8:15) It signifies an intimate relationship. The Father fully provided, so that, you too could have this adult, 'father-son relationship' once you're ready. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."



The Father's longtime purpose for man: "...I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate..." God's desire is to "...be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (II Corinthians 6:16-18)

God's will in you is accomplished as you 'function as an adult son,' conformed to the image of Christ, allowing Him to be seen in your life. Progressively, you become God's representative and 'ministering hands' living His will. By you, others can hear the fullness of the gospel and be helped and encouraged. You have this wonderful opportunity to learn and work with God, one-to-one, in the ministry.



This 'advanced issue' of being a son may seem hard to understand, at this point. God simply desires a deeper, trusting fellowship with all His saints, that of an 'adult father with an adult son.' What He is offering is to communicate and teach you intimately, by the Spirit, from this point in Romans 8 forward, through to the end of the curriculum. Until you're ready, keep this 'on the back burner,' so to speak, realizing God desires for you to function in this way. Stay in the Word, listening and maturing, desiring to grow.



## Studying All of Paul's Epistles



### Goal of our 'curriculum'

To review, a precise 'form of doctrine' is written to believers today in Romans-Philemon. The purpose of this curriculum and for those who teach it is 'to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry to edify the Church.'

Ephesian's provides this insight: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-12)

The intent of this doctrine is to assist you to become 'perfected' (mature/advanced) unto 'a full knowledge.' "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:13) Realizing that there is an orderly process with specific teachings to mature you, helps to focus your study. These things are a part of God's purpose. This enables you to make wise choices: Set personal goals to live godly, use your time and resources for God, and be determined to mature.



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### Three Distinct Units

There are three building blocks of doctrine (teaching) in Paul's epistles. Each is designed to play a role to perfect (educate) believers to be adult sons:



**Foundational** (Romans to Galatians),  
**Advanced** (Ephesians to Thessalonians)  
**Leadership** (Timothy to Philemon).

Romans and Ephesians are key 'doctrinal books,' each with a unique focus. Romans teaches foundational Truths to be established in the basics of faith. Ephesians progresses you in deeper Truths, refining you to maturity. It teaches God's eternal purpose: 'to reconcile (bring together) all things unto himself...things in earth and heaven.' (Colossians 1:20)



The books that follow Romans and Ephesians provide application of their doctrine. For example, Corinthians and Galatians books apply Roman's foundational Truths. Philippians through Thessalonians are letters that enable you to see practical ways the progressive Truths of Ephesians are worked out in life.

The Leadership Epistles are the final advancement in perfecting the Church, the Body of Christ. Direction provided seems to fine tune



attitudes and nurture mature saints, especially those in leadership positions. I and II Timothy uncover how to deal with the struggles of a leader in ministry, while Titus and Philemon are opportunities to see grace application in local assemblies.

## Curriculum Outline

### I. Foundational Doctrine and Application

- A. Romans: Basic Doctrine to Establish (Romans 1:11)
- B. Corinthians: Application-Carnal Church (I Cor. 1:10/II Cor. 1:7)
- C. Galatians: Application-Church in Legalism (Galatians 1:6-7)

### II. Advanced Doctrine and Application

- A. Ephesians: The Mystery of God's Will (Ephesians 1:9-12)
- B. Philippians: Approve Excellent Things (Philippians 1:9-11)
- C. Colossians: Filled with Knowledge of His Will (Col. 1:9-11)
- D. Thessalonians: Patient Service (I Thes. 1:5/II Thes. 1:11-12)

### III. Church Leadership Instruction/Application

- A. Timothy: Good Warfare/Hold Faith (I Tim 1:18-19/II Tim 1:13-14)
- B. Titus: Setting Things in Order in Grace (Titus 1:5)
- C. Philemon: Applying Grace (Verse 6)

\*Note: No two saints will outline Paul's epistles exactly the same. Use this as a 'help' in your study. When you are ready, make your own outline. Prove all things.

Follow Paul, who follows Christ



1 Corinthians 11:1

## Conclusion

“Growing Up In Christ” was written to point you in the right direction to mature God’s way, acquiring understanding, wisdom, and godly living. Everything is not revealed at once; it takes time and work to learn doctrine and apply it. Be patient with yourself to grow, progressively finding what God has placed there for you. In a year or so, consider reading this book again to: a) Evaluate if you’re still ‘on track,’ b) Realize the new strides made, and c) Gain fresh insights.

Remember, you have a few things to help:

- God Himself and His unconditional love
- Christ the Word died for you, paying for all sin
- The Spirit in you leads your spiritual training
- Meditation/prayer: The Father is always accessible!
- A Bible written by God, perfectly preserved
- There is a ‘form of doctrine’ written ‘to you’
- Other believers are a powerful support system

Trust God in you. Stay focused, choosing NOT to be distracted by anything Satan or this world ‘throws at you.’ “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh also in you that believe.**” (1 Thess. 2:13)

As issues addressed in this book become clear, life’s puzzle will start to fit together; but expect



pieces to align together gradually. Starting in Romans, progress slowly through Paul's epistles, reading and meditating daily. As you feel comfortable, move on 'to study' by reading a section of verses, then go back and look at one verse at a time, examining terms and phrases as you are personally motivated.



A few key issues to keep in mind:

- 1) Read, maintaining a faith response to God's Word. His design is found in Romans-Philemon. It will slowly teach you to assess 'where you are' in learning (what you know and are applying) and what is priority to study next, to be conformed to the image of Christ and grow up to maturity. (This book mainly focused on doctrines in Romans 1-8)
- 2) Be motivated in love to walk and live in God's grace, avoiding legalism. Think for yourself, driven to live by personal convictions in the Word, staying in prayer.
- 3) Recall 'your flesh' has nothing God desires; this is actually where sin resides. Rather, live in God's spiritual realm; yield and 'set your affections above.' (Col. 3:1-3)

A companion booklet will be available soon to offer support and an example of how to study Romans, in a study guide format. (It includes an overview of each chapter, chapter-by-chapter assignments, with questions, and study insights and tools.)

(Note: Some issues may remain allusive; continue to pray and study. If desired, seek help from someone wise in the Scriptures. Check resources on Page 54.)

**To God be the glory!**



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## Chapter 5 Study Page

### To Do.

- ⇒ Seek fellowship in a Church that teaches Paul's message of Grace. (Look for help from Online resources. See Page 54.)
- ⇒ A good time to begin communication with God is in the morning before rising and in the evening prior to falling asleep. Think on spiritual things throughout the day.
- ⇒ It can be encouraging to ask other believers about how they got 'saved' and their unique journey, thus far. Ask two or three saints. (It's a good way to start a friendship.)

### Answer the Questions

1. Read Romans 15:4 and write down what you learn. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you know 'how' to pray? Paul is our example. Read Romans 1:8-12 and list what you observed. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you believe what God says about the Scripture? Read and meditate on these verses. What did they teach you?  
Proverbs 3:13-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
Isaiah 55:8-11 \_\_\_\_\_  
II Peter 1:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why is it important to meditate on what you are doing and where you are going, according to Proverbs 4:10-27? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Read these verses to be clear that you are saved and have eternal life, but also to know how to share this wonderful message with others. Note your questions to ask a mentor.  
Romans 3:21-26 \_\_\_\_\_  
Romans 5:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





## Available Resources

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### **Christian Life Coach Support Services** (Our ministry)

Interested in any of these opportunities? Contact: Brian or Deborah Johnson at (804) 519-1210

*Life Coaching:* A helping service, coaching can be utilized as Bible instruction, mentoring, and/or assistance in application of Scripture for life situations and personal growth. The Word of God is our resource in coaching others. (In-person/ phone/skype - individuals/couples/support groups/retreats) Publications

*Just A Minute:* Monthly newsletter (Rightly Divides), providing Bible study/edification/life application to sound doctrine.

*Newby's Bridge:* A quarterly bulletin designed to instruct the 'newby,' an unbeliever or a Christian who has not had much opportunity to grow in sound doctrine.

#### *Additional Paperbacks*

'What to Appreciate As We Approach God's Word'

'How the Bible is Practical and Able to Mature Believers'

'Romans Study Guide'

*Home Church-Bible Study:* Join our 'Grace' group in the Richmond Area. Scripture is the only authority!

### **\*Other Ministries**

Over the years, the following ministries have been invaluable in the spiritual growth and maturation of the writers of this book. (These ministries focus on the Word as the final authority. They recognize Paul as the designated Apostle to the Gentiles, who was specifically appointed to write epistles for the Church, the Body of Christ. Additionally, they realize the King James Bible is without error and has been perfectly preserved by God.) Check these resources for yourself:

Berean Bible Ministries: [www.helpersyourjoy.com](http://www.helpersyourjoy.com)

Enjoy the Bible Ministries: [www.enjoythebible.com](http://www.enjoythebible.com)

Grace School of the Bible: [www.graceimpact.org](http://www.graceimpact.org)

\*All are to be Bereans, searching, growing, and being refined by the Word, continually. (Acts 17:11) As the writers, we would not state total agreement with any, nor would any of these sources, necessarily agree with everything written in this book.



“To God  
only wise,  
be glory  
through  
Jesus Christ  
for ever.

Amen”

Romans 16:27



*Christian Life Coach Support Services*

Brian and Deborah Johnson  
Christianlifecoachsupport.squarespace.com  
lifecoachesdjbj@yahoo.com  
(804) 519-1210