

## ROMANS

### CHAPTER 1

1-4. This is a letter from Paul, called by God to be a special servant of Jesus Christ. God had plans for Paul to preach the gospel. Events of Paul's life were controlled by God to be sure His plans would happen. The gospel Paul was to preach is about God's Son, Jesus Christ. Hundreds of years before Paul was born, God showed Old Testament prophets that a descendant of King David would be the Son of God and it was written in the Holy Scriptures. It was dramatically proven to the world that Jesus was the Son of God when He returned to life triumphant over death after he had been crucified and died on the cross. That is Jesus Christ our Lord.

5-6. It was through Jesus and for the sake of His reputation (and also to prove that the Holy Scriptures were true) and God's unquestionable holiness that Paul and his disciples received favor from God. They also received the special calling from God along with power from Him to bring to all people, Jew and non-Jew alike this new message - God will be pleased with them simply if they believe Him. Whereas, before Jesus died, obedience to strict old testament rules for the Jewish people was the only way men were taught to be right with God. You are one of the people who are called to belong to Jesus Christ simply by believing in Him.

7. To all the believers in Rome called by God to serve Him as Christians, I declare that God loves you just as you are in spite of your failures and shortcomings. Have peace right now from Jesus Christ and don't worry any more!

8-12. Jesus Christ has given me great love for you all and I'm so thankful to God for you because word that non Jewish people are having faith in God is spreading all over the world! The very God whom I serve in preaching this new gospel is my witness to the fact that when I pray to Him, I always remember you and ask Him to make a way for me to come and visit you in person. It would be so great to see you! When we are together, the strength and faith God has given me will rub off on you so you can encourage each other and grow your faith in Him.

13. Don't think that I haven't tried to come many times before. I have, but it just didn't work out. I want to come and help you grow.

14- 17. I've got a mission to reach both the educated intellectuals and the poor lower class people, the worldly wise and the foolishly simple for God. The Jews and all the rest too. I am certainly not ashamed about preaching this news from God about Jesus Christ. After all, this is where the real saving power of God is. Not just for the Jews but for anyone who simply believes it! The reason it is so powerful is because for the first time ever, it is made clear that being right with God is because of something He did for us and not because of something we must do for Him. It is about believing and faith. The old testament said that "The righteous will live by faith." Well that now applies to every single person who will just believe.

18-20. God's anger and punishment is becoming obvious against people who try to discredit Him. Those wicked people actually try to keep people in the dark about this message. More people would believe us if it weren't for such evil opposition. The true message is actually quite obvious if you think about it. You can see God in nature and the universe. He's all over the place! You really have no excuse if you think there is no God.

21-23. Even though people have known that God must be real, they didn't really want to open up to Him all the way. They were closed minded and selfish about it, they weren't able to face the open light of truth. Darkness confused them so that they did foolish things. They thought they were being real smart by figuring out a way to live that avoided the real truths of God. Boy, was that stupid. They could have had the real God but instead, ended up worshiping things they made up themselves.

24-25. What was God supposed to do? He just let them do what they wanted and they went totally nuts! Their flesh bodies wanted pleasure after pleasure only. They lived very selfishly. People traded in Gods truth for a lie! They got it all backwards... they worshiped the things God made and forgot about the God who made all this in the first place! It's OK to see the beauty in the natural world but take a close look at most of the people who are really into nature and stuff. Ask them about God and who Jesus is. Most of them don't have a clue and will probably avoid talking about Jesus. The universe and all that's in our beautiful world was made by our glorious God and heavenly Father. He is the only One Who should be worshiped.

26- 32. Because people chose to live this selfish way, He let them do whatever they wanted and things got all messed up. People didn't want to know the truth about God. Without the truth, their minds became filled with all kinds of selfish and evil thoughts causing them to have horrible lives. That's why people lie, argue, fight, kill, steal, hurt each others feelings, show off, brag, don't obey their parents, think of ways to do stupid things to each other, and all sorts of terrible things. People know that God is against that kind of living. It is sinful. Sin is why people die and go to hell. But that hasn't stopped them from doing bad things. Not only do they keep on living that way, but they make excuses for it to try to make everyone think it's OK anyway.

## CHAPTER 2

1-4. How could they possibly make excuses for such wrong behavior? If you are one of the people who disapproves of those evil people for their wrong doing you also disapprove of your self because you do the same evil things too.

God's judgment about such things is based on truth. When you as a mere man pass judgment on those people yet do the same things, don't think for a minute that God won't judge you too. Do you reject His kindness and patience? God's goodness is what makes us want to change and stop doing evil things.

5-11. Some day God is going to be out in the open. Because you hardened your heart to God, that stubbornness will cause you to have horrible trouble. When God makes Himself known to the world, it will be very clear how right His laws are and how wrong us people have been.

God clearly said each person is going to get what they have coming - good or bad. People who are patient and always try to be good are the ones who are going to have life forever with God. Selfish people who refuse to listen to the truth and choose to be evil will have only horrible things in their lives. It doesn't matter whether a person is rich, poor, religious, or not... God doesn't play favorites.

12-16. It doesn't even matter if you know the bible - whether you know what it says or not, you are still going to die one day. The bible and God isn't about just hearing what He says. People aren't made right with God just because they hear what He is saying. It's about doing what He says is right to do.

There are lots of people who have never even heard about God yet they do what is right because they have lived their lives seeking truth from their hearts. God is already in everyone's heart, but not everyone will allow Him to change their minds. God will bring all this to light and every one's secrets will be out in the open.

17-23. You who are religious and do all the right things according to the rules in the bible, and tell everyone how religious you are, if you know God's will from the bible and obey the instructions in it, you probably think that you are helping lots of people to be right with God. You teach kids in bible school, help poor people, work with drug addicts and drunks to get straight. Do you also teach yourself?

You teach them not to steal, to be faithful in marriage, to be honest in business, etc. You bring disgrace to God when you do those same bad things yourself. An old testament verse says that God's name is disgraced among the non Jewish people because of you.

24-27. If you had a badge of honor that said you were a perfect person and you were very proud of it, what would it be worth if you did something bad... even one little thing? You couldn't be proud of it any more.

When you have made a sacrifice to God by obeying a law that was really hard for you to do but then break just one of the other laws it wipes out the big sacrifice you did. People who haven't made a special sacrifice to God or don't have a special badge of honor but do the right things the bible talks about... won't they be respected as if they had a badge of honor or had done something special for God? Those types of people can really make religious people ashamed. The old testament bible was written for the Jewish people but the good things that non Jewish people do puts the religious Jews to shame.

28-29. Being a Jew like the people God wrote the bible to originally, is not about doing good things to show off to other people. Neither is the idea of a special sacrifice about doing it so other people with think you are better than they are. It is all about what you are doing deep inside your own heart... how you relate to the truth not just how well you can obey rules. The person who lets truth teach them in their

heart may not always be liked by people, but God is very pleased with them.

### CHAPTER 3

1-4. What's so special then about the Jews and why should I even consider making any special sacrifice for God? Jews are very special! God trusted them with His words. We wouldn't have a bible today if not for the Jews. Sure, some of them didn't have real faith. Does that mean that God isn't real? Of course not! "Let God be true and every man a liar." An old testament verse says: So that you may be proven to be right about the words you speak and be right about things.

5-8. Now, if when we do wrong things, and it shows more clearly how right God is (in comparison to us), shall we find fault with God when bad things happen to us? Of course not! If we could fault God for that, how would He ever be able to show anyone the right way?

Someone could say "if my bad behavior makes God look that much more holy why does He give me such a hard time about sinning? He knows I can't help it." If that were so, you might as well just say that we should all do bad things because it makes God look good. That is so stupid! Some people actually think that's what I'm preaching! They deserve what ever happens to them.

9-18. What do you think so far? Are we getting any where? Not really. We've already said that both Jews and non Jews - religious and not religious are all sinners.

The old testament says: "There is no one who is really right - not a single person. No one understands and no one is seeking for the real God. Every person has turned away from God's truths and become worthless. Nobody is doing good. Nobody! It's like their throats are open graves. Poison comes out of their mouths as lies and curses all the time. They hurry to do harm to people. Wherever they go, people are left miserable. These people don't have a clue about what peace is. They couldn't care less about God."

19-20. It should be clear to you now that the rules apply to everyone. Not one person can escape right and wrong. The law puts everyone in their place. Each one of us ultimately will answer to God. That ought to shut up all the prideful braggers! No one is ever made right in Gods eyes by doing everything right according to the laws and rules.

Understand that God made the laws of right and wrong to show us that we are not right inside. That is how we know that we are sinners in the first place.

21-26. But since Jesus came, the way to be right with God not by obeying laws and rules has been made known. This is the core of what the old testament was getting at. Being right with God is something that comes from Him to all who believe and whose faith comes through Jesus Christ.

It makes no difference who you are, what you used to believe, what your parents taught you, or what your opinion is. We have all sinned -

Every person who ever lived has sinned and that is what has kept us from being right with God.

Likewise, all can be right with God because He bought us back when Jesus died on the cross. The consequence of sin is death. Death is the only acceptable payment for sin. Jesus died on the cross in our place and also to show His justice to the world because of the sins of others that lived before we were born. God knew all along that Jesus would come and die on the cross for us all. This took care of the sins committed long before Jesus came. Jesus was the Just One and the One who justifies those who will believe!

27- So, who can brag about how good they are? There is nothing to brag about. If you think you are cool because you do everything right all the time... God just made you a fool. No one can brag about their faith because if it's true faith, we can only brag about the One we have faith in and what Jesus has done for us, not what we've done for Him. We can't brag about our religion either since we now see that God is one God for all people, not just the Jews or any "special" people.

Does this mean that rules about right and wrong are not important any more because of faith? Of course not. Right and wrong are more clear than ever.

#### CHAPTER 4

1-3. How does faith figure in when you consider Abraham? The old testament says that Abraham was made right with God by the things he did. (How could this be? How can a man make himself right when he is born wrong?) If that is so, then Abraham would have had something to brag about. But the bible answers by saying that "Abraham believed God and that because of his faith God made him righteous (the same thing as being right with God).

4-6. When you work for someone, you earn your money. It's not given to you as a gift. It's your job to work and the employer's responsibility to pay you. The person who knows that God loves them just the way they are (in spite of sins and a sinful nature) - without having to "earn" God's love or acceptance or trying to "buy" God's love by "working" for Him (like you would for your boss)... that person is counted by God as being "right"... actually made right with God by the fact that they have faith in Him and trust Him for their lives instead of trying to "work" everything out themselves.

God looks at a person's faith in Him and considers that as righteousness and gives that person with faith the "gift" of a right standing with Him - nothing further is necessary! Remember Who we are dealing with here. It is God who makes wicked people good. That is what is grace and love is all about.

In the old testament it is said: 7-8. "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. (Our transgressions and sins are the things we did and inherited from Adam that made us so selfish that we couldn't stop sinning.) Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

9-12. The blessing it speaks of... is it only for the religious people? We're using Abraham as an example of where God made someone right. God saw that Abraham trusted and believed Him. But was Abraham a real religious person at the time that occurred? Not really. Abraham became religious after he began to have faith and trust God. The old testament calls Abraham "... the father of all who believe but are not religious so that right standing with God could be given rather than earned." It also says that "he is the father of all religious people who also believe God and trust Him the way Abraham did before he started being religious".

13-15. Abraham is an important person in the old testament because God promised him that his children would inherit all Gods blessings. The important thing is that it wasn't by doing "good things" and obeying rules and regulations that Abraham and all the people that came from him and his children were blessed.

It was because of faith alone and not because of behavior. Because of believing and not because of obedience. If the people who live by rules and regulations and do all sorts of good things trying to impress God were to receive God's blessings, then faith would not have any value and God's promises wouldn't be worth anything.

Every place in the bible where God imposes rules and laws, it's always to show what bad things will happen if the rules aren't obeyed and the law's are broken. If God never made the rules, there would be no laws to break and sin would not be obvious.

16-17. The blessings promised by God come by believing and trusting Him. This way, His blessings can only be a free gift of love and not something we earn and deserve. God's blessing is thus available to everyone... not just to the Jews or the religious people. Abraham is God's example of faith and how to trust God.

Speaking about Abraham, the old testament says: "I have made you the father of many nations". Abraham is known as the "father of faith" for us all. He believed God who gives life to the dead... who speaks about impossible things as if they were real and they then happen... God has no limits!

18-25. When it was so impossible that no one else would have hoped, Abraham still had hope and believed God, and that is how and why he became the "father of many nations" as it was told him "Look up to the stars... that's how many children will come from you. As many as the stars".

When Abraham was a real old man, almost one hundred years old, he was practically dead - and so was his wife Sarah. They had no children, but God promised them children and they believed Him. Sarah was way too old to have children. Old Abraham knew his body was as good as dead but that didn't matter to him. Abraham trusted God.

If God promised children to him, he figured that nothing could stop it from happening and so he grew strong in faith and loved God. This is why God called Abraham righteous, actually "made" him right in His sight... because of his faith and trust.

Being "made right" with God this way was not just for Abraham alone. It is also for us today. God makes right all who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. Jesus was given over to death to pay for our sins and He was raised to life to make us right in God's sight.

#### CHAPTER 5

5:1 Because it is by simply believing and trusting God and what He did for us by sending Jesus to take our place on the cross, we have peace with God no longer worrying about disappointing Him.

5:2 By understanding what Jesus did for us is how we know that God forgave our sins and loves us no matter what. We can be happy now because our future is safe forever with God.

5:3 Not only the future but even when things get tough in this life we don't worry because we know that by trusting God in the tough times we learn to be patient and patience is a good thing.

5:4 Being patient and trusting God is good for us because we learn to hope for the better things God has for us.

5:5 Hoping for better things from God is nothing to be ashamed of. Hope makes us more free as we learn to listen to God in our hearts because His Spirit lives inside of us and we can spend more time loving others who don't know God.

5:6 Before we knew all this when we were weak and even way before we were born, Jesus lived and He went to die on the cross to bear punishment for all the sins of everyone of us. We were sinners and He took our place on the cross and died so that we wouldn't have to die on the cross one day.

5:7 Only vary rarely do we ever hear about someone who would give their own life to save an innocent good person. Think about how a Secret Service person protecting the president would shield him with their own body. If someone tried to shoot the president, the Secret Service guards are trained to use their body as a shield and be shot themselves.

5:8 God loves us so much that even when we were wickedly bad, prideful sinning and rejecting Him, He sent Jesus to die for us.

5:9 Now since we've been given the gift of a new free and right life do you see that we've also been forever saved from punishment?

5:10 At a time when we were God's enemies, we were brought close to God because of the death of his Son Jesus so that now being made right with God we are kept safe forever by His powerful pure and perfect life.

5:11 We are excited and happy and grateful to God for Jesus who took our place in death opening the way for us to be right and free.

5:12 It was just one man, Adam that opened the door for sin to enter the world and infect the entire human race condemning us all to death.

5:13 Even before God's laws were shown to us, we were sinners inside. God wouldn't blame us for sinning if we didn't know better. But it doesn't make it right just because we didn't know about it.

5:14 Death was in charge here from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. Death even came to people who didn't know about God's commandments like Adam did. Adam was one man and set the pattern of what all people would be like after him. In a similar but much better way, like the one man Adam, Jesus who would come and set the pattern of how all people will live after Him.

5:15 The gift of eternal life, free from the guilt of sin, is so great that it should not even be compared to the sin that separated us from God in the first place. If through the sin of the one man, Adam, sin entered into the world killing us all, so much more so has God's merciful forgiveness and unconditional love by the single act of one man, Jesus, going to the cross, given a life of eternal peace and blessings to so many people.

5:16 When Adam sinned in the garden he was one man judged guilty of one sin. The free gift of God's life for ALL who would believe, is given to pay for the countless sins of many people making them all right with God.

5:17 Because of one sin of one man, Adam, sin entered the world and death took over. The gift of a free life that Jesus who was just one special man, gave the great gift of being right with God to many who will live forever, happy and free through Jesus Christ.

5:18 It was the sin of one man that separated the entire human race from God making us all guilty of sin. It was the perfect life of one man that gave the gift of eternal life with God to all men.

5:19 By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. It is by the obedience of one man that all shall many be made righteous.

5:20 And also because of sin, God's right rules were shown to us so that we would all see how wrong we are and how bad sin really is. But remember that though sin is really bad and affects all of us, God's love for us is that much more special and powerful.

5:21 Sin ruled the world bringing with it death and suffering. But more importantly, God's love for us overcomes sin and death so that those that believe in Jesus will be shining examples to everyone forever.

6:1 Does this mean that because we know God loves us no matter what, that we can just keep on doing whatever we want even though it's wrong? Should we keep on doing wrong things just because God will still love us anyway?

6:2 Of course not! When we trust God, knowing that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins, we actually become dead to the sinful life we once lived. We should know better than to keep doing what is wrong!

6:3 Haven't you figured it out yet that when you accepted Jesus as your substitute on the cross, that in God's mind he saw you on the cross also?

6:4 In God's eyes, we were also buried with Jesus. Because God miraculously made Jesus come back to life, in His eyes we also came back to life to live a new life with power over our bodies to not sin any more.

6:5 Just as like in God's eyes we were on the cross with Jesus, we are also like Jesus is after He came back to life living forever!

6:6 In God's eyes, the sinful person we used to be was the cross with Jesus so that the sinner in us would die and no longer be subject to the urges of our sinful minds and bodies.

6:7 Dead people don't sin! In God's eyes we died with Jesus and are free from the nature that once made it natural for us to sin. We're now free to serve God with a clear conscience no longer victims of the sinful ways of people that don't know Jesus!

6:8 So if we now know that in God's eyes we died on the cross with Jesus, we also know that our life now is with and because of Jesus.

6:9 Jesus came back to life and will never ever die again. Death will never be able to kill Him again.

6:10 Jesus died once. As far as God is concerned that was enough. The life Jesus has now, He lives because of and for God.

6:11 In the same way you should also think of yourselves to be dead to the bad things you once did and now alive with God through what Jesus did for you.

6:12 So don't let sin try to make you do bad things again. Your body will try to make you do selfish things but you should not let it nor do you have to.

6:13 Don't let your body tell you what to do. Let God show you what to do now. Keep your body under control so you can do the good things God wants you to do.

6:14 The power of sin over you was broken when God brought Jesus back to life. Sin doesn't have the power over you it once did. You no longer have to try to please God by what you do. You already please God simply by being who you are because He loves you so much!

6:15 Does that mean that because God loves us in spite of bad things we've done that we can just do whatever we want now? Are you crazy?

6:16 Don't you know that whoever you let yourself listen to and follow is your boss and has power over you? It doesn't matter if you're following those who want to do bad things against God or the good things God wants you to do. The one you follow is your boss.

6:17 Let's be grateful to God because before we knew Him, the words about His truth His messengers wrote in the bible spoke to our hearts.

6:18 We were made free from our sinful life by letting God be our God and choosing to be His children preferring to do good things.

6:19 I'm talking to you as if you were regular people that don't know God because I know that you're still trying to figure this all out. Your bodies still desire to do selfish bad things but if you will follow God you will have power over your body so that you will do right things which will be better for you in the long run.

6:20 When you used to do whatever you wanted even though it was wrong, you were not doing what God wanted and it didn't seem to matter.

6:21 By doing what you wanted and being ashamed of it, what did you have to show for it? The end result of those things kept you from God and ultimately resulting in death.

6:22 But now you've been made free from the power of sin and become servants of God. You now want to do good things and love people and keep close with God because you enjoy having a clean conscience that will last forever.

6:23 Doing wrong things kills you inside and makes you avoid God but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

7:1 Don't you know yet how bad sin is? For those that don't know the forgiveness of God in Jesus, sin keeps them under its control for as long as they live.

7:2 When a woman gets married, she is married to her husband for as long as he lives. If the husband dies before the wife does, she becomes single again. She is no longer married.

7:3 Now if she were to marry another man while her husband was still alive that would be wrong. She would be guilty of what is called adultery. But if her husband died she would be free to marry another man.

7:4 So too my friends, you also have become dead like the first husband and are now free to be with another. That other one is Jesus who came back alive after dying so that He would bring eternal life to many people for God's sake.

7:5 When we were living the way our natural bodies wanted to, we naturally did things that were against God's rules resulting in actions that were bad for us and others and led us to death.

7:6 But now we have been made free from living according to the rules and laws that once restricted us. Being now "dead" to those rules and laws we should serve God from the new life inside our hearts and not by trying to obey the rules and laws in our old minds.

7:7 Should we now say that those rules and laws were bad? Heck NO! Had it not been for those rules and laws in the bible I would not have known that my sinful ways were wrong. Were it not for those rules and laws I would have never have known that my natural feelings and desires were so wrong. If the bible had not taught me that "Thou shalt not

covet" I may have never known how wrong it was to think and do those things.

7:8 God's laws showed me that it was really sin working in me. Because of God's law, it was obvious that sin led to death. Had it not been for God's law sin would not have seemed so bad.

7:9 Without God's laws I thought doing my own thing was ok. When I read the bible, God's law made it obvious to me that I was a sinner and as good as dead.

7:10 God's commandments were intended to lead people to life. When I first heard and read the bible, the very commandments that lead to life showed me that I was a sinner as good as dead.

7:11 Sin intentionally kept me in the dark! When the light of God's truth dawned on me I realized how dead I was in His sight.

7:12 There's no question that God is good and His rules and laws are right.

7:13 Was then that which is good made death to me? Absolutely not! But so that it could be shown to me how bad sin is, God's rules showed me how bad I was compared to the good things I should have done. His laws made it clear that I was wrong and He was right so that I would know just how bad sin really is.

7:14 We know that the commandments of God come from His Holy Spirit and pertain to heavenly matters. I'm no angel. Rather, I am of the sinful world living in a selfish body of flesh and blood.. by nature I am a sinner.

7:15 I don't do the good and right things I know I should do. Instead, I do the bad things I know I shouldn't do. I should do good things. But I don't. I shouldn't do bad things, but I do them anyway.

7:16 When I do bad things that I know are wrong, it proves all the much more how right God's rules are and how wrong my way is.

7:17 I now understand that it's really sin in me causing me to do wrong things.

7:18 I clearly see now that inside my own body is where the sinful desires and urges come from and it's not good at all. In fact it's all bad! In my mind and heart I want to do the right things God intends for me but I don't know how to overcome the desires that make me want to do selfish and bad things.

7:19 The good things I know I should do, I don't do. Instead, I do the bad things I know I shouldn't do.

7:20 I now see that if I do things I know are wrong, it's not actually me doing it but it's sin in me that's doing it.

7:21 It happens all the time. When I want to do right things, there is always a struggle within my body trying to make me do selfish things.

7:22 I really like what God says in the bible. It's like He's inside of me showing me how to live and do right things.

7:23 But there is a real struggle in my mind because I still want to do the selfish things my body wants. It's as if sin keeps me in jail inside my own body because I can't overcome these desires and urges I know are wrong.

7:24 I am SO screwed up! Who in the world could ever help me get free from these bad desires that are killing me and keeping me from serving God?

7:25 Well Thank You Jesus! He's the One who can do it. Though my mind agrees with the bible and I want to do good things, my body still wants only to do selfish things.

8:1 Let me tell you right here and now that you don't have to be ashamed if you are a Christian. You're following Jesus in your heart and no longer wanting to let your body control everything about you.

8:2 The life that Jesus gives you is pure and good in God's eyes. You don't have to worry about trying to please God by living up to his perfect commandments. Those commandments are there to show you that you were not right and cannot possibly obey them all of the time. But the life that Jesus gives you inside does obey all of God's wishes all of the time and makes you free from the death that sin brings.

8:3 Though God's commandments are right, my own physical body had so much power over me that I couldn't obey them. God sent Jesus in a physical body to live perfectly, overcoming sin, being an example to all people.

8:4 God did this so that His requirement perfectly doing right things all the time and never ever sinning would be possible for us who don't want to just do whatever selfish things our bodies want, but rather want to do the right things God shows us in our hearts.

8:5 People who do whatever selfish things they want to do are simply slaves to their physical bodies. But those of us that follow Jesus in our hearts want to do the good things God wants for us to do.

8:6 To just do whatever your body wants to do leads to bad things and will kill you in the end. But following your heart through Jesus leads to a wonderful life giving you peace of mind all the time.

8:7 Man's natural mind resists God and doesn't want to know His right ways. It's impossible for a natural person to serve God. Their body and mind want to be in total control only wanting to do selfish things.

8:8 Those people won't and can't please God.

8:9 But you are not like those people ruled by their bodies doing only selfish things. You who live by the Spirit of God have God living in you! Anyone that doesn't have the Spirit of God through Jesus in him doesn't yet belong to God.

8:10 You who have the Spirit of Jesus living in you know that the

sinful ways your body wants made you as good as dead. The Spirit of Jesus made you alive because of how right and pure He is and not because of any good things you have done.

8:11 If the Spirit of God who made Jesus come back to life after He died lives in you, He that made Jesus come back alive will also give new life to your body by the Spirit of Jesus that is inside you.

8:12 So my friends, God gave us a huge gift. Not so that we could do whatever our selfish bodies want.

8:13 If you just keep doing what your bodies want you will die. But if you will live through the Spirit of Jesus and consider your body to be dead to it's former sinful ways, you will have real life.

8:14 God considers all of you that let the Spirit of Jesus lead you in life to be His sons also.

8:15 You no longer need to be afraid of God. You have been adopted by God as His own child and we can call Him our Father.

8:16 God's Spirit inside of you is very real to you now. You know this because of He is present with and in you. He cares for you as any loving father cares for his own child.

8:17 Knowing that you are one of God's own children, you should also know that you are one of His heirs along with Jesus Himself. So if you have to suffer hardship in this life like Jesus did, you can also know that in the end you will also inherit all of God's love and wonderful life forever just like Jesus has.

8:18 The wonderful fantastic life God has given us both now and later in heaven will one day become obvious to everyone. Compared to God's life in and for us, the troubles we have in this life are very small and are nothing to worry about.

8:19 All of God's creatures and even the trees and other plants eagerly wait for the day when He will show Himself to the world through His children...

8:20 because they were also affected by man's sin. Not because of anything they did but because they were part of the world that Adam was in charge of when he first sinned and the whole world fell into a tough life. God knew that one day life even for the animals and nature would be better.

8:21 God's creatures in all the world will one day get to live in a much better world not affected by sin and enjoy the wonderful new life God has given to His children.

8:22 All of nature cries in pain waiting for this moment in history.

8:23 And it's not just the innocent animals that cry. We who have the Spirit of Jesus in us cry inside our hearts while we still live in these physical bodies. When Jesus returns, our physical bodies will be transformed into eternal bodies not part of this world just like His body was transformed. Our new bodies won't urge us to sin.

8:24 We're all looking forward to that day. We hope it comes soon! Even though it hasn't happened yet, because God promised it and He is totally trustworthy, we're at peace now and we rest confidently hoping for that day. Knowing that day will come helps us to resist sin's temptations. We're made free from sin by what we hope for.

When Jesus does come back, everyone will see Him with their eyes. It doesn't require faith or trust in God's promise when you have physical proof and can see it come true with your own eyes.

8:25 Hoping for what we don't yet see with our natural eyes requires patience as you wait for it to appear.

8:26 Because it's hard to wait for the proof our eyes want to see, God gave us His Spirit to help us. He knew we were going to get tired and worry because our physical bodies get weak. There is so much to this that we don't really even know how to talk about it or even pray about it. God's Spirit in us helps us pray even though we may not understand what we're praying about. We often cry out in our hearts sometimes thinking or saying words and making sounds we don't understand.

8:27 Remember that it's God inside you and He knows you better than you know yourself. He knows EVERYTHING! His prayers are perfect. His Spirit is inside of you praying perfectly for everyone and everything.

When you pray, don't worry about what you're going to say or if you don't even know what to say at all. God's Spirit is in you and you can just let it all out in your tears or even with moaning, groaning, and words you don't understand.

8:28 Everything that happens to you now is part of God's plan for your life. You have been called by God and love Him. Everything is ok. He knows exactly what He's doing.

8:29 God knows the future and has always known us. He planned all along for us to become like Jesus so that Jesus would be the first one to be raised from the dead and born to a new heavenly life with many others to follow Him.

8:30 Not only did God plan all of this ahead of time, He came to get us calling out for us. And to those He called, He also made right with Him through the cross. Those He made right, He also raised up to a heavenly life with new eternal bodies!

8:31 How in the world can we possibly respond to what God has done for us? Knowing that God is totally on our side, who could possibly ever threaten us?

8:32 Since our loving God gave His one and only beloved Son to die on the cross for us all, don't you also know that because of His love for us He freely gives us every good thing?

8:33 Who could possibly find any fault with us now since God is on our side defending us. He is the creator of the universe and chose to make us right with Him through His own sacrifice!

8:34 Who could possibly condemn you now? Certainly not God. It was Jesus that died for you or more importantly the One raised from the dead for you and now lives with God to defend you forever before God.

8:35 Can you think of anything that could possibly separate us from God's love? Could problems, worries, ridicule, hunger, poverty, threats, guns, or war keep us away from God?

8:36 Life in the world is tough. In the old testament, the bible says "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

8:37 But there's no way ANYTHING could undo what God has done. Because God loves us so much, He made us to be greater than anything man could ever imagine.

8:38 I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is absolutely nothing that could happen to us that could take you away from God's love. Surely nothing in this world has power over what God has done for you. Not even death itself! No demon now or ever..

8:39 ...nor anything anywhere in the universe, or any creature on earth shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9:1 I'm telling you the straight truth. God showed me clearly that these things I tell you are true.

9:2,3 I know how tough life in this world can be. It weighs heavily on my heart to know that people suffer so much. If it were possible, I'd give up everything Jesus has given me if it would help more of my fellow Jewish people come to know Him.

9:4 The Jewish nation are the ones God originally offered His precious promise of becoming His children to by showing them many miraculous signs of His presence in the old days. It was to the Jewish people that God spoke about His right laws and His good promises.

9:5 Jesus was born into a Jewish family whose heritage goes back all the way to the beginning. God knew every one of Jesus' ancestors and was with them in special ways all along. God's plan is so perfect! He always knew exactly what He was doing and how it would all happen. WOW! God is the One and Only Great God of the entire universe forever and ever! WOW!

9:6 Not everyone that believes in Jesus is from a Jewish family. God considers all those that trust Jesus to be in His family. Don't think that just because most of the Jewish people rejected Jesus that God's word didn't work.

9:7 Just because someone was born to Jewish parents descended from Abraham doesn't make them part of God's real family. Abraham had another son with his wife Sarah. The second son named Isaac was the one God promised to Abraham and Sarah when they were too old to have children naturally. Many people descended from both of Abraham's sons.

9:8 It was not ALL of Abraham's descendants that God said would be His children.

9:9 God said that when Abraham and Sarah were very elderly that Sarah would have another baby.

9:10,11 Abraham also had two sons with Sarah's maid when he was very old. These children grew up and had families of their own that brought many more people into the world so that ultimately God could show that everyone whether Jewish or not could choose to trust Jesus and not simply be special in His sight because they were from the ancestry of the original Jewish people.

9:12 God told Rebecca that the older son, Esau would one day serve the younger son, Jacob.

9:13 He said "Jacob have I loved, but I was disappointed that Esau was born because he was not part of My plan.

9:14 Does this mean that God isn't fair- that He did something wrong? No way!

9:15 Way before this happened God told Moses "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion".

9:16 This means that it's not up to us to tell God what to do but rather it's all up to God who is the One from where all mercy comes.

9:17 God said to the evil Pharaoh of Egypt that it was for His own reasons that He allowed Pharaoh to live and reign over Egypt and the Jewish people so that one day God's power would be shown to the world and everyone would know how great God is.

9:18 Some people are going to accept God and His mercy and other people are going to reject God's love. God knew all this would happen way before those people were ever born.

9:19 You ask then "Why does God judge and find fault with those that reject Him if it was His plan for them to be this way in the first place? How can anyone go against God's plans?"

9:20 Who are you to tell God what to do? Shall the one formed say to him for formed it, "Why did you make me this way?"

9:21 The potter that makes things out of clay makes all sorts of things. Some pots are made for serving good food and other pots are made to pee into. The same potter makes them all.

9:22 God's power is against all that sin and do evil. His anger against sin will one day be unleashed and totally destroy all the people that willfully rejected Him. God chose to hold back His ultimate punishment against evil for as long as possible.

9:23 He did this to show the world how great His mercy is toward the ones He loves.

9:24 We are the ones that have received His blessings in Jesus. He called us out from our former lives Jew and non-Jew alike.

9:25 Through the old testament prophet Hosea, God said "Those that were not My people I will call My people and she that was not loved I will call her My beloved".

9:26 To those that God once said "You are NOT My people" He will one day call them "Sons of the living God".

9:27 The old testament Jewish prophet Isaiah cried about his people "Though there are many of you, sadly it will be only a few that will come to God through Jesus and be saved".

9:28 One day God's plan for earth as we know it will come to an end. That day there will be no more chance for anyone to turn to God because He will have to quickly move on to the next phase of His good plans for mankind.

9:29 It is exactly as the prophet Isaiah foretold. "If God had not protected and kept alive the family line of those He originally promised His heavenly gifts to, we would all have been destroyed by now just like many evil people before us had been destroyed.

9:30 What are we to say about those people not descended from the Jews? They never even tried to obey the holy commands. They didn't even know those laws existed. But now many of them have accepted Jesus and been made right with God simply because they believed Him.

9:31 But the Jews that followed after God's rules and requirements to be made right were never able to measure up to all the perfect details God required.

9:32 How come? It was because they approached God based the merits of what they did for Him by doing good things and not by trusting in what He did for them. As the prophet Isaiah said, "They have stumbled over the Stumbling Stone" or as we would say, they tripped over the big stone(Jesus) that God put in their path.

9:33 Isaiah said "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed". What God meant is that Jesus was as solid as a rock and His teaching would challenge men and that not all men would accept that Jesus was sent from God. But those that open their hearts to Jesus would never be ashamed and would live forever.

10:1 My heart's desire and prayer to God for the Jewish people is that they would accept Jesus and have His Spirit live in them forever.

10:2 Though the Jews are enthusiastic about God they have not kept up with Him and followed Jesus.

10:3 They ignored the teachings of Jesus and refused to accept Him as their sacrifice on the cross and missed out on the salvation God offered them. They wanted to be right with God based on their own good deeds and not because of the goodness of the perfect life Jesus lives.

10:4 Jesus is the perfect expression of what God intended to show us in His commandments for those of us who have been made right with God through Him simply by believing and trusting Him.

10:5 Moses said that the man who tries to obey all of God's rules will have to live by those rules and that because he will ultimately be unable to perfectly obey those rules, he will also then die because of the very same rules.

10:6 But being right with God comes only by trusting what God did for you by sending Jesus to die on the cross in your place. Don't think that you had anything to do with it. You didn't. Nor could you go up to heaven and ask God to send Jesus down to earth.

10:7 Nor could you ask God to bring Jesus back from the dead for you. There is nobody else that could die and come back to life for you. If you died you would just be dead forever.

10:8 What God does say is that "The true story about Jesus is already inside of you in your heart and can also can speak those very same words telling others what we've been telling you about".

10:9 Those of you that can say out loud what you believe in your heart to be true about Jesus, that is, that God raised Him from the dead, demonstrate to the world that you believe. Doing that, proves to God that you are sincere. You don't have to be afraid of anything ever again.

10:10 Inside your own heart is where Jesus always was waiting for you. When you heard about Jesus and learned that He took your place on the cross, in God's eyes you were made totally right with Him. By not being ashamed to tell people what you believe is how you are made safe from any of the bad things that will happen to the people that reject Jesus.

10:11 The bible says that "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

10:12 There is no longer any difference between the religious Jews and intellectual nonreligious people. It's the same God that loves us all equally and will give the gift of a clear conscience to anyone that accepts what He did for them by sending Jesus to die for them.

10:13 God doesn't play favorites. The bible says that "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved".

10:14 How are people going to open their heart to and believe in someone they've never heard of? The only way they're going to know about Jesus is if someone tells them.

10:15 The only people who can tell others about Jesus are those of us who know him. That's why it's important that you be confident in knowing about Jesus so you won't be shy about telling others. The bible says that people who tell others about Jesus have beautiful feet when they tell about the peace that Jesus brings and of all the goodness that comes from knowing God through Jesus.

10:16 Not everyone believes us nor will everyone believe you. The old testament prophet Isaiah asked "Lord, who hath believed our report?"

10:17 Trust in God comes only by knowing what Jesus said and what God says about Jesus. That knowledge comes when we tell people what God said in the bible.

10:18 Hasn't everyone already heard about God? People can see God in everything He made.

10:19 The religious Jews knew the bible but they didn't recognize Jesus when He lived here. They rejected the idea that Jesus was God's Son. Moses said that one day the Jews would become jealous of the many people not descended from them that were made right with God through Jesus. The Jewish people are very proud of their heritage and became angry that non-Jewish people were being brought close to God.

10:20 Isaiah boldly said it like this. "I loved and made right, people not descended from the Jews that honored God. I showed Myself to those people that weren't even seeking Me."

10:21 To the Jews he said "All day long for many generations I patiently offered my love to you. But you were selfish, critical, and disobedient."

11:1 Does this mean that God has rejected His own Jewish people? Of course not! I myself am a Jew... a descendant of Abraham from the family of Benjamin.

11:2 God hath not cast away His people. They were the ones He had in mind all along! Isaiah prayed to God for the Jewish people saying...

11:3 "God, they killed your prophets, and destroyed the places where you were worshiped. Now they want to kill me."

11:4 But God answered him saying "I already planned for there to be seven thousand Jewish men that have resisted Satan boldly refusing to serve him."

11:5 So that now there are still a few Jews living that will accept Jesus because of God's mercy and great plan.

11:6 It's only because God planned it that way and not because those few Jews did anything special to deserve His love. God's gift of love is based entirely on what He did for us and not what we do for Him. If by doing something special for we God could earn His love, then His free gift is meaningless and our efforts would score us points with Him.

11:7 Are we to think that the Jewish people failed to please God and that only those He chose would be made right with Him and the others were kept out of the picture?

11:8 The bible does say referring to the Jews that "God made them sleepy so they couldn't see or hear even up to now".

11:9 Through David God said of the Jews that "their celebrations and feasts for God backfired on them..

11:10 Let their eyes be blinded from the truth and let them suffer under the burden of what would happen to them because they treated God so selfishly."

11:11 Does this mean that the Jewish people are without hope now? Absolutely Not! Rather through their falling so far away from what God meant, His love was extended to the non-Jewish people making the Jews envious.

11:12 If the failure of God's original people caused Him to turn His back on them and give His love to the non-Jewish people the world over, how much more will He give His love to the Jewish people that accept Him now and how special that will be for them?

11:13 I'm speaking to you that are not Jewish. It's important that I explain these things to you because you didn't grow up learning about God.

11:14 Because I was raised Jewish, my hope is that by telling all of you about God that my Jewish people will be challenged to find out what I'm talking about and come to know Jesus also.

11:15 The Jews rejected Jesus and God then gave His love to the non-Jewish people the world over. For a Jew to come to Jesus now is really like bringing someone back from the dead!

11:16 Considering that God's original people are the one's to whom He gave all the promises, they are very special to Him as are all their descendants. Think of that big family as if it were a tree.

11:17 You who are not of Jewish decent are of a different tree. Some of the descendants of the original Jewish lineage fell away from God and were broken off of the tree so to speak. God grafted you onto the Jewish tree so that you could share its root system and be included in His family and all of His blessings.

11:18 Don't brag because you know Jesus and they don't. Remember the roots of the tree onto which you've been grafted. The blessings you enjoy by finding God's love through Jesus are those He intended all along for the Jewish people.

11:19 You might think that because the Jews rejected Jesus and you accepted Him that you're somehow superior to them.

11:20 The Jews were cut off from God because of their unbelief. You know Jesus because you believed and trusted Him. But be careful not to think that makes you special.

11:21 If God who intended for His original Jewish people to be made right with Him through Jesus actually cut them off of the tree because of their unbelief, you'd better be careful to take your faith in Him very seriously so that you don't ever get cut off the tree by unbelief!

11:22 Appreciate His loving goodness toward those that believe and trust Him so that you will never ever want to be apart from God. Also know how seriousness He is that He would cut off His own people because of their unbelief.

11:23 The Jews that were cut off can be reunited with God through faith if they will humble themselves and trust Jesus.

11:24 You who were never part of the Jewish family were brought close to God through Jesus and included in all the blessings He intended for the Jews. It will be that much more special for the Jew that accepts Jesus now and takes their place in the original plan God intended for them.

11:25 It's important that you get this all in perspective to avoid looking down on the Jews for rejecting Jesus and think that you're special. God didn't want anyone to miss out on what Jesus did for them. Most of the Jewish people rejected Jesus. God opened His love up to everyone so that as many people as possible would come to know Jesus and be made right with Him forever.

11:26 God's love is freely available to all the Jewish people. The bible told us that Jesus would come from the Jews and turn away all those that were against God..

11:27 and that God would take away all their sins.

11:28 As far as our message to you, the Jews have turned their backs on God which made God's love extend beyond them to you but God has always loved His original people and still does.

11:29 God doesn't change His mind. He will never withdraw his gifts and promises once He gives them.

11:30 Before you knew God you were disobedient and selfish but have now come to know Him because the Jews rejected Him.

11:31 Now that you have received Jesus and are telling everyone how wonderful God's love is, the Jews will hear about it and hopefully believe also.

11:32 God leveled the playing field so that we're all equally guilty of sin, Jew and non-Jew. It's only because of His forgiveness and mercy by sending Jesus to die for us that He loves us all.

11:33 God's wisdom is so deep! Nobody but God could have done this! Without His help we could have never figured this out.

11:34 As the prophet Isaiah said "who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has given Him advice?"

11:35 Or "who has given God anything so that God would owe him?"

11:36 Everything in life comes from God and it's only through Him that we can have life. God lives forever! There is nothing greater than God! Yeah!!!!

12:1 I ask you very seriously to live your lives doing what is right in God's eyes. Don't let your bodies rule you. That's the very least you can do for God Who's done so much for you.

12:2 Don't let unbelieving people influence you to the contrary. Rather let your mind be changed to think the way God would have you as you learn what the bible says. This way you will show the world that God's way is the only way to really live life.

12:3 I'm telling you the truth just the way God taught it to me personally. Don't think of yourself as being more special than anyone else. Remember that God sent Jesus to die for each and every one of us and gave us all the same opportunity to be made right with Him.

12:4,5 Just like your body has many parts each doing different jobs, as believers in Jesus, we're all part of His one body so to speak, each having different parts to play in God's plan.

12:6 Some of us are preachers and we should preach what He shows us to teach.

12:7 Others of us are meant to help people and others are meant to teach.

12:8 Still others are to encourage or to give money. Whatever your specialty, you should do it generously, freely, and always with love.

12:9 Let your love be genuine. Don't tolerate evil bad behavior. Let goodness rule your life.

12:10 Be kind and affectionate to each another. Love one another and help everyone to know they are loved.

12:11 Don't be lazy in your life. Stay excited about God.

12:12 Remain full of joy as you hope for better things to come. Be patient when you have to endure hardship. Always keep your heart open to God. He hears the constant prayers of your heart.

12:13 Give what you can to help the others that serve God. Open your home to them when necessary.

12:14 Be nice even to the people who are mean to you. Don't get mad at them.

12:15 Share other's happiness and also share the burden of those that are sad.

12:16 Live peacefully together. Don't be snobs thinking you are special. Rather you should humble yourself and be sure the simple things are all done well.

12:17 If someone hurts you don't hurt them back. Do only that which you know to be good so that all people will see that you are an honest trustworthy person.

12:18 Do the best you can to live a peaceful life with everyone you know.

12:19 Dear friends, if someone does wrong against you, leave it up to God to show that person that they were wrong. Don't try to show them yourself. The bible says that "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord".

12:20 If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat and if thirsty give him something to drink.

12:21 Don't let the evil of other people get to you but instead let the goodness inside you get to them.

13:1 All of you should live as good citizens while in the world. In the end there is no higher power than God. All power that men have ultimately comes from God. The people in authority in the world were given that authority by God whether they know it or not.

13:2 Any person who goes against the rules actually goes against God. He was the one who set the rules in the first place. There is always punishment for breaking the rules.

13:3 The police and government authorities are no threat to people that do good. They are here to help deal with people who do bad things. Give your respect to those in government and from them you will receive praise and honor.

13:4 Government authorities are God's servants for good purposes. If you do wrong, you have reason to be afraid of them because they are put in power in the world by God to enforce good rules and punish bad people.

13:5 You need to obey the laws of the land not just to avoid God's judgment but also to keep your conscience clean.

13:6 Pay your taxes. The government is appointed by God to care for society.

13:7 Respect the authorities and honor them for their good service.

13:8 Don't borrow money. Your only debt should be to repay God's love by giving love to other people because there is no law greater than for us to love one another.

13:9 The ten commandments that tell us "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, etc." is summed up in the commandment that "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself".

13:10 Love never does wrong. It never hurts anyone. Love fulfills all of God's requirements in all of His laws.

13:11 It's about time that we all wake up and realize that right now is the time for us to live God's way because there is less time left now than when you first came to know Jesus.

13:12 Your time of living in darkness is over and the light of truth has dawned on you. Therefore let's stop living the way we used to live before we knew Jesus and start really living strong and safe in the new life He's given us.

13:13 Live your life honestly out in the open. Stop living selfishly like you used to live when you were jealous and drunk all the time doing shameful things in darkness.

13:14 Put on Jesus like you'd put on new clothes. Don't follow after your body to do what it wants.

14:1 Welcome new believers and be careful to not criticize them because they don't understand as much about Jesus as you do.

14:2 Some may believe that it's ok to eat whatever they want but other's think they should be vegetarian. It doesn't matter to God what you eat but not everyone knows that yet.

14:3 Don't criticize the vegetarian because he doesn't want to eat meat nor the meat eater. God loves all people regardless of what they eat.

14:4 Don't interfere with another persons employees. They work for him and not for you. Those employees need to do what their own boss tells them. That employee will ultimately answer to God.

14:5 Some people think that certain days are more special than other days and other think all days are equally special. Let every person think the way they want to.

14:6 If a person thinks a certain day is special to God, its ok to let him think that way because he honors God. The person who eats certain foods and doesn't eat other foods does so to honor God and it's ok. Both people give thanks to God.

14:7 None of us live only to ourselves but in the end we all live to God. None of us die alone but die in the presence of God.

14:8 When we live, we live because of God and when die, we die in His presence so either way we all belong to God.

14:9 Jesus lived and died and came back to life for all of us in life and in death.

14:10 We all stand alone before God. Who are you to judge anyone?

14:11 The bible says "Because I God am real and alive and cannot be denied by anyone, the day will come when everyone will bow down and acknowledge Me with the words of their own mouth".

14:12 Every one of us shall one day stand before God where the truth of your live is obvious in His revealing pure light.

14:13 Let us not judge one another any more but instead never ever do anything that would get in the way of another's trust in God.

14:14 Jesus showed me clearly that there is nothing wrong in what anyone does unless that person thinks it is wrong.

14:15 If your friend is upset with you because you eat meat and he thinks it's wrong to eat meat then you run the risk of offending him. It's not worth offending someone by your personal choices. Jesus died for that person. If it means that you should not eat meat when you are with that person you should not eat meat so as to not offend that friend.

14:16 Don't let people say bad things about you because you have found great freedom in Christ. Don't let your freedom offend anyone. Respect everyone's beliefs even if they are very religious and still trying to obey laws to be right.

14:17 God's kingdom is not about what we eat or drink but rather it's about being right in His sight and enjoying peace of mind free of guilt and rejoicing in His Spirit of Truth.

14:18 God loves everyone that strives to serve Jesus. Even those that don't know God respect those that do good things.

14:19 Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and do things that support each other in their quest for truth so as to not ever discourage anyone.

14:20 It's not what you permit yourself to eat or do that frustrates or helps the work of God. As far as God is concerned everything is ok. But you don't want to ever make anyone feel bad about what he permits or doesn't permit himself to eat or do in his life.

14:21 If it means that you should not eat meat or drink wine or do anything else that someone thinks is wrong than you shouldn't do it so that you don't hurt anyone's feelings about what they believe is right for them.

14:22 You should keep your personal choices on such matters to yourself as you strive to know the truth and do what God wants for you. You can have a clean conscience about what you do or do not do as long as you make your choices based on knowing you are free and that God loves you.

14:23 The person who worries that God may not approve of his actions doesn't yet know the love of Jesus. He will feel guilty if he breaks the rules he set up for himself because he doesn't yet understand God's freedom and love and fears that he may be sinning.

15:1 Those of us that have a strong faith and great freedom in Christ should be patient and understanding of those that are still trying to figure it all out. Be modest and humble yourselves as you gently encourage them being aware of their tender sensitivity.

15:2 Let's live to make other people happy so that we can show them the way of faith by our example and help them to know the love of God.

15:3 Jesus didn't live to please Himself. As the bible says, "All of the evil deeds people did to hurt you fell on me".

15:4 Those things written in the bible a long time ago were written for us so that we could learn about God and grow to trust Him more and more as we learn more and more about Him.

15:5 May God who gives you patience and strength also help you to live at peace and in harmony with each other just like Jesus.

15:6 And that you will be unified in the message that you preach so that people will know how great God is.

15:7 Welcome each other with love in your hearts just like Jesus does for God's sake.

15:8 Jesus became a minister from God to the Jews to prove to them and all the world, that the bible was true by fulfilling the promises made to the early Jews, the fathers of our faith.

15:9-12, And also so that God's love would be shown to the non-Jewish people as the bible said "I praise you among non-Jewish people singing to Your name. Rejoice and be happy along with all of God's people. Praise the Lord, Jew and non-Jew alike." Also as Isaiah said, "A sprout from the root of Jesse shall rise up to reign over the non-Jewish people and they will trust Him."

15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you up with the joy and peace that comes by knowing and believing Him so that by living your life by faith hoping for the good things He promises us, love will so fill you that it flows out to everyone around you by the power of His Spirit.

15:14 I have great confidence in you knowing that you are filled with love and know Jesus personally. You are well able to teach others about Jesus.

15:15 Some of the things I've written to you here are pretty intense. But I knew it's what God wanted me to teach you.

15:16 God wanted me to teach the non-Jewish people about Jesus so that you who God has chosen, would be well prepared and be good examples of God's love to the world.

15:17 I am humbly proud in God's eyes because you received my teaching about Jesus.

15:18, 19 Of course I refer only to the things that God has done through me to help the non-Jewish people know Him. Those things were proven to be from God by the miraculous things that happened wherever I went. As far as God is concerned, I think I've done a good job.

15:20 My goal was to preach the gospel about Jesus to people that didn't before know about God.

15:21 This was to fulfill what was long ago written "To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand".

15:22 That's why I've been so busy here and wasn't able to come visit you.

15:23 I've done my job here now and hope I'll be able to come visit you soon.

15:24 I'm planning a trip to Spain. When I come through Rome we can spend some quality time together and enjoy each other's company.

15:25 Right now I've got to go to Jerusalem and help out the believers there.

15:26 The believers in Macedonia and Achaia gave a lot of money to me to bring to the believers that need some help in Jerusalem.

15:27 They were really happy about being able to donate this money. It's good and right that they share with the Jewish believers considering that God let them share in all the blessings he originally intended for the Jews.

15:28 When I have delivered the money to the believers in Jerusalem, I'll come see you on my way to Spain.

15:29 I'm so full of God's love these days it's going to be wonderful for you all when I get there.

15:30, 31 Now listen up. My work among you is very important to God in telling the world about the love of Jesus. Be united in praying for me so that I will be safe while among the unbelievers in Judea and that God's people in Jerusalem will appreciate and put to good use the money I'm bringing to them.

15:32 Then I'll be free and happy to come visit with you all and we can relax and have a good time.

15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

16:1 I want you to meet and know our sister, Phoebe who has been serving Jesus among the believers in Cenchrea.

16:2 Love her and help her out with whatever she needs. She's a wonderful believer who has helped me and a lot of other people keeping us safe and taking good care of us.

16:3, 4: Send my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila the other believers there that risked their lives for me. I'm grateful to them and to all the non-Jews that believe in Jesus.

16:5 Also remember me to all those that meet in their home. Most of all, tell Epaenetus, who was the first on in Asia to accept Jesus, how much I love Him.

16:6 Greet Mary, who worked so hard serving you all.

16:7 Send my greetings also to Andronicus and Junia, my dear friends and fellow prisoners. Those guys are highly respected by the apostles who were personal friends of Jesus before even I knew Jesus.

16:8, 9: Let my dear friends Amplias, Urbane, and Stachys know that I love and miss them very much.

16:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15: Also Apelles who suffered so much for Jesus and all the believers that live with Aristobulus and my brother Herodion my kinsman and all those believers living with Narcissus, and Tryphena, Tryphosa, Rufus, his mother and mine, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, all their brothers, Philologus, Julia, Nereus, his sister, Olympas, and all the believers which are with them.

16:16 Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

16:17 Watch out for those among you that would cause divisions and strife teaching things inconsistent with what you have learned. Stay away from them!

16:18 Those people do not serve God. They are only out for their own gain. They use persuasive words to deceive simple minded people.

16:19 I'm very proud of you and happy that you're loyalty to Jesus is well known all over. It's good that you are well educated about what is good and ignorant of what is evil.

16:20 Our God of peace shall soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with you. Amen.

16:21 Timotheus, Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow workers in Jesus send you their love.

16:22 I Tertius, who wrote this letter for Paul send you my love also.

16:23 Gaius who has opened his home to me and all the believers here also send their love to you as does Erastus, the city treasurer and his brother Quartus.

16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

16:25 - 27 Now to Him who makes your faith strong according to what I have taught you about Jesus and revealed what was once a great mystery kept secret in the scriptures until now according to God's great plan but now made known to all the nations of the world so that all would believe in Jesus, to the one and only true God, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.