

96-05-24b

We resume our study now, and we're picking up in the middle of chapter five. We have reviewed the all-important section here, which is those first five verses. But recall that when we were looking at point two, the access to this grace comes through Christ.

We reminded ourselves of the fact that this was something of a foreign concept in Israel, two Israelites, under the law, that you could receive something by proxy that was so valuable. And Paul is going to give them a series of illustrations to bring this point home. He's saying a lot, and you could probably make a career out of studying this one chapter.

But the main idea, if we were going to do what we did with the first four chapters for chapter five, what we would perhaps say is, first of all, for these first five verses, we've covered those in our five points, for the rest of the chapter, we could say God's love and grace accomplished our salvation when we were His enemies. We were as far from God as you can get. We were hopeless, helpless, useless.

And look at what God did for us when we were His enemies. How much more will God do for us as His children? So there are two complementary points that are being made in the rest of this chapter, and they are part and parcel of one another. First Paul is going to answer the question, how can righteousness come through someone else? And he's going to say that this is based on the fact that God did this redemption and reconciliation and propitiation for us at salvation.

Now that we have been saved, how much more will He do for us in the eternal life package? What a great opportunity that we have. So if we look at the remainder of this chapter, when he gives these comparisons and he says, just like as through one man sin came into the world, death through sin, death passed on all men for all have sinned. Why does he bring that whole thing in? Because of this thing that we saw right here, that righteousness comes through Christ.

People say, wait a minute, righteousness comes through what I do. I have to represent myself before God. He says, look, your sin and death didn't come through what you did.

You didn't earn your own sin and death. You got that in Adam. So your status of sin and condemnation and death came through someone else.

You got that by proxy and you live out that status because you're in Adam. If you can get sin and death and condemnation by proxy, you can also get righteousness and justification and life by proxy through someone else. And that's why he keeps going back and saying, just as through one man these bad things happen, so also through the one man, Jesus Christ, these good things can happen.

If we wanted to have a key verse for the last half of chapter five, we might pick verses nine and ten. Much more than having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath

through him. We were justified by his blood.

We were delivered from the condemnation that came to us in Adam at the point of salvation. We were redeemed. We were given righteousness that lets us escape the lake of fire at the point of salvation.

Much more will we be delivered from wrath. Now that we are his children, God is anxious to give us a life of productivity, a life that reflects his glory. And wrath in this context, all of the wrath that has been talked about ever since chapter two is God's evaluation of his children at the judgment seat of Christ.

Deliverance from wrath is in the future. And one of the interesting things, the more you go around, we don't have time to look at all of the passages, but it's very interesting to watch as you read through some of the epistles and as we go to some of these passages, look at what Paul puts in the past and look at what he puts as a potential or puts in the future. This is a great example in verse nine, having been justified by his blood.

And of course, justified by his blood is not the same as being declared righteous through living faith that we've been talking about. This is a true reference back to salvation. Justification by his blood, that's at the point of salvation.

But he says that's in the past, having been declared righteous. That happened back at the point that we accepted Christ. How much more we shall be delivered.

Now if he was talking about the deliverance from the lake of fire, he could say not only were we justified, but we were delivered. And he would put all of these things in the perfect tense. We have been delivered, we have been saved, we have been made righteous.

But he says because this thing happened in the past, look at what can happen in the future. Look at what is potential. And that's one of the clues that tells us that this particular deliverance from wrath is not the wrath of the lake of fire, it's the wrath at the judgment seat of Christ.

Because it's potential, it's in the future. Our deliverance from the lake of fire is a foregone conclusion. It is a perfect tense, it has already happened.

And if we keep track of what he puts in the perfect, what he puts in the past, and what he puts in the future as a potential, we can see the distinction between salvation and the Christian life. We can see the distinction between positional truth and experiential truth. And it's an important distinction because we have blurred this line for so long that now when we observe that line, it almost strikes us funny.

We think, well, wait a minute, is that what that really says? We've just heard it and been immersed in it for so long that we've lost the opportunity to be edified by a lot of the things that are in the Word of God for us as believers in this age. So that's why I pick verses 9 and 10. Look

at verse 10.

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, what's in the past tense there? We were reconciled through His death. That's a done deal. Much more, having been reconciled, we shall be delivered by His life.

We shall be delivered. And of course, there's lots of ways of taking this. If you want to look at it in the old way, you can say, well, that's a reference to the resurrection body, to resurrection and the eternal future and so forth.

But in the context and the flow of the argument, think about what he's arguing for in this letter. Is he trying to assure the Romans about their salvation? Has someone come in and been preaching, you're not really saved? You won't be resurrected. There's no such thing as a resurrection.

A bunch of Sadducees went to Rome and were denying the resurrection. Is that the problem he's addressing? It's not. It's the Judaizers who say, you can be righteous before God by keeping the law.

You need to worry about what we think of you. You need to measure yourself by the standard that we set for you. That's how you should look at yourself.

And he's saying, no, righteousness comes through faith. Look at your salvation. Your salvation came through faith.

As you receive Christ, so walk. We're going to be looking at that passage before the night is over. So that's the argument that he's making.

If we keep this in context, it helps us understand those other things are certainly true. And a lot of the points that are made out of Romans are perfectly true points. That's just not what Paul was saying in that particular passage.

So God's love and grace accomplished our salvation when we were his enemies. That's what he's making in verse 10. If God did that for us by proxy through what Christ has accomplished on the cross when we were enemies, now that we're in the family of God, it's just going to be that much more.

It's going to be magnified. We're going to have the opportunity to reflect the glory of God through faith, not just be delivered from the lake of fire, but participate in the eternal purpose of God through faith. It's an a fortiori.

It's a much more than type of argument. And so these comparisons in the last half of chapter 5 do two things. First of all, it sets up this contrast.

Here's what happened at the point of salvation. Here's what can happen now that we have been saved. And you'll see that distinction through all of the epistles of Paul.

Look at what he puts in the perfect tense. Look at what he puts in the future tense. And the second point is, if you're worried about this coming through Christ, that, well, I've certainly got to do something to make this happen.

Just think about your condemnation. Your condemnation came without any participation on your part, and that problem is solved. And you go from death to life.

You go from sin to righteousness in the very same way. It's through faith, not through works. So that's what he argues in the last half of chapter 5. Now, what shall we say then, having covered all of this? And that's exactly how he introduces chapter 6. What shall we say then? We've slogged through four and a half chapters of deep theological truth.

What does it all mean? Why did we follow the logic and the train of thought and all of the doctrines and the theological principles that have been brought up? What shall we say then? And then he continues. He says, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? So what question is he specifically raising here? And we go back in chapter 5 to verse 20. One of the points that he made as he closed out this argument about the difference between the law and grace, the difference between the old man and the new man, the difference between the old point that God was making about sin and the new point that God is making about righteousness.

In verse 20, he said, the law entered in that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. There's nothing like, this is one of the things you learn in art.

I have a screen saver that comes up on the screen and puts colors up. It'll create some random shapes and patterns and things and assign them specific colors. And then at a certain point, it will rotate the color palette and the different shapes will change at different rates and become different colors.

And it's interesting to watch because some color combinations, when you put green on brown, they tend to sort of blend together. When you put red on blue, they tend to really stand out by contrast. And depending on the context in which you set something, it either tends to blend in, that's the whole principle of camouflage, or it tends to stand out, which is the principle of international distress orange.

Why do we have that color? We want it to stand out. If you don't want to lose your garden trowel, paint it orange and you'll always be able to find it. God wanted to make a point about the difference between his righteousness and our lack of righteousness.

And so he created a contrast. He used the Mosaic Law. He said, here's a standard of righteousness.

You stand up against that lineup wall. You stand up against that color, and let's see if you blend in with my righteousness or not. And we were a big contrast.

When the law came in, it just brought out the contrast. But why did God need to make that contrast? He didn't do it through the whole Old Testament ages, did he? He didn't do it ever since Adam. He brought it in once Israel was out in the wilderness, Mount Sinai, tables with the Ten Commandments, and the rest of the law was delivered.

Why didn't he give the law to Adam, have it go all the way through? There is a progress, there's a gradual parting of the ways. Human life gets shorter. Evil gets more evil.

Trespasses get greater. And when the law came in, it just magnified that even more. And where that problem was made extremely obvious, it emphasizes the grace of God in solving the problem.

If Christ... It's interesting to think about all of the different possibilities. What if Christ had come before the flood? Why did God have 4,000 years of human history plus before Christ came? Wouldn't a couple of 300 people or a few thousand people have demonstrated the point that God wanted to make before the angels? Why such a large experiment? Why so much time? Why didn't Christ come in the garden? Instead of slaying the animals and giving the skins to Adam and Eve, Christ could have come and been crucified and the demonstration is complete. Why all of this time? It's a good thing to ponder on.

One of the reasons is, remember when the lady came and was washing the feet of Jesus, she had been a prostitute. She was washing his feet with her hair and the Pharisee that was entertaining Jesus said in his mind, if he knew the profession that this woman was in, he wouldn't be sitting there letting her do those things and Jesus knew what he was thinking. He said, those who have been forgiven little, love little and those who have been forgiven much, love much.

When the law came in and magnified the trespass, it showed us the magnitude of God's love and the magnitude of his grace and the magnitude of his power. It was a huge problem. It spanned millions of people over thousands of years and he solved it all in one moment on the cross with one man on the cross, the God man, Jesus Christ.

The law came in to bring this into relief, to make the contrast clear. That was its purpose. What a terrible thing to misunderstand the purpose of the law.

What is the law? The law is a set of behavior standards. We tend to think, I don't have a big problem with that, I don't want to not eat pork and so forth. We tend to box the argument in terms of the Mosaic Law, but today, do we not have a behavior standard in Christian circles? There are certain things that are just not done and there are certain things that are expected of you.

You should be certain places and do certain things and participate and there are a lot of

expectations that we place on one another, both consciously and unconsciously, that mirror the behavior standards that were given by God. A lot of times our behavior standards aren't near as righteous as his. It's important for us to understand that the only reason God ever gave behavior standards was to magnify and throw into bold relief our sinfulness.

By the law comes the knowledge of sin. So, if you're hung up on the law, and in chapter 5, verse 20, when he explains that the law entered in so that the offense might abound, where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. Now, the grace of God partakes of God's immutability.

It's an infinite grace. It's not like, well, God had a little bit of grace and then it suddenly grew bigger in the presence of sin. When it says grace abounded, our perception of God's grace, the application of God's grace on our behalf, became magnified.

It was thrown into relief. It gave us an ability to comprehend in some small way the magnitude of God's grace because we began to see the magnitude of the problem. Sins were not being measured before the law came in.

When it says sin was not accounted, we studied that a week and two weeks ago, it wasn't that God didn't care about sin or that God didn't know people were sinning, but there was no ruler to show its height and depth like there was once the law came in. So, people say, well, okay, the law came in and magnified the trespass, and because that helped us appreciate the grace of God, then sort of a ludicrous argument can be made, well, then let's continue in sin and let the grace of God continue to abound. And Paul's whole point is that all changed at the cross.

That demonstration was finished, and the lights were turned out on that experiment at the cross. Christ fulfilled the law. Christ is the end of the law.

That point has been made. That experiment is over with. We're now in a new demonstration, a new phase, a new purpose in God's plan, and it is more than silly for us to find ourselves falling back, making the old point.

It doesn't move forward the plan of God for us to go back and make the point that we're very sinful and that our righteousness is as filthy rags. But that's the argument that's presented here. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid.

Meganoitos. Certainly not. Heck no.

And so forth. How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Notice the way that Paul answers this argument. He answers it with a piece of this theological truth.

He doesn't argue from the standpoint of morality. He doesn't argue from the standpoint of national destiny or personal happiness or anything else. He says, let's take some of this dry positional truth that we were united with Christ at the point of our salvation.

And his death, his burial, and his resurrection. You think, well, that's a nice thing, and I get standing before God and I'm not going to the lake of fire. Paul's going to say, no, this is a practical truth.

Look at the application of this truth. How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. And there has been great dead seas of ink spilled about baptism in this passage, about positional truth, about the newness of life and how real is that.

And is it a foregone conclusion that we're going to be on an upward path? We will automatically persevere. We will automatically advance. God is at work in you to will and to do his good purpose.

And once we've accepted Christ, we're automatically on this upward road. And it's just going to happen whether we think about it or not. And of course, based on what we have reviewed here, we know that that's not what Paul is saying at all.

He's emphasizing the fact that it's our choice. He says, Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? And whatever else you want to say about is this the baptism of the spirit, is it water baptism and so forth, what's the clear, obvious point? We know that it's the work of Christ that pleases God and that we are identified with that work. It is pictured in water baptism.

It is accomplished by spirit baptism. It's a great thing to just say we were baptized into Christ and baptized into his death because it applies to all of it. We understand the symbolic significance of water baptism, especially as it was practiced in the early church as a teaching tool before the canon of scripture was available.

What a great object lesson, dunk someone down below the water, bring them back up. It looks just like someone going horizontal six feet under and coming back up. We don't hold them down until they drown and put a marker there.

They go down and they come back up. And it's a great teaching tool. You say, I'm a different person now that I've come back up.

I'm living in a different world with different opportunities. Baptized into Christ. It's interesting that we are identified with him in his death and we've all got that pretty clear.

Have you ever thought about being identified with Christ in his burial? That's a whole subject we won't go into tonight, but one of these days, maybe Easter, we'll talk about identification with

Christ in his burial. As Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, even so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. Why? Why didn't God resurrect Christ right off the cross and prove to all those Romans and all those Pharisees that he was who he claimed to be? What a great place to do the ascension right after the three hours of darkness.

Big blaze of glory. A couple of legions of angels come down. Christ flings the nails out of the cross and says, so there.

But God didn't do that. He went into the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. Why? We are identified with Christ in that three day period.

Why? Well, I'll just tantalize you with that because I don't want to get off track, but there's a reason for it. There's a reason for it. And that's not the point that Paul is making here.

He says we were identified with him. That is, maybe we'll cover it next week. I'm not going to get off track.

We were baptized into his death. We were buried with him through baptism into death. So that, and what was the purpose? So that, and if you look closely, you'll see the answer to that question right here in this passage.

So that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. All things are passed away.

All things are become new. There is a whole fresh set of potentials. The purpose, the goals, the motivations, the priorities, everything about our life is different.

It doesn't mean that our circumstances are different. It doesn't mean that our challenges are different. It means that the answers to those problems are different.

The solutions to those challenges. The means by which we go through all of those same circumstances and deal with those same people and live in those same environmental pressures is completely and totally different. It doesn't say if any man be in Christ, the world is a new place.

Old things are passed away. All things are become new. It says we are different.

And there is a difference in putting a thermometer in a room and putting a thermostat in a room. There's a difference in putting a rock in the water and putting a cork in the water. Water's the same.

The room is the same. It's what you have at the center, what you're looking at that's different. We are different because we're in Christ.

We have access to the grace by which we stand. And that's the point that he's making. By identifying with Christ in his death, identifying with him in his burial, identifying with him in his resurrection, we as believers are potentially completely different people in a completely same world.

So he goes on to say in verse five, if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be, and we have in the English to try to get this to make sense, in the likeness of his resurrection. He basically just says so also in his resurrection if we've been united with him in the likeness of his death. We weren't actually nailed to the cross.

We didn't actually spend those three days and three nights. It's the form, the likeness of his death. We go through a process that is in many ways tied to his death and is similar to his death.

And it has a purpose. We also shall be in his resurrection now. We tend once again to fall into our old ways and we think salvation, I don't want to go to the lake of fire when I die and I'm resurrected.

I'm going to heaven and not to hell. I'm going to be with God and not in the lake of fire. That's a wonderful truth.

It's absolutely true. That's not the point that Paul is making here. What is our context? What is our flow of argument here? What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound? Now we're not going to go from believers continuing in sin back to assurance of salvation or assurance of resurrection.

He's saying that we too might walk in newness of life. This is not resurrected and have newness of life in the millennium in the kingdom of the father. This is now.

This is different now. Walking in newness of life. As you have received Christ, so walk.

So this ought to make a difference to us. So we ask ourselves the question, does it make any difference to us that Christ died, was buried and rose again and that we were co-crucified, co-buried and co-raised? Does it, tomorrow, are we going to stop at 1045 in the morning and say, I have a standing before the God of the universe based on the fact that I'm identified with Christ? When we face our next decision, when we undergo our next pressure, when we deal with the next hateful person, when we deal with the bad opinion of people around us, when we, all of the challenges that face us, do we stop and think, I died with Christ, I was buried with Christ, I have been raised with Christ and I should be walking in a different way than all the people who don't have that privilege, who don't have that standing. It ought to make a difference.

If it doesn't make a difference, we're dead. We might as well be a Pharisee, we might as well go back and leave off the bacon and put on the sackcloth and ashes and just live under the law because there's no material difference and the wrath of God will fall on us, we're storing up

discipline for ourselves in time and loss of reward in eternity, the displeasure of God at the judgment seat of Christ. There's a lot on the line and how silly it's going to be when we stand there before the bema, before the judgment seat of Christ and think back, you know, I was so consumed with this issue, I was so consumed with achieving this goal and getting this thing done and I was so occupied with how miserable this person or that circumstance made me feel and we completely overlooked the opportunity that God has given us in this particular age.

The reason Christ died, remember over in Colossians 1, to deliver us out of this present evil age, I'm sorry it's Galatians 1, to deliver us, we tend to think deliver us from the lake of fire. He says to deliver us out of this present evil age, are we being delivered on a daily basis? Are we walking two or three feet off the mundane ground of circumstances and people and testing? If we're not, we're missing out. If we're not, we're failing the grace of God.

If we're not using the access that Christ died to give us. So what a great opportunity this is. He says, if we've been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall be in his resurrection, knowing this, our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Is this talking about eternity or is this talking about time? It's talking about time. We know that when we're raised, resurrection, body, eternal future, we won't be slaves to sin, but look at what's in the past and look at what's in the future. Remember our perfect tenses and our conditional future ideas here? We have been united together in the likeness of his death.

We're believers, same audience that has been getting this whole message. We have been united. We shall be united in the likeness of his resurrection.

That's true materially at the point of resurrection, but it's also true now because what does Christ's resurrection mean? Christ is living a life to God. Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father even now, trusting the promises of God until his enemies are made his footstool. He's interceding for us.

He is preparing a place for us, and once the Father looks over that place and approves it, just like in the Jewish marriage ceremony, the whole ritual surrounding that engagement period, the potential groom goes and builds the family homestead. Once his Father comes and approves it and says it's habitable, I pronounce this dwelling fit for human habitation, once the Father gives that pronouncement, the groom can go and collect his bride and have the wedding. Jesus says, I'm going to prepare a place for you so that where I am, there you may be also.

He waits on the pleasure of the Father to pronounce that ready, to pronounce the time right, and then he will come back and collect us. In the meantime, we have a great expectation. In the meantime, we can do the same thing Christ is doing.

He is living his life to please the Father now. That's what we ought to be doing. We've been

united with him in the likeness of his resurrection, and we shouldn't be living life to please ourselves, and we shouldn't be praying to God for him to please us and to serve us.

We exist to please and to serve God. It's just the reverse. I want to point something out here in chapter 6 in this first section that you may or may not have noticed.

I'm just going to write these down. In verse 3, he uses the phrase, do you not know? In verse 6, he uses the phrase, we know. In verse 9, he uses the phrase, we know.

In verse 11, we read on down here, he says, he who has died has been freed from sin. If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over him.

The death that he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life that he lives, he lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. It's very interesting here in verse 11, because he says, reckon.

You must reckon yourself. You must reckon yourself dead to sin, alive to God. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body.

I'll just say let sin not reign, keep it short, in verse 12. And this phrase that says that you should obey it in its lusts, there's a little bit of difference in the texts here, and technically speaking, sin does not have lusts. We have lusts.

Sin is the status in which we find ourselves, but sin is not a person. Sin doesn't have desires. We have desires, and half of the texts have this, and some of the others do not.

Basically I would render this, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it, period. Because that's the point. Sin is reigning.

It's got authority. You're obeying it. The idea of desires is going to come in later, and they're our desires, not sin's desires.

And do not present your members, in verse 13, do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as what? As being alive from the dead. Yes, all of the things are true about the resurrection and the eternal future, and we can see that and rejoice in it in this passage, but Paul's point is, get resurrected now. Partake of eternal life now.

It ought to make a difference now. Do you feel resurrected? Do you feel like a new creature in Christ? And when I say feel, I don't mean an emotional experience. I mean, is that what drives your train? Is that what you're thinking about when you go through the day? What do we think about when we recognize that we have been united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection? Now, look at the pattern here.

We've made observations in verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, and 13. Verse 11 is sort of a pivotal point here. Do you not know, in verse 3, that we've been baptized into Christ and into His death? Baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you not know that? We know, in verse 6, that our old man was crucified with Him. In verse 9, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death has no more sway.

Power of death is gone. People lived under the power of sin and the power of death in Old Testament days. Even believers.

Even the faithful. That was a phase of God's plan. The law came in and proved it.

The righteousness that comes by faith was the exception rather than the rule in Old Testament days because God was emphasizing a different point. The law and the prophets bore witness to righteousness by faith. It happened in Old Testament days, but the thrust of that age and the thrust of that whole phase of God's plan was, man is sinful, man can't produce righteousness.

So, we know, we know, and we know. Because of what we know, we must make a decision. We make an application.

We reckon. This word for reckon is *logizomai*. It's the very same word used when God reckoned righteousness to Abraham and that that righteousness will be reckoned to us.

It's an accounting. It's a view that says this is the status of things. Based on what we know about our union with Christ, we need to do something.

This is where application from a lot of what some people see as dry theology comes into place. We learn these things. We sit in Bible class.

We study the Word of God. We understand positional truth. We understand all of that.

What is the application? How do you answer the question, so what? This is it. You must reckon. You've got to make a choice in your mind.

We have to make a decision and reckon, view the universe, view the world, view ourselves in a certain light. And in this case, we must reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. He was raised.

We're raised. We should be walking in newness of life. We need to look at ourselves.

Am I walking in newness of life or do I look just like an unbeliever? Do I look just like a reprobate believer? Do I have the same motivations? Do I have the same thought patterns? Do I have the same unhappiness? Do I have the same lack of production in my life or am I laying up treasure in heaven because I'm operating in faith and I don't care what people think and I don't care that

people think I'm going to be put to shame and so forth. We must reckon. We've got to make a decision.

We've got to take some action. And once we make that decision in our mind and we change our view of ourselves in the context of our life, we have some things to do. Don't let sin reign.

When we catch ourselves falling into the old patterns and the old ways, stop. Wait a minute. I've been crucified, buried, and raised.

Experientially, I ought to be a different person. This is unsatisfactory. I need to get back to thinking about what I know.

The knowledge of the Word of God in our soul has power to change our thinking. Nothing else does. No psychological treatment, no psychiatric analysis, no step program, no knowledge of how we came to be where we are.

Well, I was dropped on my head. I was abused as a child. I came from a dysfunctional family.

I had this condition and that condition, my parents' abuse and neglect and all of these other things and that's why I'm the way I am. You can get insight. You can understand, well, the reason I don't trust men is my father abused me as a little girl.

You know, little girls say, well, my father molested me and so forth and now I can't trust men. That's insight. Psychiatrists, psychologists can give you insight and say, well, this is how you got to be the way you are.

Insight has no power to change. You can say, well, I know why I'm not trusting you, but it doesn't give you the power to trust. There's no power in insight.

There's no power in human knowledge. There's even no power in biblical knowledge. A lot of people say, well, let's combine biblical truth with psychological truth and that'll be a great one-two punch.

The only way that the principles of the Word of God and the truth of the Word of God has any power is when we make it the object of our faith, when we trust it, when we incorporate it into our thinking and say, that's reality. What people tell me is not reality. What my emotions tell me is not reality.

What God says is reality. The universe revolves around God and not me. So it's a process that we go through.

We have to have the power of the Word of God in our soul. We have to know it. Some people think, well, it's listening to the Word of God.

It gives me the power. The more I listen to the Word of God, the better off I'm going to be. It's a

wonderful thing to listen to the Word of God, but we have to know it.

It has to be in a place where we can dredge it up out of our soul and say, that's truth. That's reality. I believe that.

And because that's true, I'm going to ignore this thing over here. We know, we know, we know. Therefore, we reckon.

You can't reckon if you don't know. And because we make that reckoning now, let sin not reign. Do not present your members.

What a terrific verse. Almost every word in verse 13 is great. I just want to give you a few things out of verse 13.

He says, let me get my Greek text here. He says in verse 13, do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness. And the word for yield is a compound in Greek.

The word para, we've studied para and many other combinations of these alongside of, like parallel. And the other part of this word is histamine, which means to stand. So you're standing beside something.

Somebody says, I'm going to go take the hill. Who's coming with me? You come up and stand beside. You say, OK, I'm in.

My hat's in the ring. I'm with you. He says, don't throw in with.

Don't come up and stand alongside sin. Don't come up and present yourself to sin. And instead of self, he says specifically, do not present your members.

And the word members here is melee. It means your limbs or your parts, literally. And it's used that way in a lot of contexts.

Why does he say that? Why doesn't he just say yourself? He says, don't yield your members. Because he's saying, this is the application of all of these principles we're talking about. Now we're talking about functioning in the real world.

This is your hands and your feet. Remember the leper with the blood on his ear and his thumb and his toe? This is what you do in your life. This is the way you walk in your life.

Don't let sin become a pattern. Don't let bitterness or anger or wrath or jealousy or a grudge be a part of your life. That's your operation.

That's your limbs. That's your physical operation in life. Don't let that be characterized by sin.

Don't present your modus operandi, your way of living in life, to sin as instruments of wickedness,

he says here. Well, the word for instruments is hapla. If you've ever studied the ancient Greek armies, there was a category of soldier called the haplite.

The haplites were the infantrymen. They carried the spears and the swords and the short swords and the shields. And they had all this baggage in the movies when you see the guys marching in big files.

Those are the haplites. Why are they called haplites? Because they're the weapon bearers. A hapla is a weapon.

We've got several different passages that throw some light on this. If you look in John 18, 3, for example, it says Judas, in chapter 18, Judas went to the Pharisees and to the chief priests and rulers, and he gathered up an army to go get Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. And they came, and they had lanterns, they had torches, and they had hapla.

They had weapons. They had spears and swords and things. In this very book, Romans 13, verse 12, you might turn over to that because it isn't translated weapons there, but it probably should be.

Romans chapter 13, verse 12, salvation deliverance is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone. The day is at hand.

Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the hapla of light. Let us put on the weapons of light. We can yield our lives, our activities, our members as weapons of wickedness.

Or we can be weapons of light. It's an either or proposition as believers. Do you want to be a weapon of wickedness or do you want to be a weapon of light? That's the choice.

And we as believers are one or the other at any given point in our life. And hopefully we start operating as weapons of light more often than we are weapons of wickedness. But this is a great passage here.

We will arrive here eventually because he's making the same point down here after he has gone through more of his argument. Here in chapter 13, he's making the very same point. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the weapons of light.

Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling in drunkenness, not debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. It's the flesh that has desires. Sin provides the motivation, but we have the desires.

So, hopla, do not yield your members as weapons of wickedness. Look over in 1 Peter 4, verse 1. Peter, of course, was there at the garden when Judas showed up with the soldiers. Peter had a sword, whipped it out and lopped off Malchus' ear.

And Jesus, in the last of His healing miracles, restored that ear even as He was being arrested and taken to the cross. as weapons of wickedness. But in 1 Peter 4, verse 1, Peter says, since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, and if you look at the context up at the end of chapter 3, he's talking about Christ's death in the flesh.

This suffering is the suffering unto death. Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourself with the same thinking. And this is the verb form of hopla.

Arm yourself. Take a hold of the weapons that Christ had in His thinking. Weapons of light, not weapons of darkness.

You might look just up above there. He talks about baptism in verse 21 of chapter 3 of 1 Peter. Talking about Noah and his total of eight family members there saved through water.

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now delivers you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And Peter ties baptism to resurrection.

Walking in newness of life. Arm yourself with the same mind. Get those weapons of light going.

We're here for a purpose. We're not just here to get through. We're not here to get by.

We're not here to seek our own goals, to seek our own pleasure, to seek our own vindication, our own justification before people. We're here so that God is justified, so that God is vindicated and God's purposes are accomplished. We should present ourselves, come up and stand alongside God in the accomplishment of His purposes and let our members be weapons of light in this great conflict that God is engaged in.

It's the greatest opportunity in history. It's such a terrific thing that we can be washing dishes and driving to work and doing all of the mundane things that we do, dealing with family members and dealing with friends and dealing with physical ailments and all the other things that come to us in daily life. And it all has eternal significance.

It all counts in the eternal purpose of God. If we arm ourselves with that thought life, if we start living by faith and not worry about being ashamed or being discredited or dishonored, that's the way to honor God at the judgment seat of Christ. That's the way to expect glory.

That's the way to glory now in tribulation because we know something. If we know, if we know, if we know, if we reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God, that whatever life we have here is not our own. We've been bought with a price.

What's the point of... How would you like to hire an employee who thought about nothing except getting their own stuff done? In the computer business, all he wanted to do was build his own machine and install his own software and play his own games and marvel at his own screen

savers and that kind of thing. What kind of employee would that be? Why did I hire you? You're doing nothing but pursuing your own goals. We don't want God to look at us that way at the judgment seat of Christ.

We want to be busy accomplishing His purpose. That's the calling that we have. Paul is making that argument in these chapters of Romans.

It's so important for us to understand that this is what Romans is about. It is an exhortation and encouragement to us as believers to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity to live beyond ourselves, to live in a way that pleases and glorifies our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let's close in prayer.

Father, we thank You for the privilege of living in this age, of being sustained by Your grace, of having access to Your grace through Jesus Christ. We are awestruck by the magnitude of Your plan and Your purpose and by the love that You've expressed toward us in incorporating us into Your eternal purpose and giving us such tremendous opportunities. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will take these truths, convict us, correct us, rebuke us, and instruct us so that we will be mature and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.