Romans Survey

The Foundational Epistle for the Edification of the Body of Christ

A 22-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These are the 22 lessons of course three, Keith Blades' survey of Romans, which he calls the foundational epistle for the edification of the members of the Church, the Body of Christ. Lessons 1–6 lay the groundwork and go through the introduction (Romans 1:1–15). Then come four cornerstones: justification by grace through faith (Lessons 7–10); sanctification by grace through faith (Lessons 11–14); the dispensation of Gentile grace now in effect (Lessons 15–18); and walking worthy of who we are in Christ (Lessons 19–22). The goal of Romans is establishment, a building term for laying a foundation; it is God's will that members of the Body of Christ learn the doctrines of Romans first.

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Lesson Summaries

L1

Edification and the Goal of Establishment *Romans 1:11–12; 16:25 — edification, establishment, and the order of Paul's epistles*

Course Three Begins

- Paul's epistles, Romans through Philemon, are expressly to us and about us in this dispensation; course two surveyed God's program with the nation

Israel

- Romans is the foundational epistle for the edification of the members of the Church, the Body of Christ; though not the first epistle Paul wrote, God placed it first
- The believer today is not a spiritual Israelite — "There is no such thing" — but a member of the new creation, the Church, the Body of Christ

Established (Romans 1:11–12; 16:25)

- Paul's purpose was "to the end ye may be established"; the goal of the epistle to the Romans is their establishment
- Two issues comprise the establishment doctrines: what Paul calls "my gospel," and "the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery"

Foundation, Superstructure, Roof

- Romans through Galatians deal with the foundational truths, Romans the major one; I and II Corinthians and Galatians deal with problems believers have understanding, appreciating and applying them

L2

The Divine Design: Milk Before Meat

Ephesians through the pastoral epistles — foundation, superstructure, roof

Doctrinally Progressive Order

- This dispensation of Gentile grace is a divine interruption in God's program and dealings with the nation Israel
- Romans through Philemon are put together not chronologically but in a doctrinally progressive manner, from the milk doctrines to the meat doctrines
- God designed godly edifying and a pastor is only to follow the divine design; "apt to teach" means skilled in laying the foundational doctrines first and building on them

Superstructure Doctrine: Perfection in View

- Romans through Galatians has establishment in view; in Ephesians 4 the provisions for edification have perfection in view — God's ultimate aim is the doctrinal perfection of His saints

Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians

- The Thessalonian epistles would be doctrinally out of place before Romans: milk doctrines are Romans through Galatians, meat doctrines Ephesians through II Thessalonians

The Local Assembly Follows the Design

- In the four pastoral epistles — I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, as Keith names them — Paul deals with the implementation, use and defense of godly edifying in a local assembly

L3

Four Cornerstones Framed by Introduction and Conclusion

The Romans outline — introduction 1:1–15; cornerstones 1:15–16:20; conclusion 16:21–27

Four Cornerstones of a Foundation

- As any foundation has four major cornerstones, Romans breaks itself down into four major sections; calling them cornerstones is Keith's own terminology

- The four sections are framed by an introduction in the opening 15 verses of Romans 1 and a conclusion in Romans 16:21–27, which parallels the introduction

First Cornerstone: Justification (1:15–5:21)

- Establishment in the doctrine of our justification by grace through faith: Paul preaches the gospel to the already saved to teach what transpired the moment you trusted Christ

Second Cornerstone: Sanctification (6:1–8:39)

- Sanctification is different from justification — you can't be sanctified unless you are justified; it sets you apart, able to live unto His honor and glory

Third Cornerstone: Gentile Grace (9:1–11:36)

- Establishment in the doctrine of the dispensation of Gentile grace now in effect: Israel's program is temporarily, not permanently, in abeyance, and we live in a new dispensation formerly kept secret
- There is no such thing as a spiritual Israelite; in the one new man, the Body of Christ, there is no Jew or Gentile

Fourth Cornerstone: Walking Worthy (12:1–16:20)

- Establishment in the doctrine of walking worthy of who we are now as justified, sanctified members of God's new creation in this new dispensation

L4

Paul Separated unto the Gospel of God *Romans 1:1 — Paul's special apostleship; different gospels in the Bible*

Paul's Distinct Apostleship

- An apostle is one authoritatively sent out with a message; the twelve were sent with the same message to the same people under Israel's program, the gospel of the kingdom
- Paul was sent out with a different message to a different group of people under a different program

Separated unto the Gospel of God (1:1)

- "Separated" translates aphorizo, a special, unique separation: Paul has to be pulled out of the group and set by himself

Different Gospels in the Bible

- There are at least 15 different gospel messages from Genesis to Revelation; not every occurrence of the word gospel means the gospel of your salvation
- The gospel of the kingdom is about the literal establishment of God's kingdom on this earth vested in Israel; the twelve preached it a long time without understanding Christ's death, burial and resurrection
- The gospel of God Paul was uniquely separated unto looks at the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as good news

L5

The Cross Set Forth as Good News *Romans 1:1–5 — the gospel concerning His Son, to all nations*

The Gospel Concerning His Son (1:2–4)

- Verses 3 and 4 are a synopsis of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, which God "had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures" (verse

2)

- Two things make Paul's separation unique: he proclaims the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as good news, and he was sent to the Gentiles apart from Israel and in spite of Israel

Not Good News to the Twelve

- In Acts 2, 3, 5 and 7 the cross was preached to Israel as a criminal indictment; Keith is not criticizing Peter — at that time God did not have the cross set forth as good news

A Gracious Apostleship (1:5)

- In Paul's ministry the cross is put in an entirely different light and set forth as good news — the first big distinction in his unique apostleship
- The Lord came back from heaven (Acts 9) and gave Paul "grace and apostleship" — a gracious apostleship, not called for or promised before — and sent him to all nations
- The prophets speak of God dealing with the Gentiles, but always in the context of Israel's program, through Israel possessing her kingdom — nothing apart from Israel or in spite of Israel

L6

Paul's Gospel, Saints, and Establishment *Romans 1:5–15 — finishing the introduction; the four cornerstones laid out*

Without a Dispensation of Gentile Grace

- Keith asks the class to pretend the Lord never came to raise up Saul of Tarsus, to see the message Gentiles would have heard without a dispensation of Gentile grace
- The remaining record of Acts would have described the commencing of the Lord's day of wrath, and there would have been no Romans through Philemon

Paul's Gospel

- The Lord raised up Saul of Tarsus and sent the gospel of God concerning His Son out as good news to the nations: in the cross is the provision for amnesty and deliverance from the wrath to come
- That is Paul's gospel — uniquely his, which is why he will say "my gospel"

Thanksgiving, Establishment, Debtorship (1:8–15)

- Unable to come in person, Paul recognizes his debtorship and accomplishes it by this epistle; in verse 15 he preaches the gospel not to get them saved — they are saved — but to get them established in it

The Four Cornerstones Laid Out

- Paul had the four cornerstones established in his soul and now communicates them to the Romans: justification (1:15–5:21), sanctification (6:1–8:39), the dispensation of Gentile grace now in effect (9:1–11:36), walking worthy (12:1–16:20)

L7

Wrath Consciousness: the First Part of the Gospel *Romans 1:15–32: the First Cornerstone Begins; Children of Wrath*

The First Cornerstone (Romans 1:15–5:21)

- Romans 1:15 through 5:21 has the first cornerstone for the doctrinal

establishment, the edification of our souls; as the outline says, it is establishment in the doctrine of our justification by grace through faith

The Gospel Preached to Saved Romans (1:15–17)

- Verses 15–17 set the stage for the first cornerstone; Paul is not preaching to unsaved people — the Romans are saved — and God has more designed in the gospel than the salvation of those who believe it

The Three Parts of the Gospel

- The gospel of Christ has three parts: 1:18–32 produces wrath consciousness; 2:1–3:20 sets forth that no man can escape God's wrath by anything he may do or try to do; 3:21–26 brings the good news
- The word gospel means good news, but no one will think it good news until he first realizes that by nature he deserves God's wrath

Deserved Wrath Held Back, Grace Sent Out

- Grace is getting what you don't deserve: "The world deserves wrath, but it's getting grace." They deserve His wrath, and that is the first part of the gospel
- Ephesians 2 gives a summary expression of the first part: men need to see themselves as children of wrath, the product of the course of this world charted from the moment sin entered

L8

No Self-Defense Plea: the Second Part *Romans 2:1–3:20: Every Plea Answered, Every Mouth Stopped*

No Self-Defense Plea (2:1–3:20)

- The second part of the gospel runs from 2:1 to 3:20: no one has a self-defense plea that will successfully excuse them from being counted worthy of God's wrath
- Confronted with wrath, man's flesh nature rears up and tries to come up with self-justification; Paul, like a prosecuting attorney, answers each self-defense tactic from the most common to the most desperate

Relative Righteousness (2:1–11)

- Relative righteousness is a man comparing himself and his conduct with another man — "I'm not as bad as some people are" — the most common self-defense plea, which is why it is dealt with first

The Favored Jew (2:17–29)

- The law condemns the Jew as by nature a sinner just like the Gentiles; he has no self-defense in simply being a Jew

Desperate Attempts and the Concluding Declaration (3:1–20)

- Paul cites passages from Israel's own scriptures declaring them sinners equal to the Gentiles; the law, instead of providing justification, confirmed the condemnation and stops every mouth
- Only when a man's mouth is stopped is he ready to hear the good news — the third part of the gospel, beginning in 3:21

L9

The Glorious Good News: the Third Part *Romans 3:21–4:25: Justified Freely by Grace, and the Proofs*

"But now": Righteousness Offered (3:21–23)

- Men cannot obtain the righteousness of God by the law; it is offered without the law as an absolutely free gift, received solely by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as substitute Redeemer

Redemption and Propitiation (3:24–26)

- A redeemer pays a price to deliver you from a predicament you have no capacity to deliver yourself from; Christ paid it, freeing God's justice to act for us rather than against us

The Debit and Credit Account

- Forgiveness cancels the debit side and Christ's righteousness is imputed to the credit side; these two components make up justification, the standing a man needs to escape the wrath to come

Declarations and Proofs (3:27–4:8)

- From 3:27 through chapter 4 Paul sets forth that the good news really is that good; justification by grace through faith is not something new to this dispensation of grace
- Abraham was before the law and David under the law; God counted Abraham's faith, not his works, for righteousness — when you work for something, grace is not the basis upon which you get what you get: debt is
- Abraham did not believe in Jesus as substitute redeemer — the message was different — but the issue is what God responded to; no man has ever been justified on the basis of works in God's eyes

L10

Stuck Being Justified: the Much Assurance Doctrines *Romans 5: Three Judicial Results and the Irrevocable Reconciliation*

Three Judicial Results (5:1–2)

- Instead of wrath against us, we have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" — the exact opposite of wrath; God's justice has nothing against us
- Access stands in stark contrast to the alienation we used to have with God: the liberty of approach, with no more obstacles between us and God
- Instead of the prospect of wrath, we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God", which we get through the rapture of the church at the end of this dispensation of grace

Troubling Challenges (5:3–4)

- Patience is the determination to take a stand and check a matter out without panicking; the experience is proof that the gospel we believe is the gospel of God, and the tribulation ends up underscoring the hope
- Keith notes James 1 as a similar principle taught to the remnant of Israel in God's program with them

Irrevocable Reconciliation: the At-One-Ment (5:11–21)

- Verses 11–21, the doctrine of our irrevocable reconciliation, is the capstone to the eternal security doctrines; the at-one-ment is a permanently fixed position resting solely on the integrity of the Lord Jesus Christ

L11

Second Cornerstone: Dead to Sin, Alive unto God *Romans 6:1–13: Our Sanctified Position in Christ*

The Second Cornerstone (Romans 6:1–8:39)

- Lesson 11 begins the second cornerstone of doctrine for the edification of our souls, running from Romans 6:1 to the end of chapter 8: establishment in the doctrine of our sanctification by grace through faith
- When we trusted Christ, the judicial transaction of justification took place, and simultaneous with it another transaction referred to as sanctification; it is just as appropriate to talk about the gospel of sanctification as the gospel of justification
- Chapter 7 teaches not being under the law in this dispensation of grace; chapter 8: putting the position in Christ into practice by walking after the Spirit, being made sons of God, not treated as children, and coping with the sufferings of this present time

Three Components of Our Position in Christ

- Justification enables us to live forever with God; sanctification allows us to live unto God right now, practically in the details of our lives and on into eternity

Dead to Sin (Romans 6:1–2)

- "Dead to sin" is the summary expression for the sanctified position: the mastership of sin's dominion in our mortal bodies is broken, so we don't have to obey sin as a slave any longer

Reckon, and Let Not Sin Reign (Romans 6:11–13)

- Verse 11 is the sanctified position in a nutshell; to reckon is to acknowledge the reality of something and count it true, and living the Christian life is simply living like who you are in Christ

L12

Not Under the Law, but Under Grace *Romans 6:14–7:25: Dead to the Law; Paul's Anticipated Objections*

Putting the Position into Practice

- There is a great tendency to assume God deals with us today as He dealt with Israel in time past; in this dispensation of grace He has put a brand new program into effect, compatible with our position in Christ
- The law operates on your flesh, and there is a yearning in our flesh nature to be under a performance system like the law; yet the law is a yoke of bondage, not designed to enable you to live unto God

The Astounding Statement of Romans 6:14

- "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" is an astounding statement, because to natural thinking it doesn't make sense
- God created a brand new system for us to operate under today called grace; if members of the Body of Christ try to live unto God under the law, sin will be given back the dominion
- The law will not enable you to put your position in Christ into practice; the only way it ever will be put into practice is God's way, under grace

Is the Law Sin? (Romans 7:7–25)

- Romans 6:14 sets out two systems — under law, under grace; the most foolish thing a Christian can do is put himself under the law, and deliverance is by living consistent with God having put you under grace

L13

Walking After the Spirit: Functional Life and Peace *Romans 8:1–17: No Condemnation; Sons, Not Children*

Functional Death in Romans 7

- The contrast in Romans 7 and 8 is not between an unsaved man and a saved man but the two potentials that exist in a believer; the choice is yours as a member of the Body of Christ

The Yoke of Bondage (Galatians 5)

- Walking under the law system and trying to live unto God by the law is walking after the flesh, because that's a fleshly performance system — a yoke of bondage, designed not to squelch sin but to give it life

No Condemnation (Romans 8:1–4)

- The condemnation of 8:1 is not eternal condemnation; it is the condemnation chapter 7 described, coming from the law as the yoke of bondage it is

Minding the Things of the Spirit (Romans 8:5–11)

- Minding the things of the Spirit, you are occupied with Christ and who you are in Christ; to be spiritually minded is functional life and peace, the exact opposite of the wretched man of 7:24

Not Debtors to the Flesh; Sons, Not Children (Romans 8:12–17)

- God treats us as sons and not as children in this dispensation of grace; being led by the Spirit of God characterizes sonship, and the law is not employed with sons — it is employed with children
- Paul's context is adulthood in contrast to childhood — not being dealt with by the law system, as God dealt with Israel as a child; Keith will deal with sonship again in Romans 12

L14

Provisions Under Grace to Cope with Suffering *Romans 8:18–39: Glorification to Come, the Spirit's Help, God's Counsel, God for Us*

Concluding the Second Cornerstone (Romans 8:18–39)

- Lesson 14 is the last on the second cornerstone, Romans 6–8; the outline reads, "Provisions under grace to equip us to cope with the sufferings of this present time as we await the hope of the glory of God."

The Sufferings of This Present Time

- The sufferings of this present time are common sufferings we experience along with all men, because we live in a world still under the bondage of corruption because of sin — sickness, decay, accidents and death in particular
- We ought not expect God to shield us from them; that was part of God's program with Israel, but not of His program in this dispensation of grace — "the sufferings of this present time" is a dispensational expression

Glorification to Come Produces Patience

- God will not deliver you from these sufferings now, but He has equipped you to cope with them; what He has provided is the knowledge of the glory which shall be revealed in us

God Is for Us (Romans 8:31–39)

- As members of the Body of Christ we primarily suffer because of two issues: the sufferings of this present time, the most common of all; and, as we take a stand for sound doctrine, sufferings that come from the satanic powers of evil

against us

- In this passage Paul deals with sufferings for Christ's sake, and "more than conquerors" is the key expression; it is the foundational doctrine he builds upon in II Corinthians — a full-blown epistle of amplification upon Romans 8:18–39 — in which we get the full equipment to endure the sufferings of Christ

L15

Accursed from Christ: The Third Cornerstone Begins *Romans 9–11 Overview; Romans 9:1–13: Has the Word of God Taken None Effect?*

The Third Cornerstone (Romans 9–11)

- The third cornerstone, Romans 9–11, is establishment in the doctrine of the dispensation of Gentile grace that is now in effect; the first two cornerstones covered justification and sanctification by grace through faith
- Its goal: to understand and appreciate what God has done with Israel — His program with them temporarily in abeyance — and that we live in a new and different dispensation formerly kept secret

Not the Assumers of Israel's Program

- This dispensation of Gentile grace has not canceled God's program with Israel; it is a temporary suspension, and when it concludes God will resume and fulfill His program with Israel
- Coining a word, Keith says we are "not the assumers" of God's promises and covenants made to Israel; you are not to look at yourself as a spiritual Israelite
- Israel's fullness is still yet to come, and "their fullness is not your fullness"; Romans 9–11 teaches your position in Christ in the overall outworking of God's plan and purpose

Accursed from Christ (Romans 9:1–5)

- Romans 9:4–5's list — the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, the promises — pertains to Israel; Paul does not say they possess these things, and right now they are accursed from Christ

L16

Is There Unrighteousness with God? God Forbid *Romans 9:14–33; Exodus 31–34 and 5–9: Mercy, the Potter, and Much Long-suffering*

Is There Unrighteousness with God? (Romans 9:14)

- With the first proposal dismissed, Paul anticipates another in verse 14; especially to a Jew, charging God with unrighteousness is not an uncommon charge — as with the desperate thinking Paul anticipated at Romans 3:5

Of God That Sheweth Mercy (Romans 9:15–16)

- What God has done is consistent with His previous dealings with Israel: it is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"
- God turning to the Gentiles has to do with Him showing mercy on them — consistent with what He told Moses He reserved the right to do, and that would include the Gentiles

Pharaoh and the Potter (Romans 9:17–24)

- Verse 17 is Paul's second reason: before delivering Israel God had another

purpose to accomplish; before He gives Israel a kingdom, He has a purpose with the Gentiles, made known in the mystery of Christ — nothing unprecedented in His dealings

God Will Fulfill His Program with Israel (Romans 9:25–33)

- The only way God would be unrighteous would be to fail to resume and fulfill His program with Israel; Paul quotes Hosea and Isaiah to show that is not going to take place
- The Gentiles attaining righteousness rests solely on God being merciful and gracious to us; that is why it is called the dispensation of the grace of God — not covenanted or contracted with us

L17

Israel Responsible for Her Own Stumbling *Romans 10: Zeal Not According to Knowledge and the Word of Faith*

An Often Abused Passage

- Verses 9–10 are often quoted as the proclamation of the gospel for us today, and Keith says they really are not, though Paul says something here with an application to us; Romans 1–5 dealt with justification by grace through faith

Two Senses of Israel's Salvation

- Paul talks about Israel and salvation two ways in these chapters: Romans 11:26 is the complete deliverance of the nation of Israel from all their national predicaments — the Messiah coming to be Israel's Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King and Blesser
- In Romans 10:1 it is a personal salvation for an Israelite: justification, and deliverance from the judgment that has come on apostate Israel; a Jew who trusts Christ becomes part of the remnant

Zeal Not According to Knowledge (Romans 10:1–4)

- Israel's big spiritual problem is not lack of zeal: they have "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" — misplaced zeal, and Israel is a perfect example

The Righteousness of Faith Paul Preached to Israel (Romans 10:5–13)

- Verse 9 is Paul's message to an unbelieving Israelite: more is involved than justification — through the mouth making a confession comes deliverance from being part of apostate Israel and suffering the consequences of being accursed from Christ

Israel Heard and Is Without Excuse (Romans 10:14–21)

- Isaiah 52:7 refers to the ministry of the 12 apostles in Israel, and "sent" is apostello, a direct reference to the apostles; God did send, Israel did hear — they could have believed and called, but didn't

L18

Not Cast Away: Stumble, Fall, Diminish, Fullness *Romans 11: Israel's Present State, Future Fullness, and the Doxology*

Ending the Third Cornerstone

- This is the final lesson in the third cornerstone, Romans 9–11; its major goal is that you understand you are not a spiritual Israelite today

Judicially Blinded (Romans 11:7–10)

- Israel's present status is judicial blindness — not permanent — describing

what chapter 9 called being accursed from Christ; they don't see God dealing with them because He has put their program in abeyance and turned to us Gentiles

Stumble, Fall, Diminish, Fullness (Romans 11:11–15)

- Everything in Romans 9–11 about what has happened to Israel is spoken of in connection with four terms: stumble, fall, diminish, fullness

The Olive Tree: Restoration Provided For (Romans 11:16–24)

- Paul is not talking about individual Gentile salvation — settled in the first five chapters of Romans — but about God putting Israel back in the position she used to be in

Blindness in Part, and the Doxology (Romans 11:25–36)

- The blindness is in part, only temporary, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" — roughly the end of this dispensation, by the rapture of the church; then God resumes His program with Israel
- The gifts and calling of God are without repentance — God has not changed His mind; we are not the assumers of Israel's promises, covenants, gifts and calling, and Israel gets them when this dispensation ends

L19

Walking Worthy: Beseeched by the Mercies of God *Romans 12: The Fourth Cornerstone Begins — Renewing the Mind, Sonship and Agape Love*

The Fourth and Final Cornerstone (Romans 12:1–16:20)

- Beginning in Romans 12, Paul deals with the fourth and final cornerstone: establishment in the doctrine of walking worthy of who we are now as justified, sanctified members of God's new creation in this dispensation of grace

Beseeched by the Mercies of God (Romans 12:1)

- The mercies of God shown in the first three cornerstones are the basis on which Paul beseeches us; our conduct is to be grace motivation, mercy motivation — gratitude, thanksgiving and appreciation
- Living right so as not to lose your justification is an entirely wrong reason for living right; "The issue is walk worthy of it, not walk worthy to get it. You've got it."

Transformed by the Renewing of Your Mind (Romans 12:2)

- Conforming to this world's norms and standards is out of line with who we are; the transformation takes place by the renewing of our mind with the norms and standards God has

Treated as Adult Sons, Not Children

- Romans 8:14–15 is a contrast between being under grace and being under the law, not between saved and unsaved; adoption or sonship is being treated like an adult in contrast to being treated like a child
- A saved Israelite under the law was treated as a child, under the tutor and governor principle and the fear motivation system; under grace the motivation system is gratitude, thanksgiving and appreciation — grace beseeches, it doesn't demand

L20

Human Government, the Catch-All, and Knowing the Time

Romans 13: Three More Issues for Renewing the Mind

Three More Issues for Renewing the Mind

- Paul sets three more issues before us in Romans 13 about which we need to renew our minds: the divine institution of human government (verses 1–7), a summary catch-all principle (verses 8–10), and knowing the time

The Divine Institution of Human Government (Romans 13:1–7)

- We need to think of human government according to the main reason God designed and ordained it; however bad it can be, it has an overriding factor for good
- Human government was God's idea, not man's; man can corrupt and pervert it. To subject yourself is a willing act of putting yourself under it

The Catch-All Principle: Agape Love (Romans 13:8–10)

- Paul uses the owing principle to give a summary catch-all declaration on knowing the will of God in the details of our lives; everything the law said to do would have been done on the basis of agape love, for God or for man
- Paul could not address every detail of your life, nor would God want him to — that would be inconsistent with dealing with you as a son; where no passage addresses it, operate on agape love and be confident you are doing God's will

Knowing the Time (Romans 13:11–14)

- The precious opportunity in this dispensation of grace is to redeem the time; besides giving time for people to be saved, God is giving you time to redeem to His honor and glory

L21

The Weaker Brother: A Test of Agape Love *Romans 14:1–15:7: Receiving the Weak in the Faith, the Edification Process and Sonship*

A Test of Agape Love and Sonship

- From Romans 14:1 through 15:7 Paul deals with weaker brothers; handling them properly is a great display of agape love — Keith calls it "just about the supreme test of your agape love"

Who Is Weak in the Faith

- A weaker brother is not a sinning, rebellious or deceived brother; he is another member of the Body of Christ who hasn't learned as much as you have

Receive Him, but Not to Doubtful Disputations

- In Romans 14:1 Paul summarizes the whole thing: the weaker brother doesn't yet have the doctrinal capacity to make the discernments the strong one in the faith is able to make
- The strong one understands Israel's dietary commands don't apply in this dispensation; the weak one is not disobedient or rebellious if he hasn't learned the truth yet
- Paul does not handle the Galatians' observing of days on the basis of Romans 14: they had learned the truth about the dispensational change and its ramifications, and were not weak in the faith
- Agape love values and esteems the edification process and the sonship status the weak one received the moment he trusted Christ as his Saviour

No Stumbling Block (Romans 14:13–15:7)

- "Your viewpoint is right. That's not the issue." You don't demand it on him — he is a son with you; give up your liberty in his presence and let his sonship operate, for Christ died for him to become a son, not just justified

L22

The Dispensational Change and Satan's Policy of Evil *Romans 15:8–16:27: Time Past, But Now, Mark Them, and the Conclusion*

Two Primary Closing Matters

- From 15:8 to the end of the epistle Paul sets forth two primary issues to close out the foundational doctrines of Romans: the reiteration of the great dispensational change with the uniqueness of his apostleship, and the warning about the satanic policy of evil

Time Past: A Minister of the Circumcision (Romans 15:8)

- "Was a minister of the circumcision" is past tense: He came to minister to the people of Israel in connection with God's program with Israel, confirming promises made to the fathers concerning a kingdom

Gentile Expectation in Israel's Program (Romans 15:9–12)

- With God's program with Israel in effect, the Gentiles' expectation was to rejoice with Israel in the establishment of the kingdom; in citing Psalm 18, Deuteronomy 32, Psalm 117 and Isaiah 11, Paul is not describing what Gentiles do today
- That expectation is still to come — God's program with Israel is not in effect today; Gentiles now respond with thanksgiving, gratitude and appreciation for a dispensation of Gentile grace before the day of wrath

But Now: The Offering Up of the Gentiles (Romans 15:13–16)

- Verses 8–12 are time past with the expectation of what is yet to come; verses 13–16 are right now — the offering up of the Gentiles is taking place, made manifest through Paul's ministry
- The goal of the satanic policy of evil is "to get you not to be unbiblical, not to be unscriptural, but to get you to be undispensational"; its major contrary doctrine is denial of the dispensational change

The Conclusion: Your Establishment (Romans 16:21–27)

- The goal of the epistle is your establishment, to go on to learn the advancing doctrines and come to the full knowledge of the gospel committed to the Apostle Paul and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel's Program vs. the Dispensation of Gentile Grace

Keith says Paul's epistles, Romans through Philemon, are the portion of God's Word expressly to us and about us in this dispensation of Gentile grace; Hebrews through Revelation deal with the resumption and fulfillment of God's program with the nation Israel. Israel's program is temporarily set aside and in

abeyance — a temporary suspension, not a cancellation; when this dispensation concludes, God will resume and fulfill His program with Israel.

Justification vs. Sanctification

At the exact same time God justified you, He also sanctified you; sanctification is something different than justification, and you can't be sanctified unless you are justified. Justification is the judicial position — God made you His righteousness in Christ — and it enables us to live forever with God; sanctification sets you apart and allows us to live unto God right now.

Under the Law vs. Under Grace

Romans 6:14 sets out two systems — "not under the law, but under grace." God dealt with Israel under the law, but in this dispensation of grace He has put a brand new program into effect, compatible with our position in Christ. The law will not enable you to put your position in Christ into practice. Walking after the flesh is trying to live unto God by the performance system of the law; walking after the Spirit is being mindful of who you are in Christ.

Paul's Gospel and the Preaching of the Mystery

Keith says the establishment doctrines of Romans comprise two issues: what Paul calls "my gospel," and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery. This dispensation of grace was a mystery in ages and generations past, not made known; God kept it secret, revealed it first to Paul, and it could not be searched out in the scriptures of the prophets.

Sons, Not Children

Part of our sanctified position is to be made sons of God in this dispensation of grace and not to be treated by God as children. Adoption or sonship is being treated like an adult in contrast to a child. Under the law God treated Israel like children, with the fear motivation system; grace is the motivation system under grace.

Two Issues of Suffering

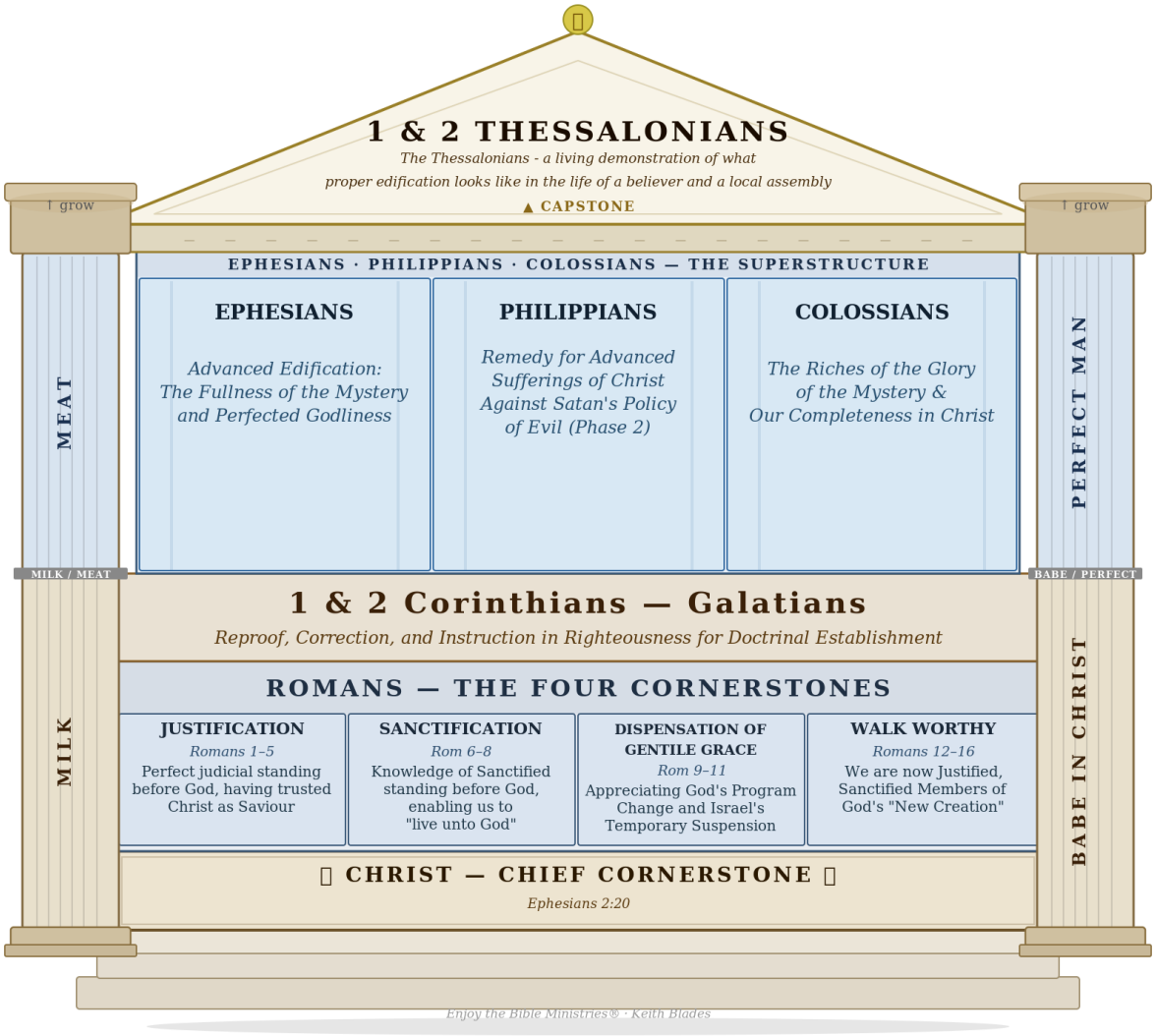
Keith says members of the Body of Christ primarily suffer because of two issues: the sufferings of this present time, the most common, and suffering from the satanic powers of evil for standing for sound doctrine. The sufferings of this present time are shared with all men because the world is still under the bondage of corruption; shielding from them was part of God's program with Israel, not of this dispensation of grace.

Israel's Salvation: Romans 10 vs. Romans 11:26

Romans 10:9–10 is oftentimes quoted as if it were the proclamation of the gospel for us today, and Keith says it really isn't; verse 9 is Paul's message to an unbelieving Israelite. The salvation of Romans 11:26 is the complete deliverance of the nation from its national predicaments under the 5th course of punishment, when the Messiah comes to be Israel's Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King and Blesser.

Key Scripture References

Romans 1:1	“separated unto the gospel of God”: Paul set apart from the twelve
Romans 1:11–12	The purpose of the epistle: “to the end ye may be established”
Romans 1:15	The gospel preached to saved Romans to establish them, not to save them
Romans 1:18–32	First part of the gospel: wrath consciousness
Romans 3:21–26	Third part: the good news — justification through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus
Romans 5:11–21	Irrevocable reconciliation, the at-one-ment: capstone to the much assurance doctrines
Romans 6:1–13	Dead to sin and alive unto God: the sanctified position; reckon it, and yield yourselves unto God
Romans 6:14	Two systems: “not under the law, but under grace”
Romans 8:14–17	Sons, not children: the law is not employed with sons
Romans 8:18–25	The glory to be revealed equips us to cope with the sufferings of this present time
Romans 9:1–5	Israel accursed from Christ; things that pertain to Israel which they do not yet possess
Romans 10:9–10	Paul’s message to an unbelieving Israelite — not the proclamation of the gospel for us today
Romans 11:25–29	Blindness in part until the fullness of the Gentiles; the gifts and calling of God are Israel’s
Romans 12:1–2	“by the mercies of God” shown in the first three cornerstones; the renewing of the mind
Romans 15:8–12	Time past: Christ “was a minister of the circumcision”; Gentile expectation in Israel’s program
Romans 16:25–27	The goal of the epistle is your establishment


1 & 2 THESSALONIANS
The Thessalonians - a living demonstration of what
proper edification looks like in the life of a believer and a local assembly
▲ CAPSTONE
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↑ grow
EPHESIANS · PHILIPPIANS · COLOSSIANS — THE SUPERSTRUCTURE
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and Perfected Godliness
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Sufferings of Christ
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COLOSSIANS
The Riches of the Glory
of the Mystery &
Our Completeness in Christ
MEAT
PERFECT MAN
MILK / MEAT
BABE / PERFECT
1 & 2 Corinthians — Galatians
Reproof, Correction, and Instruction in Righteousness for Doctrinal Establishment
ROMANS — THE FOUR CORNERSTONES
JUSTIFICATION
Romans 1–5
Perfect judicial standing
before God, having trusted
Christ as Saviour
SANCTIFICATION
Rom 6–8
Knowledge of Sanctified
standing before God,
enabling us to
"live unto God"
DISPENSATION OF
GENTILE GRACE
Rom 9–11
Appreciating God's Program
Change and Israel's
Temporary Suspension
WALK WORTHY
Romans 12–16
We are now Justified,
Sanctified Members of
God's "New Creation"
CHRIST — CHIEF CORNERSTONE
Ephesians 2:20
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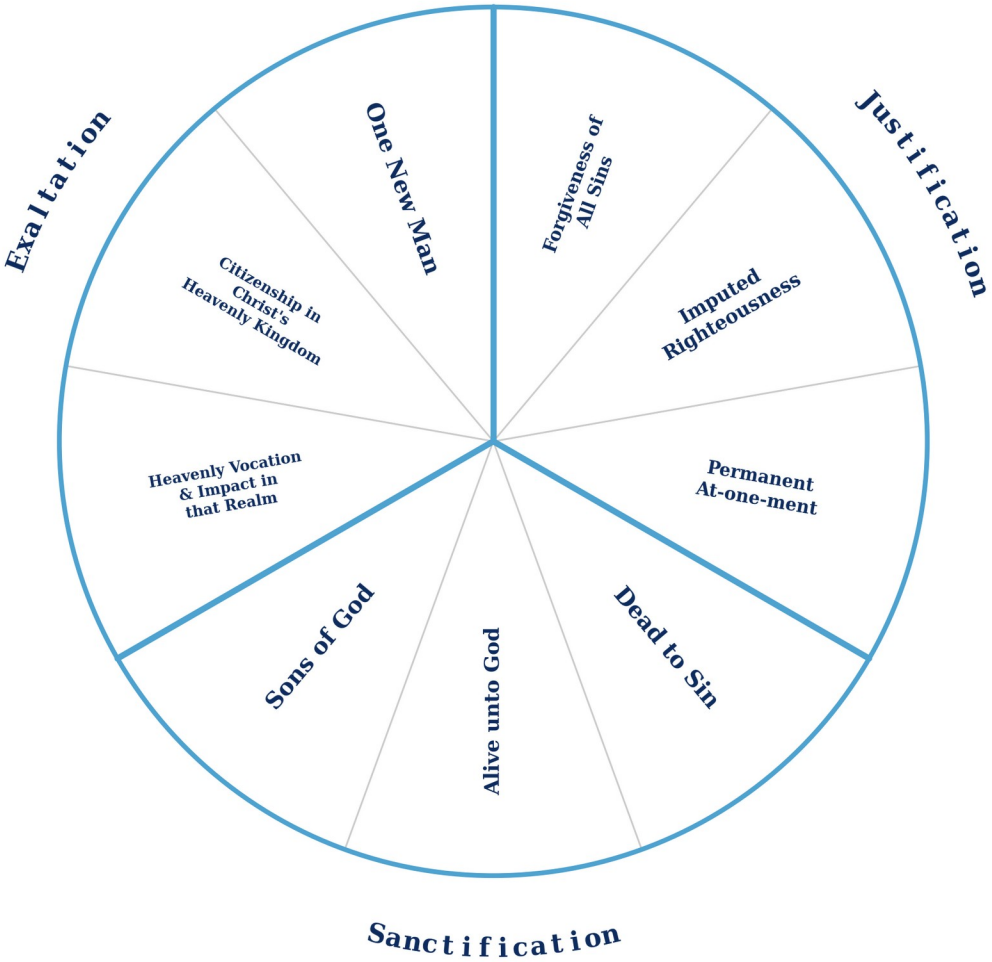
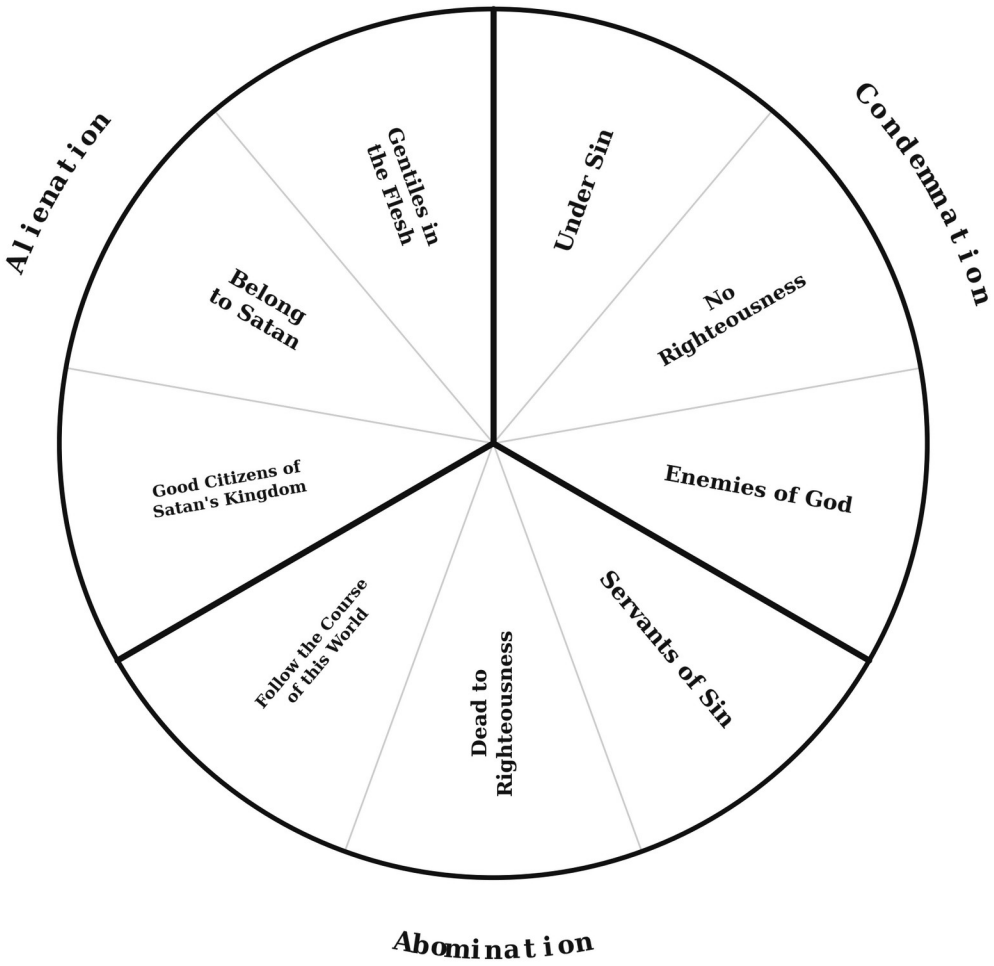

Justification
Forgiveness of All Sins
Imputed Righteousness
Permanent At-one-ment
Sanctification
Dead to Sin
Alive unto God
Sons of God
Heavenly Vocation & Impact in that Realm
Exaltation
Citizenship in Christ's Heavenly Kingdom
One New Man

"in Adam"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Condemnation
Abomination
Gentiles in the Flesh
Under Sin
Belong to Satan
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Good Citizens of Satan's Kingdom
Enemies of God
Follow the Course of this World
Dead to Righteousness
Servants of Sin