

# Romans

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- [ 0 : 00 ] The fourth letter to the Romans and chapter 8, a phrase that you'll find in verse 23.
- Romans chapter 8 and verse 23, a phrase there in the middle, the first fruits of the Spirit.
- The whole verse reads, and not only they, that is the creation, the animal creation around us, nature, life.
- Not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit. Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption to it, redemption of our body.
- Paul here, writing to Christians whom he had not visited, writing to a church that, under God, he had not been responsible for founding, is determined that they should be grounded in the truths of the Gospel.
- [ 1 : 35 ] He wants them to be under no misappreciations. He wants there to be no misunderstandings as regards the great teachings, the great doctrines of the Christian faith.
- And in consequence, this letter to the Romans gives us the fullest explanation of the great central truth of justification by faith in Christ alone.
- And Paul is a great claim.
- Paul is a great claim.
- How you describe to them the lengths to which man goes when God takes off his restraint. There's a red phrase in the first chapter which talks about God giving people up to themselves and their own lusts.
- [ 3 : 25 ] All goes on from there to describe what man is before God. He goes on from there to describe what man is before God. He goes on to show them that to be right with God, to be saved, to be forgiven our sins, to be justified, is not a question of works.
- It is not a question of merit or of our labouring to earn God's favour. Indeed, he sums it up in chapter 6 and verse 23 by saying that the wages, and that's something that we earn, we all earn while working.
- We earn wages for work done, and that is quite right and that is quite just. The wages of sin is death. The wages of sin is death. That is something we sinners earn.
- That is what we merit. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- And wages and the gift are very, very different things, aren't they? And Paul shows to his readers that even Abraham, who lived before the time of the war of Moses, he believed God and it was accounted him for righteousness.
- [ 4 : 49 ] And therefore, he was able to walk with God. God was his God and he was the Lord's child. God was his God and he was the Lord's child.
- God was his my God and he was his and he was his grace. God was his faithful dream. You had peace. His ■GE is the Lord's child. God was his love is the Lord's child. Because it was hard for when he was his child. We were His truth. God was his ■ar.

He was his humble. God was his act as when. And the end facing ». Itaja tips are the best of PB and he was and us about religion and the winde turned aside.

Yeah! How we establish that fact, Paul then goes on through chapters 5, 6 and 7 to show the relationship between the gospel of pure grace.

Grace, of course, is unmerited love. The gospel of pure grace and works on the other. He shows that we cannot take a flippant attitude and say, well, if I am saved by grace, then I am saved, I shall be saved.

[ 6 : 27 ] There is no doubt about it. Therefore, I can be careless because grace is always stronger than my sin. Shall we continue in sin and grace may abound?

Paul asks the question, in supply of the answer, God forbid. He shows the relationship between grace and works. We are not saved by works, but we show the equality of our faith and of our testimony by our works.

And that's a theme, of course, as you know, the Apostle James takes up and expounds in some detail. And then chapter 7, Paul looks in, inside, and he talks and expounds the inner warfare.

He says, I've got two natures. There are two men. There's the old man of sin. There's the new man of grace. They fight.

They war one against the other. And sometimes they bring you to the point of saying, oh, the wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? It's interesting that that phrase, this body of death, death is a reference to a rather revolting custom that the Romans had, the Roman soldiers had.

[ 7 : 44 ] Sometimes they would, when they were in war and when they captured prisoners alive, they would chain a prisoner to a dead body and just leave him until he was dead as well.

Now, I know that's revolting, but that happens to be true. And doubtless, that is the thought that Paul has in his mind. Because, of course, those Roman soldiers would know exactly what he meant.

He says, I've been chained to a dead body and I can't rid myself of it. So he shows us that there's a warfare. A warfare going on inside him and indeed within every believer.

And then he comes on to, as it were, turn his mind away from that warfare, that which drags him down to come to the new life he has in Christ.

And so we come to chapter 8. As we look at this phrase that we have as a text, let us remember that before there can be fruit, there has to be life.

[ 8 : 58 ] Before there can be first fruits, there must be possession. A farmer cannot produce first fruits unless he owns that field, that land, and those trees or those crops.

They are not his first fruits if he does not own it. Simple, I know, an obvious thing to say. But we must just pause there. Because Paul here in chapter 8 and verse 9 said, You are not in the flesh and in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. He does not belong to Christ. Now it's worth just pointing out, I think, that here Paul is referring to the Holy Spirit.

He is referring to the third person of the Trinity, as we refer to him. You remember how before he went to the cross, before he went to Gethsemane, he said to his disciples, he prepared them and said, You know, you are sorry I am going alone.

But it's necessary that I go, because if I do not go, the comforter, the strengthener, will not come. And he prepared his disciples and said, I go, I shall go away.

[ 10 : 19 ] When I go, I will send another comforter. And he takes up that theme two or three times in the chapters 14, 15 and 16 of John's Gospel.

And he makes it clear that when he has gone and he has ascended, he will pour out the Holy Spirit. Indeed, he refers to the Father giving the Spirit. They are, of course, totally united.

Together. In everything. And, as it were, together, if one can put it like that, it's obviously very difficult to put the mysteries of the Trinity into any sort of human language.

But if we could put it like that, together they give the Holy Spirit to be their permanent agent, the one who acts and works on this earth until time shall be gone forever.

It is sometimes, I know, said that such and such a person has the Spirit of Christ, meaning they have certain qualities of character which are Christ-like.

[ 11 : 24 ] But that isn't what Paul is referring to here. He is referring to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. That Holy Spirit who came upon the Lord Jesus, outwardly, of course, he had the Holy Spirit.

From birth and before birth, he was conceived in the Spirit. But the outward act of the dove descending when he was baptized during that, it says that Christ, that God gives not the Spirit by measure unto him.

God doesn't need to measure it out, him out, as it were. He has the Holy Spirit. He has the Holy Spirit, if you like. In infinite abundance.

Now that Hussein Holy Spirit is the one who brings a sin around the darkness into light, out of a state of death, into a state of life.

Nicodemus, that good, upright, religious man whose life we would not be able to impeach, whose knowledge of Old Testament Scripture I'm sure we could better came to our Lord with his questions and our Lord cutting short and said to Nicodemus, you must be born again.

[ 12 : 35 ] How? By water. Cleansing. And the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who brings the believer to the earth.

Paul in Ephesians chapter 2 talks about being dead, but being quick. Dead, trespasses and sins, but quickly brought to life. We must ask ourselves this question before we move on.

Do we have the Spirit of Christ? Are we born again? In John chapter 1, the Apostle there writes of how the Lord was with God in the beginning.

He then describes the ministry of John the Baptist, do you remember? And in John 1 and verse 12, he says, As many as received him, to them gave him power, that is, the right or the privilege, to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Born of God. We must ask ourselves, are we born of God? We must be careful that we take the right biblical standpoint. It is not a question of saying, am I elect?

[ 14 : 06 ] God hasn't opened the books yet. I say that reverently. What we must ask is, have I believed? Have I received, by faith, the only God and Son of God, whom God has said to be the Savior?

Have I repented? Have I turned to God and asked him to save me? Now, that is the question to others.

And, our answer to that question proves whether or not we are born again. Whether or not we have the Spirit of Christ. It's an astonishing miracle.

Now, Lord Jesus said it, it is true that the Holy Spirit comes and dwells, makes his home, he abides. The Lord said it, we will come and make our abode with him, with the believer that God should dwell within the soul of man.

Sinful man is astonishingly beyond it. Is it? Surely. And sometimes we look at ourselves and our lives and we just won't. And we mourn, don't we?

[ 15 : 18 ] I'm sure. We wonder, how can God dwell in you? Before first fruits there has to be possession.

But also, if there are first fruits, those first fruits point forward to a harvest. Now, that is the natural order of things. The promise to Noah still stands good in 1982 while the earth remains at sea time harvest.

I'm going to be harvest. Summer and winter and cold and heat, night and day I've got them slightly out of order. I beg your pardon, but I'm sure you know the reference. And it is true in a spiritual realm.

If there are first fruits, there will be a harvest. There is no question that the harvest will not come.

There is no doubt. If there are first fruits, if we have the first fruits, then we shall know the harvest.

[ 16 : 27 ] let us think about one or two of these first fruits. The first one is life.

Natural five referred to in verse 10. If Christ be you, the body is dead because of sin, it is corrupt, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Now I've already referred to Ephesians chapter 2 and indeed that's a very important, very key passage on this question of spiritual life.

And Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 1 reads, And you have he quickened, and that means made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sin.

We've got total contrast. Dead in trespasses and sin. Out of the way. Gone astray. It doesn't matter what biblical praise you do.

[ 17 : 39 ] It's all we like sheep have gone astray like the rather unintelligent animals they are. Sheep, if they're not pending, will just wander and go anywhere. It doesn't matter what praise you do, it's like in Scripture.

Dead is the phrase that Paul uses here. But the opposite is this, in life. You have he quickened, you have he made alive.

In that passage, Ephesians chapter 2, he describes how within times past they walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our behavior, our conversation, in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature the children of Roth, even as others.

It's a gusty catalogue. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, where he loved us, because of his great love, where he loved us, even when we were dead in sin.

God didn't say, now you must make yourselves alive and I will come to you. We teach our children to walk when they're small.

[ 19 : 07 ] And once we feel they've managed to get up off their knees, onto their feet, so to me that seems such a long time ago now, might be that age. Perhaps we sit in a chair and they're over there and they're going to go away and sing up.

Come to me, hold out our hands to them. They have quite reach, they've got to come, and of course it's good for them, they get the idea of balance and their legs gradually grow stronger.

God doesn't deal with us like that. He doesn't come to us and say, now you sinners must reform yourselves. You must erase some of those evil thoughts.

You must deal with some of those bad motives in the things that you say and think. No, it says here, but God who is rich in mercy for his great love, wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins and quickened us, brought us to life, together with Christ by grace ye are saints.

life from the dead that sure is the beginning of the first fruit.

[ 20 : 26 ] Without life, nothing, a plant that dies won't produce fruit. fruit. Paul in verse 13 says that if you live after the flesh you shall die, but if you through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Now on the face of it, we might misconstrue this if we took that passage out of the chapter and looked at it on its own. We might say, well God is here telling us there is something we must do so that we shall live.

Remember that Paul is talking to those who are already alive in Christ, who are already believers, whose salvation is sure through what Christ has done.

And he's teaching them the greatness and the glory of their salvation. And he's saying to people who are alive, if you through the spirit do mortify or put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

He's saying to those who are alive, this is the way the life continues. There's got to be a mortifying of putting to death, of putting in their place the deeds of the body.

[ 21 : 51 ] Now of course, if you haven't got time to digress into other scriptures, Paul isn't telling them to let us withdraw from all we know it. then there are those men and women who have felt it right before God and I suppose it is right for us to judge them, though I think they're mistaken.

They feel they have to withdraw from life. And thus, of course, over the centuries we have had the monasteries and the nunneries. Now we know that some of those gracious folk do, it's still up here and there.

And of course, without, if Luther hadn't been a monk, would he have realised the great truth of justification by faith as clearly and as wonderfully as the Lord revealed it to him?

Earlier Clare Bowie wrote some marvellous things, and so did he go on, that's a digression. But no, the Lord isn't saying to us that we withdraw from life. He's not saying you mortify the deeds of the body by that sort of rigorous taking of vows, you know, taking vows that you don't speak, or vows that you only wear long, dark garments and all the other things I'm sure you're well aware of.

He doesn't say that. He's saying there has to be continual back to you see really, it's a harking back to chapter 7. Just as Paul said, there's a back to going on.

[ 23 : 14 ] When I go to do good, evil is present with me. And so on. And he's saying that this life, if it's going to be an active life, if it's going to grow, then that life's got to be exercised by putting to death the deeds of the body.

Realising the things in our lives and in our minds, which are against God, and by the spirit, notice that, through the spirit, putting those things away, dealing with them.

Now we fail in this continually. we allow thoughts to come into our minds and we say to them that we ought not, in all kinds of different ways.

We act hastily, we speak unadvisedly, act so on. But is our desire to put to death those things, is there in our minds a concern that we do fail in that way?

Or are we oblivious to these failings, to this? When our Paul says if we are alive, then that life will grow as we mortify, as we put to death, these simple things.

[ 24 : 29 ] It is growing, it is not expecting a new believer to suddenly be full grown overnight. A farmer doesn't plant seed and then get a combine harvest throughout the following week?

Of course not. It takes much. months and months of anxious watching the weather and so on. But there is growing and there is the filling out of the corn and so on.

Through the rain is necessary in the right times and the sunshine and so on. Well, you're all aware of that. Of course. And so it is it's spiritual.

There has to be a growing. And if there's no growth, then either there is something very wrong or perhaps there is not life there.

But before we go then condemning ourselves and saying, well, I seem to be going and getting on so poorly in the Christian way, therefore, perhaps I'm not alive. You are concerned about it?

[ 25 : 33 ] Are you, like me, concerned about your lack of growth in grace and maturity? Concerned that you seem to take one step forward and then two back.

If that is a concern and a pain to us, then surely that itself is an evidence that there is life there. Let's move on. Life and liberty.

Here in this chapter, he talks about being free. He talks about, in verse 2, he says, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Of course, it does mean free to act and do as we wish, but let's just examine it. It says, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

A reference here, of course, back to the law of Moses. He is not of course saying that Paul is a pain in the letters of Galatians to say to his readers there and to us, there is nothing wrong with the law of Moses.

[ 26 : 54 ] The law is holy and just and good, he says. But that law and attempting to keep that law in order to obtain God's favour will not and cannot save.

It cannot deal with sin. It cannot atone for sin. It cannot wipe out the past, it cannot sanctify the present, and it cannot keep us from sin in the future.

To that extent, the law of Moses is weak. verse 3 of chapter 8, for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.

People tried and strove over centuries to keep the law of Moses, but couldn't manage it. The law was weak because of the flesh. And then when the fullness of the time was come, God sent his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh.

And for sin, and in so doing he condemned sin in the flesh. Christ came, and Christ kept the law, and Christ offered a perfect life to God, and Christ's blood of atonement was shed.

[ 28 : 17 ] His life illuminates the necessity to keep the law of God in order to be right with God, and his blood and divination for necessity or any further sacrifice, be it an example or anything else, to take away sin.

And Paul says here, we've been set at liberty, we are free from that law. Now the Christians in the regions of Galatia had been led astray by false teachers.

They maintained in Hector solidly their faith in Christ, but they were beginning to add the works of the law. Their gospel was now beginning to be you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, as Paul said a morning question, and keep the works of the law.

Consequently, they introduced the Jewish riots of initiation for the Christians, something that they ought not to have done, and the letters of the Galatians were written to put that straight.

And indeed, in Galatians chapter 3, and in verse 2, Paul says, Receive ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith.

[ 29 : 42 ] You see, he's saying it's an either-or situation. It's not, well, you can go this way, or that. We travel to different places, we say, well, shall we go that way, or shall we go that way, perhaps that's quicker, this is a nicer road, and so on.

But it's not like that in spiritual things. Paul says to the Galatian Christians, unto you and me, did you receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing of faith? You cannot and alganate the two.

You cannot put them side by side. Or if you had works for faith to destroy what faith is, faith is resting solely on what Christ has done, solely on what he has done, on our behalf, with no mixture of our good works.

And indeed, Galatians 3, further down the chapter, he says this, for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, and this comes from Deuteronomy chapter 27, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Now the person who is not in Christ is under that law, and they will be judged by that law, and they are under obligations with the law of God himself to keep all the things written in the book of the law, and if they do not keep them all 10.

[ 31 : 14 ] He goes on to say that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith, and the law is not of faith, but the man who do them shall live in them.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, and so on. He goes on to say that the law was like the school master.

Of course, the word here he used, the school master, comes from the Latin root of the pedagogus I think it's pronounced. He was a man who actually wasn't a school teacher in the sense that we know, but a slave in the household whose particular job was to ensure that the children were educated.

He did not have to teach to himself. Probably he didn't have enough education to do it. What he had to do was to make sure the children got to school and he had to drag them if necessary.

And that's the thought behind this in Galatians 3 23 and 4. The law was our school master. It drives us to God, to bring us to Christ.

[ 32 : 31 ] The law shows us how hopeless it is for us to endeavour to for our own salvation.

And as we learn what God requires we are driven to Christ. There is no other way to go. There is no other place to turn. And Paul says that this law of the spirit of life has made us free from the law of sin and death.

No longer is the believer under the curse of the law. Christ has fulfilled the law on the behalf of the believer and God does not want or require our good works to add to what his son has already done.

Now of course it doesn't mean we just throw the law aside. Of course not. The law we see is just and holy and good. And indeed the person who knows their sins are done away in Christ that Christ's perfect obedience has been accepted on their behalf.

Hasn't been sainted to keep God's law. Out of thankfulness out of the desire to honour him God's to keep God's love.

[ 33 : 58 ] From endeavouring to keep every passive of the law thinking to ourselves all the time I must earn this piece of merit and I must earn it. This sadly was one of the areas of the Roman Catholic Church that many are going about to establish their own righteousness alongside what Christ has done.

Paul says we are free. We are at liberty. We are no longer bondage under the Lord. Christ has set us free.

That's another of the first fruits. One other. In verse 15 Paul says you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear but you have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba father and that Greek word *oter* is a word that we can't really translate in English and that's why the translator is left it there as it was.

The nearest we get is daddy. I know we don't pray like that. That's the nearest you get in English language is an intimate word.

Father and son are close to the first fruits of the spirit from being a condemned hell deserving sinner to be a son or daughter of God is a remarkable transformation isn't it?

[ 35 : 38 ] But that is what scripture teaches. Paul says that you've not received the spirit upon your gain. He says the Romans look you haven't got yourself back under that yoke of the law.

You're at liberty and you've received the spirit of adoption. We know about how adoption works in our society. A child is adopted into the family.

The idea is if it works properly that that child will take the family name will be treated in an identical fashion to the ordinary blood children of the husband and wife.

But that child in due course will have a similar share in whatever is going in the family. The inheritance is should they be after the death of the parents.

From being made away from Australia perhaps left on a doorstep somewhere as happens occasionally into a loving family part of it equal with the true born sons.

[ 36 : 45 ] And that is true of the Christian believer. The Christian believer is adopted by God into his family. He is ready to be heirs.

Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to share God's inheritance with him. Now that is beyond my imagination. Perhaps it's beyond yours.

That is the position of the Christian believer. As I say in this letter Paul has gone to the depths. He's shown how far man can see.

He's convinced all his readers and all true believers down the centuries that indeed all have sin and come short for the glory of God. There's no righteous no client by nature. Yet he says those self-same people can be adopted into God's family and become joint heirs with Christ.

It says in Hebrews it talks of Christ as being the firstborn among many brethren. Now this is quite quite incredible.

[ 37 : 52 ] It's quite wonderful isn't it friends? God should take those who deserve only Peter of and by pure grace and mercy raise them to be his children.

Can you imagine that? You want to know you're a son of God? A child of God?

Verse 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of them. What's he mean led by the Spirit of God?

Now here we must be a little careful. Scripture tells us of occasions when people had visitations from angels when God spoke to people through dreams when they went through incredible experiences of fire coming down and burning up sacrifices I mean that happened to Elijah he had to Abraham he had to Gideon we cannot say that God never or cannot we certainly cannot say that he cannot he is unable to work like that.



mainly he will lead us and guide us through his word and if we are those who seek his way in his word we who when we come to the decisions the crossroads if you like of life at different times who seek God's will through his word here surely according to this scripture in evidence of adoption into God's family as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God now it's very easy to say I am led to do such and such a thing we must always test the way we think we are led by God's word because if we are being led in a way or think we're being led in a way that's contrary to God's word we must think again it's very easy to be led by our emotions by our own particular desires even by our upbringing in power of the good of God we must test these things by what God has said because that is true and that's impenable and the best of men aren't it's just as simple as that furthermore do we have this spirit in our hearts to come to God and call him father to lay all our concerns at his feet to bring to him in prayer every part of life we mustn't think

[ 40 : 28 ] God is only interested in our spiritual life God is concerned about your daily rhythm he's concerned about your employment your home your neighborhood your body and weakness or strength God made us body, soul and spirit and he has sent his only begotten son as we read here he who spared not his only son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not give him also freely give us all things do we come to God as our father and lay everything before him adoption and really that is to another first group and that is prayer and really we've covered that the disciples said Lord teach us to pray as John taught his disciples and he did if you're able to speak the words we often are when we come to God in our prayers prayers

I know if you turn aside to pray and you think to yourself how shall I begin what shall I say I've found that to pray through the words of what we commonly call what the world commonly calls the Lord's prayer is a very powerful and a very useful thing because it concentrates our minds upon the things that the Lord wants us to concentrate upon in prayer just a thought as we go on we need the spirit to lead in prayer it says here that the spirit helped with our infirmities in verse 26 for we know not what we should pray for as we ought but the spirit himself may give intercession for us to groan to which cannot be not another evidence of being alive is prayer the Lord came to Ananias he said Ananias you know Saul of Tarsus yes

Lord I know him Ananias trembled the Lord said go find him behold he prayed Saul of Tarsus been in prayer many times regular intervals probably through the day and he didn't miss the occasion in the synagogue either the Lord says to Ananias go to him he he he prayed sore in his blind little blindness of course over those three days with increasing physical weakness because he couldn't eat or drink his mind turned on his whole life turned upside down and inside out you're killed and the Lord said to him I am Jesus and you're persecuted and immediately the whole basis for what he was doing in persecuting Christians was swept away the whole basis of what he was doing was that Jesus would not possibly be the son of God therefore frankly to claim that was blasphemy therefore he must do that work of healing his people into prison and then

Jesus swept it all away and Saul began to pray he he began to live was then so much for the first of us a word or two about the heartless two words here strike us in this tremendous chapter first with the word redemption in verse 23 and Paul here is not only talking to believers but he gathers in the whole of creation creation it says groans and chameleons well there is blight and there are weeds and thorns and thistles there is disease amongst men amongst animals there are predators the animals that prey on other animals there are the pests and the vermin and Paul says they're groaning they're traveling and they won't be set free until God reveals who are his children on the last time we read about the new heavens and the new earth all he's looking at tonight who says creation will be in this plight it's the plight it's been ever since the day before until we