

Romans 1 (Conrad Bowman) (April 23, 2008)

Father we thank you for the time You give us; for bringing us together; for the apostle Paul who gave his life in presenting us the Gospel of the New Testament of Grace. We thank You for it, Father. We thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ who paid for it all; and who fills us with His life on a moment to moment basis from where He is in heaven, from the throne of His Father. We thank You in Christ's name and for His sake. Amen.

We're in Romans chapter 1, and this is our – third? This is our third class. You will not have missed much by the time we get through with today, because we'll cover most of what I've covered in the first two just in brief so it is all within context. As I have reminded you before, and some of you have told me you've already – you've already managed to get them, this is *Romans Verse by Verse* by William R. Newell, written in 1937; its still the best – the best commentary on Romans that you can lay your hands on. There's none better. There's a lot of them out there – there's none of them better and few that are even close to Newell's *Verse by Verse*. Any questions that linger from last week? Ok.

Gil is not with us this morning. We ought to talk about Gil, since he's not here today. This afternoon, isn't it? Let's talk about him – no; he's here. He's here. He's working late, and he's set off some studies with his comments last week that – that we're still working on. Adam and I haven't sorted it out yet. Gil is not bashful – he jumped right on in on top of us.

Evelyn Wamble. You're not started without us, are you?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. We've already started. [Laughter].

[Class banter back and forth].

Conrad Bowman. No ma'am. You're right there. This is Evelyn Wamble speaking, just for the tape. So you're recorded already.

Alright. So Romans – Romans chapter 1. I'm going to start reading in verse 1 and right down to verse 18 where we're going to take off tonight. That'll be our – that'll be our lesson for tonight, starting at 18 and going on to the end of chapter

1. Paul, a bond-servant ...

Doulos.

1. ... a bond-servant of Christ Jesus,

He belongs to Christ Jesus. He's

1. ... called as an apostle, he's set apart [*hagios*] for the gospel of God,
2. which He promised beforehand through His prophets in holy Scriptures,

And that's God who promised beforehand this Gospel through the prophets in holy Scriptures,

3. concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

And according to – born of the seed of David ties Him to the promises made to Israel and the promises made to David as king. So he starts out by mentioning that because the context of these opening comments are Christ as He came – the promised seed of David.

4. who was declared with power to be the Son of God by the resurrection out from – from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

Now if you want to look at this thing, you mark "bond-servant," which is a set apart bond-slave. "Set apart" is one of the – *hagios* – holy Scriptures – "holy" is *hagios* – who is born of the seed of David – resurrection out from the dead according to the spirit of holiness, which is *hagios* again in verse 4.

5. through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

So our role – apostleship means ones sent with a message, and the authority of the sender. That's what the word "apostle" means. That you have been sent on the authority of the sender and with his full resource to back you up. That's what Paul is – he's an apostle set apart for the Gospel of God.

5. through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles ...

Paul understands that his apostleship is chartered in order to bring about the obedience of faith from the Gentiles. That's – that's the group to whom he's been sent.

5. ... all the Gentiles for His name's sake,

6. among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Now he's giving us the Jewish context. He's giving us specific calling to the Gentiles; and then he refers then to the people in Rome as being "the called of Jesus Christ" for His name's sake,

7. to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called saints:

And the word "saints" is the same word as "holy," or "holiness," *hagios* again,

7. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So you see how often this word "set apart" keeps coming up within his text. Ok? That's very important. Now it's the same word that was used to penning up the sacrifice for three days and examining it before it was killed and offered to God. It's the same word that's used of the veil of separation; the great veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. In the Holy Place, there's the Table of Showbread, the Menorah, and the Altar of Incense; and behind that veil of separation is the Ark of the Covenant, and the Shekinah Glory of God, sitting right on top of that Ark. And that veil of separation – the same word is used for set apart – *hagiasmos*. So, you see how tightly we are tied to the concept of being separated. We are separated unto God from out from mankind and from the world. We are separated from our sins because our sins have been placed on the sacrifice, on the altar out in the courtyard. So we're separated from our sins and from – this idea of separation is all wrapped up in the Gospel according to Paul. Now what that tells us is that when we gather as a body unto Christ, which means joined to Christ, we gather as a body here; the local church is separated from the world outside. Now anything we do to break that separation down violates God's intention. Ok? We are – we are not intended to make the Church enough like the world outside that it becomes attractive to people who don't know Christ, and really could care less about Him. That's not what we're here to

do. We're here to demonstrate our difference. To demonstrate our separation. To demonstrate our uniqueness. To demonstrate that we are a peculiar people of God chosen by Him; set apart by Him; set apart unto Him. In fact, as believers today, we're set apart in Him by union with Christ. Ok? Now that's something that the world has never seen before. Israel didn't have that. That's why we're not part of Israel. Israel was never set apart by union with God. That was never offered to them. They're set apart as His people, apart from Him, governed by Him, protected by Him, loved by Him, and cared for by Him; but not in union with Him. That's unique to His Bride. That's why man only has but one bride. I mean, that's the whole argument we're going through with this compound up in Dallas. Up there in Dallas. That very thing. That's what's at issue right here. Ok? Man and woman. They're set apart from one another. For this cause, Adam was told, man will leave his mother and father and will cleave unto his wife. That's the same word that's used to separate, except in reverse order. The same power should be used to keep you bound, as a man and a woman in marriage, as is used to separate by physical force. Ok? The very opposite of that action is what man and woman in marriage are to represent. Ok? Now Paul would explain it this way later when he is writing his epistles, he said, "husbands love you wives as Christ love the Church and gave Himself for her." Right? There it is. You lose your identity, Ok, except as it relates to filling your wife full. Ok? You don't have a separate identity from her. You lose your identity in becoming the completer or fulfiller of the woman you're married to. Once she sees that, she's willing to give herself to you; to meld yourself – herself, into you in your life; and she'll accept all – all manner of hardship and difficulty if she believes you are attempting to fulfill that admonition to love her as Christ loved the Church and give yourself for her. Now, all of those things flow out of – once you've – once you've seen the unity of Scripture, and how Paul's writings just dovetail, just one right into the other into this glorious, marvelous matrix; when you go to Romans and you read this and you see this principle of separation from, and separation unto; all sorts of things begin to flow back through that thing. The concept of marriage. The concept of eldership. The concept of pastor and Church leadership. All of them begin to flow through the same matrix, and the same rules apply to every – to every one of them. To all of them; and they just add truth to truth; precept upon precept; they just add to one another. Now, verse 7,

7. to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints:

Or set apart ones.

7. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And there's that grace and peace progression again. Grace first comes because it's God's riches at Christ's expense, and peace is the natural result in our life and circumstance because we've accepted that. So once we've accepted God's riches at Christ's expense, that becomes the driving force. That's the gas in our life that moves us from one experience to the next experience to the next one; and peace is the natural result, and it comes from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; and Paul's got that in the right order because first we have to recognize that that peace in our life comes on the basis of Christ's work, but by decree of the Father. First, verse 8 – any comments on verses 1 through 7? Feel free to jump in anytime you want to. Verse 8.

8. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all,

Notice again the prominence that Paul is giving the Father, because he's bringing Him up first in the list of things.

8. First, I thank my God [the Father] through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

That's the faith of the Roman believers.

9. For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

You pay particular attention to that because – because Paul said, he acknowledges that it's the Father

9. ... whom I serve in my spirit by the preaching of the gospel of His Son, and that is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

10. always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God

The Father. Now he's saying the Father just to make sure you understand who he's referencing.

10. ... if perhaps now at last by the will of God [the Father] I may succeed in coming to you.

11. For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

12. that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

See what he's saying. Your faith encourages me daily, as I was told my faith encourages you. That's what Paul was saying. These last three or four years have been – some of them have been difficult years and ah, and sometimes _____. But I can tell you this. Norma and I and Brenda have been sustained by the faith that centers and comes from you guys. You've held us up since 2004, when I had my first surgery and the pathway got a little more difficult. I can tell you this. The studies have gotten richer. I wouldn't trade them for anything. They were difficult years, but I would not trade any one of them. There were sixty-nine good years, almost perfect years; and then one year that was just absolutely the pits. That seventieth year was not fun. But, God showed us that we can be sustained by the prayers and the faith of those around us; and He made it evident – has made it evident just about every day.

9. For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

10. always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.

11. For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

12. that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

And that's a living testimony.

13. And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented thus far) in order that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

14. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

15. Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

The nugget that's buried in that last – in that statement is that we are, and incur obligation to those around us, both Greeks and barbarians. That's believers and unbelievers. Thus those who are willing to hear the Gospel and those that are not willing to hear the Gospel; but you're put together with them, and they're going to hear it because you're there. Ok? So Paul says I'm under obligation to them. I'm a debtor to them. Ok? God brings them into his life, and then he had a debt to them; and his debt is to take the Gospel that God has given him, which is God's own assets, and share it with those people too. Barbarians are those people that are not pleasant to be around; and they don't have the best motives; and then believers are those that have even worse motives. They are more difficult to be around. Ok? As tough as it is to be around barbarians, it's a lot more difficult to be around a believer who is faking it. You agree? That's true. The barbarian is there by ignorance. The believer is there knowing the truth, but willingly setting it aside in order to gain some advantage through his or her relationship to you. Ok? So it's more difficult. So – so what's God's answer to that? What's Paul – what did He tell Paul about that? Be long suffering. Long suffering. Be slow to anger. Ok? Be steadfast. Avoid those who are nothing but a source of trouble in your life. You avoid them if your relationship to them keeps stirring up problems in your own life. You're not obligated to stay with them. You're obligated to share the Gospel whenever you are with them. I'll give you an example. You go over to Corinthians where we deal with doubtful things. And Paul says to the Corinthians, if a believer [unbeliever] bids you to a feast; and the next phrase is very important, but it's more often treated as a throw-a-way. If an unbeliever bids you to a feast, and you're disposed to go; you think it'd be a good idea to go; might be fun; might be the biggest Christmas party in the block. You know. It could be any number of reasons you'd want to be there. But if you'd be disposed to go. You decide you want to go. Says _____. What ever is set before you – eat. For the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. However, if your hostess says, oh, this has been offered to idols. In other words, get this picture. You're sitting down – you sitting down at the table, and there's all these people that are guests of the host, and they're sitting down and food is coming; and that's going to be put in front of you. What's the first thing you're going to do? Thank the Lord for the food. Ha. Now that's great if you're at my house, or Phil's house, or your house, or what-have-you. You'd be expected to do that. But this is an

unbeliever's house, and the guests are there, and you just presume, just assume that they're unbelievers too. Is that going to stop you? It says, but why should you're thanksgiving be though little of. So you're going to offer thanks, regardless of the circumstance, because that's what we do as believers. We thank God for His provision. So the food's coming, and the host says, oh, this was offered to idols. I bought this down at the temple of Diana about two hours ago, and it's great, because you get the best steaks in town down there; and here is this glorious, sizzling T-bone; and it looks so good, doesn't it? And you're not going to get another one like that for a long time. You're eating pot roast which is good enough. I mean, that's great, but it's not like this porterhouse, and your thanksgiving is going to set you apart from everybody else at that feast; and the hostess thinks maybe you ought to be offended by that. In other words, you host thinks it might be a problem, but you as a Christian could partake of food taken from an idol's temple – food having already once been offered to the idol, and then taken to the market next door, the shambles – taken to the market and sold in commerce. And that's where she got her steaks. Well Paul says, if that's the case, then don't eat it. Not for your conscience, but for the conscience of the one who served it. Because in refusing the steak, you know you're going to have to offer an explanation. Right? So you're going to say, that's Ok, I don't need this salad will be great. You know. Apparently, you think somehow that that offering of the steak to the idols changed the steak. Well, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. He gave us all things to eat. If I should want to eat this, that's fine; but if you think it's a problem, I can certainly do without it, because I don't live by that food alone. I live according to the Word of God. Then you see what happens, is the steak now becomes an occasion for preaching the Gospel. For announcing the Gospel. You've set your life apart unto God so that every circumstance is an occasion for sharing truth with people. It wasn't an occasion just to get a good porterhouse. It was an occasion for sharing the truth which is the basis of your life. And you see how that integrates. You're separated unto God. Ok. If it behooves you, and it seems good to you, to go and mingle and enjoy an evening with the unbelievers, you do so; but it's not without purpose; because you don't alter your life in order to enjoy the evening. You bring your life and feed it into the circumstance with courage. With courage, you know. How ----- company benefits? And how often when you go and associate with people in a general public gathering, do you go there, and the food is served, and everybody just kind of takes it on and has the food and ends the meal; and there's no mention of thanksgiving, because they wouldn't occur to do it; they wouldn't want to offend anybody. What do you do in those circumstances? You know. I've conducted training meetings at Cutter for thirty-five – forty – fifty people all over San Francisco and the Bay Area when I out

there as a training manager; and I had – I had fifty people gathered in a – in a hotel – big hotel room, and we'd had a nice meal; and it was my custom to – to tell the waiters ahead of time, stop serving. When you get ready to serve the meal, stop serving and immediately when we settle – when you seat everybody, just everybody hold their place right there, because I've got a few words I'm going to say. And it was always very consistent, I would say it's custom in my house to return thanks every time we have a meal; because I'm very thankful to have spent time with these people and with you guys tonight, and we have to share this. And so if you would, I'm – I'm going to have a word of prayer in thanksgiving for the evening and for the meal. You can join me if you want to. And I've had a couple of people who would insist on talking right through that just to make sure that they were identified as people who didn't believe in it. But we'd have a moment of thanksgiving, and I can't tell you the number of times that I've had people that I least expect come up to me and say that was – that was – that was the moment that made the evening – that has set this evening apart among evenings of anything I've done since I've been with this company for the last thirty years. Ok? The most – the simplest things in your – in your day, and the simplest things in your life can become occasions for sharing what Christ did and what He means to you and your service to God can become those events if you just relax into what God has provided and just let that flow out of your life. It's simple. It's very simple. I had – I had the President of the company ask me one time, Conrad, who writes those prayers for you? [Laughter]. That's what he wanted to know. _____ Who writes those prayers for you? And it was a privilege to say, nobody writes them. It's just conversation between me and my heavenly Father. I am genuinely thankful for my opportunity at this company, and for the opportunity it gives me to work with people and to gather them together. Those are choice. And – and I'm genuinely thankful for it and that's just conversation. That's all it is. Nobody writes them. Really? You don't write them down anywhere, because I was going to get a copy of them tonight. No, I don't write them down anywhere. I really don't think about them that much until it happens, and then it just is part of it. It just integrated into it. You see. Well, that's what Paul is saying here. Paul says,

14. I am under obligation both to the Greek and to the barbarian,
to the wise and to the foolish.

There're all degrees of integrates that are involved here

15. Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also
who are in Rome.

And when he's talking about preaching the Gospel, he's not just talking about formally preaching the Gospel. But he's talking about announcing the Gospel as it – as it is a work in his life on a moment by moment, day by day basis. Ok?

16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God

...

Dunamis again. Dynamite for God.

16. ... for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY MEANS OF FAITH."

That's what we need to do. We need to trust God alive in our life to lead us from circumstance to circumstance so that the faith that's within us flows over and spills over onto those who are around us. Now, questions? Ok? Ok?

18. For the wrath of God

Now he's covered in verse 17 his relationship to God; his relationship of God to the world; the relationship or lack thereof of the heathen's lack of relationship to God; and also the availability of God to the Greek as well as to the Jew; and now in verse 18 he changes the perspective. Now,

18. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

So you have an unrighteousness category who are suppressing the truth in the sphere of unrighteousness,

19. because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

In other words, it's inescapable,

"That which may be known of God is evident within man and woman; because God made it evident to men and women."

Now he's going to explain how He's made it evident.

20. For since the creation of the world the invisible attributes, His eternal power [and Godhead] and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

In other words, the very nature of creation and the very nature of the world in which we live speak of the attributes of God. Now you already know what those attributes are. Okay. There's sovereignty; justice; righteousness; eternal life; absolute love, or agape; all knowing, which means there's nothing that God doesn't know; omnipresence – He knows all things because He is everywhere at all times; and omnipotent – He's all powerful – there's nothing that's not doable by God; He's absolute veracity or truthfulness – He cannot lie; and he does not change – He's immutable. Okay. So those are the attributes of God. They are held in three persons. The person of the Father; the person of the Son; and the person of the Holy Spirit. Now if you think about that, three persons who are co-existent, and are all places at all times; and are all powerful and are all-knowing at all times, occupy a single unity. So God is one in unity and three in persons are the way He displays Himself. He displays Himself as the Son, or as the Father, or as the Holy Spirit. All three are the one divine entity – God – who is one in character, or essence, or attributes. Any question on that? I put that on the board last week. It's in your Notes in graph form, in graphic form; and I'll have those Notes ready for you next week.

GOD IS ONE IN ESSENCE OR CHARACTER

SOVEREIGN JUST RIGHTEOUS LOVE ETERNAL LIFE	OMNIPOTENT OMNIPRESENT OMNISCIENT TRUTH UNCHANGING	
THE FATHER <i>PLANNER</i>	THE SON <i>EXECUTER</i>	THE HOLY SPIRIT <i>REVEALER</i>

**GOD IS THREE PERSONS IN COMPLETE UNITY, EACH POSSESSING ALL
OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF HIS CHARACTER**

Conrad Bowman. Yes sir?

John Young. I think this is on point, but I keep forgetting to ask you when we're talking about the attributes of God. Specifically, the omnipresence.

Conrad Bowman. Uh huh.

John Young. All places at all times.

Conrad Bowman. At all times. Yes.

John Young. Past. Eternity past. Eternity future.

Conrad Bowman. Difficult concept. Right.

John Young. And what I'm getting to, is – I want to throw this out there. I pray for people that have died. Not the regular way. But my prayer is, that somehow, someway, before so-and-so died, they had an interlude of grace, or opportunity that the Holy Spirit touched them and they accepted Christ.

Conrad Bowman. Right.

John Young. In other words, I don't pray to get them out of Purgatory or some such thing as the Catholics do, but – am I off base on that?

Conrad Bowman. No. No. I don't think so, John.

Evelyn Wamble. I'm not sure I know what you're saying. They're there. They're gone. At some time in their life they were touched by the Holy Spirit ...

John Young. In the past. Because God is present at – at all times. That's the future, and everywhere.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. John, you know – you know, if it were not for that, there would be – there are people in your life that you don't have any idea whether they were saved or not.

John Young. Exactly. That's what I'm talking about.

Conrad Bowman. You don't have any idea.

John Young. Don't have any idea.

Conrad Bowman. Okay. Maybe you knew them only slightly, and God had put them on your heart. So what do you pray for them intelligently? How do you pray for them intelligently? And they died. Maybe twenty years ago. Okay. Well, the - the one attribute that's open to you that allows you to pray for them is to pray that beyond your knowledge at some point in their past, that God had mercy on them and showed Himself to them and that they had a chance to receive it beyond your knowledge. That's another way of - of resting in God's hands ...

John Young. They're completely ...

Conrad Bowman. ... for their eternity. That's all you can do. That's all you can do. Because they're - they're people in your life that you care about and you love and you realize - especially having come to Christ late in life like you did. See. There's all these people that you knew earlier in life you had no idea what their spiritual condition was. So the only avenue open to you then is to lay them in the hands of the Lord, and know that He would deal with them in absolute fairness, and He was there the whole time. Right? And you just pray - have mercy on them. That's good enough. That's good enough.

Evelyn Wamble. You'll never know.

Conrad Bowman. No. But that brings your mind in line with the mind of Christ.

John Young. Exactly.

Conrad Bowman. That's the important thing. Okay. Any other comments on this?

Jeff Little. _____

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Jeff Little. _____ This is a question or a comment.

Christ is also these things, and He's one in three.

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Jeff Little. And, and He

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Jeff Little. Instead of immutability, He never really

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little.

Evelyn Wamble. Now immutable is the same. Yesterday, today, and forever. That

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You know what, here's the – here's the crux of that question. Here's the crux of that question. In your own mind's eye, if the difference of whether you are giving up on your flesh _____, and losing yourself in Christ; or whether you view yourself, and this is what we have to be careful of – is whether you view yourself on a path of continual improvement until you attain Christ likeness. And there's where you have to guard yourself now. Right?

John Young. Absolutely.

Conrad Bowman. Because you let the Church organize itself and we'll put yourself on a path of self-improvement until your increased piety qualifies you for attainment of some level or the other. And that's a complete operation of the flesh. That's a hundred percent flesh driven.

John Young. I've done that and I've crashed and burned every time, without fail. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. But the next time you're going to – crash and burn again.

John Young. Crash and burn again.

Conrad Bowman. Mark one more site. Yeah. We've got crash sites. Yeah. Yeah. We have to do – we have to be real careful – we have to be real careful of the flesh. This flesh thing is shrewd. I mean it is shrewd.

Evelyn Wamble. It's going to be with us, as long as we're here, isn't it?

Conrad Bowman. Unfortunately. Unfortunately. I wish mine was better looking. It'd be easier – it'd be easier to live with. Phil?

Phil Richman. I was going to say, the flesh really wants reward. It really wants reward.

Conrad Bowman. It ...

Phil Richman. It wants it bad.

Conrad Bowman. Yes it does. Yes it does.

Betijeane Kennerly. Well we saw that last week, when the Pope was here. They kept saying he's the only representative of Jesus Christ on earth.

Conrad Bowman. Yes.

Betijeane Kennerly. And that's the way he ought to be

Conrad Bowman. Yes.

Betijeane Kennerly. He got to be Pope because he was the only _____. I don't know which one it was.

Conrad Bowman. I don't know either. It'd be interesting to be a fly on the wall in some of those conversations, wouldn't it? Yeah. How – I could talk about my own experience with the flesh.

Jeff Little. _____. There was that whole Gnostic provision in the day of Christ ...

Conrad Bowman. You are preoccupied with those Gnostics, aren't you? Somebody ...

Jeff Little. _____. It's very important, because I think a lot of Christians have been led to believe that when they die actually the spirit comes out of their body, there're done with their body _____ and that's heresy. That's not Christianity. Christianity goes back to the resurrection of both _____ Not the resurrection from the body.

Conrad Bowman. That's what you've seen corruptible is made to be incorruptible. Right. We are transformed in exchange from state to state. That's true. That's true. But that's not – that's not Gnosticism.

Jeff Little. Gnosticism is a belief that the body is evil. That flesh

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. The flesh is evil.

Jeff Little. Where Christianity professes to ...

Conrad Bowman. Christianity says the flesh is evil.

Jeff Little. No. Christianity says that everything that God created – He said it was good.

Lady. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. You stepped off the end of the plank, Jeff, right there.

Betijeane Kennerly. The flesh is the old sin nature.

Conrad Bowman. The old sin nature was in the body ...

Jeff Little. That's why I said the word "flesh" is misleading.

Betijeane Kennerly. You're talking about ...

Jeff Little. I'm not talking about – I'm not talking about _____. I'm talking about the body itself.

Conrad Bowman. You're talking about skin and bones. That has nothing to do with the flesh in the Biblical context. Biblical context of the flesh is the old sin nature that lives within you; that always struggles against God and promotes self.

Jeff Little. Which is what Paul is going to talk about in chapter 6.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. Yes. We'll get there in chapter 6. But it's interesting, because you've mentioned Gnosticism in at least three different classes.

Jeff Little. It's something that they need to be aware of. Most people in here don't even know ...

Conrad Bowman. We'll get there. We'll get there. Gnosticism is – Jeff – Gnosticism is a physiological belief.

Evelyn Wamble. I never knew a Gnostic.

Jeff Little. It was one of the main religions of the day.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah, but that wasn't what Paul addressed.

Jeff Little. That's – that was one of the main ...

Conrad Bowman. It wasn't what ...

Jeff Little. ... I mean, Plato and ...

Conrad Bowman. I understand that; but Paul wasn't addressing that. That's not what he was addressing. He was addressing Christian doctrine and theology from God's perspective; not anti-Gnosticism. So we don't want to be – we don't want to be off target on what Scripture was doing, because that's – that's not what Paul was addressing when he wrote his letter to the Romans.

Jeff Little. In chapter 1, he's addressing homosexuality.

Lady. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. Okay. Let's move on. The – from verse 18.

18. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who are suppressing the truth within the sphere of unrighteousness,

19. because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

So the point of verse 19 is that every man has within him, or her, man or woman, the evidence of God's truth regarding the world in which they live.

20. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through that what has been made, so that every man is without excuse.

In other words, if you take the world just as it comes at you and you use that as the basis for your definition of truth, you – you will arrive at God, in one sense as the original cause and as the sustaining power.

21. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God nor give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart [kardia] was darkened.

In other words, the center of their thought process. Now, watch this, because this goes right to our entire discussion that we're having right now. That even though they knew God, they didn't honor Him as God or give thanks but became empty, because futile is empty, in their speculations and their foolish minds were darkened.

22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became foolish.

Or the word is _____ for fools.

23. and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God [who made it all] for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

In other words, they're – they're following the religious forms of Egypt and Babylon where they worshipped those things and brought them with them. Now,

24. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them.

So the first thing they did, was – when they gave themselves over to the worship of creatures, rather than the Creator, God gave them over to impurity – their minds over, “so that their bodies might be dishonored among them.” In other words, they lost their content of their physical self even. Which goes to exactly what Jeff was saying. In one sense, is – their physical bodies, then, they lost orientation to what they were all about. Lost it completely. Okay. So, what did they do?

25. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Or I believe it.

26. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; the women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

27. and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another,

And that's homosexuality.

27. ... men with men committing indecent acts ...

Or, I bet the *King James* says, men with men doing those things which are inconvenient.

27. ... indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

28. Just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

Or appropriate. Sexual impropriety is what's in mind.

29. being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,

30. slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

31. without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

32. and although they know the ordinance of God,

Or the rule of law of God.

32. ... that those that practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

So, this is an orientation to physicality. This is the worship of the physical being, rather than the spiritual being within them who has the evidence of God within each person to make a right decision as to God's position relative to the created world and to mankind. Okay? Beth?

Beth Davis. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Both. Both.

Beth Davis.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. Generationally, this was a generation where that was rampant and driving the society of the day. No question about it. But, individually, if you lose your orientation to who and what God is, in respect to who and what we are, the first thing that goes is your orientation physically to what you are. If you lose your moorings to who God is, and who you are relative to Him, you then lose your orientation to what God is – He's Spirit – must be worshipped in Spirit true; and what man is? He's a created being.

Beth Davis.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Beth Davis. That influences

Conrad Bowman. Well, we're dealing – we're dealing with an omniscient, omnipotent God, who is at all places at all times; who is not limited by His power to instruct within the spirit and mind of any individual regardless of age; who has the capacity to renew, and build anew, in every life. So if we take Scripture exactly what it says, that he shows himself to each individual regardless, you know; then – then there's the pathway of faith that we have to trust and lean on with regard to any specific individual. Because – because we start – what happens is – it's one thing to generalize on these things and say, well here's the way it works, in general. But it's another thing altogether to be specific. When we start to pray for specific people, who are caught up, and we see the circumstances of their life and how they got caught up in these things, and have no apparent influence whatsoever that would help them avoid it or pull themselves out, we're in a confused state. Ourselves being in a confused state. It's the same thing that John was talking about a while ago, when he says, I consider members of my family, or persons I love and care about, that I don't know anything about how God dealt with them, you know, what can I do? You

pray back into their lives – the prayers of mercy and strength and pleadings on their behalf, to a God who's not bound by time or circumstance; that they could have had, would have had, and did have, by God's mercy, enough information put into them to make good and decent choices. That – I mean that's where we are. And I don't have to get out of my family to find myself facing those circumstances. You know, I don't.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. Sure.

Lady..

Conrad Bowman. Sure.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. Sure.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. Sure. And see, and when we see this, that God – the statement that he's made here that God put within them – because that – in verse 19 –

19. because that which is known about God is evident within them, for God has made it evident to them.

Now, we don't know the mechanisms by which that happened. All we know is that God has made clear statement here that it did happen. That it did. Phil and I talk about it all the time, and it's from the standpoint of the moment in time when God chooses to "switch" somebody on to the truth. Why does He wait – why does He wait to the mid-40s, or the late-40s, to do that with some, and He does it with others at six or seven? And you look at their life, and the ones that were turned on at six or seven who knew what they knew, wasted it for years and did nothing about it. And the guy He turns on late in life, in his 40s or 50s, has a burning desire to share it with others and lacks the physical strength to do it. You know? I – I can't run – I can't run twenty feet now. You know. Would that I had the burning desire to get to some things twenty years ago that I have today that I can. Right? I'd love to be able to climb a ladder and do it. Climbing a ladder is out. You know. So that's where we are. Don't you – in this class, don't we feel the frustration of having – of our limitations. We feel that every day. We

would – we would love to – to have legs that are strong. That’s why I listen to Adam. That’s why I listen to Jeff. Especially if I disagree with either one of them. I want to listen all the more carefully, because I’m listening to a guy that has strength in his legs to deliver, where I can’t go. And I want to know what God is speaking into his heart. What God is speaking into his heart, and heart, because they can go places where me and you – we can’t reach it. We can’t just reach there. So I want to – I want to know what God is saying to them, and at the same time, I want them to know what God is saying to me. You know, and saying – and saying to you. That’s – that’s the beauty of being in a class of multiple ages like we are; because God can rub us together and knock the round edges off of – off of both of us, and meld what He has deposited in us together into a fruitful and powerful force that He can use. Okay. And – and – yes ma’am?

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. That’s right.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. Yeah. There’s great purpose in there. And I think that’s what – that’s what Paul was – Paul said, I’m praying to God that perhaps he will – maybe this time He will let me come to you to stir up some gift within you. That’s what he’s saying and is his desire – is to stir that up. Now, in chapter 1, he’s talking about the universal evidence of God before mankind. In chapter 2, now we’re going to see the response – response to the Jewish moralist. Therefore – chapter 2.

1. Therefore you are without excuse, every man – of you who passes judgment, blame that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

That verse speaks to my old sin nature. It just does. It does. It doesn’t take much to stir me up; and – and I have to deal with that on a regular basis. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. Now he’s given us a long list of things to practice, and I found myself in a couple of those categories. Just a couple. But a couple of them.

3. Do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who do such things ...

And the word “practice” is *prasso*, which means practice as a matter – as a matter of life style. *Prasso*. We practice the same things.

2. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice [*prasso*] such things.

3. And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and you do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?

Just because you’re so much better than they are if you don’t speed? That won’t get it, will it? You can’t qualify yourself in one or two areas and then – and then expect a break-through of God’s mercy. Just because you’re better in some of those areas, it just won’t work. John and I had some really fruitful discussions over these things.

4. Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Ok? Do you think lightly of that kindness? And just take it for granted? Is that what we do? We – isn’t it so easy to take your spouse’s services for granted. You know. Dinner is on the table. Clean clothes show up in your sock drawer. I mean by magic, you take them off, and we put them on the floor – and you put it in the bed like we’re supposed to, and then they show up all cleaned and in your sock drawers. It’s absolutely miraculous, and you thank God for this magic dresser you have that does that sort of thing. It’s easy to take kindness of other people, the kindness of God, and take it for granted, isn’t it? And just relax into it, and fail to show appreciation for it.

Lady.

Conrad Bowman. We don’t want to talk about that.

Evelyn Wamble.

Conrad Bowman. We certainly do. We certainly do, you know. Can you just imagine me bellowing because I go to my sock drawer and my favorite socks are not there? You can imagine that, can you? It could happen, under rare circumstances it can happen. But that’s the way we are. The first thing you know,

we get offended when God provides somebody else with things that He's not providing to us. It carries over, you know? And all at once we're offended, because we think, He didn't entitle us to that this time. Well, Paul in another place will say, and we'll get to it, I've learned how to – I've learned how to do without. I've learned to do with plenty. I've learned that in either one of those states I'm to be content. Okay? Either with or without. My contentment will not be interrupted _____. Alright, lets move on. A couple of verses.

4. Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience ...

None of those three qualities pile riches at our feet. For those are considered His riches – forbearance, kindness, and patience.

4. ... not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

He's going to be patient while you stub your toe.

5. But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant hearts you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

6. who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:

Evelyn Wamble. Are we talking about believers?

Conrad Bowman. That's a good question right there, isn't it? Because all at once we were talking about forbearance and kindness and patience, and then the tone changed very rapidly, didn't it? And it was easy to get ourselves into forbearance and kindness and patience. That sounded good. I like that. You know. I like that. But then the tone changed, and he said because of my stubbornness and my unrepentant heart, I'm storing up wrath for myself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God who will render to every man according to his deeds. To those who by – I'm coming back to you. I'm not forgetting.

7. to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

That sounds like a good reward, doesn't it?

8. but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth [that's the Gospel], but obey unrighteousness, there is going to be wrath and indignation.

So here's two things now, isn't it? Here's two things. I want you to look at these carefully, because we're going to end up with these questions before us today, and we're going to have to address them solidly next week. He's going to render to every man according to his deeds in the day of wrath and revelation.

7. to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

Is going to be theirs.

8. but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there is going to be wrath and indignation is going to be theirs.

9. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, for the Jew first and also of the Greek.

And what the Lord says here, and Paul is pointing it out, is a day of retribution is coming. It's ahead. But the guy who perseveres in doing good – he's not very deep into his doctrinal study yet.

7. those who persevere in doing good and seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

That does sound like people who are seeking rewards for their efforts, doesn't it? Okay?

8. but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, and wrath and indignation is going to be their lot.

So he's talking about a group of people – one condition of heart is perseverance. You've got to persevere. Alright. What if it's the flesh who perseveres? The flesh is absolutely – the flesh is absolutely tough. It's consistent. It's persistent. It just goes to work on that, doesn't it? The flesh within seeks out the good and seeks

out the honor. What's Paul saying? What'd he say in Galatians? Let every man seek the other's good. Let nobody seek his own good, but every man seek the other's good. See. Yeah. All the way through. Right on through. Right on through, and – and in Galatians 6 he just ends that whole thing by saying, for man to go taking a fall, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. You know. Do that. Let every man bear his own cargo; but every man bear the other guy's overload. Even though it uses the same word, it's talking about two different things. So we're going to get to that in order to clear this up, because we don't want to be led into believing that our perseverance in doing good results in our eternal life as a reward. Why? Because Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we don't walk in our own works. We walk in the works that He has completed beforehand for us to walk in. So, we have to draw it all together, okay, to make sure that we come to the right conclusion about this. Next week I want to talk about who Paul is addressing this second chapter. This second portion of his letter to the Romans – who he's addressing that to. And I want you to think about that carefully through this week. I'm going to stop right here, and next week we're going to take it up right from verse 1 in chapter 2, and we're going to carry right through the Law, and the Law as it was given to Israel – the Mosaic Law. And we'll talk about that. Any comments you want to make? Questions? David?

David Yearly. Getting back to the attributes of God.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

David Yearly. And one of the – well, going back to your – omnipotence type attribute. Now-a-days we have ... [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Uh huh.

David Yearly. ... experts. And one of the things that they claim is the God of the Jews, the Christians, and the believers of the God of Islam ... [inaudible]. So, how would you answer something like that?

Conrad Bowman. It's possible – it's possible for Islam, and Christianity, and Judaism all to acknowledge the same attributes in God because God is who He is. The question is not what they do with the attributes of God, but what do they do with the persons of God.

[Conrad goes to the Board].

GOD IS ONE IN ESSENCE OR CHARACTER

SOVEREIGN	OMNIPOTENT
JUST	OMNIPRESENT
RIGHTEOUS	OMNISCIENT
LOVE	TRUTH
ETERNAL LIFE	UNCHANGING

THE FATHER <i>PLANNER</i>	THE SON <i>EXECUTER</i>	THE HOLY SPIRIT <i>REVEALER</i>
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GOD IS THREE PERSONS IN COMPLETE UNITY, EACH POSSESSING ALL OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF HIS CHARACTER

When the Father decreed that the wages of Adam's was both physical and spiritual death, He also broke fellowship with them because they were no longer **righteous** and because His perfect **Justice** demanded that the penalty had to be paid. Before His love could be appropriated by man, His **Justice** and **Righteous** standards of being had to be met. Those demands were the basis for His sending His Only Begotten as a man to be the Kinsman Redeemer for Israel and the Savior for all mankind.

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The attributes of God – the attributes of God are up here. And God is one in essence of character; sovereign, just, righteous, love, eternal life, omni, omni, omni, veracity and un-changeability. Now, you come down here and those are expressed in three persons. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now, Christianity says, the Son possesses all the attributes of God in single character, and expresses in His – in His title as the Only Begotten Son of God the Father, Jesus, who is glorified forever. Here's what separates Christianity from Judaism and from Islam. The Father is the planner of everything that was done on man's behalf on the behalf of creation. And the Holy Spirit is the revealer of everything that the Father planned and the Son accomplished. All the work was done here. No man has seen God the Father at any time; the Son – the Only Begotten Son who's in the bosom of the Father is clearly revealed. It's by the finger play of the Son that the world's systems are held together. It's by the Holy Spirit's revelation to the heart of man – and this is what Paul said in chapter 1 – that the Holy Spirit has revealed within man what God the Father has decreed to be deposited into man. And so the Holy Spirit is the revealer who opens the eyes of man so he can see.

Okay? Now you don't get there – man doesn't get there by his work – which is exactly why we have to address this directly next week in chapter 2. We can't work our way into that relationship. That relationship has to be provided to us by grace, and we have to approach that cross by faith in order to appropriate what He became for us. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us in order that having been made to be sin He can make us to be the righteousness of God in Him, or in union with Him. So, we walk by faith up to that. Islam would say, we get there on the basis of the works we do; especially the self-sacrificing works. If we give ourselves over, even in death, in order to attack the infidel who doesn't accept what we teach – the gospel that we teach – then we have elevated ourselves in God's sight where He will reward us in eternity; by providing you with any number of brides; like the lovely Ms. Rachel. Now I don't see how you could do better. But Islam would offer you, you know, a great number to replace her. So she's worth at least sixty some-odd. We know that. Right? Now, that's Islam. Islam will take and start to manipulate you by offering you things of relative value to what God has already gifted you with. Now, the Jew believed, on the other hand, that the Mosaic Law – the Mosaic Law was the means by which – you kept the Law, and in keeping the Law, you attained a condition of acceptability to God, or righteousness. You remember, a long time ago, within this thing, the Law – as one of Betjeman's students did for us, became a big yellow bus. And it had windows in it. It had a big – and it was driving. Here it came. It came from Numbers 19 all the way up to the cross. Here's that big yellow bus. And it parked – it pulled up on a parking lot where – this is what it was. And there was a big entrance gate into the Grace Park. And everybody was on that bus. And they rolled that bus along right up there and it parked on the parking lot; and the driver got out, and everybody got out and they looked at the entrance to the Park of Grace. And some said, oh, I don't like this. It's too noisy and bright. So they went and got back on the bus. Well the bus is not going anywhere else. The bus has arrived at its destination. And it's sitting on the bus of law today. Okay? And it's not going anywhere. It's already arrived. And the windows are broken, and the motor has been stolen, and the tires are flat, and the doors have fallen off; but they're still sitting on the bus of Law. And you look across the isle, and there's Orthodox Judaism over on that side; and there's reform Judaism on this side; and it can be Methodist, or Presbyterian, or whatever. It can be us; right down the hall; it can be you, if you've adopted a law based means of satisfying God. By grace, He satisfied the righteous demands of the Father; and makes free by grace His life and His righteousness to us who have no way to deserve it. All we can do is accept it. The separation between Judaism, Islam, and Christianity is not here. We can all agree on that. It's here.

It's the work of the Son and how we appropriate that work. That's where it is. Okay? Let's pray.

Father, we thank You for the time You give us. Thank You for the evening. Just guide us in our studies. Weave these things from the heart and mind of the apostle Paul into our souls, and into our minds, and into our very spirits; that we might exude the grace, Your grace, to a lost and dying world; and we thank You for it. Keep us safe, and bring us back together. In Christ's name. Amen.

Thank you so very much.