

May 2026

Daily Devotional

I have seen a limit to
all perfection, but
Your commandment
is without limit.

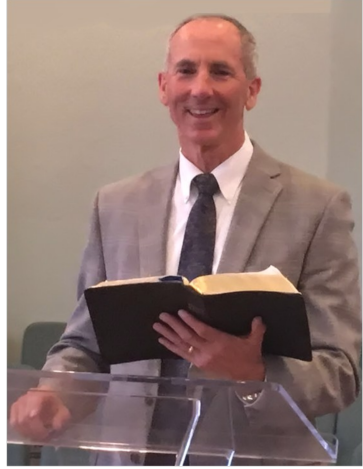
Psalm 119:96 BSB



Vistoso Community Church

Foreword

This month, we have one lesson to finish our current study in Romans, then, we'll spend some time reviewing Ephesians. After that, we'll take up a new series of readings in the Book of Psalms. Finally, at the end of the month, we'll spend a number of days on one of my favorite portions of Scripture—the second half of the eighth chapter of Romans.



I trust that our time reading and pondering God's Word will be a great blessing to you in the month ahead.

In His grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Redig'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Kevin Redig

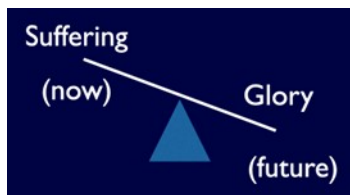
All Scripture quotes have been taken from either the NKJV (1992 edition) or the NIV (1984 edition).

Returning to Romans

Friday, May 1: Read II Corinthians 4

I can't resist one more day on the subject of God's sufficient grace because it is such a wonderful conclusion. Here is a thought exercise for you:

If you put your current suffering on one side of a see-saw, and your future glory on the other, how would it balance out?



The Scriptures already answer this question:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

Are you following the picture? Our future glory is much *weightier* than whatever it is we might be going through right now! This is meant to have a very important impact on our lives; specifically, to keep us from losing heart!

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

II Corinthians 4:16-17

Do you see how this passage from Paul's letter to the church in Corinth is really teaching the same thing? It may be hard to grasp, but whatever we are going through right now is said to be *light and momentary*. It may not feel that way, but here is the point—it is light and momentary in contrast to the eternal *weight* of glory to come!

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Returning to Romans

Friday, May 1: Read II Corinthians 4 (Continued)

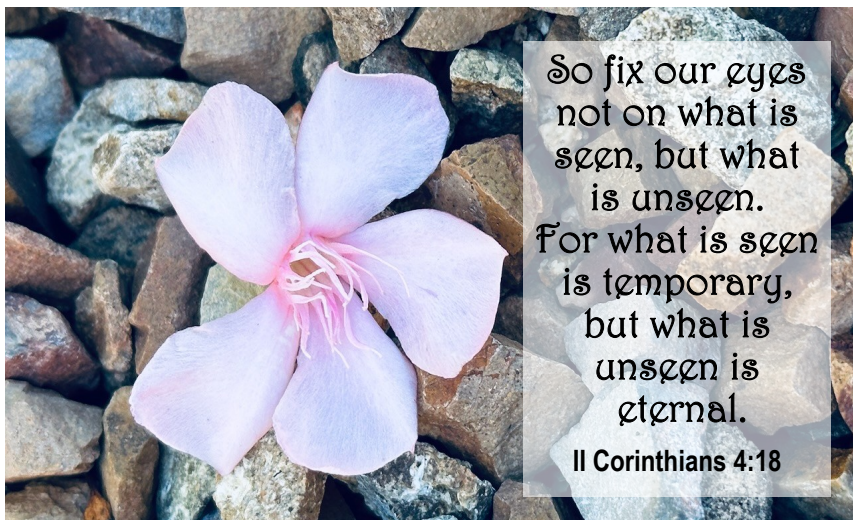
So, what is this meant to prompt us to do?

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

II Corinthians 4:18

In other words, we are to fix our eyes on that which is glorious, that which is to come! The reason we are told to do this is because it is going to last for all eternity. Our light and momentary troubles are just that—short-lived in contrast to that which is eternal.

I hope at this point you might be thinking to yourself, *“What is the glory to come?”* Consider for starters: a home in the Father’s house, a glorified body like that of our Savior, a share in the destiny of our Savior, a glorious inheritance on reserve for us, and access to both the Father and the Son for all eternity. That’s a glory to long for in the midst of each and every trial.



So fix our eyes
not on what is
seen, but what
is unseen.
For what is seen
is temporary,
but what is
unseen is
eternal.

II Corinthians 4:18

Lesson from Ephesians

Monday, May 4:

Read Ephesians 5:1-7

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, we learned of our exceedingly privileged position in Christ—raised up and seated with Him in the heavenly realms and recipients of every spiritual blessing in Christ. What did we do to deserve such blessing? Nothing! That's why we label what God has done for those who believe as an act of *grace*. He saw our need and provided, from His own resources, what we could never achieve by our own efforts.

As exceedingly privileged as the first three chapters of the Book of Ephesians are, the last half is every bit as challenging! To be positionally seated with Christ in the heavenlies is indeed a great privilege. But, in Chapter 4, we learned that, as new creations in Christ, we are to live a life *equivalent in weight* to our position in Christ! If that were not enough, in Chapter 5 we start with the call to:

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

This should most certainly give us pause. For we are being told to imitate God and love in the same way that Christ loved by sacrificially offering Himself. Doesn't that seem like an exceedingly tall order? Is it even possible? There is much more to consider, but I can tell you one thing right at the start: Just as we no more achieved our privileged position in Christ by our own efforts, so too there is no chance whatsoever we are going to imitate God and love as Christ did in our own strength. Mark it down! The grace of God is going to have to provide the means.

Lessons in Ephesians

Tuesday, May 5: Read Matthew 5

I want to refer back to Ephesians 5:1:

Be imitators of God, therefore as dearly loved children ...

We see something very similar in today's reading:

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 5:48

These two passages have set the bar impossibly high!
Then, add:

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us ...

Ephesians 5:2

How did He love us? He died in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous. The bar is now out of sight up in the clouds somewhere! There are two ways to respond to this kind of Scriptural call:

1. Consider it to be impossible and just chalk it up to hyperbole. Then just do the best you can, which, of course, is to aim under the bar. Does that sound right to you?
2. A second response, and the one we are looking for, is to simply say, "Of course!"



Lessons in Ephesians

Tuesday, May 5: Read Matthew 5 (Continued)

Given everything we have learned in the Book of Ephesians, it couldn't be any other way. We have been accepted in the Beloved, with an exalted position in Christ, so, of course, we should be imitating God. Given our union with Christ, why would we want anything less than conformity to the image of our Savior?

A few additional things for you to consider:

1. If we have been brought into the family of God and are co-heirs with Christ so that we have every spiritual blessing, should we not anticipate the highest of callings upon our lives?
2. This is God's way—the grace way! He blesses us first, and then calls for our devotion to follow. And, naturally, He provides what we need to follow through!
3. From our own resources, we are going to have trouble wrapping our minds around living up to such a high calling. We simply need to turn to the Word, learn God's provision for living such a life, and then put our trust in His provision.

You see, the Christian Life is a supernatural kind of life from beginning to end! As we shall see, it involves the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

Lessons in Ephesians

Wednesday, May 6: Read Ephesians 5:8-14

Here is another verse to consider memorizing:

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ... Ephesians 5:8

Let's extract what we can from this passage:

1. Could this verse mean anything other than: You were once lost and now are saved; once you had a destiny of eternal separation (damnation) and now you have a home in heaven?
2. Why the reference to darkness? Darkness is the contrast to Jesus, who is the true light:

The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. John 1:9

We were all born in Satan's dominion which is the dominion of darkness. So whenever a lost person turns to Christ in faith, he or she is:

... rescued ... from the dominion of darkness and brought ... into the kingdom of the Son ...

Colossians 1:13

3. If we have indeed been brought out of the darkness and are now in the Kingdom of light—in union with our risen Savior—then we have to be the *light in the Lord!* He is perfect light, *in Him there is no darkness at all.* (I John 1:5) If we are as intimately united with Him as the Book of Ephesians says we are, then we too are in the light—solely as the result of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

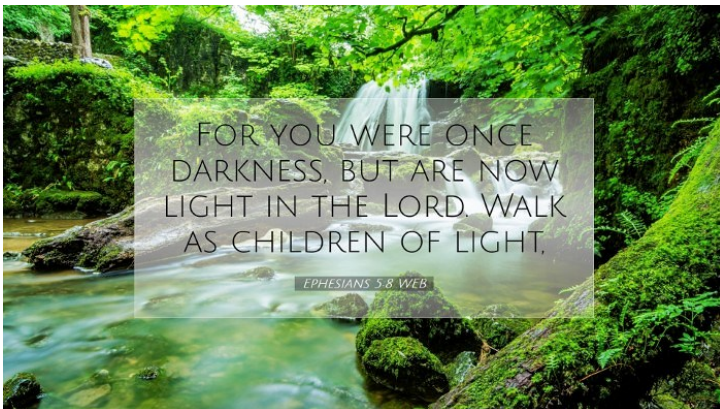
Lessons in Ephesians

Wednesday, May 6:

Read Ephesians 5:8-14 (Continued)

4. That brings us to the most natural of applications: *Live as children of light*. For to live any other way would be completely out of character with our transference from darkness to light!
5. The very fact that Paul is commanding us to live consistent with our new position in the light means that it is possible for us to fail. Any time Christians go back to the deeds of darkness from which they were rescued, they have trespassed, spiritually speaking, to a place where they no longer belong.
6. Finally, this passage is so important in terms of sequence. Here is the Divine order: First we are transferred from darkness to light as the result of our faith in Christ; then we are to live consistent with our new status.

We don't change our behavior to get saved, God works to change our behavior because we are saved!



Lessons in Ephesians

Thursday, May 7:

Read Ephesians 5:15-20

The text of Ephesians is so rich with truth. Today, did you notice that the text presents us with an application:

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15-16

The text has brought us to exactly the same point as many times before: Given that we are *light in the Lord*, we are to *redeem the time!* It might as well have said: Given that you have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, have been raised up with Him, are seated in the heavenlies, and are children of light, then walk worthy of the calling you have received, be imitators of God, and redeem the time!

I hope you noticed this is a summary of the first five chapters of Ephesians. God has abundantly blessed us, and then calls us to respond to what He has provided. I think of this as God blessing us first, and then calling us to devotion. This is what unconditional love from the Creator to the creature looks like. Don't fail to notice the command to *redeem the time*, a label for the second phase of salvation.

Chapter 5 of the Book of Ephesians is talking about the number of days God gives us on this earth. Because of who and what we are in Christ, God wants us to *redeem the time*—every single day of it. It is as if we could *purchase* time, and indeed we do when we choose to live for Him, bearing witness to Him and in obedience to His Word.

Just one thing to note! This redeeming of the time is only possible through the filling of the Spirit (Verse 18) and that's our subject for tomorrow!

Lessons in Ephesians

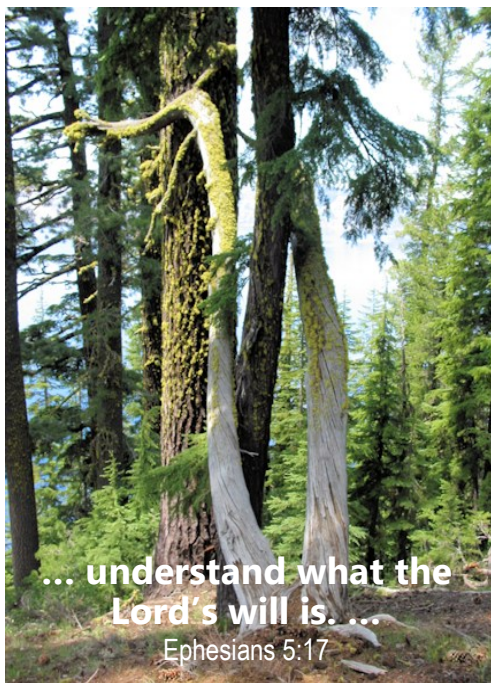
Friday, May 8: Read John 14

For the next few days we are going to focus on the Holy Spirit. We simply cannot pass by this scripture:

... understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.
Ephesians 5:17-18

A few things to note:

1. It is God's will that every single believer in Jesus Christ be filled with the Holy Spirit—all the time!
2. Notice that it is not a given. It is the Lord's will, but in the text it is one of two options. It is either we are filled or we are not filled.
3. In the plan of God, He has provided the Holy Spirit to influence and guide the soul of redeemed mankind. So, in essence, the Christian must make a choice about what it is that is going to influence the soul. In the text, one possibility is alcohol, but there are many other lusts of the flesh which would be glad to do so.



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Lessons in Ephesians

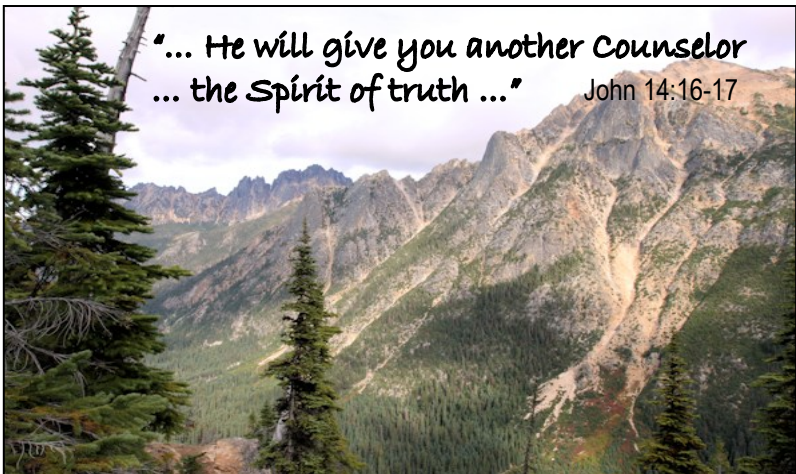
Friday, May 8: Read John 14 (Continued)

4. The soul does not operate in neutral or in a vacuum. It is going to respond to something and God desires it to be the Holy Spirit! This naturally brings us to the question: What exactly does it mean to be *filled with the Holy Spirit*? That's where today's reading comes in:

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth ...”
John 14:16-17

The disciples are understandably upset at the news that Jesus is going to return to the Father. Part of Jesus' response to their concern is His declaration that He will ask, and the Father will answer by sending the Holy Spirit.

Did you notice that Jesus said *another Counselor*? The word *another* means another of the same kind. In other words, the Father is going to send another member of the Trinity. The term *Counselor* means an encourager, one who comes alongside and supports, guides, chides, and instructs. Much more to come!



Lessons in Ephesians

Monday, May 11: Read I Corinthians 6

As believers in Jesus Christ, it is a matter of faith for us that the Father has sent the Spirit to be in each of us. We see that validated and amplified in today's reading:

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have received from God?
I Corinthians 6:19

There are a number of things we should know:

1. If you have placed your faith in Christ, then the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in your body. This is often referred to as the *indwelling* of the Holy Spirit.
2. The indwelling of the Spirit is essential, but it is not the same as the filling of the Spirit described in Ephesians 5.
3. The indwelling of the Spirit is something the believer cannot lose! The Corinthian believers were involved in sexual sin, and Paul argues that sinning in this manner was completely inappropriate because they were sinning while indwelt with the Spirit. If the Spirit does not leave during the commission of sexual sin, then He has taken up residence permanently.
4. It is interesting to note that the Spirit is said to reside in our bodies—as if God has provided something within the believer to counteract the sin nature. Let's not, as we ponder the filling of the Spirit, forget Paul's conclusion in I Corinthians 6:19-20:

**You are not your own; you were bought at a price.
Therefore honor God with your bodies.**

What are the means by which we can honor God with our bodies: by *walking worthy* of who we are in Christ, and allowing the indwelling Spirit of God to fill us—daily! We'll continue to investigate this tomorrow.

Lessons in Ephesians

Tuesday, May 12: Read Colossians 3

Thus far we have seen that the filling of the Holy Spirit is part of God's provision to *walk worthy* of who we are in Christ. Further, we understand that each believer is indwelt by the Spirit, but how does that bring us to the filling of the Spirit? To answer, let me introduce you to the counterpart of being filled with the Spirit—letting the Word of Christ dwell richly within:

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another ... Colossians 3:16

I am suggesting that the filling of the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ dwell within are two sides of the same coin! You cannot have one without the other. You see, when we place our faith in the person and work of Christ, God provides a *trinity* of sorts to allow us to *walk worthy* of who we now are. He, in grace, provides:

1. The life of Christ to replace the old life in Adam. (Galatians 2:20)
2. The Holy Spirit as the source of power to enable the new life. (Ephesians 1:17-19)
3. The Word of God as the *playbook*—the guiding light for the new life. (Colossians 3:16)

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to allow the indwelling Spirit to influence and empower the soul while being guided by the Word of God. This is the God-ordained means for living the supernatural quality of life to which we are called. I trust at some point the light bulb will go on. God didn't just give directions for the kind of life He wants us to live, He also provided the means for us to accomplish this calling. We truly have been given "*every spiritual blessing in Christ.*" (Ephesians 1:3)

Lessons in Ephesians

Wednesday, May 13:

Read I Corinthians 3

As a reminder: To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to allow the indwelling Spirit to influence and empower the soul while being guided by the Word of God. With this definition as a starting point, let me ask this very important question: Is the filling of the Holy Spirit permanent in the life of a believer? Consider the following:

1. In the context of Ephesians 5, where we originally found the command to be filled with the Spirit, the Scripture presents it as an either/or proposition. That would certainly indicate that it is not permanent.

2. Then consider I Corinthians 3:1-3:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people, but as to carnal ... For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Paul can't speak to the church in Corinth as spiritual people because they are not filled with the Spirit. If you are influenced by the sin nature (envy, strife, and so on) then you are not filled with the Spirit!



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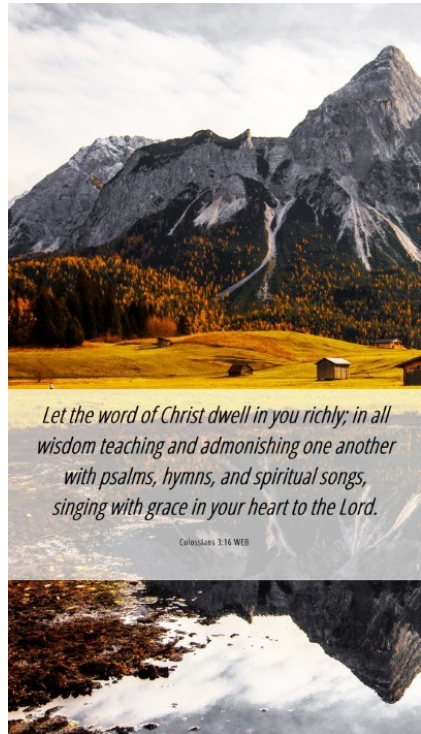
Lessons in Ephesians

Wednesday, May 13:

Read I Corinthians 3 (Continued)

3. In fact, let me suggest that whenever we sin, we have lost the filling of the Spirit—not the indwelling which is permanent—but rather the filling which is His influence and enablement in our lives.
4. How do we regain the filling when it is lost as the result of sin? First, confess the sin that we might regain our fellowship with God as the *blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.* (1 John 1:7) Then return to allowing the Word of Christ to dwell richly within you.

This is a deep subject and we have just scratched the surface, but I trust you have been given a number of things that will stimulate your thinking and growth!



Blessed by the Psalms

Thursday, May 14: Read Psalm 1

As we begin to read a sampling from the Book of Psalms, there are several things you should keep in mind. The Hebrew title for this portion of Scripture is literally *Praise Songs*. The Greek title, from which we get the word psalms, refers to the sound that comes from plucking a stringed instrument such as a harp. So, it is not surprising that many consider the Book of Psalms to be a Jewish songbook of praises. However, what we will notice, beginning with Psalm 1, is that there is more to this book than just praise. We will find thanksgiving, prayer, wisdom, and even prophecy.

Today, we begin by turning to Psalm 1. It is often put into the category of those psalms which promote wisdom and, to that end, it should be seen as foundational to the rest of the psalms. It starts by telling us that the truly blessed man steers clear of certain things. Specifically:

**... the counsel of the wicked ... the way of sinners ... or
the seat of the mocker!**

Psalm 1:1

These represent a sure-fire way of ruining your spiritual life—first by listening to the wicked, then by following their example, and lastly by imitating their blatant rebellion. What's the alternative?

Continued on the next page.

Blessed by the Psalms

Thursday, May 14: Read Psalm 1

Note that the alternative is not three things, but just one! Delight yourself in the law of the Lord! For us, as part of the Church, we should think of this as delighting ourselves in the Word of God. What will happen if we do? We'll be:

... like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither ...

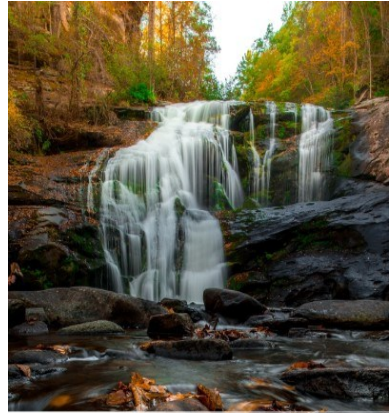
Psalm 1:3

This verse should be understood from a spiritual rather than a material perspective, if for no other reason than that is what is ultimately going to matter, for:

... each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Romans 14:12

The wisdom of Psalm 1 is to be able to give an account of ourselves to God as one who has walked in the path of the righteous, rather than the way of the wicked!



PSALMS 1:3 WEB

*He will be like a tree planted
by the streams of water,
That brings forth its fruit in
its season, Whose leaf also
does not wither. Whatever
he does shall prosper.*



Blessed by the Psalms

Friday, May 15: Read Psalm 2

Psalm 2 is both prophetic and Messianic. It is prophetic because it is speaking of things that hadn't yet happened at the time the psalm was written and, in fact, they still haven't happened. It is Messianic because the King who is going to rule the nations with an *iron scepter* is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Go back and read the Psalm a second time. We are currently living in the time of Gentile world rule, a time when the nations clearly do:

... gather together against the Lord and against His Anointed One. Psalm 2:2

Do I exaggerate? If you think so, then tell me where in public policy we see the will of an Almighty God considered and where is His Word sought to be obeyed? Psalm 2:3 is a much better description of the public policy of most nations:

"Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."

In this case, the chains and fetters are the will of God as revealed in His Word! Is God worried? I think not:

The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. Psalm 2:4

Continued on the next page.

Blessed by the Psalms

Friday, May 15: Read Psalm 2

(Continued)

You see, God the Father is going to install His king in Zion. (Verse 6) That King is the Son of God. (Verse 7) Then, the entire earth is going to fall under the dominion of this coming King. (Verse 8)

Surprisingly, some think that the Lord Jesus ruling over this earth is too far-fetched to consider. But isn't this exactly what the Scriptures declare in many other places? For example, these verses from Isaiah:

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

Isaiah 9:6-7

We seem to attribute the first phrase to the coming of Jesus at His First Advent, and then promptly pretend like the rest is too far-fetched to believe. I assure you He is coming and, when He does, it is going to be as One who:

With justice ... makes war ... on His head are many crowns ... Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." ... On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 19:11-16

No wonder Psalm 2 tells us to:

**Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling ...
Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.**

Psalm 2:11-12

Blessed by the Psalms

Monday, May 18: Read Psalms 3 and 4

I want to draw your attention to something that is found in both Psalms—sleep! In Psalm 3:5 David tells us:

I lie down and sleep; I wake again because the Lord sustains me.

Not only does he sleep, but it is peaceful sleep:

I will lie down and sleep in peace ... Psalm 4:8

Now perhaps you are thinking,

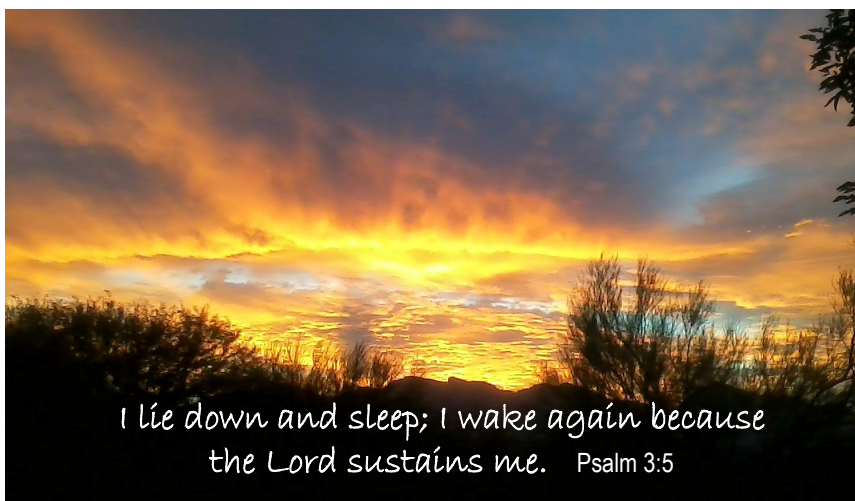
"Well David was the king, he had everything he could want!"

That is not the story of either Psalm. Psalm 3 was written when Absalom tried to kill David and usurp the throne.

That is why David says:

O Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me! Psalm: 3:1

Continued on the next page.



*I lie down and sleep; I wake again because
the Lord sustains me. Psalm 3:5*

Blessed by the Psalms

Monday, May 18:

Read Psalms 3 and 4 (Continued)

In fact, David has

... tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.

Psalm 3:6

Likewise in Psalm 4, David is in difficulty of some sort:

Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.

Psalm 4:1

So, David had every reason to be anxious, worried, and unable to sleep—and yet he did. How could he do so in the midst of life-threatening circumstances? He tells us:

To the Lord I cry aloud, and He answers me from His holy hill.

Psalm 3:4

He goes on to tell us that the Lord is his *shield*, the One who *bestows glory and preserves*, and the One who *sustains*. David simply trusts his God to keep him through the night!

Let me suggest that we may face any number of worrisome problems in the days, months, and years ahead. What are we to do? Here is what we are going to learn from the Book of Psalms: turn to the Lord, cry out to Him, put your trust in Him and His merciful ways, and then simply keep trusting. That is what it means to find your rest and refuge in the Lord. We too can have the testimony:

I lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 4:8

Blessed by the Psalms

Tuesday, May 19:

Read Psalms 8 and 150

Psalm 8 begins and ends the same way:

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth.

The word translated majestic refers to that which is mighty, majestic, and excellent. Thus, the Psalm begins with a declaration that our God is *excellent* above all else! This Psalm, first of all, brings us to a recognition of who God is—His glory is above all that which has been created. Second, it brings us to a consideration of where man fits into this created order:

... what is man that You are mindful of him ...? Psalm 8:4

When the psalmist looks at the immensity of the material universe, and the way in which this world is so perfectly suited to human life, he can't help but step back in amazement. How is it that God has shown such concern for mankind that He gives us a creation so perfectly suited to our needs. The answer can be found in the account of man's creation:

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 1:27

The world was even more suited to our needs until sin marred that which God declared to be *very good*.

Continued on the next page.

Blessed by the Psalms

Tuesday, May 19:

Read Psalms 8 and 150 (Continued)

But still, we should give praise to God for that which He has created, and thanks for so abundantly meeting our needs. Of course, He has even more abundantly met our deep, deep spiritual need by the sending of His Son. Again, we must ask: *What is man that you are mindful of him ...*" (Psalm 8:4) For we were *dead in our transgressions and sin and like the rest were by nature objects of wrath.* (Ephesians 2:1,3)

The answer is that God so loved the work of His hands, that which was made in His image and likeness, that:

He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

So we have God, the Creator of all things, Who is above and beyond all things. Yet He cares for man enough to send His Son to provide a salvation we didn't deserve and could never earn.

Now you know why I had you read Psalm 150 as well. Psalm 1 opens the psalms with a call for wisdom, Psalm 8 introduces us to the majesty of our God, and Psalm 150 brings the psalms to a close with a call for praise. We will find many reasons to praise our God throughout the Book of Psalms, but already we have a God who cares deeply for the work of His hands. What more can we say and do than:

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Psalm 150:6

Blessed by the Psalms

Wednesday, May 20: Read Psalm 11

This is a favorite psalm of mine because I find it so helpful in prompting me to align my thinking with God's ways, and not man's. David starts with a simple statement of his approach to life:

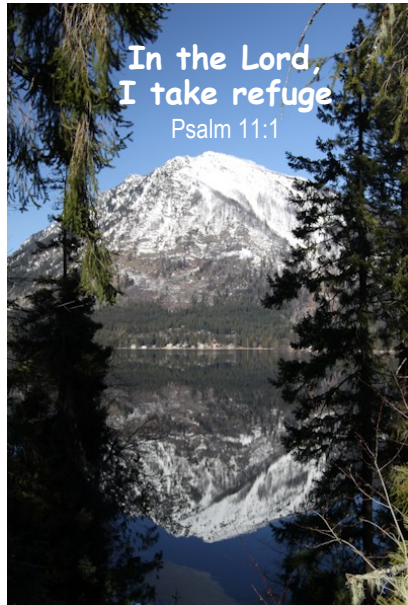
In the Lord I take refuge ...

Psalm 11:1

You will see this reinforced by David throughout the psalms: The Lord is his refuge, his strong tower, his strength, and his portion forever! This explains how David could face such adversity during his life, and for the most part, come through it all calmly and victoriously!

At this point we have to follow closely what is happening. In the rest of Verse 1 and down through Verse 3 is the voice of the *nervous Nellie!* This is one of David's advisors who counsels him to run and hide, for the wicked are after him. Verse 3 is this advisor's famous lament:

When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?



Continued on the next page.

Blessed by the Psalms

Wednesday, May 20: Read Psalm 11 (Continued)

This is not the voice of the wise, but of the one in panic mode. David will have none of it. From verse 4 through the end of the Psalm, David provides a description of the way things really are!

For the Lord Most High is still in heaven and still on His throne; He will have the final say; for the Lord is righteous and just!

In essence what David is saying is that he is not going to panic because things look bad from an earthly perspective. I would suggest to you that God has chosen to include this in His Word because He doesn't want us to panic either. For the Lord sees what is going on and He is still on His throne.

His purposes still stand and He will do all that He pleases ...

Isaiah 46:10



So, what can the righteous do when things look bad? We should know that answer: Take refuge in the Lord and put our hope in Him!

Back to the Book of Romans

Thursday, May 21: Read II Peter 1

Would you agree that the world in which we live is filled with uncertainties? For example, what will the economy do? What will the Supreme Court decide? How will the mid-terms turn out? What is going to be my next health crisis?

There are uncertainties in the spiritual realm as well. For example, John 3:36 tells us plainly:

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

I am suggesting that the first spiritual uncertainty, at least from a human perspective, is whether or not an individual will place his or her faith in Christ during the course of this lifetime. Some will, many will not. But as this verse makes clear, our eternal destiny is dependent on the choice we make.

For those who do respond in faith, there are many spiritual uncertainties ahead: Will the saved individual spend time in the Word, grow spiritually, become more Christ-like, bear the fruit of Christ-like character, walk by faith, walk by the Spirit, and many more. In other words, what's uncertain for every child of God are issues of spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity is not guaranteed for any of us. It greatly depends upon the choices we make on a daily basis. Now this is not meant to discourage you in any way. In fact, allow me to

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Back to the Book of Romans

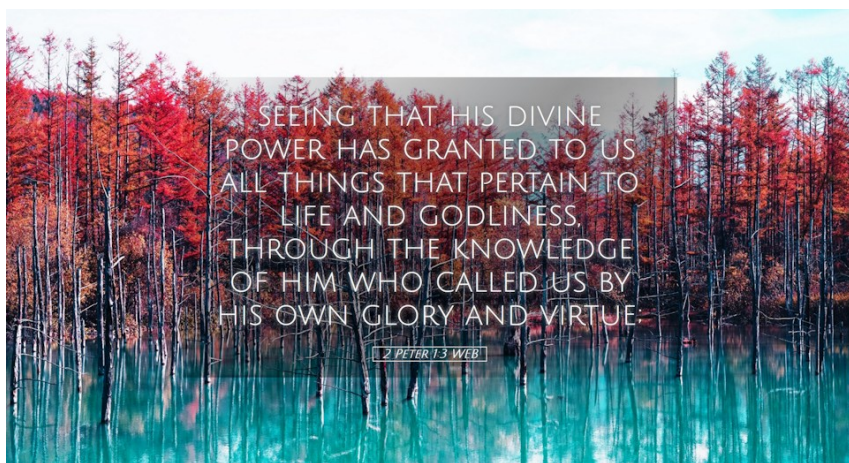
Thursday, May 21: Read II Peter 1 (Continued)

remind you that God has provided everything we need to advance in the *Christian Life*.

... His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness ... He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

II Peter 1:3-4

The great issue for every believer is whether or not we will avail ourselves of what our Savior has provided! That's enough of the uncertainties of the Christian Life. As we head into the last portion of Romans Chapter 8, we are going to spend a number of days on a sampling of those things of which we can be ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN! This is going to be a collection of glorious truths! More tomorrow.



Back to the Book of Romans

Friday, May 22: Read Romans 8:26-39

As a way to begin, allow me to sum up those things of which we can be absolutely certain:

The Trinity, each member, is working for you and through you for your best and for God's glory!

Then, let me immediately follow with an observation:

If this were really truth, and this eighth chapter of Romans is going to make it abundantly clear that it is, you and I would be able to relax. Then we can focus on God above and what He has promised to do, rather, than the up and down nature of our day-to-day walk.

To begin to prove the above to you, let me show all three members of the Trinity in our reading passage today:

- Pertinent to our subject, the Holy Spirit is found as far back as Verses 15-16 and then in Verses 26 and 27.
- The Father is found in Verses, 17, 28-29, 31, 33.
- The Lord Jesus is found in Verses 32, 34, 35, and 39.

In all of these verses, we find a member of the Trinity at work on our behalf. There should be no surprise that we find all three members of the Trinity in our reading for, although they are three in person, they are one in essence and unified in purpose!

A second item that we should note at the outset is the thread of justification that flows throughout. See both Verses 30 and 33. This is important because it makes

Continued on the next page.

Back to the Book of Romans

Friday, May 22: Read Romans 8:26-39

(Continued)

absolutely clear to whom this passage applies. Only those who have put their faith in Christ are justified before our holy God—that is one of the key parts of the first portion of Romans.

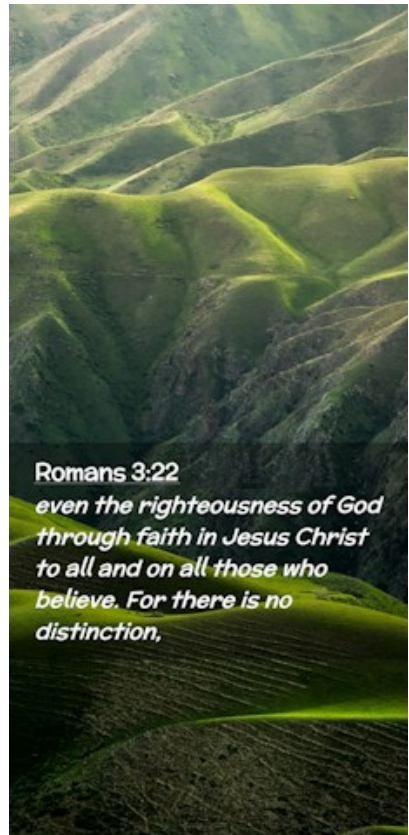
... even the righteousness of God through faith in Christ, to all and on all who believe ... being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus,

Romans 3:22, 24

So, the precious truths we are going to unfold, those things of which we can be absolutely certain, apply to the child of God—those who have trusted in Christ unto eternal life. We will look at what each member of the Trinity is doing tomorrow, but for today, allow me to close as I began:

The Trinity, each member, is working for you and through you for your best and for God's glory!

Marvel in the truth that our God would do such a thing for such as we are!



Back to the Book of Romans

Monday, May 25: Read James 5

Let's begin today by considering what we learned in Friday's reading about what the Holy Spirit is doing on our behalf. Of course, outside of the Book of Romans we already know He does many things for the child of God: teaches, convicts, seals for eternity, indwells, gifts, and enables—to name a few. But what about this last portion of the Book of Romans? Here is your answer:

In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Romans 8:26

Have you ever been in deep distress regarding the needs of someone close to you, but things are so bad you are not even sure what to ask for? I have, but based upon this verse, I don't let that concern me. I come to the Father with whatever is on my mind, and then I just pause and trust in the Spirit to carry on. For He will intercede—and He will do a better job than I can! How do I know that? Look at the next verse:

And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Romans 8:27

Are you following? The Spirit will take up where my prayer leaves off, and He will do so in keeping with the Father's will. If the Spirit prays in accordance with the Father's will, then we know the Father will answer. There is our first example of a member of the Trinity, in this case the Holy

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Back to the Book of Romans

Monday, May 25: Read James 5 (Continued)

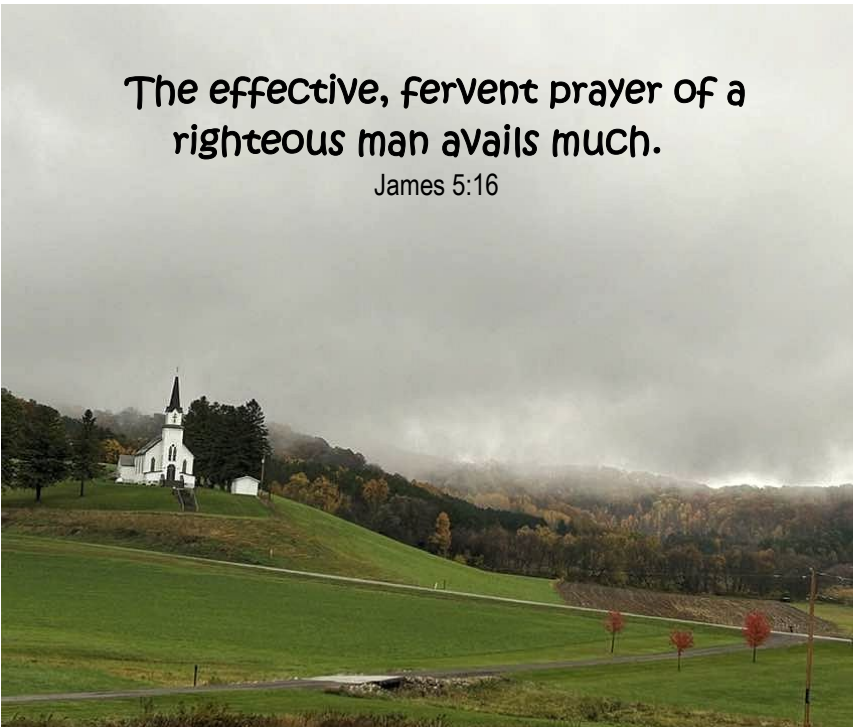
Spirit, working for us and through us. What a blessing that we don't have to carry our burden for loved ones (or ourselves) alone. The Spirit will intercede for us with words we can't even express and do so in keeping with the will of the Father. What a great comfort to know and believe the Holy Spirit comes alongside to help in our time of need! Perhaps this is part of the reason for the promise:

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

James 5:16

**The effective, fervent prayer of a
righteous man avails much.**

James 5:16



Back to the Book of Romans

Tuesday, May 26: Read Romans 8:26-34

Today I will continue to prove from the second half of the eighth chapter of Romans that:

The Trinity, each member, is working for you and through you for your best and for God's glory!

Yesterday we saw that the Holy Spirit has a ministry of interceding on our behalf. Today let's consider what the Father is doing:

First, He works all things together for good!

... in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

Second, He is bringing us into conformity to the image of His Son!

For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son ...

Romans 8:29

Third, the last part of His plan for every child of God is glorification!

... those He justified, He also glorified.

Romans 8:30

Fourth, here is my favorite. Along with the Son, the Father is graciously providing all that we need.

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:31-32

Continued on the next page.

Back to the Book of Romans

Tuesday, May 26:

Read Romans 8:26-34 (Continued)

Should you doubt the fullness of this promise, consider the argument that Paul developed: The Father has already done the greatest possible thing in sending His Son to save us.

Of course, He is going to provide, from that point forward, for those who believe!

Lastly, God will deal with every charge against us!

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? (The idea is a charge that will stick.)

It is God who justifies.

Who is he that condemns?

... Romans 8:33-34

The answer to this rhetorical question is: *No one that matters in comparison to God!* Add that to what the Holy Spirit is doing and we have an amazing list. Ponder each one carefully. Best of all, we still have the Son yet to go.



Back to the Book of Romans

Wednesday, May 27: Read II Corinthians 1

The Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf. The Father undertakes an amazing list, and here is what the Son is said to be doing in this amazing last half chapter in Romans 8.

First, the Son, too, is interceding for us!

Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Romans 8:34

This is very difficult to grasp, but should be an amazing source of comfort. The Holy Spirit who dwells within each child of God, *intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express*. At the very same time, our Savior is interceding on our behalf from the right hand of the Father—the Holy Spirit within and the Son in the place of honor.

We need to pray more, so that we can at the same time trust in the ongoing intercessory ministry of the Son and the Spirit!

Second, along with the Father, the Son is working to provide all that we need as His disciples.

He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:32

Continued on the next page.

Back to the Book of Romans

Wednesday, May 27:

Read II Corinthians 1 (Continued)

Third, we are *supra-conquerors* through Christ. For in the midst of all manner of hardship, persecution, and danger:

... in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Romans 8:37

Lastly, we are objects of His love from which nothing can separate us!

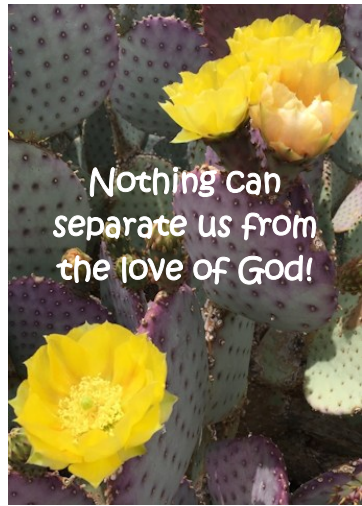
... neither death nor life ... nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

We started these several days of devotional reading with the question: *Of what things can we be absolutely certain in these uncertain days?*

Upon the authority of God's Word we have our answer. If we have placed our faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, every day for the rest of our lives we can be certain that the Holy Spirit is interceding on our behalf, the Father will graciously provide all that we need, and the Son will both intercede and steadfastly love us with a love from which absolutely nothing can separate us!

Let me submit to you, that there is no uncertainty with respect to the things that matter the most! Our God is ever so faithful to those who are His.



Nothing can
separate us from
the love of God!

Back to the Book of Romans

**Thursday, May 28:
Read Hebrews 12:1-15**

We are not yet done considering the amazing things we have seen in this eighth chapter of Romans. In light of what the Spirit, Son, and Father are doing in us and for us, we should absolutely be able to clear the air of certain doubts and fears.

Let me walk you through a few errors we should now be able to avoid. First, *is the salvation that is ours through faith in Christ like being on parole?* I am asking, is it like being out of jail, and as long as we don't violate the terms of our parole, we can stay out of jail? However, if we do violate the terms—back into jail we go?

This is, in essence, the teaching that you can lose your salvation. I hope after considering God's commitment to those He has saved, you are thinking, "*My salvation is nothing like parole!*" If the Spirit is interceding, the Son is interceding, the Father and Son are graciously providing, and I am inseparably united to the Son through His love, I don't have to worry about losing that which I couldn't earn or deserve to begin with.

Now to be sure, I am not saying that sin on our part doesn't have consequences—for it most certainly does. Furthermore, another of the certainties of Scripture is that we should expect to be disciplined by the Lord as part of being one of His children. (Hebrews 12:7) If we fail, trust in God's commitment to those He has saved, we must confess our sin and get back to following after the Lord Jesus!

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Back to the Book of Romans

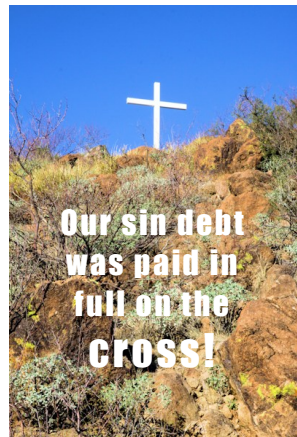
Thursday, May 28:

Read Hebrews 12:1-15 (Continued)

Here is a second option for you to consider: *Is the Christian life like purchasing an insurance policy?* I am asking, does the policy remain in place as long as I keep making regular premium payments. However, if I stop making payments (doing those things a good Christian should do), does my policy lapse and I am no longer covered?

Here is how this shows up as false teaching: Our regular payments of Christian works become proof that we have a policy—proof that we are saved! What do you think about that? Here is the Biblical answer: Look to the cross! The entire *premium* was paid right up front!

Didn't we just see that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all working on our behalf and for our benefit? Where in the list of certainties that we found in this last half of Romans Chapter 8 do you see us making *premium payments*? Nowhere!



To be sure, our bad choices can grieve and quench the Spirit's work in our lives and lead to divine discipline. But that discipline shouldn't create doubts about God's commitment to those He has saved. Rather, it should make clear our need to be sensitive to a walk by the Spirit and by faith—that we might avail ourselves of all that God is so willing to provide. So, whether you have turned away for a moment or a decade, always confess sin first and then rely on the faithfulness of God rather than thinking it all depends on you. That's the lesson of the second half of Romans Chapter 8!

Back to the Book of Romans

Friday, May 29: Review Romans 5-8

The final lesson I would like to extract from the last portion of the eighth chapter of Romans has to do with failure. I interact with people all of the time who are very concerned about the eternal destiny of a loved one and sometimes even themselves. If the individual has never placed his or her faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, they should be concerned because salvation is found in no one else.

But, in many of these conversations, the object of concern has believed in Christ. It is just that they don't appear to be *faithful enough* or have committed some *whopper* of a sin. Let's assume we are talking about a person who really has believed, but has failed along the way. If we take all of our concerns and bring them to the Lord, what do you suppose He would say based upon Romans 8:26-39?

I think He would say, *"I don't want you to look at your shortcomings; I am not even going to address them. I want you to look to me and what I am committed to do for you!"* In essence, I think the Lord would say, *"You think your failures are bigger than the sufficiency and efficacy of My work on the cross—and I do not agree! Get your eyes and concerns off of yourself and look to Me! I will pull you out of the pit you have dug for yourself and bring you back into relationship with Me!"*

If we go all the way back to Romans Chapter 5, I am reminded that God did the work of our justification, and He has provided everything for our sanctification including His life and His Spirit! None of His gifts are my works, they are all His. This isn't about me and my failures—although I need to take responsibility for them. It is about what God is desirous of doing in and through me to my great blessing and His glory! And all God's people said, "Amen!"

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He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit...*John 15:5*

1200 E. Rancho Vistoso Blvd., Oro Valley, AZ 85755 ☎ 520 825-0652

Website: www.vistoso.org