The Epistle of Romans VII
Chapter 3:1-20

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I want to cover a couple of things here in the way of review of Romans 1, and let's see where Paul sets the whole theme for the book. It actually goes from this place clear up to Rom. 3:20—all of that is included in one big section leading up to how we are in right standing with God.

Romans 1:17: "For therein… [in the Gospel] …*the* righteousness of God **is being**… [present tense, always] …revealed from faith **into** faith… [the Greek means that—*into*—your faith toward God, God back to you with His faith and His faith in you and then back to God] …according as it has been written: 'The just shall live by faith.'" This continues all the way through showing the problems and difficulties of human nature, civilization-wide, individually, collectively with the Jews, collectively with the Gentiles. It's all broken down into those various categories from Rom. 1:18 thru 3:1.

Verse 18: "Indeed, the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who are suppressing the Truth in unrighteousness." Then he gives all the indictment of chapter one.

Roman 2:1—he begins with the individual: "Therefore, you are without excuse, O man, everyone who is judging…" So, he brings it down to an individual level because where in the Greek it says *O man* meaning any human being. Then he shows that the judgment of God is according to Truth; it is going to be the judgment of God; and shows that he is going to give the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience to the Jew first and then to the Greek, and that God is no respecter of persons.

Verse 24—this will tie in with chapter three. I want you to especially notice this: "For this very reason the name of God is being blasphemed… [When we get to chapter three, we're going to find out that they were blaspheming what Paul was doing in preaching the Truth. Here is the comparison, and he's really saying to the Jews, 'because of *your* behavior'): …God is being blasphemed through you among the Gentiles, exactly as it has been written. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision!" (vs 24-25).

That is an unthinkable statement! I mean, if you want to really get on totally the wrong side of any Jew, walk up to him and say, 'Your circumcision is uncircumcision.' If you still have your teeth in your mouth when you're done saying it, you'll be lucky. That is unthinkable! Circumcision was a token of the covenant that they were in a special relationship with God. So a Jew to look at this would think this is beyond belief—the tooth grinding and gnashing kind of response.

Verse 26: "Therefore, if the uncircumcision is keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?" Again, unthinkable! Those of the Gentiles are 'goy-yeem'; they're animals; they're made to be used, to be abused, to rob, steal from, used, and so forth. This is almost unreal!

Verse 27: "And shall not the uncircumcision by nature, **who are fulfilling the law**…" Not only are we to keep the law, we are to fulfill the law *spiritually*. It's like with the Sabbath, yes, we are to keep it from sundown to sundown, that is absolutely correct, without a doubt! But because you cease from work does not necessarily mean you're observing the Sabbath. And to observe the Sabbath does not necessarily mean that you are fulfilling the Sabbath. What do I mean by that? *If you understand that on the Sabbath Day God spiritually fellowships, with His Spirit*—God the Father and Jesus Christ do—and then you make this day the delight that it should be; you put the Sabbath Day to its fullest, maximum spiritual use, then you are fulfilling the Sabbath Law. Same way with how do you fulfill the law concerning God? *You love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your being!* You are fulfilling the first commandment. You are not merely having no other gods before Him, but you constantly spiritually striving and seeking God.

Likewise if you're going to fulfill the law to 'love your neighbor as yourself,' then you will do all of those things which then go above and beyond. If there are some of your neighbors who are very difficult to love, the best way you can love them is stay away from them, lest they rob you or hurt you or something like that.

Notice, these are fighting words! If this were out west it would now be a duel in the street, v 27: "And shall not the uncircumcision by nature, who are fulfilling the law, judge you… [No one judges a Jew. Who are you to judge a Jew! And for Paul to say the uncircumcision is going to judge a Jew—Whooooo! That's strong language.] …who, with the letter and circumcision, are a transgressor of *the*

law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision *which is* external in the flesh; rather, the one who is a Jew *is one* inwardly, and **circumcision *is* of *the* heart**, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise is not from men but from God" (vs 27-29). We went through in great detail what it meant to have the circumcision of Jesus Christ, the circumcision of the heart 'made without hands.'

Now, we come to Romans 3:1-8. We'll read it first and then we'll go back and we will analyze each verse as we go along. "What then… [We're going to find that Paul says 'what then' or 'what shall we say then' many, many times. Paul is dealing in situations, which then must be addressed directly.] …is the advantage of the Jew, or what is the profit of the circumcision? Much in every way. First, because that they were indeed entrusted with the oracles of God. What then is the situation if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief nullify the faith of God? MAY IT NEVER BE!…. [This is very emphatic!] …Now then, let God be true but every man a liar! Exactly as it has been written, 'That You [God] should be justified in Your words, and You shall overcome when You are being judged *by men*.' But if our unrighteousness brings to reality **God's righteousness**…" (vs 1-5). Notice the difference here. Going right back to what we just read in Rom. 1:17-18—***the righteousness of God*** is being revealed and also the wrath of God against all unrighteousness is being revealed.

"But if our unrighteousness brings to reality **God's righteousness** then what shall we say? Is God unrighteous Who is inflicting His wrath? (I am speaking according to man's *view*). MAY IT NEVER BE! **Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?** For if, by my falsehood [lie], the Truth of God has shown itself supremely great, to His glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?…. [Again, we're into the situation concerning judging.] …And not, according as we are being blasphemously charged, even according as some are affirming *that* we say, 'Let us practice the evil things in order that good things may come'? Their condemnation is deserved!" (vs 5-8).

Verses 1: "What then is the advantage of the Jew, or what is the profit of the circumcision? Much in every way…" (vs 1-2). That is ***IF*** they keep the law; ***IF*** they keep the covenant. What is the advantage if they don't? *They have the advantage of the first wrath*—don't they? The wrath of God is coming on those who sin, 'the Jew first and then the Greek' (Rom 2).

Verse 2: "…First [primarily], because that they were indeed entrusted with the oracles of God." Let's understand something here concerning the wording in the Greek. *Oracle* comes from the word 'logion'—which means *the sayings.* Christ is called 'ho logos'—which is singular, *the Word.* They were entrusted with the words of God, not just restricted to Scripture alone. Therefore, we can rightly conclude that from this the information concerning the calculated Hebrew calendar is in entirely correct.

Now then, let's go to 2-Timothy, the third chapter, and let's see where it talks about the Scriptures. The Greek word for *Scriptures* is 'graphe'—which means *writing, Holy writings!* Whereas, 'logion' means *words*—which can mean additional instructions, not necessarily included in the Scriptures. When Ezra edited the Scriptures did he leave out other writings? *Yes, he did!* He left out the book of Jashur; he left out many parts of the chronicles of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah, because if he didn't do that we would have a Bible that would be three feet thick.

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings ['graphe'], which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine… [teaching; interesting that that's first—isn't it?] …for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 15-17). So there is a difference and that difference is brought out there by Paul in both places. When it talks about the oracles of God, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Let me just mention this: Carl Franklin is going to have ready the history of the Hebrew text. I'll give you just a summary of it: The temple scrolls were removed from Jerusalem—before the destruction of the temple—to Tiberias and they set up a school of Levites in Tiberias. These were the Masoretes. They were there until the 570s$_{A.D.}$ when they had persecution; then they took their scrolls and went to western Spain and became known as the Sephardic Jews. Let's understand that the word 'Jews' in this sense that Paul is using is not referring to one who is of the tribe of Judah. It's referring to one who is living in Judea and could be one from Judea, one from Benjamin—which he was a Benjaminite—or Levite, as was Barnabas and some of the priests who were converted.

So, when it says 'they were entrusted with the oracles' it was the Levitical Masoretes within the Jewish community who were the ones who had charge of taking care of the Word of God. They are the ones who had the correct pronounciation markings.

In the middle of the 1200s—I think about 1260-70-80, somewhere right in there—there was a

lot of persecution in Spain and they grabbed up their scrolls, went over to northern Italy and there is where they put together and translated the manuscript of what we have in the *King James* version today. That was subsequently published and then it went north from Italy into southern Germany and was there for Martin Luther and William Tyndale, and that is the text that they used to translate for the German Bible and for what now we have as the *King James Bible*, what Tyndale did.

There is also another Masoretic community within the Jewish community, which is a rabbinic masoretic group. They are the ones who worked for the pope to produce the text, which is in the Catholic Bible—considerable different than the one that is in the *King James Bible.* Carl Franklin did the message on that: *The Catholic Pope and the Rabbi.* They worked up a text out of that. So, you need to know from whence the text comes, because there's so much confusion.

Romans 3:3: "What then is the situation if some did not believe?…. [What if the whole world doesn't believe God? Does that change God? *No!*] …Shall their unbelief nullify the faith of God? MAY IT NEVER BE!…." (vs 3-4). In the Greek this is very emphatic! It's pronounced this way: 'me genoito''—and this means *may it never come into being!* That's how strong it is. 'me genoito' comes from the word *beget*—'gennao.' So this is *don't even let this thought come into existence; don't let it even be formed.*

"…Now then, let God be true but every man a liar! Exactly as it has been written…" (v 4). What we're going to find here is that the depth of Paul's writing in relationship to the Scriptures is going to really be something!

We will see where he quotes this from—every man a liar! That's why it says in another place ***trust no man.*** Psalm 116:11: "I said in my haste, 'All men are liars.'" And it seems as though this nation has been taken over by so many lies that it's almost impossible to find the truth, tell the truth, or wring it out of someone—especially those who are running for President. It's almost an evaporated quality. All men are liars. One thing for sure: If you're going to get into politics and you're going to rise in politics, you must first prove that you will lie. Absolutely have to, without a doubt! You are lied to if you become a candidate, because they don't tell you who's really in charge.

Romans 3:4: "…Exactly as it has been written, 'That You [God] should be justified in Your words, and You shall overcome when You are being judged *by men.*'" I pondered that when I was translating it because that is a particular infinitive form of the verb *you are being judged.* Since it's talking about God, where it says, "…You [God] should be justified in Your words… [If every man is a liar, no man can be justified in his words—can he? *No!* So it has to refer to God.] …and You shall overcome when You are being judged… [and obviously then] …*by men.*'" Do men judge God? *Yes!* Let's look at some examples. How do they judge God? *James, the fourth chapter!* We need to read it into the record at this particular point because it's very important that we do. And most people judge God whether they know they are judging or not, but

- Is that going to change God? *No!*
- Is that going to change His faithfulness? *No!*
- Is that going to change His laws? *No!*
- Is that going to change His commandments? *No!*

James 4:11: "Brethren, do not talk against one another…. [We are to judge *righteous* judgment.] …The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, is speaking against *the* law, and is judging the law…. [Here's the point]: …But if you judge *the* law, you are not a doer of *the* law; rather, *you are* a judge…. [Who are you judging then? *You are judging the Lawgiver!*] (That's what he says): …*But* **there is *only* one Lawgiver**… [So, if you're judging the Law, you're judging God! Is God going to overcome you if you judge Him? *Without a doubt!*] …Who has power to save and to destroy. Who are you that you presume to judge another?" (vs 11-12).

Who was someone very famous in the Scriptures that judged God? *Job!* Let's go back and look at 'ole Job here. Job 9—this is one of my favorite Scriptures in Job, so you may see me go back there every once in a while when I'm talking about *judging God* and *judging the Law* and so forth. Job is complaining to God, all the stuff he's suffering through. Was Job receiving wrath from God for his sins? Though in the letter he appeared perfect? *Yes!* Who did he use to bring that wrath? *Satan the devil!* Who else? *His three friends!* Who, for weeks of arguing back and forth couldn't figure out the truth. They brought up every philosophy that there was ever to bring up concerning God and man. No one could answer Job. He's complaining about God:

Job 9:32: "For *He is* not a man, as I *am, that* I should answer Him, *that* we should come together in [judgment] court; there is no umpire between us *who* might lay his hand upon us both" (vs 32-33)—and say, 'Now, God, take it easy here. And, Job, you're right over here. God, You're wrong over here. Job, You're wrong over here.' That's what Job wanted.

Let's see what Job did, Job 34:1: "And Elihu… [the youngest one. Remember, the first words he said, 'I thought that old men were wise, but I've been sitting here listening to this and found out you're not. I being a young man sat here and kept my mouth shut, but I was ashamed at all your foolishness. Now, let me speak; I am bursting to speak; my spirit is to explode in me if I don't speak.'] …answered and said, 'Hear my words, O you wise men; and give ear to me, you who have knowledge; for the ear tries words, *as* the palate tastes food. Let us choose for ourselves what is right; let us know among ourselves what *is* good. For Job has said, "I am righteous; but God has denied me justice… [What did he do? *He judged God!*—didn't he?] …should I lie against my right? My wound cannot be cured; *I am* without transgression."…. [God is not fair! That's what he said.] …What man *is* like Job, *who* drinks up scorning like water; who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men?…. [That's what he thought of his three companions there.] …For he has said, "It profits a man nothing when he delights himself in God'"" (vs 1-9). Absolutely the opposite of what God said.

"'Therefore, hearken to me, O you men of understanding; far be it from God to commit iniquity; and from the Almighty, *that He should commit* iniquity. For the work of a man shall He render unto him, and cause every man to find according to *his* ways. Yea, surely God will not do wickedly… [even though He judges] …neither will the Almighty pervert judgment'" (vs 10-12).

Verse 18: "'Who says to a king, "O worthless one;" and to nobles, "O ungodly ones"? *How much less to Him who* does not respect the persons of princes, nor regard the rich more than the poor?…. [That is God!] …For all of them *are* the work of His hands'" (vs 18-19).

Verse 35: "'Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom. My desire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end… [and God did] …because *his* answers *are* like those of wicked men. For he adds rebellion to his sin; he claps *his* hands among us, and multiplies his words against God'" (vs 35-37). That's kind of strong indictment. That fits right in with what Paul wrote here when people are judging God.

Job 35:1: "And Elihu answered and said, 'Do you think this to *be* right… [probably looked him right in the eye—here's Job all fettered over with these boils and scraping flies all around, throwing ashes in the air, puss running down, dried puss and blood and everything—and said]: …'Do you think this to *be* right, you *that* say, "My righteousness *is* more than God's"? For you say, "What advantage will it be to You? What profit shall I have, more than *if* I had sinned?" I will answer your words, and your companions with you. Look to the heavens, and see… [There's good advice. Whenever you get 'bigger than your boots,' get out of them, go out at night and look at the heavens and see, and then you're going to understand how great God is! And how nothing that man really is compared to God! And to judge the One Who created all of this has got to be the greatest height of folly! You need to repent of it lest God come and do to you like He did to Job.] …and behold the clouds; they are higher than you. If you sin, what do you do against Him? Or *if* your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him? If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand?'" (vs 1-7). The truth is, God gives us everything! He gives us everything!

Verse 13: "'Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it. How *much less* when you say you do not see Him! The cause *is* before Him; you must wait for Him. And now because it is not so, He has visited in anger yet he does not understand even his great extremity…. [as Job accused him of] …Therefore, does Job open his mouth in vain; he multiplies *his* words without knowledge'" (vs 13-16).

How did God answer Job? Think of this way: If you had someone give all those stout words against you, and all of those accusations against you—how would you answer them? *Probably not too kindly!* And you would probably feel well deserved in not doing so—right? *Yes!* Notice how God answers Job; almost like Elihu:

Job 40:1: "And the LORD answered Job and said, 'Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?…. [Like He said in Isa. 40: 'Who has told God how to make the heavens? Who has been His counselor? *No man!*] …He who reproves God… [*judges Him*, because you can have no reproof without judgment.] …let him answer it.' And Job answered the LORD and said, 'Behold, I am vile!…. [Now you're getting the point, Job!] …What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth…. [It's about time!] …Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further'" (vs 1-5). This is a very profound key and deep repentance when you understand the total wickedness of yourself and understand the total righteousness of God. Then you have made the first step in a deeper conversion and a greater relationship with God just like Job did.

"And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 'Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment?…. [Almost like

Paul said, 'Will their unfaithfulness annul the righteousness of God? MAY IT NEVER BE!'] …Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous? And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His? Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you'" (vs 6-15).

That's the whole lesson of Romans! ***Your own righteousness cannot save you!*** In other words, God was telling Job, if you are not God, there is no salvation in any human being. That's what He's saying, very clearly!

- Did not God overcome when He was judged by Job? *Yes, He did! Completely!*
- Did not Job repent totally, absolutely? *Yes, he did!*
- Did not God then bless him beyond that, after it was over? *Yes, He did!*

So, it's the same thing in our lives, exactly! When we come to that same experience that Job did—and I think a lot of us need to—then we can also receive the blessings of Job.

Romans 3:5: "But if our own unrighteousness brings to reality God's righteousness…" How can it do that? When there's so much evil around it makes you understand there has got to be good, and there's got to be God, Who is righteous! Who's going to uphold it! In other words, when you see all of the wickedness out here in the world, and all of these people going through what they are going through—and are judging God by what they are doing and what they are saying—it is really proving that God is righteous!

"…then what shall we say? Is God unrighteous Who is inflicting His wrath?…. [against those who do so, as He did against Job] …(I am speaking according to man's *view*)…. [That's what Job thought—wasn't it? Did he not think that God was wrong in correcting him? Did he not think that God was unrighteous because He did not recognize Job's righteousness? *Yes!* See how this ties in with Job?] (but notice the answer): …MAY IT NEVER BE!…. ['me genoito'] …Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?" (vs 5-6).

If you have a standard of righteousness and you declare what righteousness is—like the Ten Commandments or any other righteousness of God—and then you transgress that, there must be a penalty. There must be a judgment. That penalty may be very severe. God may, as He has of nations, sent in other nations for destruction. But God is not unrighteous in doing that.

Look what He told Saul to do in going into the Amalekites (1-Sam 15). He told them to kill everyone, because 'that is My judgment.' Was God's judgment unrighteous to kill everyone, young and old, men, women and infants, and all cattle and everything? *No!* If you know the history of the Amalekites, they were evil people, indeed! What they did when they brought captives, they didn't kill them, they cut off their noses and left holes in their faces; and cut off their ears. So God was righteous in destroying that civilization. Same way with the civilizations in South and Central American; heinous, barbarian, cannibalistic, vicious, cruel, cutting off heads, arms, legs, tongues and gouging out eyes. That's why those civilizations are no longer there. God is not unrighteous in inflicting His wrath! "MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?"

Let's look and see how God is going to judge the world in His wrath. Let's go to Revelation, chapter 16; we'll see that. The world does not understand the plan of God, nor understand the meaning of the Last Great Day, after the Feast of Tabernacles; nor do they understand the second resurrection; nor do they understand that they're given over to blindness. That God has a day where He's going to undo all of these things in His way and in His time, just like He did with Job while Job was still alive in his particular case.

Revelation 16:5: "Then I heard the angel of the waters say, 'You are righteous, O Lord, Who are, and Who was, even the Holy One, in that You have executed this judgment. For they have poured out *the* blood of saints and of prophets, and You have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' And I heard another *voice* from the altar say, 'Yes, Lord God Almighty, **true and righteous *are* Your judgments**' (vs 5-7). That's what Paul was making clear here. He had to set the stage for what he's going to bring a little bit later.

Now, let's come back here to Romans 3:7—he brings up something that's important for us to realize. "For it, by my falsehood [lie], the Truth of God has shown itself supremely great, to His glory…" He was being accused because of God's mercy and grace, that God does not give mercy and grace; God only gives judgment. We're going to see what happened with that. It is the Truth of God! Notice as you go through this:

- the Truth of God
- the judgment of God
- the righteousness of God

—all the way through in every one of these things. "…why am I still being judged as a sinner?…. [Men were judging him—right?] (Here's what they were saying): …And not, according as we are being blasphemously charged…" (vs 7-8). Because there is grace and mercy and repentance that God is extending first to the Jew and then to the Gentile, is that blaspheming God? *No!*

Notice the contradiction here that they who were withholding the truth were blaspheming God. Those who are withholding the truth are judging God, yet, the Gospel is true and God is true. Here's what they were saying because of the mercy and grace, which God is giving: "…even according as some are affirming *that* we say, 'Let us practice the evil things, in order that the good things may come'? Their condemnation is deserved!" (v 8).

We find a little later in the book of Jude where Jude records that 'men crept in unaware who were turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.' The grace of God was never given to give us lasciviousness, to continue in sin, to do evil things, that more grace may come; the more we sin the more grace we receive. We'll find out that that is entirely wrong!

Let's see Paul experience in preaching Christ when he came to the Jews. You need to understand how horrendous it was to speak against Moses in the view of the Jews. Whereas, Paul was not speaking against Moses, he was showing that Moses only brought us to a certain level. Now God, through Christ, was bringing us to a greater level.

Acts 13:38—he was preaching in the synagogue: "Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man *the* remission of sins is preached to you. And in Him **everyone who believes** is justified from all things… [that is *put in right standing with God*] …from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses" (vs 38-39). A great and profound truth you need to understand. All of the sacrifices under the Old Covenant—to the tabernacle or temple—merely justified one to the temple or tabernacle; they were never justified to God the Father in heaven above, was never intended to do so, was not in God's plan to do so.

So, the Jews, however, construed it to be that these things could, in fact, do what the sacrifice of Christ was designed to do—forgive sin in heaven above. So when he said, "…from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses" it was again pushing one of the hot buttons of the Jews. Then he gave them a warning:

Verse 40: "Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you: 'Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe, *even* if one declares it to you.' And when the Jews had gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles entreated *him* that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath. Now after the synagogue had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshiped *there* followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God" (vs 40-43). Which is what? *The forgiveness of sin by believing in Christ!* That is the grace of God.

Notice, here is where you can connect Sabbath-keeping and grace together; profound Scripture. Someone just gave me a booklet by someone against the Sabbath, there are many out there. "And on the coming Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of God. But when they saw the multitude, the Jews were filled with envy; and they spoke against the things proclaimed by Paul, *and* were contradicting and blaspheming" (vs 44-45).

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That's exactly what Paul was talking about in Rom. 3. Acts 13:46: "But Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, saying, 'It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles'" Boy! That set them on edge!

Acts 14:19—this was to Lystra, after they had preached: "Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and after persuading the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged *him* outside the city, supposing *that* he was dead." So they came and stirred up the people to stone Paul. Anyone want to be Paul? Any volunteers? *No!* The only thing we can do is read what Paul went through; none of us can every compare what we do as to what Paul went through. So we get stuck on the freeway! I mean, come on! Or have a flat tire on the way to church. Have you been run out of a synagogue?

Acts 17:5: "But the unbelieving Jews became envious and took to *them* certain evil men of the baser sort; and when they had gathered a huge crowd, they set the city in an uproar; and they assaulted the house of Jason, looking for *Paul and Silas*, to bring them out to the people." What they did, they finally got them out of there and then they went on down to Thessalonica, went out by night and so forth.

Acts 18:4—Paul came to Corinth and went into the synagogue: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks. Now when Silas and Timothy came

down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* **the** Christ. But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming… [that's what he's talking about in Rom. 3] …*Paul* shook *his* garments *and* said to them, 'Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles'" (vs 4-6). I tell you, that's something! Go through and read all the rest of what Paul had to go through. That's quite a thing!

Romans 3:8: "…Their condemnation is deserved!…. [What was the final condemnation of the Jews who rejected Jesus Christ? *Destruction of the temple and Jerusalem and the whole Levitical priestly system*—final condemnation.] …What then?…." (vs 8-9).

- v 1—What then?
- v 3—what then?
- v 9—what then?

He does this all the way through; we'll see it time and time again.

"…Are we of ourselves better? Not at all! Because we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—*with* being under sin. Exactly as it has been written: 'Because there is not a righteous one—not even one! There is not one who understanding; there is not one who is seeking after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have all become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness [graciousness]. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats are like an open grave which has been opened; with their tongues they are deceiving; *the* venom of asps *is* under their own lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their own ways; and *the* way of peace they did not know. There is no fear of God before their own eyes.' Now then, we understand that whatever the law says, it is speaking to those who *are* under the law, so that every mouth may be shut, and **<u>all</u> the world** may become guilty before God…. [Who is under the law? *Everybody!* They are under sin; they could not be charged with sin.] …Therefore, by works of law there shall not be any flesh justified before Him; because **by law *is the* knowledge of sin**" (vs 9-20).

Verse 9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better?…. [that ties in with v 1 concerning the advantage of the Jew; although this could also include the Gentiles who have been called, forgiven, baptized, and received the Holy Spirit.] …Not at all!…."

And "…we of ourselves…" means *out from!* In other words, inherently within us do we have anything better than any other human being? *No!* Everyone has different skills and different abilities on the physical level, but that does not count before God *spiritually.* So no one is better than any other. He says, "…Not at all! Because we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—… [and that's emphatic in the Greek] …*with* being under sin." Every human being has the *law of sin and death* within him. You receive that by inheritance; it's within your genes. We'll cover that when we come to Rom. 7, where he defines the law of sin, and Rom. 8, where he defines the *law of sin and death*.

But let's look at human nature. The problem then is with this kind of nature, are we ever going to be made right with God? (two sermons: *The Impossible Work of God*). We're going to look at human nature, and as we do let's ask: How is it that God is going to take this and make it Holy, righteous, perfect character to be son or daughter of God. You talk about a mystery!

One of the things we need to come to understand is that God is calling us. Also, on a deeper, more profound basis, as we proceed with our Christian life, we need to understand that these Scriptures are not talking about someone else. We need to apply them to ourselves! Granted, there are degrees of evil among people. That is true. People can exercise themselves to evil, like it was said of Ahab: 'He has given himself over to do evil' and be involved in the occult with Jezebel his wife. He killed an innocent man to take his vineyard because he wanted it, among other things. But he still repented—didn't he? *Yes, he did!* So, if you think you're so bad God can't forgive you, always remember Ahab. If you think someone else a little worse, always remember Manasseh. God forgave both of them, so there's hope for everyone. God does not delight in the death of the wicked.

All of us have the *law of sin and death* in us. Just like the lesson of unleavened bread, 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump.' So, if you have human nature, you have it there. You may not have had the same opportunity to have it stirred up or developed in a greater, more full-fledged evil, but the evil is still there.

Let's go to Mark 7:21: "For from within… [not something that comes from without] …out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts… [He starts with that—doesn't he? And most of these evil thoughts then are directed as to why you don't have to keep the first four commandments. Think on that! Because all of the rest of these follow the commandments almost right down the line.] …evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these

evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man [or woman]" (vs 21-23).

Now, when you've just taken a shower and you have your best hairdo or haircut or the cleanest shave you can get, or you just trimmed your beard and you have on the best smelling stuff you can possibly have. You put on your best clothes and you look in the mirror and you say, 'Ahaaa, don't you look so good?' That's a little conceit—right? Remember this:

Psalm 39:4: "'O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am…. [Isn't it something, a little virus can take you down—SNAP!—just like that! And God uses those *little things* to prove to you that it doesn't take very much!] …Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth, and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity…. [At his best, his smartest, his strongest, most handsome, most beautiful, most voluptuous] …is altogether vanity. Selah…. [*meditate and think* on this] …Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain. He heaps up riches and does not know who shall gather them. And now, LORD, what do I wait for? My hope is in You…. [When you see all this vanity, what hope do you have in yourself? *None!* It has to be in God!] …Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the fool" (vs 4-8).

We're going to take a little thumbnail sketch of the election, right here, Psalm 62:9: "Surely men of low degree are vanity…" You can take it to the other extreme. If you're not your best, what if you are at your worst? You're cruddy and smelling and need a shave and a bath and your hair is messed up and your clothes are rotten and falling off of you and your teeth are falling out of your head and you're chewing and spitting tobacco and swearing and cursing, drinking cheap wine and you're living under the freeway bridge. It's still vanity.

"…and men of high degree are a lie… [Isn't that something! What is the highest degree you can go in Masonry or whatever? It's all a lie—isn't it? It is absolutely true that no man can be a Mason and be a Christian, because you're worshipping and serving another god. I don't care what they put on that altar in the middle of their meeting room.] …when weighed in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Trust not in oppression, and do not take pride in stolen goods; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them" (vs 9-10).

There can come a time when you exercise yourself to wickedness that it can come to this, Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." Isn't that something? Every thought! It says in Gen. 6 that every thought of man is evil continuously! Then it gets to this point, even included in your religion.

Verse 9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things… [This is what we need to really recognize and understand. Some of our greatest thoughts that we have about ourselves are the most deceitful things in the world. They are!] …and desperately wicked; who can know it?…. [God does!] …I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (vs 9-10). God is going to take it all into account. This is why Paul is coming up with these things, leading up to a very profound thing.

How are you going to take this, being so evil and wicked, and convert it so it can become a Son of God? That has got to be a marvelous thing, indeed, brethren! So the whole thing that God is doing is just absolutely wonderful beyond words. And to even comprehend or understand that we have a part in that is just marvelous! I think if the brethren really knew and understood this, there wouldn't be so many 'restless, dry leaves' blowing around with 'every wind of doctrine' out there in the world.

Jeremiah 10:23—here's the point that we have to come to; and another point which is very profound and important that we need to really understand: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself… [If you trust in yourself and you trust in your own judgment and you trust in your own ways, you're going to be disappointed.] …*it is* not in man who walks to direct his steps…. [We need God to lead us! (Psa. 23).] …O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing" (vs 23-24). This is a real point of conversion. When you come to this point of real conversion, then something else is going to happen.

Psalm 119:128 will happen. This is one of my favorite parts of all of Psa. 119. When you come to the true point of conversion—notice where we're coming from in this—from the total evil:

- accusing God
- judging God
- hating God
- sinning
- transgressing

—all of these things! Then we are to come to this point, Psalm 119:128: "Therefore **I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way**." That's something! That means therefore then, that we are not judging God—are we? Nor are we judging the Word of God in a

light to make us look better. But we are letting the Word of God interpret itself and judge for us what we should do.

Proverbs 14:12—here's another one we should memorize. I think this is one of the first ones that I heard when God was calling me that really rung a bell in my mind. "There is a way which **seems right**…"

- it looks good
- it feels good
- it sounds good.

You can even work business plans in a computer and make it look really great! It "…seems right to a man, **but the end thereof *is* the way of death**." It is just not going to work! And if we're honest with ourselves and look back on our lives and think about all the things that we have done, that didn't work out. I can look back and see the things that I have done and see what, in a sense it kind of gets to the one Scripture where God says to Israel, 'You made Me serve with your sins.' That's really profound—isn't it? We look back and we just have to really be honest with ourselves. The thing which will help us more than anything else is to let the Spirit of God let us be honest with ourselves and strip away all the deceit. Then we really understand, yes, this just the way that human nature is and this is the way that I am—and I have human nature. Only God can save me from it.

- it *seems* right
- it *looks* right
- it *sounds good*

But, it's not! This is what Paul is getting to here as he builds his case.

Now, let's come to Galatians, the fifth chapter, and these are all called *the works of the flesh*. Again, notice how these conform with the Ten Commandments and the other commandments of God. Galatians 5:19: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest… [openly known] …which are *these*: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred…" (vs 19-20).

Sounds like the nightly news; the evening or morning newspaper, the television guide—doesn't it? Have you noticed how much more witchcraft and demonism that there is on television now than ever, ever before? They have these graphics that they can now do just absolutely unreal things, just mind-boggling. I'm only telling you what I see in a little boop on the advertisements they have for these movies or whatever—I'm not watching them or going to them. But just to kind of keep up on what things are going on, it is getting something!

"…strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects… …" (v 20). We could almost give a sermon on every one of these. God doesn't want this in His Church either. There are some people who bring them into the Church, and that's a shame. It doesn't need to be. If they want all these things and all the strife and heresies, go someplace else and have it to yourself; don't disturb the rest of us. That's what we have to let be known. That has happened.

But, where there is the true atmosphere of love and we're all truly seeking God, there's no place for them to 'hang their hat' on to sit there and wait for a later date to come in do things. It won't happen! That's why God has brought us down to ground zero, to start all over again with virtually nothing. I was thinking that there were 700 who kept the Feast of Tabernacles with us, I remember when there were just seven of us. When you have that all stripped away, and you say, 'Oh, God, where are You; help us to understand Your way.' Then he begins showing us; then we can recognize any of these things early and then they can't stay. Those who are dedicated to self and evil cannot stay where there is the love of God—period! They can't! So then it becomes self-purging that way.

Heresies, we've got so many now it's almost like raking up all the leaves under your tree and you get them in a nice great big pile and you're just getting ready to put them into the bag so you can have them carried away and then all of a sudden 100 mph wind comes and all these leaves are blowing everywhere! That's just about the state of the Church of God today with the various churches. There are doctrines going 100 mph everywhere just like that. So, we're going to have to address some of these heresies.

"…envyings… [I'm better than you] …murders… [there have been murders in the sense that there have been people who have committed suicide over the terrible things within the Church. That is murder in a sense that you would cause someone to be so discouraged and lose hope in God that they would commit suicide. In the world you can understand that, but in the Church of God that shouldn't be! If there's the love of God, that won't be. What God wants us to understand how bad and evil the human condition can be so that we can repent and that He can *convert* us and He can *change* us. That's the whole thing that God wants to do.

There's a profound less we're going to learn here. "…drunkenness, revelings and such things as these… [anything similar to that] …concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God" (v 21). Profound truth: ***You cannot accomplish spiritual***

things by fleshly, carnal or physical means! That's the whole lesson of Job. You can't do it by what you do out here [in the world]; it can only be done by what you and God do in your heart and your mind. Then you can accomplish the spiritual things. Then God can add the fruit of the Spirit.

Verse 22: "But the fruit [the result] of the Spirit is love, joy, peace… [That's what God wants us to have. I would have to say that at this Feast of Tabernacles we had love and joy and peace like we've never had before. There was one small glitch. Isn't it nice to only have one small glitch? *Yes!*] …long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (vs 22-23). When you have that, you don't have to create all kinds of things to bind people together, because then it is *spiritually* done. That's what Christ is trying to do with the Church. That's the whole lesson that He wants us to learn now.

Verse 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 24-26).

Romans 3:10—what we are going to do, we're going to look at every one of the Scriptures from the Old Testament where he is quoting. "Exactly as it has been written, 'Because there is not a righteous one—not even one!'"

Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a [just] righteous man… ['dikaios'] …on earth who does good and does not sin."

Romans 3:11: "There is not one who is understanding; there is not one who is seeking after God. They all have gone out of the way; together they have all become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!" (vs 11-12).

Psalm 12:2: "They speak falsehood each one with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak. The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaks proud things, who have said, 'With our tongue we shall prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us?'" (vs 2-4).

Psalm 14:1 "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God!' They are corrupt; they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any who understand, who seek *after* God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; **there is none who does good, no, not *even* one**" (vs 1-3).

Romans 3:13: "Their throats are like a grave which has been opened; with their tongues they are deceiving; *the* venom of asps *is* under their own lips."

Psalm 5:9: "For there is no truth in their mouth; their inward part is destruction; their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. Hold them guilty, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, for they have rebelled against You" (vs 9-10).

As we are going through this, this show you how the Apostle Paul rightly divided the Word of God to prove his point, to pick a verse here, a verse there and so forth.

Psalm 139: 4—this is talking about the tongue, but not necessarily in the deceiving way: "For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether."

Romans 3:14: "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they did not know" (vs 14-17).

Isaiah 59:7: "Their feet run to evil… [Boy! Isn't that true today?] …and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction *are* in their paths. They have not known the way of peace, and *there is* no justice in their ways. They have made crooked paths for themselves; whoever goes therein shall not know peace" (vs 7-8).

Romans 3:18: "There is no fear of God before their own eyes."

Psalm 36:1: "The wicked utters transgression in his heart…. [his own heart] …There is no fear of God before his eyes, for he flatters himself in his own eyes… [how good I am] …until his iniquity is found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he has stopped acting wise and doing good. He plots iniquity upon his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not hate evil" (vs 1-4).

So, the Apostle Paul shows the things concerning human nature. Because of this and because of the nature that we have, let's begin to understand, Romans 3:20: "Therefore… [because of the condition of the human heart apart from God] …by works of law… ['*the* works of *the* law' is not correct, and the *King James* becomes very misleading. When it says '*the* works of *the* law' it doesn't mean that.] (It means): …by works of law there shall not be any flesh justified before Him;

because by law *is the* knowledge of sin."

What is the function of law? Works of law could be sacrifices; repentances:

- if you're Catholic or Buddhist, trips around the beads
- if you're Protestant it means that you're not keeping any law
- if you're Hindu you have bathing in the Ganges River
- if you're a sadomasochist religionist, then you have certain things that you poke through your nose and ears and skin
- if you're in the Philippines and you want to keep Easter, you get these flagellating things and flagellate your back; and if you're real brave you'll allow yourself to be crucified and hung up on a cross

All of those things do not justify. In other words, there's nothing you can do outside of yourself—though it may be a good act in itself—which makes you right before God. It takes the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Nothing else can make you right in the presence of God but the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

As we go through some of these things, let's something very clearly: ***Nothing substitutes for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ***—period! *Nothing can!* Let's also understand something that is a profound spiritual thing: ***You cannot accomplish spiritual things by carnal or physical means!*** You can't do that! You must ***use spiritual things to accomplish spiritual things***—not carnal means. You can go back to Gal. 5 and you can read all the works of the flesh. Then it's followed by the *fruits of the Spirit,* and that's what's necessary, brethren—the fruit of the Spirit.

The function of law is to tell us what sin is, and there is not a law that God made which can give eternal life. That can only come from Jesus Christ.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter
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4) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
5) Psalm 116:11
6) Romans 3:3-4
7) James 4:11-12
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10) Job 35:1-7, 13-16
11) Job 40:1-15
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18) Acts 18:4-6
19) Romans 3:8-20, 9
20) Mark 7:21-23
21) Psalm 39:4-8
22) Psalm 62:9-10
23) Jeremiah 17:1, 9-10
24) Jeremiah 10:23-24
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26) Proverbs 14:12
27) Galatians 5:19-26
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30) Romans 3:11-12
31) Psalm 12:2-4
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- *The Catholic Pope & the Rabbi* (Carl Franklin)
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FRC:bo
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