

# EMBASSY

COLLEGE



**TEXTBOOK (ACADEMIC VERSION)**

**ROMANS II: NEW LIFE IN CHRIST**

**COURSE: ROMANS II (NT401)**

**DR. RON COTTLE**



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# **The Gospel According to Paul**

**Volume 2  
The New Life of the Believer**

*Dr. Ronald E. Cottle, Ph.D., Ed.D.  
With David Alsobrook*

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Take note that the name satan and related names are not capitalized. We choose not to acknowledge him, even to the point of violating grammatical rules.

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# **Dedication**

Gene, Bob, Joann, and Carol

Siblings rare and wonderful, whose love and support I have enjoyed and cherished over the years.

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## Preface

When God created man, He made him in His image, with authority and dominion over all the works of His hands. Man was a spiritual being who had fellowship with God, and was able to stand in His presence without flaw, without sin, without guilt, and without fear...for awhile, that is.

When Adam ate the forbidden fruit, he was instantaneously separated from God and entered into the bondage of death, spiritually and physically. The first question asked by God in the Bible signifies this separation: "Adam, where art thou?" What happened is that Adam was thrown into a new state of hopeless slavery and death for both himself and all his race. He was estranged from the very God who loved him. He was helpless and without hope until God sent a Redeemer to bridge the chasm and reconcile both parties. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus provided the bridge to God and escape from the tyranny of sin. This is the real meaning of salvation.

There is no middle ground when it comes to salvation; one is either saved or lost. Just as Adam was changed the moment he sinned, the one who comes to Christ experiences an instantaneous work the moment he believes. All that is required of man is simply to believe. "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31). The Holy Spirit transforms the sinner from one state to another, and he immediately becomes a child of God with assured freedoms. In particular, Christ has freed those He redeemed from wrath (see Rom. 5), sin (see Rom. 6), law (see Rom. 7), and death (see Rom. 8). This glorious, multifaceted emancipation is the rightful inheritance of every believer and the essence of his new life in Christ.

Explore this wonderful life with me...



# Introduction

**R**omans is absolutely excellent and without equal. It is the greatest apologetic of the Christian faith in existence.

Samuel Coleridge<sup>1</sup> said of this great book, “Romans is the most profound work in existence.” Martin Luther said, “This epistle is the real chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel.”<sup>2</sup> William Tyndale called Romans “The principle and most excellent part of the New Testament.”<sup>3</sup>

We have much for which to be grateful to the human author of this grand epistle since without him both the understanding and the outreach of our religion

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1. Spiros Zodhiates, *Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1986), p. 1366.
  2. R.C.H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Romans* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg Press, 1945), p. 8.
  3. F.F. Bruce, *Romans* (Tyndale) (Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985 rev. ed.), p. 9.

would be lacking. A common joke is told of a Jewish rabbi who lamented over the thousands who deserted Judaism for its Messiah as a result of Paul's ministry. He was overheard as he muttered to himself, "Roses are red, violets are bluish. If it wasn't for Paul, we'd all be Jewish." Paul, if permitted to look over my shoulder as I write these lines now, would be quick to tell me, "It wasn't me, Cottle; it was Christ in me." I agree and want to give all the ultimate credit to the One who arrested the hotheaded Pharisee on the ancient road that led to Damascus; but as Paul himself said in this epistle, I also want to "give honor to whom honor is due," and it is surely due this indefatigable follower of the lowly Nazarene, who gladly "suffered the loss of all things" for his Master's sake. Paul's overall contribution to Christianity is incalculable, and his work in Romans is inestimable. Romans is an extended exposition of Pauline theology—the only original one in existence—and, as I said earlier in Volume 1, is based upon the Old Testament text of Habakkuk 2:4b, "The just shall live by his faith." Without Romans the overview of Christian salvific belief would be lacking.

In this second volume, I will not cover the background of Romans as extensively as I did in the first. The reader is, therefore, encouraged to consult Volume 1 for a detailed background of this epistle.

Romans logically falls into four divisions: 1:1-17 serves as the introduction to the book. The second major division is 1:18–8:39 and is the primary theological

section. The third great division, chapters 4, 9, 10, and 11, comprise the historical section which also deals with the Church as the new true Israel of God. The fourth division focuses on ethics (12:1–15:21). Finally, the conclusion of the letter (which does not contain a major emphasis and is not considered in our studies as a major division) is found in 15:22–16:27. Let me columnize this for your convenience:

First Division: *Introduction*: 1:1-17

Second Division: *The Theological/Soteriological Section*: 1:18–8:39 (This division naturally falls into two parts. The first part is 1:18–3:31. **The second part is 5:1–8:39 and is this volume’s focus.**)

Third Division: *The Historical Section*: 4:1-25;  
9:1–11:36

Fourth Division: *The Ethical Section*:  
12:1–15:21

Conclusion: *Farewell*: 15:22–16:27

We covered the first division, the introduction, at length in my earlier book on this beloved letter as well as the first part of the second division (see *A Commentary on Romans — Volume 1: The Gospel According to Paul, From God’s No to God’s Yes*). The second division is the primary soteriological section of the epistle and should be studied in two parts (1:18–3:31 and 5:1–8:39, respectively).

Paul's description of the new life of the believer is laid out for us in the second half of the second division of the book, chapters 5 through 8 of Romans and deals with the major exegetical and theological concerns of the entire book. James S. Stewart, the scholar/preacher from Scotland wrote a commentary of Romans entitled *A Man in Christ*. It is the theme of being "in Christ" which is featured in these four chapters of Romans and is the focus of the book you are now reading. We shall delve into and seek to understand the spiritual principles of living in Christ in the hope that the modern day Christian will be encouraged to apply these principles to his or her own life.

## Chapter 1

# Man Without Christ

**M**an without Christ is under wrath. The first part of the second division of Romans deals exclusively with this problem as we detailed in our first volume. For a quick review, let's notice a small excerpt from Romans 1:18–3:31 again.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. ...God gave them over to a reprobate mind...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ...there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 1:18,28; 3:19-20).*

### **Wrath**

These passages depict the results of mankind's deliberate rejection of God which removed him from a

## *The New Life of the Believer*

safe state of submission to a dangerous position of rebellion. That is “where” wrath is, not a location, but a position. No one was created for death. Man who was created in God’s image was not appointed to wrath in his unfallen, edenic state. When mankind experienced “paradise lost,” he sought through a multitude of foolish pursuits to regain Eden. He was put back in the garden of salvation only after he was recreated in Christ Jesus.

We explained in Volume 1 how wrath is not a possession, but a position, and neither is it an emotion. God does not hate people at any time—even when they are under wrath. His love for us is displayed in the most famous verse of the Bible—John 3:16. *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* So then, the “where” of wrath is the *position* in which we place ourselves when we reject God and His Son. Wrath is living in sin, under law, and under spiritual death, with its ultimate end in the lake of fire. *Think of wrath as a locale, a place that one might go to, rather than an attitude in God’s heart toward man.* This is precisely what wrath is in the spiritual sense, a locale, a position in which one finds oneself due to his own acts. One moves from innocence to wrath, just as one might drive from sunny skies to cloudy in one short hour. Man is under wrath because when he knew God, he did not worship and glorify his Creator, but chose

## Man Without Christ

instead to worship and serve the creation in all its forms. It was man's rebellion, our writer stresses, that placed him in the awful predicament he was in prior to the cross. (The reader should consult Volume 1 of my series for a detailed discussion of wrath and how it developed in the Mosaic tradition, the Prophetic Period, and in the Pauline understanding.)

### **Righteousness**

Having established that wrath is a position, our thoughts next ponder the meaning of its opposite. Righteousness, like wrath, is also a position, but one that is the exact opposite, just as north is opposite south. In order for man to arrive at righteousness, it must be revealed to him at the cross; he cannot come to know it by natural deduction, nor can he achieve it by natural effort.

God revealed His righteousness to man when He set forth Jesus as the Mercy-Seat. Therefore, when an individual accepts Christ Jesus as his personal Savior, he is placed into this new position of righteousness and is no longer under wrath. Sin is separated from him. The demands of the law are separated from him. Spiritual death is eradicated from within his spirit, and his heart no longer fears hell. The former sinner is now living under righteousness. His heart trusts in God and is in right relationship with Him. (This doesn't mean that a believer never sins again; he does, but he doesn't