

# EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

ACCOMPANYING NOTES FOR  
EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

4 CD SET BY TERRY VIRGO

# EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

Disk 1

## AN EXPOSÉ OF THE WORLD ROMANS 1:18-32

### INTRODUCTION

Paul has introduced himself as an apostle set apart for the gospel, which is centred in God's Son, descended from David, but now declared Son of God with power by the resurrection.

Paul's commission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles through his proclamation of the gospel.

v16     He is not ashamed of the gospel.  
v17     In it the righteousness of God is revealed.

### I. MAN'S TERRIBLE PLIGHT – THE WRATH OF GOD (v18)

It is possible to over-simplify Christian salvation by emphasising that God is always forgiving and that men are essentially well-meaning; God makes allowances and we simply need to return to Him.

We can fail to recognise man's complete disqualification and the need for God's great saving work at the cost of the cross.

Because of his disobedience, man is left in real peril.

Before Paul introduces his remedy he sets out his diagnosis of the situation.

**Leon Morris**   *'In the New Testament no one takes sin more seriously than Paul and nowhere does he treat it more fully than in Romans... "sin" 48 times in Romans (next Hebrews with 25).'*

v17 tells us that through the gospel 'a righteousness from God is revealed'. Now in v18 'the wrath of God is revealed'.

The gospel only has real meaning against the backdrop of an alternative, namely the wrath of God. Unless there is something to be saved from there is little point in talking about salvation.

God is not passive in the face of sin. He is implacably and vigorously opposed to evil.

Some theologians, such as CH Dodd, have tried to depersonalise wrath, regarding it as inappropriate in God. He sees it more in terms of cause and effect. Writing 'sin is the cause, disaster the effect,' he says it is 'not to describe the attitude of God to man, but to describe an inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe.'

It is true to say that the phrase 'wrath of God' only occurs here in the book of Romans. Elsewhere it is referred to simply as 'wrath' but undoubtedly its meaning is consistent.

**AM Hunter** *'The truth is that we dislike the phrase because we have sentimentalised our conception of God in a quite unbiblical way. Wrath – the strong and continuous reaction of the holy God against every evil in every shape and form – a wrath operative now and not only in the last judgment, is an essential part of any truly Biblical idea of God.'*

**John Murray** *'Wrath is the holy revulsion of God's being against that which is the contradiction of his holiness.'*

**Francis Schaeffer** *'Anyone who is unwilling to speak of the wrath of God does not understand the Christian faith.'*

God does not simply leave sin to work out its consequences but he is actively opposed to it.

Note that wrath is revealed in the context of the gospel. The cross shows us the measure of God's wrath.

Although 'wrath' is something ultimately to be revealed at the end (see Rom. 2:5-9) it is also a present reality.

## II. THE SUPPRESSION OF EVIDENT TRUTH (v19-20)

**Psalms 19:1** *'The heavens are telling the glory of God and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech.'*

In nature we see something of nature's God. He has so made the universe that we are responsible beings. God has given revelation in nature but people have rejected it.

**John Murray** *'God has left the imprints of his glory on his handiwork and this glory is manifest to all.'*

Not a saving knowledge of God.

God has revealed enough of himself to the gentiles for them to be blameworthy.

## III. NEITHER HONOURED OR THANKED HIM (v21-23)

Failure to honour and glorify God as God, or give thanks to Him, open the door to a downward spiral of horrifying proportions.

In stark contrast to Abraham, who grew strong in faith giving glory to God (Rom. 4:20), they became futile in their speculations. Professing wisdom, they became fools with darkened hearts.

**Jeremiah 2:5** *'They walked after emptiness and became empty.'*

**John Murray** *'The mind of man is never a religious vacuum; if there is the absence of the true, there is always the presence of the false.'*

Idolatry is essentially futile – worshipping what you have created.

Their attempts to be wise makes fools of them (see Isaiah 40:19-20, 44:9-20).

However sophisticated a 'thinker' may be, turning from God is darkness and salvation is turning back to the true light.

**Douglas Moo** *'In that this "becoming foolish" involves the various idolatrous religions that people invent for themselves (v23), Paul's estimation of non-Christian religions also becomes clear in this verse. Far from being a preparatory stage in the human quest for God, these religions represent a descent from the truth and are evidence of man's deepest corruption.' – (see 1 Cor. 1–4)*

Paul's description of the fall into idolatry is reminiscent of several Old Testament texts, particularly Psalm 106:20, 'And they exchanged their glory of the likeness of a bull that eats grass.'

#### **IV. GOD'S ABANDONMENT OR 'HANDING OVER' (v24, 26, 28)**

The 'therefore' at the beginning of this verse shows that God's 'handing over' is His response to man's rejection of the knowledge of Him that He has made generally available.

CH Dodd, in keeping with his interpretation of God's wrath, thinks the 'handing over' is no more than the outworking of the natural processes of history, but the phrase 'hand over' demands that we see God as having an active role as the initiator of the process.

**Douglas Moo** *'God does not simply let the boat go – He gives it a push downstream. Like a judge who hands over a prisoner to the punishment his crime has earned, God hands over the sinner to the terrible cycle of ever-increasing sin.'*

**Leon Morris** *'The verb gave them over shows that God is active and not passive in the process... God is in all of life. He does not contract out.'*

Paul goes on to describe the horrors of lifestyles adopted in the pagan world. It is not necessarily a picture of all pagan life but such life was present and contemporary records show that he was not exaggerating.

Their immersion in their sin was itself their punishment.

**Leon Morris** *'There can be little doubt that Paul is referring to the practice of ritual prostitution which was all but universal in the idolatrous systems of the 1st Century. He was writing from Corinth where more than 1,000 sacred prostitutes were said to be attached to one large temple.'*

They exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v25). Paul does not see pagan religion as a partial truth but the lie that leads people away from the truth of God.

## V. DEGRADING PASSIONS

**John Murray** *'The stress falls upon the unnatural character of the vice...The implication is that however grievous is fornication or adultery the desecration involved in homosexuality is on a lower plain of degeneracy; it is unnatural and therefore evinces a perversion more basic...The offence of homosexuality is the abandonment of the divinely constituted order in reference to sex.'*

God also gave them over to a depraved mind (v28). Their minds became unable to make trustworthy, moral judgments. They are 'filled with' all unrighteousness etc – not half-hearted but given to it.

## VI. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S JUDGMENT FAILS TO PREVENT MUTUAL APPROVAL IN SINNING

**John Murray** *'The knowledge of God's righteousness judgment does not create any hatred of sin, nor does it foster any disposition to repent of it. 'However severe has been the apostle's delineation of the depravity of men, he has reserved for the end the characterisation which is the most damning of all. It is that of the consensus of men in the pursuit of iniquity. The most damning condition is not the practice of iniquity, however much that may evidence our abandonment of God and abandonment to sin; it is that together with the practice there is also the support and encouragement of others in the practice of the same. To put it bluntly, we are not only bent on damning ourselves but we congratulate others in the doing of those things we know have their issue in damnation...Iniquity is most aggravated when it meets with no inhibition from the disapproval of others and where there is collective, undissenting approbation.'*

# EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

Disk 2

## THE EFFECTS OF JUSTIFICATION ROMANS 5:1-11

### INTRODUCTION

- John Stott** *'Justification is a legal or forensic term belonging to the law courts. It is the opposite of condemnation. Both are the pronouncements of a judge.'*
- Charles Hodge** *'To condemn is not merely to punish, but to declare the accused guilty or worthy of punishment; and justification is not merely to remit that punishment, but to declare that punishment cannot be justly inflicted. . . Pardon and justification therefore are essentially distinct. The one is the remission of punishment the other is a declaration that no ground for infliction of punishment exists.'*
- CK Barrett** *'It does not mean to make righteous or good but to be "acquitted in God's court".'*
- Leon Morris** *'There should be no doubt that it means "to declare righteous", not "to make righteous".'*
- Romans 3:24** *'Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.'*

### I. PEACE WITH GOD (v1)

Not just 'peace of mind'.

Having reconciled us to Himself through the death of His Son, we are on peaceful terms with God.

This does not imply simply lack of hostility but introduces a word rich in Old Testament meaning – shalom – see Numbers 6:26, 'The Lord lift up His face upon you and give you peace.'

### II. OUR INTRODUCTION TO GRACE (v2)

Although in Ephesians 2:18 our access is to the Father, here Paul underlines our access being into grace.

God has brought us into a 'realm' or 'sphere' in which 'grace reigns' (Rom. 5:21).

In contrast to the realm or domain of the law (Rom. 6:14-15).

We obtained an 'introduction'. Someone who could bring us in.

Also we stand firmly here. Far more than a periodic or occasional audience with the king.

**Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

*'You stand in grace; you do not slink into it; you do not creep into it; you do not crawl into it! Christ justifies us and we walk into this grace, and we stand in it.'*

### **III. WE BOAST IN HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD (v2)**

The word carries more than the sense of rejoicing. It means to congratulate oneself. We are to look forward in a spirit of exultation and joy and boasting to see in the glory of God.

In John 17 Jesus prayed that we might see His glory.

**2 Thess. 1:10** *'When he comes to be glorified in His saints on that day and to be marvelled at among all who have believed.'*

**1 John 3:2** *'Beloved even now we are the sons of God but it does not appear what we shall be. We know that when He appears we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.'*

### **IV. WE ALSO BOAST IN TRIBULATIONS (v3-4)**

1. We do not simply stoically endure suffering.
2. Nor do we boast in spite of suffering

Paul's claim is that we boast in suffering.

**Matt. 5:10-12** *'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. Blessed are you when men revile you, persecute you, say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be glad for great is your reward in heaven.'*

**Acts 5:41** *'They departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.'*

**2 Cor. 4:17** *'I will rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions and distresses for Christ's sake...'*

What we know.

We are not called to suffer in ignorance. We can celebrate because we know that tribulation produces perseverance, which produces character and hope.

Paul is not teaching a kind of masochism. We are not called upon to be mindless 'happy clappies'.

**James 1:2**      *'Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.'*

God's justifying work makes us vindicated in a moment. Trials produce character and godliness if we receive them well.

## **V. THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S LOVE IN OUR HEARTS (v5)**

**v5**      *'Hope does not disappoint us because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.'*

This hope will not 'put us to shame'. It is reminiscent of the Old Testament passages that affirm that those who hope in God will not be 'put to shame' (see Psalm 25:3, Isaiah 28:16 etc).

Christians are confident they will not be put to shame because of our inner subjective certainty that God does love us.

This is the first mention in Romans of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

**John Stott**      *"Under the vivid metaphor of a cloudburst on a parched countryside" (Dunn), what the Holy Spirit does is make us deeply and refreshingly aware that God loves us.'*

**Douglas Moo**      *'The verb "pour out" connotes an abundant, "extravagant", effusion.'*

## **VI. THE OUTWARD DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S LOVE (v6-8)**

Paul now traces the love we experience in our hearts to its source by substantiating its utter dependability.

While we were helpless (v6), sinners (v8) and enemies (v10) God demonstrated His own love for us in that Christ died for us. 'His own' puts the emphasis on the love of the Father (cf 1 John 4:10).

**Douglas Moo**      *'Paul accentuates the unity of the argument in verses 6-8 by ending each sentence (in the Greek text) with the verb "die".'*



**John Stott** *'The unique majesty of God's love lies in the combination of three factors, namely that when Christ died for us, God (a) was giving Himself, (b) even to the horrors of a sin-bearing death on the cross, and (c) doing this for His undeserving enemies.'*

**2 Corinthians 5:19** *'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.'*

## **VII. FUTURE SALVATION FROM THE WRATH TO COME**

**v9-10** *'We not only enjoy God's acquittal, justification in the present but also the certainty of deliverance from wrath in the final judgment.'*

**v10** *'If having been enemies we are now reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled we shall be saved by His life.'*

**Charles Hodge** *'If while we were enemies we were restored to the favour of God by the death of His Son, the fact that He lives will certainly secure our final salvation.'*

**v10** *Saved by His life – NASB and AV  
Saved through His life – NIV  
The actual word is 'in' – Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones, 'Before we were outside of his life, outside his love as it were – enemies. Now, we are in the life of Christ; and therefore our position is absolutely certain and secure.'*

## **VIII. WE ALSO BOAST IN GOD (v11)**

**John Stott** *'We should be the most positive people in the world. For the new community of Jesus Christ is characterised not by a self-centred triumphalism but a God-centred worship.'*

# EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

Disk 3

## AN EXODUS FROM SLAVERY ROMANS 6:1-18

### INTRODUCTION

Paul's free offer of salvation by grace through faith, which provides a perfect righteousness as a gift. Creates challenging questions.

1. Shall we carry on sinning then?
2. What about the place of the law?

In this study we shall see that we have not only been provided with righteousness as a gift but also an exodus which delivers us from our former slavery.

### I. SHALL WE CARRY ON SINNING? (v1-2)

**WH Auden** *'I like committing crimes. God likes forgiving them. Really the world is admirably arranged.'*

In reality, one rarely finds Christians asking Paul's question, but a similar question often arises, namely 'Now that I am accepted by God as righteous, how can I also know freedom from the power and enslavement of sin?'

I am reminded of Israel's experience at the time of the Passover, namely that the blood of a lamb resulted in God granting them mercy and acceptance, but their actual condition as they approached the Red Sea was that they were still in captivity with their former masters bearing down upon them.

How could they really be free? Was there any way through?

Paul's answer starts with things we need to know.

First, he gives his firm answer

- 'May it never be!' – NAS
- 'By no means!' – NIV
- 'God forbid!' – AV
- 'What a ghastly thought!' – JB Phillips

How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

'We died to sin' – an action, not a state.

## II. DO YOU NOT KNOW?

Jesus said, 'You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free.'

Knowing truth is fundamental to Christian salvation.

Knowing something that

- (i) has happened already in the past
- (ii) has happened to 'all of us' (not an elite group)

**v4** *'We have been buried with Him through baptism into death.'*

**v6** *'Our old self was crucified with Him.'*

**v7** *'He who has died is freed from sin.'*

- (a) Not our death to sin experience
- (b) Not something we are trying to feel or accomplish
- (c) Not something that is going to happen to us
- (d) Not something that ought to happen to us

It has already happened!

This is something we need to KNOW because God says it's true.

## III. WE NEED TO CONSIDER, RECKON OR ACCOUNT IT TO BE TRUE BECAUSE GOD SAYS IT IS TRUE

**v11** *Consider – 'even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus'*

- (i) *Notice that this is the first exhortation in the whole epistle. Paul had laid a foundation in doctrinal truth regarding what God has done for us.*

Not 'mind over matter' but lining up with God's truth.

- (ii) *'Consider' or 'count' – Leon Morris 'A favourite Pauline word; it conveys the idea of reckoning or calculating.'*

**Douglas Moo** *'The object of the imperative is that we should take this death into account, take it seriously, and thus make the gift a gift in which we participate.'*

- (iii) Present tense – a continuing process.

## IV. RESPONSIBLE ACTION

v12 *'Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts.'*

Now we need to act responsibly (not simply 'let go and let God').

Our 'mortal' body has not yet been saved.

See: Romans 8:23  
Philippians 3:21  
2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Formerly sin was expressed through members of our bodies. These were the instruments that sin used.

Our old self was crucified with Him (v6) and he who has died is free from sin (v7).

- so my mortal body becomes a target for sin

Sin has not been eradicated from my body. I must take responsibility for it.

v13 *'Do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourself to God as those alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.'*

v14 *'Sin shall not be master over you.'*

**Douglas Moo** *'The paragraph that began with the question "Should we remain in sin in order that grace may increase?" ends with the glad tidings that we are under grace in order that sin may be overcome.'*

## V. SLAVES TO A NEW MASTER

Former slaves of sin (v17) have now 'been freed from sin' and have entered into a new slavery to righteousness (v18).

This is a statement of fact, not an exhortation.

# EXCERPTS FROM ROMANS

Disk 4

## THE ESSENCE OF GRACE ROMANS :1-13

### INTRODUCTION

Paul's proclamation of the gospel provides a righteousness based on faith and apart from the law. Such a message provoked at least two questions, namely:

1. What about the matter of sin? (dealt with in Romans 6)
2. What about the place of the law? Romans 7 answers this important question.

**John Stott** *'He is not answering questions put to him in a Christian holiness convention, but rather struggling with the place of the law in God's purpose.'*

**Douglas Moo** *'Despite its divine origin, the law can neither justify nor sanctify...Paul argues that a person's bondage to the law must be severed in order that he or she may be put into a new relationship with Christ.'*

### I. PAUL'S IMAGERY OF MARRIAGE

The law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives.

As a woman is bound to her husband for life, so we are bound to the law.

- (a) The law is a demanding husband.
- (b) The law is an authoritative husband.
- (c) The law is a husband who offers no help.
- (d) The law is a husband who cannot be argued with – he is always right!
- (e) The law is a husband who will never pass away!

This marriage is binding and no other relationship is possible for that would be adultery.

### II. PAUL'S AMAZING REVERSAL

Having referred in verse 2 to the possibility of the husband dying, Paul surprisingly changes the image by showing that it is the wife who dies.

'You also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ' (v4).

What does 'through the body of Christ' mean?

Our union with Christ is the key to our salvation and sanctification. For Paul, his favourite description of the Christian is one who is 'in Christ'.

What happened to Christ is accredited to our account.

Christ took the full punishment of the law. Indeed He fulfilled the law in two ways.

- He perfectly obeyed its requirements
- He took its full curse hanging on the tree in our place

**Galatians 2:19-20 (JB Philipps)** *'For under the law I "died", and now I am dead to the law's demands so that I may live for God. As far as the law is concerned I may consider that I died on the cross with Christ...'*

It is important to establish that the law (our husband) does not die but that we, in Christ, have died!

**v6** *'We have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were bound.'*

Our death has released or discharged us from the power and authority of the law.

**1 Tim. 1:8-9** *'But we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realising the fact that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners...'*

**Rom. 10:4** *'For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.'*

### III. JOINED TO ANOTHER (v4)

Our discharge from our former husband – the law – does not leave us in a spiritual vacuum.

Another marriage is in view. We are to be 'joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God' (Rom. 7:4).

This further marriage is God's ultimate objective.

**Gal. 3:24** *'The law has become our tutor (child conductor) to lead us to Christ...'*

Now the law's temporary function is fulfilled. God's great purpose is the marriage of Christ to His bride.

## IV. AN IMPOTENT HUSBAND REPLACED BY A LIFE-IMPARTING ONE

Romans 7:4 tells us that the goal in our being joined to another, namely to Him who was raised from the dead, is that we might bear fruit for God.

Our former husband did not cause us to bear fruit.

**Gal. 3:21**        *'If a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.'*

The mere knowledge of law does not result in a fruitful life.

Our former husband was impotent; he imparted no life. Our new husband is a life-imparting husband who causes us to be fruitful.

**John 15:5**        *'...he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit...'*

## V. PAUL VINDICATES THE LAW

**v7**        *What shall we say then? Is the law sin?*

Paul has painted such a picture of the law that he has raised questions about its integrity and usefulness. Now he demonstrates the usefulness and purity of the law and shows its purpose:-

- (1) The law defines sin - I would not have come to know sin except through the law; for I would not have known about coveting if the law had not said, "You shall not covet" (Rom. 7:7).

The law provides an objective standard.

**Rom. 3:20**        *'...through the law comes the knowledge of sin'*

- (2) The law provokes sin.

**v8**        *'But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the law sin is dead and I was once alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came sin became alive and I died.'*

Man in his rebellion is provoked by law.  
God's commandment resulted in death instead of life.

- (3) The law demonstrates my condition to be utterly sinful.

When God sends His 'holy and righteous and good' law to us it demonstrates how sinful we really are.

## VI. CONCLUSION

We are no longer under law but under grace. Law has done its job. It has brought clear awareness of our failure and led us to Christ. Christ provides forgiveness, justification and freedom. Marriage to Him is a life-imparting relationship.

Rom. 8:3 'For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.'

## VII. APPLICATION

We must cultivate lives free from the condemnation and guilt associated with being married to the law. We must develop our exclusive love relationship with our new life-imparting husband.

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