The Letter of Paul to the ROMANS

Although, because of its length, it is the first in the letters of the New Testament, Romans was probably the latest of Paul's undisputed letters to be written (see "Letters/Epistles in the New Testament," p. 240 n7). Romans also contains the longest and most complex sustained argument in any of Paul's letters even though it is addressed to Christians he has never met (1:13). For these reasons the letter, especially chs 1–8, has often been read as Paul's theological "last will and testament," a reflection on and a summary of the gospel of salvation in Christ. It was also intended to persuade the Christians of Rome to support Paul's intended mission to Spain (15:23–24).

Paul had more in view than creating a base for future missionary endeavors. He meant to proclaim to the Christians of Rome the gospel, "the power of God for salvation" (1:15–16; 15:18–19), and by so doing strengthen and encourage them (1:11–12). Romans is, like Paul's other letters, an instrument of moral instruction and exhortation (see 15:14–15).

The letter was occasioned in part by circumstances in Rome during the reign of the emperor Nero (54–68 ce). Among those to whom Paul sends greetings in ch 16 are Priscus and Aquila, known from Acts 18.2 as among the Jews expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius around 49 ce. Their presence in Rome at the time Paul writes may reflect Nero's suspension of that edict (Suetonius, Life of Claudius 25.3). The recent return of Jews to the imperial capital, including Jewish Christians like Priscus and Aquila, who had been driven out and probably lost property and community ties during their exile, may have aroused tensions within Christian house groups in which Gentile believers had become predominant.

Paul's appeal to Gentile Christians in Rome not to "boast" over Jews (11:13–36) comes at the end of chs 9–11, the climax of the letter. Paul's argument responds to an incipient anti-Judaism, which was already rife among Roman aristocrats and was beginning to emerge in non-Jewish Christian circles as well. Given the horrors of an anti-Jewish pogrom in Alexandria (38–41 ce), and even more recent tax riots that had turned deadly in Puteoli, a city south of Rome, Paul was concerned to prevent in Rome the sort of civic disturbance in which the city's minority Jewish population would be especially vulnerable. This is one explanation for the notorious exhortation to "be subject to the governing authorities" (13.1–7n.). Similarly, Paul's admonitions regarding the "weak in faith," concerned with the observance of diet and special days (14.1–15.13), address tensions between Jewish Christians, who retained their Jewish traditions, and Gentile Christians, who did not.

The theme of God's "righteousness" (1.17) or "justice" (3.5) resonates throughout the letter. At stake is God's faithfulness in the face of human faithlessness, as the rhetorical questions that punctuate the letter show (2.3–4.21–23; 3.3–5, 5.7, 9, 27, 28; 4.1; 5.1–3, 15–16; 7.7, 13; 9.14, 19, 30; 11.1, 11). God's righteousness is manifest in the uncompromising judgment of all impiety and wickedness, and also in unwavering loyalty to the covenant with Israel. Paul wants the Christians of Rome to confront God's integrity in the salvation offered them through the faithful obedience of Jesus (5.6, 18–19; see 3.22, 26n.).

Paul is Christ's apostle, obligated to "bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles," among whom he includes his Roman audience (1.1–6). He declares the gospel of God's salvation to all who believe, Jews and Greeks alike, but "to the Jew first" (1.16). The priority of the Jews in God's plan of salvation is an important theme in the letter (3.1–2; 9.1–4). Paul's mission to Gentiles should provoke his fellow Jews to jealousy (11.13–14), perhaps by convincing them that the last days prophesied by Isaiah were at hand (see 15.12). At last, Paul declares, "all Israel will be saved" (11.26), and all the nations will join Israel in the worship of the one true God (15.7–13).

As he writes, the apostle is about to present to the church in Jerusalem both monetary aid from churches in his mission field (15.25–27) and an embassy of converts from paganism (1 Cor 16.3–4; on the eventual catastrophe of this mission, see Acts 21.27–30). Although the Roman Christians have not had the opportunity to contribute to this collection in tangible ways, Paul asks for their prayers (15.30–32). He also writes to safeguard the sanctity of the "offering of the Gentiles" (15.15–16) by exhorting the Christians of Rome to holy living (12.1–3; 15.7–9). Non-Jewish Christians make sacrificial offering to God by the holiness of their lives.

The theological convictions expressed in the Letter to the Romans resemble those in letters to congregations Paul himself had founded. By virtue of their baptism into Christ, Christians must no longer let sin have dominion over them (6.1–14). They are no longer to live as the unbelieving world does (1.18–32), but to give "spiritual worship" to God through sobriety of thought and bodily purity (12.1–3). Just so Paul had reminded the Corinthians, Galatians, and Thessalonians that they must no longer live as "the Gentiles who do not know God," having been sanctified by Christ (1 Cor 6.9–11; Gal 5.22–24; 1 Thess 4.1–5). Universal accountability before God, Paul's theme throughout the early chapters of the letter, is more specifically applied in chs 12–16. Rather than being a treatise on Christian salvation, Romans is a sustained appeal for holy living, directed to Gentile Christians tempted to look down on their beleaguered Jewish neighbors, within the Christian congregations and without. The apostle's call to realize in common life the justice of God which the Christian congregation celebrates is the letter's enduring legacy.

1 Paul, a servant* of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, 3the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit5 of holiness by resurrection from the dead, 6 Jesus Christ our Lord, 7through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, 8 including Gentiles whom he called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is so firmly planted, a Gk slave  b Or Spirit
proclaimed throughout the world. For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, asking that by God’s will I might somehow at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I am longing to see you so that you may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine. 12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as I have among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish—hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.” 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those by whom their wickedness suppresses the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 Even since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse; 21 for though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools; 23 and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human, birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degradation of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error. 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. 29 They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, 30 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 They know God’s decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die—yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them.

2 Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. 2 You say, “We know that God’s judgment on those who do such things is in accordance with truth.” 3 Do you imagine, whoever you are, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the richness of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? 4 But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God’s unrighteousness of the pagan world to idolatry. A more ironic tone is attributed to Paul in Acts 17.22-24, 26-27. Impunity, disorder thinking and behavior, to be left behind in baptism (6.6-14; 12.1). 24-25: God gave them up, in a spiral of depravity, injustice leads mortals to suppress their awareness of truth and run from God (vv. 18-23); God abandons them to increasing wickedness (vv. 24-32). The Creator, who is blessed forever, supports the theme of the God (6.17; 7.25; 9.11-33; 16.25-27). 26-27: Degrading passions, while Torah forbids a male “lying with a male as with a woman” (Lev 18.22), Paul’s Jewish contemporaries criticized a range of sexual behaviors common in the pagan world. Although widely read today as a reference to homosexuality, the language of unnatural intercourse was more often used in Paul’s day to denote not the orientation of sexual desire, but its immediate indecency, which was believed to weaken the body (the due penalty). 28-31: The spiraling descent into wickedness reaches its nadir in these vices, presented here in list form as elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g., Gal 5.19-21; 1 Tim 1.9-10; 1 Pet 4.3) and in Greek and Roman literature. Full of envy, murder, strife, the notorious perversity and brutality of emperors like Gaius (Caligula), or Paul’s contemporary, Nero, come readily to mind. 32: They know God’s decree, they cannot plead ignorance as an excuse (see 1.20).

2.1-16: All are accountable before God for their works. 1: Paul attacks as hypocrisy the presumption that God will have mercy on some by exempting them from punishment (2.4). 2: You say, added to express some interpretation of this passage as a "judgment" for the "Jew" who judges the pagans indicted in 1.18-32. Jews are not clearly addressed before 2.17. Here, any are condemned who know that God's judgment is in accordance with truth, yet do the very same things they condemn in others (2.1,3). 4: Do you despise ... kindness, the question is rhetorical. Paul warns Christians not to presume God's grace in 6.15, 5: Day of wrath, the time of divine judgment (see Isa 2.12; 13.19,13; Lam 2.1; 1 Thess 1.10; etc.), understood in early Christian thought to be imminent and universal (e.g., 13.12; 2 Pet 3.10). God's punishment of sin coheres with God's righteousness (see 1.17-18). 6-11: Judgment according to one's
righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 For he will repay according to each one's deeds: 7 to those who by patient doing good seek glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 while for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be anguish and distress for everyone who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

12 All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. 14 When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. 15 They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

works: see 2 Cor. 11.15; Jas 2.14–26, where the Gk word “erga,” translated deeds here, is “works.” 9–10: The Jew is first in salvation (1.16; 3.1–2), therefore also in responsibility. Anguish and distress, eschatological woe (2 Cor. 4.8). 11: No partiality, Deut 10.17; 2 Chr 19.17. No discrimination compromises God’s justice. 12: Apart from the law, referring to Gentiles, just as under the law refers to Jews. 13: Hearsers and doers, Mt 7.21; Jas 1.22–25. Doers of the law . . . will be justified, see 3.20n. 14–15: Ancient Jews acknowledged righteous Gentiles who did “by nature” what the law requires, lit. “the work of the law.” For Paul, those who walk according to the spirit fulfill the law’s just requirement (8.4). 15: Their own conscience also bears witness, thus they acknowledge the validity of God’s law. A similar argument appears in 7.14–22.

2.17–29: Does being a Jew relieve one from accountability to God? Paul makes his point through imaginative conversation with a Jew (the diatribe style). 17: Although vv. 17–24 have often been read as an “indictment” of the Jews, Paul considers Israel’s privileges real (see 3.1–9; 9.1–4). Boast, Paul warns repeatedly against groundless boastings before God (see 2.23; 3.27; 4.5; 5.1–3; 11.17–20). 21–23: Will you not teach yourself? Paul interrogates an imaginary witness, whose testimony leads to the conclusions in vv. 25–29. Israel’s covenantal privileges do not lessen accountability before God. 22: Do you rob temples? While the Torah forbids idolatry, Jews in Paul’s day were careful not to dishonor pagan shrines (Philo, De Conf. Ling. 163; Josephus, Ap. Ap. 269; Ant. 4.207). 23: Do you dishonor God? A question in the earliest punctuated manuscript. 24: Isa 52.5; cf. Ezek 36.20. 25–29: These verses expand the principle that “all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law” (v. 12). 26: The requirements of the law, see v. 14; 8.1–4n. 29: Real circumcision . . . the heart, Deut 10.16; 30.6.8; Jer 4.4; 9.26; Ezek 44.5.

and physical. 29 Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—by its understanding and not literal. Such a person receives praise not from others but from God.

3 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much, in every way. For in the first place the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4 By no means! Although everyone is a liar, let God be proved true, as it is written, “So that you may be justified in your words, and prevail in your judging.” 5 But if our injustice serves to confirm the justice of God, what should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my falsehood God’s truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not say (as some people slander us by saying that we say), “Let us do evil so that good may come”? Their condemnation is deserved!

9 What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, 10 as it is written:

works: see 2 Cor. 11.15; Jas 2.14–26, where the Gk word “erga,” translated deeds here, is “works.” 9–10: The Jew is first in salvation (1.16; 3.1–2), therefore also in responsibility. Anguish and distress, eschatological woe (2 Cor. 4.8). 11: No partiality, Deut 10.17; 2 Chr 19.17. No discrimination compromises God’s justice. 12: Apart from the law, referring to Gentiles, just as under the law refers to Jews. 13: Hearsers and doers, Mt 7.21; Jas 1.22–25. Doers of the law . . . will be justified, see 3.20n. 14–15: Ancient Jews acknowledged righteous Gentiles who did “by nature” what the law requires, lit. “the work of the law.” For Paul, those who walk according to the spirit fulfill the law’s just requirement (8.4). 15: Their own conscience also bears witness, thus they acknowledge the validity of God’s law. A similar argument appears in 7.14–22.

3.1–9: God’s integrity in the covenant with Israel. 1: The advantage of the Jew is real (9.1–4), but does not provide immunity from God’s just judgment. 2: The faithlessness of some Jews does not alter God’s faithfulness to the covenant. 4: Ps 116.11; 51.4. 5: The justice of God (see 1.17n.) requires the judgment of injustice. 8: As some people slander us, it is not clear who is slandering whom, but in 6.11, similar language refers a possible misunderstanding of God’s grace in Christ. 9: Are we any better off? This translation echoes v. 2, yet reaches a different conclusion. The Gk may also be translated “Do we have a defense?”

3.10–20: The universality of God’s judgment. These quotations from the Hebrew Bible insist that no one may claim to satisfy God’s standards. 10: 12–13: Ps 14.1–2; 53.1–2. 13: Ps 5.9; 140.3. 14: Ps 10.7. 15–17: Prov 1.16; Isa 59.7–8. 18: Ps 36.1, 19: The law holds everyone accountable before God (cf. 2.13). The previous scriptures emphasize sins of false speech (cf. 1.18). 20: Ps 143.2. The lack of human righteousness is a theme in the Psalms and other Jewish writings (e.g., 1 Enoch 81.5; 1QH 8.20; 17.14–15). By deeds prescribed by the law, lit. “works of the law,” is Paul’s addition to the Psalms text (see 3.28n; Dan 9.18; 1QH 15.17). The “doers of the law” who “will be justified” (2.13) are not those who merely possess the law, but those who by God’s Spirit fulfill its “just requirement” (8.4), by “doing,” lit. working, “good” (2.7,10).
speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

7 "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; 8 blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not rebuke sin."

9 Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness." 10 How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, 12 and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.

13 For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

4:21-31: The revelation of God's justice. 21-22: Apart from the law, where no one might lay hold of the law as a defense from God's judgment. Disclosed, 1:17. The righteousness of God involves God's action in Christ to "justify" (make right) those who trust in God (see 6:1-23). 22: The alternate translation in note a, the faith of Jesus Christ, is increasingly preferred. It contrasts this phrase to identically structured phrases in 3:3 ("the faithfulness of God") and 4:16 ("the faith of... Abraham") and reflects the importance for Paul of Jesus' faithful obedience (3:19; Phil 2.8). 25-26: Paul emphasizes God's integrity and justice, now "revealed" (1:17), not in putting up with sin but in dealing with it decisively through the faith of Jesus (see note c). Sacrifice of atonement, 4:15. 17-18. The translation in note b (see Ex 25:17-22) is less likely. Divine forbearance, God has patiently withheld wrath, not to indulge sin but to lead sinners to repentance (2:4). 27: Boasting is excluded by the law of faith, i.e., by the law rightly understood as eliciting trust in God's saving power (see 2:17; 4.5; 11.18.; Deut 9.4-6; Dan 9.18). 28: We hold, Paul's language resembles recently published Dead Sea Scroll fragments listing "work's of the law" that will be "reckoned as righteousness" for those who perform them (4Q597, 398). Paul's point is that one is justified by faith, meaning either one's faithful obedience to God (1:3-5,16), God's faithfulness (as in 3,3), or Jesus' faithfulness (see 2:26). 29-31: God is one (see Deut 6.4), judging Jew and Gentile alike on the basis of faith, i.e., faithful obedience (2:13-16), which will indeed uphold the law (7.7,12-16).

4.1-25: Abraham as a test case. Was Abraham reckoned righteous before God on any other basis than faithfulness? 1: Abraham... the flesh, this translation implies Paul refers only to Jews. The GK may also be translated "What shall we say? Have we found Abraham to be our ancestor according to the flesh?" which leads to the negative answer in 4:11-12,16 (cf. 9:6-9). 2-5: Paul finds in Gen 15.6 proof that righteousness was reckoned to Abraham as a gift, not as wages paid as something due (6.23). God is free from any obligation to mortals (see 4.16). 5: God justifies the ungodly, Paul shares his contemporaries' view that God had called Abraham out of idolatry (see Gen 12.1-4; 13.17; 19-14,23-27). Abraham's justification stands in contrast with the "ungodliness" of the pagan world (1.18) and provides the prototype for God's justification of the ungodly through Christ's death (5.6). 6-8: Paul quotes Ps 32.1-2 (Gk) to bring in the theme of blessedness (Gen 12.2-3; Gal 3.8). 9-12: Abraham was justified (Gen 15.6) before he was circumcised (Gen 17.24), on account of his faith, therefore he could be ancestor of both circumcised (Gen 12.2; 15.13-14) and uncircumcised (Gen 17.8; see v. 17). 12: The faith that... Abraham had, his faithful trust in God (vv. 5,17). 13-15: God's promise comes through the righteousness of faith, or "faithful righteousness," like that of Abraham (vv. 16,20), not through the law. 14: The adherents of the law, compare "heaters of the law" in 2.13. Faith is null and the promise is void, if God's blessing depended on the performance of those who possessed the law (3.3-4; 9.6-9). 15: The law brings wrath, Paul may have in mind the solemn curses pronounced on the disobedient in Deut 28. But where there is no law... violation, Abraham did not stand under the law when he responded to God's faith.

4.16-25: The example of Abraham's faith. 16: Not only... but also, Jews and Gentiles alike inherit God's promise as they share the faith of Abraham. 17: Gen 17.5. Abraham's faith in God's promise, despite his own "dead" body (v. 19) is an example for all those who trust God who raised Jesus... from the dead (v. 24). God's power to call into existence the things that do not exist is a key theme (v. 24; 6.4-5,9-11; 8.11; 9.23-26; 11.5). Contrast Abraham's faith with those who refuse to acknowledge God through creation (1.20-22). 18: Gen 15.5. Hoping against hope, see 8.24-25. 20-21: God's ability to do what he had promised is at stake throughout Romans, especially regarding Israel (3.3-4; 9.6). Gave glory to God, again Abraham is contrasted with the ungodly of 1.21-24; see 15.9-12. 22-23: Gen 15.6.

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was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have received access by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will be saved through him from the wrath of God.

10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all because all sinned—

13 since sin was in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned to be sin when there is no law—

14 yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. But the law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? But by no means! How can we who have died to sin live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, once for all defeated the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Therefore, no longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you were to submit your members to sin, they would be slaves of sin, but if you submit yourselves to God, you will be slaves of righteousness.

20 The giving of the law is a minor episode, serving only to document sin's domination through the increase of trespasses (7.7–11). The law could not bring that domination to an end; God's powerful grace could (8.1–4; Damascus Document A.3.1–12).

6.13–14,23–24. 20: The giving of the law is a minor episode, serving only to document sin's domination through the increase of trespasses (7.7–11). The law could not bring that domination to an end; God's powerful grace could (8.1–4; Damascus Document A.3.1–12).

6.1–3: Life in Christ requires obedience. 1: Compare other leading questions in 4.1; 6.13.21; 7.7,13. Should we continue in sin? (see v. 2; 3.8n.). Only if grace were simply a matter of being relieved of the punishment for trespasses. But it is much more (5.12–21). 2–6: Baptism is a dying with Christ (v. 6; 7.6; Gal 2.19) to the power of sin, making that we will also live with him (v. 8). Contrast Eph 2.5–6; Col 2.12–13, where Christians are said already to be raised with Christ. 7–11: Whoever has died, whether Christ, through his own death (v. 10), or Christians, by baptism (v. 14); see 7.1–6; 9–10: The lethal collusion of sin and death are evident (see 5.12–14.21). The Gk word translated lord (see vv. 16–17n.). 12–13: Instruments of wickedness... of righteousness, lit. "weapons of righteousness." "Justice," through marital imagery Paul calls Christians not to surrender themselves as sin's prisoners of war. 14–15: If grace provided immunity from the law's verdict, then we might well "continue in sin" (see v. 11). 16–20: An analogy from slavery. Since war captives were often enslaved, these verses may continue the imagery of vv. 13–14. 16–17: Slaves... obedient, human existence is inevitably some form of slavery. Note that Paul refers here from describing God as Lord, lit. "master." 17: Obedient from the heart, not in slavish obedience but with genuine intention (12.1–2).
present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 18 I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

20 When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7 Do you not know, brothers and sisters—the ones who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only during that person’s lifetime? 2 Those married are bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man, she is not an adulteress.

4 In the same way, my friends, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5 While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

7 What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced sin by arousing in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. 9 Once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

10 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. 11 For I delight in the law of God in my inner self, 12 but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 13 Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 14 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For God has done what the law could not do, weakening the flesh, that the grace of God, who does what the law could not do, might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 4 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. 5 But those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 But whatever is of the flesh, that is hostile to the Spirit, and whatever is of the Spirit, that is hostile to the flesh. 7 So a law which is spiritual is hostile to the flesh, and one which is physical is hostile to the spirit—such hostility always exists.

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on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit" set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 8 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 9 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 10 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

11 So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 12 for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 13 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 14 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 15 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 16 Let us not become lazy in doing what is right, for the time is near. 17 Those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit think about the things of the Spirit. 18 Those who think about the things of the flesh cannot please God, 19 whereas those who think about the things of the Spirit cannot be displeased with him. 20 For the Spirit does not make us ashamed, for God is the Spirit who gives life through Jesus Christ our Lord. 21 But if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 22 Let us not become lazy in doing what is right, for the time is near. 23 Those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit think about the things of the Spirit. 24 Those who think about the things of the flesh cannot please God, whereas those who think about the things of the Spirit cannot be displeased with him.

12:25-27 For we do not see with our own eyes, we do not hear with our own ears, we do not taste with our own tongue, we do not smell with our own nose, we do not feel with our own body, we do not see with our own spirit, for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. 13 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 14 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

26 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 27 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 28 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 2 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 3 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 4 Who is the one to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God.

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit— 21 have great sorrow and
unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh.

4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

5 It is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel, and not all of Abraham’s children are his true descendants; but “it is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you.” So this means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants. For this is what the promise said, “About this time I will return and Sarah shall have a son.”

8 But not all; something similar happened to Rebecca when she had conceived children by one husband, our ancestor Isaac. Even before they had been born or had done anything good or bad (so that God’s purpose of election might continue, not by works but by his call) she was told, “The elder shall serve the younger.”

13 As it is written, “I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau.”

14 What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! For he says to Moses,

“15 I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

16 So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, “I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.” So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.

19 You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, “Why have you made me like this?” Has the potter no right over the clay to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—

including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call my people, and her who was not beloved I will call beloved.”

26 “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they shall be called children of the living God.”

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved; 28 for the Lord will execute his sentence on the earth quickly and decisively.”

29 And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts has not left survivors to us, we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah, whom God has shown patience, as in 2:4–5; 3:25–26. Morts may not presume God’s judgment on others, to vindicate or to condemn (see 8:1; 11:30–32; 14:3–4,10–13). 25–26: Hosea spoke of the redemption of Israel (Hos 2:23, 1:10). Paul applies the passage to those God has called, Jews and Gentiles alike (v. 4); 27–29: God’s preservation of a remnant in Israel (Isa 10:22, 19) shows God’s faithfulness (see 11:1–6). The word only does not appear in Gk. 9:30–11:12: What went wrong? Paul addresses the surprising circumstances of Israel and the Gentiles. 9:30–33: A fixed frame. The Greek diōkein ("drive for") can mean "chase after" as in a race. The Gentiles’ success and Israel’s failure to reach the goal or finish line have nothing to do with effort. Israel stumbled over the stumbling stone, tripped up, as it were, by God (v. 33; 11:7–8). 32: Israel approached the law on the basis of works (3:20,27). Paul speaks here (and in 10:3) not of the desire to obey the law, but of the danger of boasting in one’s own righteousness (Deut 8:17, 9:4–5). 33: Isa 8:14–15; 28:16. Other early Christians interpreted these verses in relation to Christ (1 Pet 2:6, 8; Rom 11:1). For Paul, the stone laid in Zion may be the law itself. 10:1–3: See 9:1–5; 3: In Paul’s view, Israel was wearied in failing to submit to God’s righteousness, i.e., the righteousness offered through the “faith of Jesus Christ” (see 3:21, 4: The end of the law almost certainly means its goal, not its termination (3:31; 7:12,16,22, 9:30–32). 5–13: Using a common Jewish technique, Paul interprets one passage of scripture (Lev 18:5)
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by them." 6But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down) 7or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say?

"The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For one believes with the heart and is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and is saved. 11The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." 14But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim them? 15And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" 16But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

18But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

19Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry." 20Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." 21But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I a Or namely, that b Or gospel c Or about Christ; other ancient authorities read of God alone am left, and they are seeking my life." 4But what is the divine reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8 as it is written, "God gave them a sluggish spirit, eyes that would not see, and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."

9And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; 10let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and keep their backs forever bent." 11So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. 12Now if their stumbling means riches for the world, and if their defeat means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the

end of God (9.18). 8: Isa 29.10. 9: Ps 69.22–23. 11–12: Previous rhetorical questions concerned God's righteousness or faithfulness (3.3.29; 9.14.19); now Paul asks about God's faithfulness to the covenant with Israel. The obedience of the Gentiles will make Israel jealous (see 10.19–20). Their full inclusion, see vv. 15.26.

11.13–36: A warning to the Gentile Christians of Rome. The climax ofchs 9–11, these verses reveal the heart of the letter's purpose. Paul is obliged as apostle to the Gentiles to address the Christians of Rome (see 1.1–3), and to pronounce the solemn warning that follows (see 15.14–16). 13: I glorify my ministry. 15.18–21. 14: To make my own people jealous, and thus, probably, to elicit their acceptance of the Christ (10.1–14). 15: Life from the dead (v. 23). 16: The remnant preserved by God (see 9.25–29; 11.1–5), like a portion of dough offered in worship (Num 15.18–21) or the root of a tree (Jer 11.16–17), guarantees God's continuing care for the whole of Israel.

11.17–24: The metaphor of the olive tree. The tree, root and branches, is Israel (Jer 11.16; Hos 14.6); the wild olive shoot (v. 17) represents the Gentiles who believe in Christ. 17: Broken off; the passive voice here and in vv. 19–20 reflects divine action (see v. 21). 18: The ingrafting, "contrary to nature" (v. 24), of a wild olive shoot would give life to the shoot, but would not benefit the root. Do not boast, the tone of warning earlier (1.27–28) reaches its target here. 19–21: Paul conceals the Gentile-Christian perception that branches were broken off, but warns against pride (see 12.3). 22: The kindness...severity, 2.4–10.
also will be cut off. 22 And even those of Israel; if they do not persist in unbelief, will be gathered in, for God has the power to graft them in again. 23 For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

24 So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. 25 And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, “Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.”

26 "And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

27 As regards the gospel they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; 28 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 29 Just as you were once disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 30 so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

31 For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

32 O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

33 "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"

34 "Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?"

35 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

11 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to a Gk lacks of Israel b Gk brothers c Gk lacks of God d Other ancient authorities lack now e Or reasonable f Gk age g Or what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God

24: If ingrafting a wild olive tree is unusual, restoring branches that have been broken off is nothing less than miraculous (11.15; 26; 4.17.), Natural branches, deriving from the stock of Israel (9.6.).

11.25–36: The Hardening of the Israel. A warning against Gentile-Christian arrogance, the heart of the letter. (see 2.1–4; 3.27; 12.3). 25: I want you to understand, such solemn disclosures indicate Paul's concern in his letters (1 Cor 10:1–6; 12.1; 2 Cor 1:8; 1 Thess 1.4.): This mystery, a truth revealed by God (Dan 2.18–30.47; 1 Cor 2.7; 13.2; 14.2.): A hardening, vv. 7–8; 9.18. This hardening is temporary, until the full number of the Gentiles, those destined to trust in God, has come in. 26: Isa 59.20–21; 27.8; All Israel, in view already in 11.6.33. Saved, delivered from ungodliness and forgiven their "sins." 28–32: God's mysterious course of action fulfills the election of Israel (3.2; 9.6; 11.1) and precludes the possibility of human boasting (v. 32; 3.9–30). 34: Isa 40.13. 35: Job 35.7; 41.11. 36: A doxology, as at 1.25; 9.5; 16.25–27.

12.1–15.13: Exhortation to holy living. On the basis of the argument in the previous chapters, Paul now exhorts the Corinthians to Rome to right conduct. 12.1: Holy living is spiritual worship (15.15–16), the opposite side of "ungodliness" (1.21–28), made possible through baptism (6.12–23). Paul makes his "appeal" (the Gk phrase marks exhortations in his letters: 1 Cor 1.10; 2 Cor 10.1; 1 Thess 4.1; Phil 4.9) on the basis of the mercies of God (11.22–33.30–32) and the grace "given to him as apostle" (v. 3.5; 15.15). 2: Christians are to live no longer as belonging to this world (Gal 1.4; Phil 2.15; 1 Cor 7.29–31). The renewing of minds, possible because of baptism (6.4), enables discerning the will of God (see Phil 1.9; 3.8–9). 3–8: A warning against arrogance. 3: I say, direct speech echoes 11.11,11.13. Not to think more highly, similar Gk phrases are translated "do not become proud" in 11.20, and "do not be haughty" everyone among you not to think of yourself too highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7 ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8 the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the one who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; 10 love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not lay in wait, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; 17 do not claim to be wiser than you are. 18 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 19 If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 20 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 21 No, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 22 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

13 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; 4 for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what...
Romans 13:5-14:10

is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does bear the sword in vain. It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. 5Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. 6For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. 7Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves others has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to awake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to its gratification.

see v. 3) and conscience. 6-7: Taxes, the Roman tribute (as in Mt 22:21; Mk 12:17; Lk 20:25), from which Roman citizens were exempt. Revenue, commercial taxes. Respect, lit. “fear;” the same word is translated “terror” in v. 3. The one to whom respect, or fear, is due may be God alone (1 Pet 2:17).

13:8-14: Exhortations. 8-10: Love fulfills the law. 2:14; 8:4; 12:9; Mt 22:39-40; Mk 12:31; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8; 1 Jn 4:11. 9: Ex 20:13-17; Deut 5:17-21; Lev 19:18. 11-14: Imminent salvation, i.e., the return of Christ, makes it urgent to wake to holy and honorable living (1 Thess 5:3; 1 Thess 5:3-11; Heb 5:8-18). 14: Put on the Lord Jesus, an early Christian metaphor for baptism (Gal 3:27).

14:1-15:13. Exhortations regarding those who observe the Sabbath. 1:1-12: Tolerance for others’ observance. 1-2: Those who eat only vegetables are most likely keeping kosher by avoiding “unclean” meat (v. 14), or meat “sacrificed to idols” (Acts 15:29; 1 Cor 8:1; Dan 1:3-16; Esth 3:28; 14:1; Jdt 12:1-2). Paul calls them weak in faith (or “conviction”), not because they adhere to the Torah (see vv. 46; 7:12), but because they are scandalized by Gentile Christians who eat non-kosher food (vv. 13,15,20). 4: The Lord is able, 11:23. 5-9: Jews and Gentiles can, each in their own way, live in honor of the Lord. 11: Isa 45:23. 13-23: Freedom is not will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 14For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

12So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

13 Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another. 14Know and I am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that it is nothing unclean in itself; but it is unclean for a man who thinks it unclean. 15If your brother or sister is being injured by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died. 16So do not let your good be spoken of as evil. 17For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18The one who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and has human approval. 19Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. 20Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for you to make others fall by what you eat; 21it is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother or sister stumble. 22The faith that you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed are those who have no reason to condemn themselves because of what they approve. 23But those who have doubts are condemned if they eat, because they do not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

Romans 14:11-15:11

15 We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor. 3For Christ did not please himself but, as it is written, “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” 4For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that the Gentiles might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name;" and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; 11and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him;"
12 And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

14 I myself feel confident about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are all full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.

15 Nevertheless on some points I have written to you rather boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God, in order that when I come to you I may not be burdensome, but may find you to be as I see you in the Lord, ready and eager to share with me the gift I have brought from the Gentiles through the will of God.

16 For I do not want you to be unaware of this, brethren, that if there comes a judgment against anything, it is to prevent the destruction of the whole.

17 This is the reason why I am so anxious about you, brethren, for my life is worth nothing at all to you unless I continue to preach the gospel to you, which was committed to my trust by Christ Jesus our Lord.

18 For I do not want you to be unaware of this, brethren, that if there comes a judgment against anything, it is to prevent the destruction of the whole.

19 The gospel must first reach you; then, as it is a matter of course, it will also go to the Gentiles. For whoever speaks, does so as the Lord gives him the opportunity, and whoever works, does so as a servant of Christ.

20 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

21 Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but God who supplies the increase.

22 We are laborers together with God. It is you who are God’s planting, the field belonging to our Lord.

23 But we labor, we toil, we go through travail like childbirth until our child is born, because we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

24 For in righteousness he will judge the world, and he will pass judgment on all according to the truth of the gospel.

25 This includes all the works of God,” said Jesus, “from the beginning of the world.”

26 For the gospel must first reach you; then, as it is a matter of course, it will also go to the Gentiles. For whoever speaks, does so as the Lord gives him the opportunity, and whoever works, does so as a servant of Christ.

27 But we will not be ashamed. Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, to keep them from seeing the glory of the gospel of the incarnate God, who is the image of the glory of the eternal Father.

28 For we do not preach Christ from human wisdom, but from the power and wisdom of God.

29 Since it is written, “He has scattered the rulers of the people, and dislodged them from their seats.”

30 It is written also, “They took the testimony of God falsely.”

31 Therefore they could not believe because of their unbelief, that they might be made equal in a spiritual sense to the unbelievers in the Lord, who have never been told and have never heard the gospel, in order that neither they nor the Gentiles, who have not heard the gospel, should be justified.

32 For the good news of the righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ is preached to every nation, beginning from Jerusalem.

33 You are chosen by God, that you should inherit the kingdom, if you have not become his companions by the power of the Holy Spirit, and that you should live in the spirit of God and not in the spirit of the world.
ROMANS 16.22–16.27

22 I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.\textsuperscript{a}

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother. Quartus, greet you.\textsuperscript{b}

25 Now to God\textsuperscript{c} who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages\textsuperscript{d} but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings

\textsuperscript{a} Or I Tertius, writing this letter in the Lord, greet you. \textsuperscript{b} Other ancient authorities add verse 24. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen. \textsuperscript{c} Gk the one \textsuperscript{d} Other ancient authorities lack to whom. The verse then reads, to the only wise God be the glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. \textsuperscript{e} Other ancient authorities lack 16.25-27 or include it after 14.23 or 15.33; others put verse 24 after verse 27

Tertius wrote the letter as Paul dictated it; cf. 1 Pet 5.12. 23: Gaius, perhaps the same person mentioned in 1 Cor 1.14.

16.25–27: A concluding blessing, appearing in different ancient manuscripts after 14.23 or 15.33, or missing altogether. Many consider these verses an addendum by later scribes and editors. 25: My gospel, 2.16. The proclamation, the Gk “kerygma” is another word for “gospel”; see 1 Cor 1.21–24. 25–26: Mystery, 11.25–27. The obedience of faith, 1.5.

The First Letter of Paul to the CORINTHIANS

First Corinthians offers a fascinating window into the struggles of one Christian community at an early stage in the history of the movement that developed into Christianity. Paul’s attempts to persuade the Corinthians to see and do things his way reveals how difficult it was for people rooted in the Hellenistic culture of a large metropolis such as Corinth to assimilate Paul’s gospel of Christ and its implications for personal and community life as well as for their relations with the larger Roman imperial society.

The city of Corinth had been destroyed by the Romans in 146 BCE for leading the resistance to Roman incursion into Greece. It was rebuilt in 44 BCE as a colony to which the Roman patricians sent surplus population from Rome itself, such as recently freed slaves, displaced peasants, and army veterans. Corinth quickly developed into a busy hub of east-west trade in the empire and the center of Roman imperial culture in Greece. Except for Antioch in Syria, where Paul was based at the beginning of his mission to various peoples of the eastern Mediterranean, Corinth was the first major urban center to which Paul brought his mission. For eighteen months (Acts 18.11), with several coworkers such as Timothy and Silvanus, Priscus (Priscilla) and her husband Aquila, and Phoebe, leader of the community at nearby Cenchreae, he organized and taught in house-assemblies of Corinthians. Believers came together periodically as a “whole assembly” (church) to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. After Paul moved across the Aegean to work in the city of Ephesus, another missionary, Apollos, an eloquent Hellenistic Jew from Alexandria in Egypt, also taught in the community at Corinth.

First Corinthians was written in Ephesus (16.8) in the early 50s CE. Paul was responding both to a letter from the Corinthians (see 7.1; 8.1; 12.1) and to news he had received through “Chloe’s people” (1.11). The letter begins with the usual address, greeting, and opening thanksgiving (1.1–9) and ends with the standard closing exhortation, greetings, and grace (16.13–24). The body of the letter consists of a series of issues over which the Corinthian community was experiencing internal conflict: divisions within the community connected with the claims by some to possess a superior wisdom (1.10–4.21); how to deal with a man living with his stepmother (ch 5); on not taking disputes to the official courts (ch 6); on marriage and sexual relations (6.12–7.40); on eating food sacrificed to idols (8.1–11.1); on hair arrangement when prophesying (11.2–16); on procedure at celebration of the Lord’s Supper (11.17–34); on the use of spiritual gifts, particularly “tongues” (chs 12–14); on the resurrection of the dead (ch 15). The letter concludes with Paul’s arrangements for a collection to help the church in Jerusalem, and his travel plans (16.1–12).

Much of the language that Paul uses in dealing with issues in 1 Corinthians is very different from that in his other letters. That suggests that the opinions he confronts in 1 Corinthians were distinctive to the Corinthians among the various communities Paul founded (and perhaps had something to do with Apollos’s ministry in Corinth after Paul had gone to Ephesus). Indeed, it appears from the way Paul uses some of these distinctive terms that some of the Corinthians understood themselves as “spiritual” and “mature,” as opposed to merely “unspiritual” or “physical” and “infants” (2.6,14–15; 3.1; 15.44,46) and as “wise,” “powerful,” “of noble birth,” “rich,” and “kings,” as op-