

Freedom and Assurance of Glory (Romans 8)

Paul's Ecclesial Letters

Paul's letters:	Jesus Christ as:	In Jesus Christ we find:
Romans	Power (Rom 1:16,17)	Justification
1 Corinthians	Wisdom (1Cor 1:30,31)	Sanctification
2 Corinthians	Comfort (2Cor 1:3-5)	Consolation
Galatians	Righteousness (Gal 2:20,21)	Liberation
Ephesians	Riches (Eph 1:7; 2:7; 3:8)	Exaltation
Philippians	Sufficiency (Phil 1:20,21)	Satisfaction
Colossians	Fullness (Col 1:19,20)	Completion
1 Thessalonians	Promise (1Thes 1:9,10)	Transformation
2 Thessalonians	Victory (2Thes 1:6,7)	Salvation

An Overview of Romans

1. The failure of the Gentiles.
2. The failure of the Jews.
3. All men are under sin; however, God's righteousness is revealed in Christ.
4. Justification by faith, and not by the law.
5. Two representatives of mankind: Adam (death) and Christ (life).
6. Baptism: a new life, by which we become servants of righteousness.
7. The Law of Moses cannot give us life.
- 8. Sin is condemned in Christ, leading to:
sonship, freedom, glory, and the assurance of victory.**
9. Israel's lack of faith leads to the selection of the Gentiles.
10. Faith in God's Word brings salvation for both Jews and Gentiles.
11. Israel's future: a remnant will be saved.
12. The believer in society: a life of love and honesty.
13. The believer under authority: a life of hopeful submission.
14. The believer in the ecclesia: a life of kindness and forbearance.
15. Christ's example is our incentive to obedience.
16. Miscellaneous greetings and conclusion.

A Summary of Romans, by Chapter

1. Men may have a knowledge of God from general revelation and observation; thus all men are in some sense guilty because they have rejected God's offer.
2. The Jews are guilty of rejecting God's law as well, and thus are doubly guilty.
3. Since no man can be saved by his own righteousness, justification can only come by faith in the work of Jesus Christ.
4. The primary Old Testament example of this is Abraham, who was saved by faith.
5. Justification in Christ brings peace with God.
6. God's grace gives us no permission to sin, but it does give us a "resurrection" to a new life of righteousness.
7. Nevertheless, our rebirth and regeneration in Christ also introduces a struggle, within our own nature, against the power of sin.
8. ***Christ frees us from condemnation as sinners,
brings us into his Father's family,
works with us in our continuing struggle against sin, and
guarantees our final victory in the resurrection.***
9. Our security in Christ is based upon God's choice of us first, and only then upon our choice of Him.
10. God brings His elect people to Himself by means of the preaching of the gospel.
11. God has taken the gospel to the Gentiles now, but there will come a time when Israel will also be gathered back to Him.
12. Paul shifts from theological exposition to practical application. The appropriate response to such a great salvation is to present ourselves as living sacrifices and transformed people in the Body of Christ.
13. Believers should live in hopeful submission to the civil authorities.
14. Weak and strong believers need to live in harmony, understanding, helping and forgiving one another.
15. The apostle Paul hopes to visit Rome soon.
16. Paul sends greetings to the saints, and gives warnings against "wolves".

*It is not historical scholarship which is needed
for the understanding of Paul;
nor is it the insight of genius. It is despair.
Paul did not preach for scholars, nor even for philosophers;
he preached for sinners.
He had no gospel except the gospel designed for men
whose mouths were stopped, and who were standing condemned
at the judgment seat of God.*

*James Denney,
The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*

Romans 8 Study Notes

(1) We Are in Christ, and Christ is in Us (vv 1–11)

1–4. We are in Christ, and...

NIV	Notes and references
1. Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,	Condemn, condemnation: <i>katakrino, katakrima</i> : Not just to point out as sinful, but to pronounce judgment against, as a judge. Used of Adamic condemnation in Rom 5:16,18. See also Mark 16:16; John 8:10,11. In Christ Jesus: In contrast to "in Adam" (Rom 5:12).
2. because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.	Through Christ Jesus: Better, " <i>in</i> Christ Jesus", as though the man himself is a place of refuge and safety. More than this, the flesh (of Christ) is the <i>arena</i> where "Sin" is defeated, and also generally the <i>place</i> where Paul (in his flesh) was liberated from the "law of sin and death". Set me free: <i>eleutheria, eleutheroo</i> . To deliver, to set at liberty: Rom 6:18,22 (free from sin); John 8:32,36 (the truth, i.e., the Son, sets us free); Gal 5:1 (free from slavery to sin).
3. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man [sinful flesh] to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh,	Weakened: <i>astheneo, astheneia</i> . To be weak, feeble, ill: Rom 5:6 (powerless, without strength); Matt 8:17 (Christ bears our infirmities); 2Cor 12:5,9,10 (Paul's weaknesses). Son, sons: <i>huios</i> . Son (or daughter). Related also to <i>huiiothesis</i> (Rom 8:15,23, notes). We become sons/daughters/children of God through faith in Christ (Gal 3:26). "Sons (children) of God" make peace (Matt 5:9), love their enemies (Matt 5:44,45), and separate from what is unclean (2Cor 6:17,18). In the likeness of: Literally, "in the same form as", i.e., the same flesh or nature. No other reading makes sense: Jesus had to live and die as a real human, with all that involves, so that he might save other humans. To be a sin offering (NIV, RSV margin): "For sin" (KJV), or "concerning sin" (NET). This meaning -- as a sin <i>offering</i> -- suits the context perfectly. It was only by a sacrifice or offering that Christ can "set free" from sin (v 2) those who belong to him. [God] condemned sin: see v 1. "King Sin" is "condemned" (here) so that those "in Christ" will not be condemned (v 34). See "How Jesus Destroyed the Devil", page 13 of notes. In the flesh: This victory is meaningful for us only because Christ shared our same "flesh", i.e., the same nature as other humans. He fought and won the victory in the same "arena" (sinful flesh) where we all exist.
4. in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met [fulfilled] in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.	Righteous ("justified"); <i>dikaionoma</i> . The doing or being what is just and right. The sum total of all God commands and approves. The condition of being reckoned, or declared, righteous. Naturally speaking, no man is righteous (Rom 3:10), but many are made righteous by Christ's obedience (Rom 5:19) and their faith (v 1) in his blood (v 9). Justification, or making righteous, is a "Word of Salvation" (see notes, page 14). Fully met: <i>pleroo</i> : filled up, completed, fulfilled (KJV, NET). The righteous requirements: Christ's death fulfilled the Law of Moses, which righteously required a sacrifice as a covering for sin (Heb 9:22).

- In vv 1–4, Paul explains that "there is no condemnation" (vv 1–4) for those who are "in Christ".
- Then, in vv 5–11, Paul explains that those "in Christ" can remain "in him" only by actively keeping Christ "in themselves", that is, in their hearts and minds, and by never forgetting that he is there.

5-11. ...Christ is in us

NIV	Notes and references
5. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.	Mind, minds: <i>phroneo; phronema</i> . To think in a certain way, implying mental and moral reflection, not mere feeling or instinct. We should have the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5). Live in accordance with the Spirit: See lists in Gal 5:22-25 and 2Pet 1:5-8: "the fruit of the Spirit".
6. The mind of sinful man [to be carnally minded] is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;	Mind: Outlook, way of thinking, mindset: see v 5 (cp Phil 4:8; Col 3:2,3). Is: Leads to, or brings. <i>What do we think about?</i> Mind controlled by the Spirit: <i>How we think, day by day, causes us, over time, to develop our particular character.</i>
7. the sinful mind is hostile to [enmity against] God. It does not submit [is not subject] to God's law, nor can it do so.	Mind: see v 5. Hostile to God: <i>exthra</i> : at enmity (KJV), absolutely opposed to God. Suggests Gen 3:15: the enmity between the seed of the woman (Jesus) and the seed of the serpent (sinful men). Submit to, be subject to: <i>hupotasso</i> . Military term, meaning to rank under, or to be subordinate. Used of servants to masters (Titus 2:9; 1Pet 2:18); believers to Christ (Eph 5:24) and to those in authority (Rom 13:1,5; Titus 3:1; 1Pet 2:13); younger to older (1Pet 5:5); and all believers to one another (Eph 5:21; 1Pet 5:5). One day, everyone and everything will submit to Christ (1Cor 15:27,28; Heb 2:8).
8. Those controlled by the sinful nature [in the flesh] cannot please God.	Controlled by the sinful nature: The KJV has "in the flesh", which is more literal but also more difficult to understand. Believers can be "in the flesh" literally, but at the same not "in the flesh" spiritually, i.e., they are not "controlled" by the thinking of the flesh. Compare Rom 7:5 for the same idea.
9. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.	This verse explains v 7: We may seem to be "in the flesh" like all other human beings. But the "Spirit" (teaching and commitment toward spiritual things), which we receive from God and His Son, points us in a very different direction -- as v 10 explains (Gal 5:16-25).
10. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.	Your body is dead because of sin: We live in mortal bodies because of "sin", in two ways: (a) Adam's transgression brought the curse of mortality and proneness to sin upon us all, and therefore (b) we cannot escape the consequences of our own sins either. Our only hope is our faith in Christ, and our willingness to commit to him and follow him. Yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness: see v 4. Jesus was declared righteous because he did not sin, and because he offered the perfect sacrifice for sin on our behalf. We will be declared "righteous" because of our faith in Christ (Rom 8:1-4).
11. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.	If the Spirit of [God]... is living in you: How does God's "Spirit" <i>live</i> in us? Through the teachings and example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the expression of God's righteousness in human form. Following him brings us <i>spiritual</i> life now, as well as <i>physical, eternal</i> life in the future.

(2) The Spirit of Sonship: Our New Relationship with God (Romans 8:12–17)

The Law of Moses not only condemned man (Rom 7:9–11),
but it also enslaved him (Rom 7:14).

The work of Christ removes the condemnation (Rom 8:1–4),
replacing it with righteousness.

And it also frees us so that, no longer slaves to "King Sin",
we may become children of God (Rom 8:15).

NIV	Notes and references
12. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation [we are debtors] — but it is not to the sinful nature [the flesh], to live according to it.	We have an obligation: <i>opheiletēs</i> , from the root <i>opheilo</i> , a debt. In Christ, we remain debtors: we are obliged to repay our debt to Christ by seeking to destroy the "sin" in our minds (v 13), and live our lives in keeping with his teachings (v 14).
13. For if you live according to the sinful nature [after the flesh], you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,	Paraphrase: <i>'If you live according to the sinful nature, you will certainly experience a spiritual death, but if you keep trying to put to death the sins in your own flesh, you will most certainly experience a spiritual life.'</i> You will die: 'You will be spiritually "dead" now, and eternally dead later' (1Tim 5:6; 1John 3:14). If: See the "if" in 1Cor 15:2 (" if hold firmly") and Col 1:23 (" if continue"). Put to death...: Put to death <i>what?</i> "Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed... idolatry" (Col 3:5). You will live: 'You will live spiritually now, and eternally later.'
14. because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.	Led by the Spirit of God: How are we "led"? See vv 5,6 ("the mind of the spirit"); and vv 9–11: "Living in you" is "the Spirit of God", "the Spirit of Christ", and "Christ" himself. Read the Bible; think about it always; and always have Christ in the forefront of your minds. <i>What would Jesus do?</i> Sons of God: Children of God, who belong to the "Son of God" (v 3).

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness... knowledge... self-control... perseverance... godliness... brotherly kindness and... love" (2Pet 1:3–7).

"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, **slave nor free**, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and **heirs according to the promise**" (Gal 3:27-29).

NIV	Notes and references
<p>15. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave [the spirit of bondage] again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship [adoption].</p> <p>And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."</p>	<p>Slave, slavery, bondage: <i>douleia</i>. That which binds, or enslaves. "Sin" is personified as a ruler (Rom 6:16,17,20; John 8:34). We are enslaved by "sin" or the "devil" (Heb 2:14,15) and the Law of Moses (Gal 4:24; 5:1).</p> <p>The Spirit of sonship, adoption: <i>huiothesis</i> (<i>huios</i> = son, and <i>thesis</i> = to place or set). The bestowal of a legal relationship, common under Roman law, as distinct from the relationship of birth. In Gal 4:5 those who were under the law are redeemed from the law and given the gift of "sonship". In Eph 1:5 we have been "predestinated" unto "sonship". Under Roman law <i>huiothesis</i> meant the severing of all past connections, becoming a "new man", having a new family, along with the cancellation of all debts, and the right of inheritance. This is one of the "Words of Salvation" (see notes, page 14).</p> <p>Abba: Aramaic (Hebrew) "father": suggesting the love and trust of a little child, and the tenderness of a loving parent.</p> <p>Father: "Pater" (Greek): more formal; expressing an older child's mature respect and appreciation of the father. See Christ's cries to his Father (Matt 26:39; 27:46; cp Psa 22:1). And see the Father's cry to His dear children (Hos 11:1,3,4,8).</p>
<p>16. The Spirit himself [itself] testifies [beareth witness] with our spirit that we are God's children.</p>	<p>The Spirit himself: Sometimes Jesus Christ is referred to as "the Spirit" (Rev 2; 3 throughout; 1Cor 15:45).</p> <p>Testifies with our spirit: <i>summarturei</i>: to testify together with, as witnesses. This is one of the "Sharing Words" (see notes, page 15). Christ, as "the Spirit of God", testifies along with us that -- as believers -- we belong to him, and are children of his Father.</p> <p>We are God's (dear) children: <i>teknon</i>. From <i>tikto</i>, to bear. A term of loving affection, referring to a baby, a beloved child (John 1:12; 8:39; Gal 4:25,27,28,31).</p>
<p>17. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory [glorified together].</p>	<p>Children: see v 16.</p> <p>Co-heirs with God: <i>sunkleronomos</i>: sharing the same inheritance under law. See "Sharing Words" (p. 15).</p> <p>Share in sufferings: <i>sumpascho</i>: to share in Christ's "passion" or suffering: another "Sharing Word" (see p. 15).</p> <p>Share in glory, be glorified: <i>doxa, doxazo, sundoxazomai</i> (glorified together). Another one of the "Sharing Words" (see p. 15). <i>Doxazo</i>: to be correctly held in great honor or esteem. Used often of God and His words: Matt 6:9 (the Lord's prayer); John 1:14 (Christ's glory, reflective of God); Eph 1:17,18 ("the Father of glory... the glory of His inheritance"); Phil 3:21 (Christ's "body of his glory"); Heb 2:7,9,10 (suffering, then glory, for many sons).</p>

At our baptism we did not enter a household as slaves to serve with fear. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And how often God says to His children: "Fear not." As the child takes the hand of its father in the dark, and finds courage in the sound of the parent's voice... so with perfect confidence the child of God may trust the Father in heaven... "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2Tim 1:7).

John Carter, *The Letter to the Romans*, p. 90

(3) Present Sufferings and Future Glory (Romans 8:18–25)

- *Even as our Lord endured sufferings along his way to the glory to be conferred upon him by the Father,*
- *so we who profess to walk in his footsteps must do the same.*

NIV	Notes and references
18. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.	<p>Our present sufferings: By which we know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings (Phil 3:10), and learn to trust in God alone (2Cor 1:5,9).</p> <p>Glory: Which comes in and through Christ, and involves inheritance (Eph 1:18).</p> <p>Revealed, revealing ("manifestation"): <i>apokalupto, apokalupsis</i>. Uncovering, unveiling. The title of the last book of the New Testament (Rev 1:1). Refers often to the return of Christ (Luke 17:30; 1Cor 1:7; 2Thes 1:7; 1Pet 1:7,13; 4:13).</p>
19. The creation [creature] waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.	<p>Creation ("creature"): <i>ktisis</i> (also in Rom 8:20–22). Both the act of making (especially by God) and that which is made. May refer to the creation of the world and everything in it (Mark 13:19; Rom 1:20,25), or all mankind (Mark 16:15), but often refers to the new, <i>spiritual</i> creation in Christ (2Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Col 1:15,18; 3:10; Eph 2:10,15; 4:24). See notes, page 16.</p> <p>Waits, longing, eager (expectation): <i>apekdechomai</i>. To expect eagerly; to long for. Every other occurrence clearly refers to the return of Christ (1Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5; Phil 3:20; Heb 9:28).</p> <p>Sons of God: see vv 14,15.</p> <p>Revealed: see v 18.</p>
20. For the creation was subjected to frustration [vanity], not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope...	<p>Creation: The spiritual creation in Christ (see notes, page 16).</p> <p>Subjected to: The same as "submission" (<i>hupotasso</i>) in v 7.</p> <p>Frustration, frailty, vanity: <i>mataiotees</i>. Empty, producing no result or "fruit"; "futility" (RSV). Lesson: we cannot save ourselves, no matter how much we do, and it is frustrating and vain to think that we can.</p> <p>Not by its own choice: The frailty of human nature was not chosen by us who are God's children, but it is still what we must submit to in this world when we choose to follow Christ.</p> <p>Hope: <i>elpis; elpizo</i>. (1) The happy anticipation of good; (2) the factual ground upon which the hope is based; and/or (3) the object upon which the hope is fixed. Combined with the resurrection (Acts 23:6), the promise to the fathers (Acts 26:6,7), Israel (Acts 28:20), the gospel (Col 1:23), the glory of God (Rom 5:2), the appearing of Christ (Titus 2:13), salvation (1Thes 5:8), and eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7). Altogether, these passages give a full definition of the real Bible "hope".</p>
21. ...that the creation [creature] itself will be liberated [delivered] from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom [liberty] of the children of God.	<p>Creation: see Rom 8:19. The new creation in Christ (notes, p. 16) are those who belong to him. When Christ returns, they alone will be liberated from bondage to sin and death, and into a new and glorious liberty.</p> <p>Liberated: see v 2.</p> <p>Bondage: see v 15: slavery, as of the Jews in Egypt.</p> <p>Glorious freedom: A freedom belonging to God's dear children, involving an inherited "glory" (vv 17,18,30).</p> <p>Children: see v 15: "dear children", a term of affection.</p>

The New Testament describes a new beginning of God's purpose, centered upon His only-begotten Son. Bible "beginnings" are accompanied by "creations". There could have been no "beginning" in Genesis 1 without the awesome creative activity of the LORD God in and through His angels. And there can be no "beginning" in the New Testament, i.e., the Gospels, without the even greater and more far-reaching creative work of our heavenly Father in and through His Son (see notes, "The New Creation in the New Testament", page 16 of notes).

NIV	Notes and references
<p>22. We know that the whole creation</p> <p>has been groaning</p> <p>as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.</p>	<p>The whole creation: see vv 19–21: The new creation (see notes, page 16) is the only one which groans in labor pains, now, to bring forth a "new man (or woman)" in Christ (Gal 4:19,27), who will be part of God's newly created Kingdom.</p> <p>Groaning, sighing: <i>stenagmos; stenazo; sustenazo</i> (sighs together); another "Sharing Word" (see notes, p. 15). To groan, or sigh, perhaps inwardly, either with grief or compassion: Acts 7:34 (Israel's sighs of bondage in Egypt; cp Exod 2:23,24); 2Cor 5:2,4 ("In this tabernacle [we] groan"); Mark 7:34 ("Looking up to heaven, [Jesus] sighed").</p> <p>Pains of childbirth ("travaileth in pain"): <i>sunodino</i>. With the prefix "sun" it signifies: "to give birth together": a "Sharing Word" (p. 15). This compound appears only this once. Without the prefix, "odino" refers to labor in childbirth, often figuratively: Matt 24:8 ("sorrows"); Acts 2:24 ("agony" or "pains"); 1Thes 5:3 ("travail"); and Gal 4:19,27 ("travail").</p>
<p>23. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,</p> <p>groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for</p> <p>our adoption as sons,</p> <p>the redemption</p> <p>of our bodies.</p>	<p><i>Paraphrase: 'Even we apostles, who have experienced the firstfruits of the Spirit—power in Holy Spirit gifts, realize how much more wonderful will be the greatest gift of all -- the receiving of immortal, glorious bodies at the return of Christ. Even we are not now freed from the same longing which you feel, for the fuller experience of God's glory.'</i></p> <p>Groan inwardly: see v 22.</p> <p>Wait eagerly: see v 19, notes: describing those who eagerly expect the return of Christ.</p> <p>Adoption as sons: see v 15, notes. A conferring of the status of "sonship", implying a new life, a new family, a forgiving of debts, and a new inheritance.</p> <p>Redemption, release: <i>apolutrosis</i>. A releasing or deliverance through a ransom price. The price of our release is Christ (Rom 3:24; 1Cor 1:30), that is, his blood (Eph 1:7; Col 1:20), or his death (Heb 9:15). This is one of the "Words of Salvation" (see notes, page 14).</p> <p>Our bodies: "When he appears, we shall be like him" (1John 3:2).</p>
<p>24. For in this hope</p> <p>we were [are] saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?</p>	<p>Hope: see v 20 and references. The "hope" involving the promises (Acts 26:6,7), resurrection (Acts 23:6), and the appearing of Christ (Titus 2:13), bringing salvation (1Thes 5:8) and eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7).</p> <p>We were saved: "Hope" saves us. But <i>how</i> are we "saved"? In addition to hope, we are <i>also</i> saved by: grace (Eph 2:8,9), belief (Mark 16:16), baptism (1Pet 3:21), the gospel, and its memory (1Cor 15:1,2), the blood of Christ (1John 1:7), faith (Rom 5:1), works (James 2:24); ourselves (Acts 2:40); and/or endurance (Matt 10:22). Salvation is not achieved by one single activity, but by a combination of circumstances. This full list, of what saves us, explains the Bible's teaching.</p>
<p>25. But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.</p>	<p>Hope: see vv 20,24.</p> <p>Wait, wait eagerly: see v 19. Only believers in Christ are truly waiting in patience for his coming.</p>

(4) Intercession and Predestination: Our Place in God's Plan (Romans 8:26–30)

In the earlier sections of Romans 8, Paul tells us that, if we suffer with Christ, we will also be glorified with him (vv 17,18). Now he gives us excellent reasons to endure faithfully whatever difficulties we may encounter in this life:

- (1) *Christ intercedes for us (vv 26,27).*
- (2) *In all things, God is always working for our good (v 28).*
- (3) *God has marked us out, individually, to receive His glory (vv 29,30).*

NIV	Notes and references
<p>26. In the same way, the Spirit helps us</p> <p>in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for,</p> <p>but the Spirit himself [itself]</p> <p>intercedes [maketh intercession] for us</p> <p>with groans</p> <p>that words cannot express [which cannot be uttered]</p>	<p>The Spirit helps us: <i>sunantilambano</i>: to share in bearing a burden, as Christ does with us (Matt 11:28,29). One of the "Sharing Words" (see notes, p. 15).</p> <p>Our weakness, infirmity: "without strength": see v 3.</p> <p>We do not know what we ought to pray for: Because we do not know God's will perfectly (1John 5:14). Some versions (RSV, NET) have: "we do not know <i>how</i> to pray", and the answer to this is: 'We pray briefly, just like the Lord's prayer' (cp Eccl 5:2: "Let your words be few").</p> <p>The Spirit himself: May be read as personal because, in this case, the "Spirit" describes Christ, who is our only intercessor (v 34; 1Tim 2:5,6), mediator, and saviour. See also the notes on verse 16.</p> <p>Intercedes for us: <i>entunchano</i>. Meets with, joins, or talks to us. With <i>huper</i> signifies "to speak with one on behalf of others". Of the six occurrences, three are here (vv 27,34) and the others are Acts 25:24; Rom 11:2; and Heb 7:25.</p> <p>Groans: see vv 22,23: sighs of compassion, which Christ feels and expresses for his brethren (cp Mark 7:32–34; 8:11,12), especially because he has been "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb 4:15). Furthermore, Christ feels, even now in heaven, something of the same longing which we believers still experience, for all God's children to be gathered into one (vv 22,23).</p> <p>Which we cannot express: <i>alaletois</i>: Literally, "not spoken". Words which we cannot utter, or which we cannot hear. Not necessarily inarticulate words or sounds, but rather speech that cannot be uttered <i>to us</i>, because it passes only between Christ and God (cp thoughts in 2Cor 12:4 and John 12:28,29).</p>
<p>27. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.</p>	<p>He who searches our hearts: This can only be Christ (Rev 2:23), who is also the "Spirit" who intercedes for believers.</p> <p>Mind: see v 5: mental and moral reflection.</p> <p>The Spirit intercedes: see v 26.</p> <p>In accordance with God's will: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (1John 5:14). But we must remember that, sometimes, it is God's will that we endure trials rather than being delivered from those trials, just as Christ in Gethsemane, and Paul with his "thorn in the flesh" (2Cor 12:7–10).</p>

NIV	Notes and references
<p>28. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.</p>	<p>In all things: All things good and bad; the things listed in v 35 and vv 38,39 (and more). God works for... good: Here, the NIV is much better than the KJV ("All things work together for good...") In the KJV translation, God appears to be merely passive, but in the NIV (and the RSV) He is seen to be actively involved in the lives of His children, as it should be (note, next verse). Who have been called according to his purpose: God's will and purpose -- which Christ understands, and we do not, at least not perfectly -- is the key theme in this section.</p>
<p>29. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness [image] of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.</p>	<p>In v 28, God <i>actively</i> works for good in our lives. And this is confirmed by the <i>active</i> nature of His work described in vv 29,30. Foreknew, foreordained (KJV): <i>proginosko</i>: to know in advance: Christ was the "lamb without blemish", "chosen" by God in advance, by whose blood we are redeemed (1Pet 1:18-20). Predestine, predestinate: <i>prohorizo</i>. To set bounds, or ordain, beforehand; to mark out a path or a way. Appears only here; Eph 1:5,11; Acts 4:28; and 1Cor 2:7. To be conformed: <i>summorphos</i>: to be changed or conformed together, with one another <i>and</i> with Christ (see "The Sharing Words", p. 15). Likeness, image: <i>eikon</i>. Involves the two ideas of representation and manifestation. Used of a coin (Matt 22:20; Mark 12:16; Luke 20:24); an idol or statue (Rom 1:23; Rev 13:14,15; 14:9). The sons of Adam bear his image (1Cor 15:49). Christ bears the image of God (1Cor 11:7; 2Cor 4:4; Col 1:15). And we hope to bear the image of Christ (1Cor 15:49; Col 3:10). Son: see v 3. Firstborn: <i>prototokos</i>. From <i>proto</i> (first) and <i>tikto</i> (to bear). May mean earliest as to time, or -- as here -- preeminent as to position: Christ is the "firstborn" from the dead (Col 1:18; Rev 1:5) in the sense that he is the "firstborn" of all God's new "creation" (Col 1:15).</p>
<p>30. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.</p>	<p>Called: Usually applied specifically to those who have been called to the gospel (1Thes 2:12; Col 3:15; Rom 9:23,24; Eph 4:1; Jude 1:1). Justified: "declared righteous" (v 1) because of the work of Christ in condemning sin in the flesh (i.e., in himself) (vv 3,4). Glorified: Past tense, not because it is a present possession now, but because its future possession has been assured for us -- <i>if</i> we remain faithful. The glory refers to what is reserved for God's dear children, when Christ returns and they have escaped the slavery of bondage and death (v 21).</p>

Nothing stands between us and eternal glory except our own loss of faith:

- *not our sins -- they are forgiven;*
- *not our nature -- it will be changed in a moment;*
- *not the law -- it was satisfied in the death of Christ; and*
- *not even our trials -- they are designed by our Father **and** His Son, for our benefit; and they will never forsake us so long as we trust in them.*

With these exalted -- and exalting -- assurances, Paul prepares his readers, in the last part of this glorious chapter (Rom 8:31-39), to become "super-conquerors through him who loved us".

**(5) "Super-Conquerors":
Our Assurance in Christ (Romans 8:31–39)**

NIV	Notes and references
<p>31. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?</p>	<p>What, then, shall we say in response to this?: 'How can I summarize everything I have been talking about in this letter (and perhaps especially in what we call Romans 8)?' If God is for us: The God who, out of His love, developed a plan of salvation through His Son. And the God who, to show us the depth of that love, offered His own Son as a means of bringing us back to Him. Who can be against us?: This verse invites us to look back at all the things God has done for us. God "foreknew" us, i.e., He knew us beforehand, and He "predestined" us, i.e., He marked us out for His glory. Therefore, nothing can stand against us: not our sins (vv 1–4), not our nature (vv 5–11); not the law (vv 4,7); and not even our trials (vv 17–25). Verse 32 explains and reinforces this message.</p>
<p>32. He who did not spare his own Son, but gave [delivered] him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously [freely] give us all things?</p>	<p>He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all: This language deliberately points to Gen 22 and the father Abraham's willing sacrifice of <i>his</i> special son of promise, Isaac (v 16). Paul uses this incident to demonstrate the depth of God's love for all of us, which rivals even His surpassing love for His own special Son of promise (John 3:16; cp Isa 53:10; Acts 2:23). Son: see v 3. Along with him: <i>sun auto</i>: together with another. Sharing together with Christ in receiving the divine gift of "all things": See "Sharing Words", notes, p. 15.</p>
<p>33. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.</p>	<p><i>Paul takes us into a courtroom setting (cp Isa 41:21–24; 43:8–11; 44:7; 45:20,21).</i> Read this as a question: 'Who will read out the charges against us? Will God, who loves us so much that He has given His own Son to provide us eternal life (v 32)?' A rhetorical question, to which the obvious answer is "No!" Who will bring any charge against [us]?: This is the role of the presiding judge in a courtroom.</p>
<p>34. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.</p>	<p>Once again, read this as a question: 'Who will provide evidence against us, and seek to demonstrate our guilt? Will Christ, the one who died for us...?' Once again, a rhetorical question, implying another obvious answer of "No!" Who is he that condemns?: Who will provide witnesses and evidence against the one being charged? See v 1: to pass judgment upon. Christ Jesus, who died -- more than that, who was raised to life -- is at the right hand of God: The one who should be the prosecuting attorney has now become our defense attorney instead! As our mediator and intercessor, he will be our friend and counselor, and speak on our behalf. And he will be pleading our case before a very sympathetic judge -- his own Father!: "Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11). And is also interceding for us: see v 26.</p>

*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -- yet was without sin. **Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need**" (Heb 4:15,16).*

NIV	Notes and references
35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?	<p>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble?: Tribulation, pressure, affliction, trials.</p> <p>Hardship: Distress, anguish of mind.</p> <p>Persecution: Referring to enemies who pursue us, to harm us.</p> <p>Nakedness: Poverty, in all its aspects.</p> <p>Danger or sword?: Perils in travel, perils from thieves or war.</p>
36. As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."	<p>We face death all day long: The most feared trouble is saved for last -- the fear of death.</p> <p>Sheep to be slaughtered: Paul is quoting Psa 44:22: "sheep to be slaughtered". Even if believers are put to death, they will merely be dying in the same way as did their Great Shepherd, who was also a lamb led to slaughter (Isa 53:6,7), and the Passover lamb slain for the sins of the world (John 1:29; 1Cor 5:7).</p>
37. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.	<p>All these things: These are the same "all things" in which God works (v 28) for our training and our ultimate good.</p> <p>More than conquerors: <i>huper nikao</i>. From <i>huper</i> (over) and <i>nikao</i> (to overcome). Those who are surpassingly victorious. "Super-conquerors". Appears only here.</p>
38. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons [principalities], neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,	<p>Vv 38,39: The full assurance of faith which belongs to those who have been declared righteous in Christ (Rom 8:1).</p> <p>Angels: "Ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation" (Heb 1:14).</p> <p>Demons: Greek "arche": not "devils", but rulers, powers, and authorities.</p> <p>Nor the future: So why worry about tomorrow (Matt 6:34)?</p> <p>Nor any powers: '<i>And if you can imagine anything else -- not mentioned here -- which seems a threat, believe that that power can do nothing to endanger your salvation either!</i>'</p>
39. neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.	<p>Neither height nor depth: We should not be swayed by unexpected good fortune, nor by momentary misfortune. Neither one will last, and neither one can turn us away from the love of God -- which is eternal.</p> <p>Nor anything else in all creation: see v 19. Perhaps the "new creation in Christ"? <i>Not even our brothers and sisters in Christ -- even if they tried -- could exclude us from the love of God in Christ!</i></p>

If Paul were writing to us today, what would he say? Here he has surely left us a message too: No depression, no recession, no inflation, no bankruptcy, no unemployment, no riot or crime in the streets, no cancer, no heart disease, no arthritis, no diabetes, no old age, no nuclear holocaust, no international terrorism -- nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In verse 39, two different "pairs" are each inseparable from one another. They are each bound together for eternity:

- God's love and **Jesus Christ**, and
- God's love and **us**.

*And it is precisely because we have become "one" with our Lord Jesus Christ that we will never be separated from God's love, which was **in Christ** before it could ever be **in us**. Thanks be to God for His amazing grace, and His inexpressible gift of love.*

How Jesus Destroyed the "Devil"

Passage	Subject	Action	Object	Location
(a) Romans 8:3	God (Christ)	Condemned	Sin	In "sinful man", literally, i.e., in the body, or in the flesh, of Christ.
(b) Hebrews 2:14	Christ	Destroyed	The devil, i.e., the one who holds the power of death (cp Rom 6:23; James 1:13-15)	Humanity (flesh and blood)
(c) Hebrews 9:26	Christ	Did away with [put away]	Sin	By the sacrifice of himself
(d) 1 John 3:5,8; 4:2	Jesus Christ, the Son of God	Took away or destroyed	Our sins, or the devil's work	Appeared, has come: where? In the flesh (1John 4:2)
(e) Ephesians 2:15,16	Christ...	Abolished or nullified... put to death, or killed	Hostility, or enmity... warring factions within us (cp Gen 3:15)	"In his flesh"

Points:

1. What did Christ destroy, by his life and death? See the "Object" column: Christ destroyed: (a) sin, (b) the devil (the power of death), (c) sin again, (d) our sins (the devil's work), and (e) the hostility, or enmity, between the flesh (human nature) and God.

2. Christ was made flesh in order to destroy the "devil" -- i.e., sin in the flesh (Heb 2:14; 9:26; **Rom 8:3**). Christ's flesh, or his body, was the location or arena where the "devil" reigned supreme, and it had to be destroyed there first.

3. Sin is that which has the power of death, and sin arises from inside us (Rom 6:23; 7:13,20; 1Cor 15:56). It was found, as a principle or a possibility, even in Christ's flesh (Eph 2:15,16).

4. The relationship of flesh and blood, sin, and the devil is outlined above:

- Hebrews 2:14: Christ was of our same nature, sharing our "flesh and blood", in order that through his death, he could first destroy the "devil" in his own flesh, where it resided.
- **Romans 8:3**: Christ was made in the likeness (e.g., the identity or reality) of sinful flesh, and died as an offering for sin, and so condemned sin in the flesh (that is, his own flesh).
- Ephesians 2:15,16: Christ, in his flesh, reconciled us by his death on the cross, and so put to death the enmity which is in our flesh (Gen 3:15).

The Words of Salvation, Describing God's Work of Salvation

When, in God's sight, man is...	Then God's <u>work</u> of salvation, through Christ, is...
1. In trouble or danger...	<i>Salvation</i> ("soteria"): Deliverance from danger (Rom 1:16; 13:11; 2Cor 1:6; 6:2). This is derived from the Greek word for Saviour, "soter".
2. An estranged person; an enemy...	<i>Reconciliation</i> ("katallage"): Atonement, settlement; literally, coming together again, in mutual love and shared friendship (Rom 5:10; 2Cor 5:18-21). This idea is equivalent to finding or achieving the Hebrew "shalom", a spiritual "peace", particularly with God.
3. A slave, serving the wrong "master" -- King "Sin" or the "devil"...	<i>Redemption</i> : (a) "agorazo" and "exagorazo": Literally, "purchase", as in a slave is bought from a slave market (1Cor 6:20; 7:23; Gal 3:13,14; 4:5). Or (b) "lutrosis" and "apolutrosis": To be loosed, or set free, as a slave is freed from bondage (Rom 8:23 ; 3:24; 1Cor 1:30; Titus 2:14). Both these words recall Israel's exodus from Egypt and bondage, and their entry into a new life of release and freedom. The Passover lamb was primarily the path to freedom, not just an offering for sin.
4. Common, ordinary, of no special value...	<i>Sanctification, or holiness</i> ("hagios", "hagiazo", "hagiasmos"): Literally, to set apart, dedicate, or make holy; to become a "saint" (Rom 6:19,22; 15:16; 1Cor 1:2,30; 6:11; 7:14; Eph 1:4; cp 1Pet 2:5,9 with Lev 19:2).
5. Unclean, impure...	<i>Purification, or cleansing</i> : "Katharizo" (2Cor 7:1; Eph 5:26; Titus 2:14).
6. An accused person; a guilty person...	<i>Justification, or righteousness</i> ("dikaiosune"): Declaring or considering another to be innocent or righteous ("dikaios"). A court verdict of "Not guilty!" (Rom 8:1,4,33,34 ; 1:17; 3:21,22; 4:5, 13; 5:21; 1Cor 1:30; 2Cor 5:21; Gal 3:11).
7. One who has failed...	<i>Propitiation, or acceptance</i> ("hilasmos"): To plead another's cause (1John 2:2; 4:10); from "hilasterion": "atonement cover" or "mercyseat": the place of acceptance in the Most Holy Place (Heb 9:5; cp Rom 3:25).
8. A debtor, who cannot pay his debts...	<i>Forgiveness, or mercy</i> ("aphesis", "aphiemi"): The cancellation of debt, or the pardoning of sin; the sending away of sin, in response to an acknowledged shortcoming (Matt 6:14,15; Luke 4:18; Rom 4:7; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 18:23-35).
9. An orphan, with no hope and no inheritance (Eph 2:12)...	<i>Adoption, or sonship</i> ("huiiothesis"): A new legal relationship under Roman law, involving the severing of all past connections and becoming a "new man" with a new family, no debts, and a claim to inheritance (Rom 8:15 ; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5).

The "Sharing" Words of Romans 8

A fundamental principle of our Faith is that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is a human being:

"We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin" (Heb 4:15).

"[Christ] himself suffered when he was tempted, [and therefore] he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Heb 2:18).

There is a wonderful comfort in this. As believers in Christ, we are not alone in this world. Christ is with us. Because of the very nature which he possessed in the days of his flesh, we know that our troubles in the flesh are not foreign to him. He is able to share with us the good times and the bad, and there is no struggle or trial through which we might go which he cannot understand.

In Romans 8, Paul mentions a number of the ways in which Christ shares with us in our experiences, and in which we share with him in his experiences:

- (1) **"Summarturei"**: Christ ("the Spirit") agrees, or testifies, along with us ("our spirit") that we -- he as well as his disciples -- are all God's children (v 16).
- (2) **"Sunkleronomoi"**: We are co-heirs with Christ because we are all heirs of God (v 17).
- (3) **"Sumpascho"**: We share in Christ's "passion", or sufferings (v 17). We do this also, and especially, in the breaking of bread: "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover ['pascha'] with you before I suffer ['pascho']" (Luke 22:15).
- (4) **"Sundoxasthomen"**: Consequently, we also may share in Christ's glory (v 17). Because we share in the sufferings of Christ, we shall also share in the glories that will follow (1Pet 1:11).
- (5) **"Sustenazo"**: We, the new spiritual "creation", are groaning or sighing together with one another, and also sharing in the sighings (that is, the sufferings) of Christ (vv 22,23). This sighing together with Christ is connected with the "sunodino": labor in childbirth, mentioned below.
- (6) **"Sunodino"**: Sighing together (above) means we are all laboring together so as to give birth, that is, to be reborn into "the glorious freedom of God's children" (v 22).
- (7) **"Sunantilambanetai"**: The simple phrase in the NIV ("to help") means, literally, to take hold of a heavy burden together with others so as to assist them. Christ helps us to bear our burdens, and so we are burden-bearers together with him (v 26). Christ has invited us: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me... and you will find rest" (Matt 11:28,29).
- (8) **"Summorphos"**: God has marked us out, as believers, to be conformed to the likeness of His unique Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, so that he will be the "firstborn among *many* children" in his Father's divine family (v 29).
- (9) **"Sun auto"**: God did not spare even His own Son, but gave him up for us all, so that -- "along with him" (Greek "sun auto") -- we will receive the gracious gift of "all things" (v 32).

The "New Creation" in the New Testament

Many times in the New Testament the Greek "ktisis" (creation) signifies, not the material, physical creation of Genesis, but the new spiritual creation in Christ. This is a creation -- more specifically, a *new* creation -- in and through Christ, by which men and women who bear his name are forgiven, reborn and renewed in spirit.

In the New Testament, the "ktisis" group of words is found in nine passages where the literal "creation" of Genesis is plainly intended (Matt 19:4; Mark 10:6; 13:19; Rom 1:20,25; 1Cor 11:9; 1Tim 4:3,4; 2Pet 3:4; Rev 8:9; 10:6). While these passages may have far-reaching implications for other matters beyond Genesis, they are statements firmly grounded in the LORD God's original creation. So we will set these passages to the side.

However, another fifteen passages in the New Testament just as plainly refer not to a literal creation but to God's new spiritual "creation" in Jesus Christ. This spiritual aspect is blurred by the KJV which sometimes renders the word as "creature". This spiritual "creation" describes those who have believed and thus become part of God's ongoing spiritual "creation", as well as those who have the potential to do so (Mark 16:15; **Rom 8:19-22**; 2Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:10; 2:15; 3:9; 4:24; Col 1:15,16; 1:23; 3:10; James 1:18; Rev 3:14; 4:11; 5:13). We shall take a further look at several of these:

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new **creation** ['creature': KJV]; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2Cor 5:17).*

Paul speaks of God reconciling unto Himself those who had been separated, and thereby beginning to bring order back to a fallen world. God does this through Christ in a second "creation", patterned after the first. This is clearly shown by the wider context: "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2Cor 4:6).

Elsewhere, Paul again speaks of God as the Creator, uniquely involved in this new work of spiritual creation:

*"For we are God's workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do... [Christ's] purpose was to **create** in himself one new man" (Eph 2:10,15).*

The phrase "to do good works" defines the purpose for which we are being created anew in Christ, through belief and baptism.

*"[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all **creation** ['every creature']. For by him all things were **created**: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were **created** by him and for him" (Col 1:15,16).*

Christ is the "image" and the "firstborn" of all *his* creation, because all *believers* are created by him (v 16). These figurative expressions are explained by the more literal ones of verse 18: "He is the head of the body, the church: [he is] the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (cp also 1Cor 15:20,23).

In these last passages particularly, Jesus himself is the One who "creates", an act which is only possible in the sense of a new, spiritual "creation" of believers -- created by Almighty God in and through His special Son.