

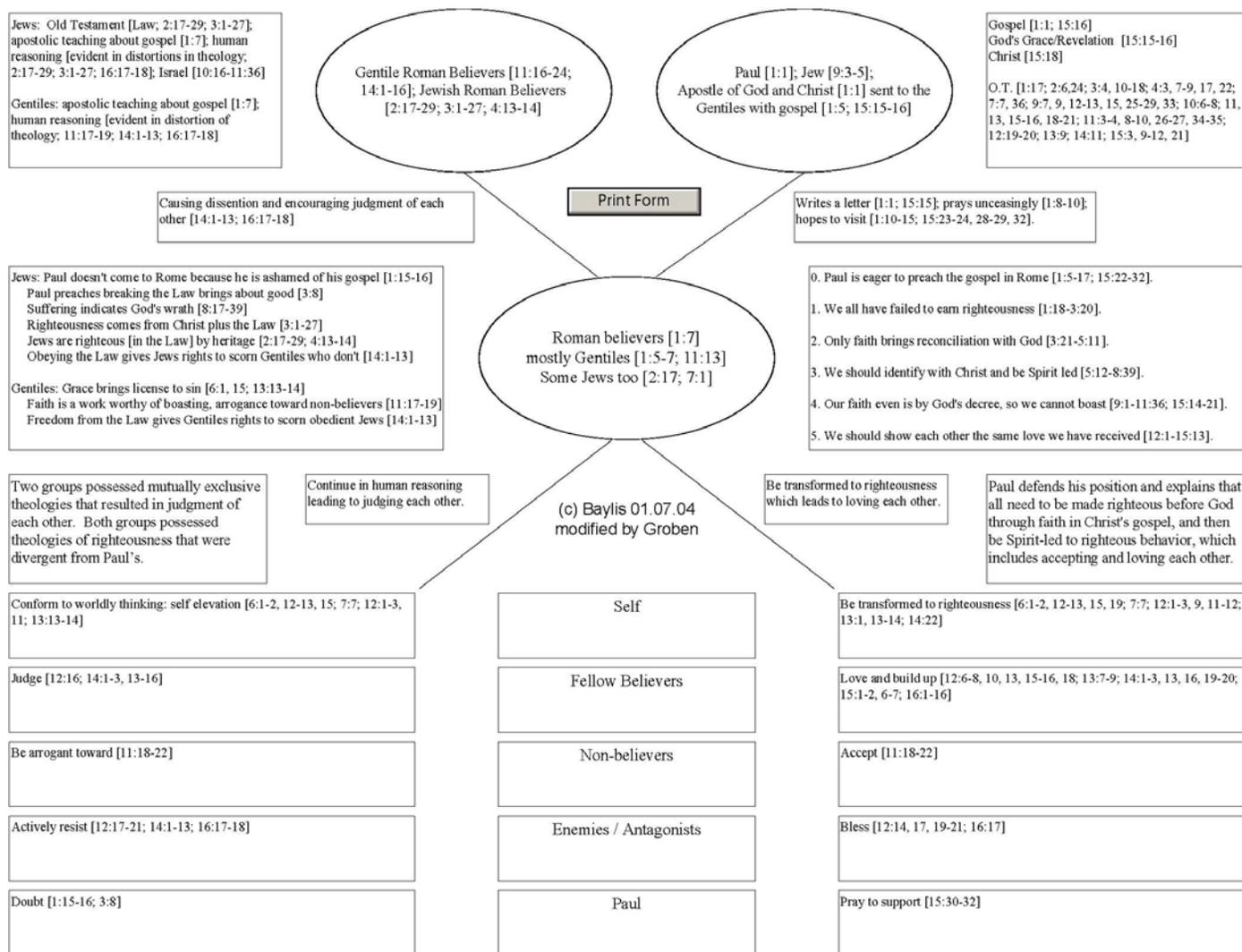
Synthetic Chart

Romans: Righteousness comes by grace through faith!

*3:23-24: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*

Introduction		None can attain righteousness		Only grace brings reconciliation		Identify with Christ		Even faith is by God's decree		Give the same love you received		Put an end to dissention	
1:1	1:17	1:18	3:20	3:21	6:11	6:12	8:39	9:1	11:36	12:1	15:13	15:14	16:27
I bring Christ's gospel of righteousness		Rejection of God's revelation brings condemnation As a rejection of revelation, sin brings condemnation Righteousness comes from a circumcised heart, not heritage We cannot attain righteousness through the Law, for all sin		Righteousness is by grace through faith Faith was always the path to righteousness Grace reconciled us to God though we were undeserving Christ's redemption overshadows Adam's fall		Because we are justified, we should live out sanctification We all still struggle with sin in our flesh Justified, we should be Spirit led and suffer with Christ		God chooses whom he will Israel heard, but did not believe This led to Gentile salvation, leading to Jewish salvation		Be transformed by the renewing of your mind Support, not judge, each other		Boast only in Christ's work Turn away from dissention and seek wisdom	

Observation: Problem/Solution Chart



ARGUMENT OF THE BOOK

Book Background

Paul wrote to explain and defend the gospel of Christ, having become aware that there was dissention in the Roman church [16:17-18] because of opposing views on how to attain righteousness [both errant¹], with some Jews saying obedience to the Law was necessary in addition to faith in Christ [at least for sanctification; 2:17-23] – attacking Paul and his gospel in the process – and some Gentiles considering their path to righteousness to have been a “work of faith,” an achievement for which they could be proud [11:17-19].

Definitions

APOSTOLIC TEACHING: teaching that originated with the apostles

CIRCUMCISED HEART: a heart dedicated to God in the Holy Spirit

CONDEMNATION: lack of deliverance from God’s wrath

ETERNAL LIFE: resurrected life after physical death

FAITH: belief in God’s revelation

FLESH: human impulses; indicative of our fallen state

GENTILE: a person not of Hebrew origin [sometimes translated “Greek”]

GOSPEL: the “good news” about what Christ accomplished for us

GRACE: unmerited favor; usually implying justification, but also used in other ways

IMPUTED: attributed by one to another, usually [in this context] attributed by God to humans

JUDGMENT: God’s wrath

JUSTIFICATION: imputation of righteousness

LAW: God’s revealed mandates

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH: a key phrase foreshadowing Paul’s message both that faith is a required obedience [though not to be confused with a “work of faith”] and that only faith will lead to fulfillment of the obligations of obedience

PROPITIATION: payment to appease

RECONCILIATION: return to right relationship

REDEMPTION: payment of deliverance

REPENTED: turned away from their sins to obey God

RIGHTEOUSNESS: the character of God; purity

SALVATION: deliverance from God’s wrath

¹ Both views glorify human achievement – either obedience to the Law for the Jews, or the “work of faith” for the Gentiles – whereas a true gospel would glorify Christ. This is the same problem with the supposed “Gospel of Judas” and many other false gospels that have circulated: they do not glorify Christ, but rather the writer or the reader who follows their teachings.

SIN: going against God's revelation

THEOLOGY: set of beliefs about God

WORKS: following the Law; attempts to earn righteousness

Interpretive Argument

Main Problem: As the two groups argued with each other, they caused dissention in the church by encouraging judgment of each other, all propagating a corrupted version of the gospel of Christ, while some also attacked Paul and his true gospel.

I. Paul is qualified to speak for Christ's gospel and the gospel is worthy of faith [1:1-17].

Paul establishes his own credentials by identifying with Christ and a calling from God, defends the merits of Christ's gospel by revealing its Old Testament roots and Christ's identity, identifies with the Romans as brothers in faith, Gentiles within his mandate, and people he desires to know, and expresses faith in the gospel which brings salvation to all through faith.

A. Paul's Identity: Paul is a dedicated servant of Christ, called by God to preach the gospel of Christ [1:1].

B. Defense of the Gospel of Christ: Christ's gospel is a foreshadowed promise through God's prophets in scripture [1:2], while Christ is a human descendent of King David [1:3] and the proven Son of God through his resurrection by the Holy Spirit [1:4].

C. Paul's Authority: It is through Christ that Paul and his team get the grace and authority to share the gospel with the Gentiles, bringing them to the "obedience of faith" [1:5].

D. Paul's Identification with the Romans: As the Roman believers include many Gentiles, they are included in Paul's mandate [1:6-7]. Their level of faith is renowned [1:8] and Paul prays for them constantly [1:9]. Paul also prays that he can visit Rome, to build their faith and be encouraged by them [1:10-12]. Paul dearly wishes to preach this gospel to the Romans, so he can, through Christ, experience ministry success there, as he has elsewhere [1:13-15].

E. Paul's Statement of Faith: Paul is not ashamed of this gospel, for he believes this gospel brings salvation to both Jews and Gentiles because it reveals that righteousness comes through faith [1:16-17].

II. All have failed to earn righteousness [1:18-3:20].

Paul ensures that nobody can think they can earn righteousness, not the uneducated Gentile, the educated Gentile, the Jew relying on heritage, nor even the Jew most fanatical about keeping the Law. This sets the table for Paul's explanation of Christ's gospel, in the next section.

A. Rejection of God's revelation brings condemnation.

Paul argues that nobody has an excuse for not honoring God, not even uneducated Gentiles who have not heard the Word of God.

1. REJECTION OF GENERAL REVELATION: Nobody has an excuse for unrighteousness, because God revealed his nature through creation [1:18-20], but the unrighteous choose to not honor God, resulting in their own weakening of mind and darkening of heart [1:21].
2. EVIDENCE: These people worship created things despite being the height of creation themselves [1:22-25], and then degenerate into other unnatural acts like homosexuality [1:26-27] and evil tendencies like arrogance and deceit [1:28-31].
3. CONDEMNATION: These unrighteous people deserve their condemnation, for they not only openly go against God's decree, they also encourage others to do the same [1:32].

B. As a rejection of God's revelation, your sin brings condemnation.

Paul turns the eye of judgment onto the reader, who is more knowledgeable about God than those whom he has been discussing, yet still is sinning.

1. CONDEMNATION: We are just as deserving of judgment and punishment for our sins [2:1-3]. God has been patient with us, but we have not fully repented, so we deserve judgment [2:4-6].
2. EARNING RIGHTEOUSNESS: For Jew and Gentile alike, only those who are doing good [2:7-11], who are obeying the Law fully [2:12-16], will be declared righteous in God's sight and find peace.

C. Righteousness comes from a circumcised heart, not heritage.

Paul argues that Jews cannot rely on their heritage because they are sinners.

1. BREAKING THE LAW: A Jew who breaks the Law is no better than any Gentile who does [2:17-24].
2. CIRCUMCISION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS: Righteousness is from a "circumcised heart" by the Holy Spirit, rather than from a circumcised body [or heritage] by the Law [2:25-28]. It is this Spirit-created circumcision that makes one a "true Jew" [2:29].

D. We cannot attain righteousness through the Law, for all are sinful.

Paul explains that, because they sin just as do Gentiles, Jews are no more righteous under the Law than Gentiles.

1. JEWISH HONOR: It is an honor to be a Jew, for God trusted the Jews with his oracles [3:1-2].

2. GOD'S WRATH: While God remains faithful even as some Jews do not [3:3-4], his wrath against those Jews who are proving unfaithful is just [3:5-8]. Jews, just like Gentiles, are sinful [3:9-18], and the Law illuminates their sin, thus proving their failure to attain righteousness by it [3:19-20].

III. Only grace through faith brings reconciliation with God [3:21-6:11].

Paul explains the gospel, revealing that the source of righteousness and reconciliation with God has always been grace appropriated through faith, and that the implication of that is assurance of salvation for believers.

A. Righteousness is by grace through faith.

Paul explains the gospel of Christ.

1. OLD TESTAMENT ATTESTATION: We can be made righteous before God through faith in Jesus Christ, as attested to in the Old Testament scriptures [3:21-22].

2. CHRIST'S REDEMPTION: Everyone has failed to keep the Law perfectly, so all have need of help [3:23], but in grace God will provide salvation through the redemption of Christ for all who believe [3:24-26]. Righteousness comes by faith, not works [3:27-28], and this is true for the Jew and the Gentile [3:29-30].

B. Faith was always the means to righteousness.

Paul explains that justification by grace through faith is not a deviation from the Old Testament teachings or an abandonment of the Law, but rather is the example of the Old Testament and a fulfillment of the Law.

1. FAITH AND THE LAW: This faith fulfills the Law, not discards it [3:31].

2. OLD TESTAMENT JUSTIFICATION: This justification by faith has been the way of God always: Abraham was declared righteous by faith, not by works [4:1-5]; King David attested to this method of forgiveness [4:6-8]; and Abraham was declared righteous by faith prior to circumcision, obviating the need for both works and a heritage-covenant [4:9-10].

3. ABRAHAM'S HEIRS: Abraham's heirs are those who follow him in faith, not heritage, Jew and Gentile alike [which builds on the earlier points of what it means to be a "true Jew" (2:25-29) and that all must come to God in faith (3:29-30); 4:11-15].

4. THE OBJECT OF FAITH: Abraham was given to be the "father of many nations" because he believed in the God who raises the dead [4:16-22], so we can know that we are declared righteous by God if we believe in him who brought Christ back from the dead, Christ who died because of our sins and was raised to make us right with God [4:23-25].

C. God's grace reconciled us to him when we were unrighteous.

Paul argues peace with God comes from Christ's sacrifice, and that – if we know this grace was unmerited – we can know that we will not face God's wrath, and therefore we can rejoice in this new relationship with God.

1. PEACE: We have peace with God because we have been declared righteous through faith, because of what Christ has done [5:1-2].
2. HOPE: We can have hope because God's love is proven by the Holy Spirit in us [5:3-5]. Christ died for us while we were still helpless and unrighteous [5:6-8], so we know – now that we are righteous by Christ's blood – that Christ will save us from God's wrath which is due for our sins [5:9].
3. JOY: We were reconciled to God through Christ's death when we were God's enemies, so now – being reconciled – we know we are saved by Christ's continuing life [resurrected life] and can rejoice in our new relationship with God [5:10-11].

D. Christ's redemption overshadows Adam's fall.

Paul argues that Christ's redemption is far greater than the effects of Adam's sin [as great as they were], and that by identifying ourselves with Christ we experience a change in legal status, from being a slave to sin to being justified and alive to God.

1. ADAM'S SIN: Adam's sin² brought sinful death to all [5:12], and after Adam all sinned even though there was no written Law to break [5:13-14].
2. CHRIST'S GRACE: Just as Adam brought sinful death to all, Christ brings grace and life to all who believe [5:15-19], and – while the Law showed increasing sinfulness – grace abounded sufficiently to bring righteousness and eternal life [5:20-21].
3. IDENTIFICATION AND LEGALITY: We are identified [baptized] with Christ in his death and in the hope of resurrection with him [6:1-5]. Thus, being justified [having received imputed righteousness], we are legally freed from our previous slavery to sin [6:6-7]³, and are alive to God in Christ [6:8-11].

² In our seminary class, Baylis translated "sin" in this part of the epistle as "the sin," because of the diction in the Greek. He interpreted this to be Adam's specific original sin, self-righteousness. This would flow with the discussion in Paul's epistle, because both antagonistic parties essentially are still trying to establish their own righteousness, the Jews through the Law and the Gentiles through a "work of faith." I have not made an issue of this in my presentation, because – as Baylis said to me in an aside during a break – all sin derives from this singular sin; and so to my mind, it does not change the analysis significantly. Paul clearly is discussing justification, and while the problem at hand in Rome might be corruption of the gospel – or self-righteousness, in a sense – Paul's arguments work just as well against sin in general as they do against "the sin" of self-righteousness.

³ In our seminary class, Baylis argued that the discussion about slavery is strictly legal: that whereas before we could not get out of our legal condemnation for sinfulness, now [with Christ's justification], we cannot get out from under the legal state of grace. This would be consistent with Paul's use of legal terminology

IV. We must identify with Christ [6:12-8:39].

Paul explains how justification leads to sanctification for the believer, providing motivation, identity with Christ, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and a future hope.

A. Because we are justified, we should live out our sanctification.

Paul argues that our justification should be our motivation for pursuing sanctification through identification with Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

1. SLAVES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: As sin is no longer our legal master we should be instruments of righteousness, not of unrighteousness [6:12-14]. We are not to take license due to grace [6:15], for – having been justified from sin – we are now slaves of righteousness [6:16-18] and should present ourselves as slaves of righteousness resulting in our sanctification [6:19-20].

2. SANCTIFICATION: Sin provided only death, but now we are free from sin and slaves of God, which leads to the free gifts of sanctification and eternal life through Christ [6:21-23⁴]. We died to the Law with Christ too, and now can live through Christ for God [7:1-4]. While previously we were in the flesh and sinful, now we are released from the Law through Christ to serve God in the Holy Spirit [7:5-6].

B. We all still struggle with sin in our flesh⁵.

elsewhere. This would be opposed to the view which holds that Paul is arguing, whereas before our total depravity caused us to be slaves to sin [in action], now – having been reborn as righteous in Christ – we can allow the Holy Spirit within us to help us resist sinful actions. I think both views are correct: that up to v.11 Paul is talking legalities having to do with justification, but beginning with v.12 he is talking about the power justification brings [through spiritual renewal and the power of the Holy Spirit] to be sanctified in our behavior. Baylis indicated in class that he believes v.12 suggests that we can be motivated by our imputed righteousness to forsake our coveting of self-righteousness. However, given his view that we remain depraved until glorification, I am not sure how we could respond in gratitude; perhaps the justification process improves the character enough for at least that, even if sanctification [in this view] does not involve much actual improvement in character, only behavior. Indeed, on a later occasion, Baylis said that our justification overwhelmed our self-nature with regard to identifying ourselves with Christ for our sanctification. I should have pursued this question further during class, but did not want to be disruptive.

⁴ In our seminary class, Baylis said v.21 is an example of Paul using the language of the antagonists against them, for though they accused Paul of being ashamed, he is here showing them they have been ashamed of their own attempts at self-righteousness through the Law, a theology that focuses on themselves instead of on Christ.

⁵ I see 7:7-25 as a bridge between a call to identify with Christ for sanctification based on our justification [6:12-7:6] and an explanation of how that can be enacted [8:1-39]. In our seminary class, Baylis offered an alternative interpretation. To him, chapter 7 is an explanation of dispensational changes, that Paul is not in the Law anymore, rather he is under grace, but previously he had thought he was righteous for obeying the Law – self-righteous – but then realized with the Law that he was not righteous because he could not keep all of it [the Law showed his sin]. Paul's mind was seeking the righteousness of God, but his body was seeking the righteousness of man. I agree that such an argument would not be out of place here, but I do not see it in the text as clearly.

Paul details how sin is prevalent even in those who desire to be righteous.

1. SIN AND LAW: Sin continues to be a problem for believers, even using the Law to create coveting in us [7:7-13].
2. FLESH AND WILL: Sin resides in the flesh and makes us err, even despite a willfulness to obey [7:14-25].

C. Justified, we should be Spirit led and suffer with Christ.

Paul argues that believers, being justified, can be assured of their righteousness and thus set their minds on things of the Spirit and be led by the Spirit, willing to obey and suffer for Christ with the view of the hope of future glory in resurrected bodies. This view of suffering counters the view of the Jewish Antagonists, who thought suffering indicated God's wrath.

1. JUSTIFICATION: As we have been declared righteous by grace through faith, there can be no condemnation for believers who sin [8:1-2]. What the Law and the flesh couldn't do, God did in sending Christ to fulfill the Law in us who walk by the Spirit instead of by the flesh [8:3-4].
2. SANCTIFICATION: While those without faith will continue to live in the flesh and live out fleshly lives to eventually face God's wrath [as in 1:18-32], believers who are of the Holy Spirit set their minds on things of the Spirit and have life and peace [8:5-8]. You can know you are of the Spirit if you belong to Christ and thus the Spirit dwells in you [8:9].
3. BEING SPIRIT LED: If you belong to Christ, then though your body is dead from sin, your spirit is alive from righteousness [8:10]. If the Spirit is in you, then God will give life even to your body [8:11]. We are not obligated to obey our fleshly desires [similar to what he said in 6:12-14, 16-20], but rather we can be led by the Holy Spirit to resist the flesh [8:12-14⁶].
4. HOPE AND SUFFERING: We are now adopted sons of God, not fearful slaves, and thus we are fellow heirs with Christ if we suffer with Christ [8:15-17]. This suffering is worthwhile because we know the hopeful glory we expect in redemption of our bodies [8:18-23], and thus we persevere in eager anticipation for this hope [8:24-25]. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us [8:26-27], and we can be confident that God is working out things for us [in glorification; 8:28-30] and that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ [8:31-39].

⁶ In our seminary class, Baylis stated that being led by the Spirit meant that the Spirit would reveal Christ through the gospel, leading us to rely on his justification and righteousness, not our own, and that this revelation of imputed righteousness would lead to a better walk [sanctification]. To me, this is a "theological" assumption, not an interpretation of the text. I believe the Spirit can lead us in many ways beyond understanding of what Christ has done for us.

V. Even our faith is by God's decree [9:1-11:36].

Having proven that salvation and sanctification are matters of grace through faith, not of works, Paul explains that even our faith is not something about which we can boast, thus refuting the Gentile Antagonists who boasted of a "work of faith." Within that discussion, Paul also deals with the issue of Israel and the lack of willingness of many Jews to embrace imputed righteousness.

A. God chooses whom he will.

Paul refutes the charge that he is not concerned with the welfare of fellow Jews, but takes advantage of the opportunity to reiterate that heredity does not lead to righteousness without grace through faith, and that God is the one in sovereign control of who will accept Christ, which includes some Gentiles and some Jews.

1. SADNESS: Paul is sad that many fellow Jews are not with Christ [9:1-5].
2. SOVEREIGNTY: Not all Jews by heredity are the true children of promise [9:6-13]. There is no injustice with God, he just chooses whom he will [9:14-18], and we are not to question how God demonstrates his mercy to us in part through demonstrating his wrath on others [9:19-23].
3. JEWS AND GENTILES: Those whom God has called include some Gentiles, and not all Jews [9:24-29]. The Jews did not pursue the Law by faith, but by works, thus stumbling, while the Gentiles, who had not the Law, are now pursuing righteousness by faith [9:30-33].

B. Israel heard the gospel but did not believe.

Paul reiterates his desire to see the Jews come to Christ, and then discusses the failure of Israel to grasp imputed righteousness by grace through faith in Christ.

1. JEWS: Paul desires to see the Jews come to Christ [10:1]. The Jews are zealous for God, but not properly as to revelation, for they seek to establish their own righteousness instead of accepting God's [10:2-3].
2. SALVATION: Christ is the fulfillment of the Law for righteousness for all who believe [10:4], and if you try to earn your righteousness then you have to live by the Law [10:5]; but if you confess Jesus as Lord⁷ you will be saved and if you

⁷ In our seminary class, Baylis made a convincing argument that "Lord" in this context means "Yahweh," not "Adonai," suggesting the verse says we must confess Jesus as God, not Jesus as master. For justification purposes, this makes sense if we believe a sinner is too depraved to repent before salvation. However, in class, Baylis said he viewed this verse and the following ones as discussing sanctification, not justification, because the "call" on God comes after belief. I disagree with this interpretation: I think the "call" is the faith in action, part of the justification process; even though justification is imputed [grace], it is also through faith, and faith to be real must bring action. Of course, those in the "Jesus as master," "lordship salvation," camp would argue that repentance was this faith in action; but even so, I like the Jesus as Yahweh argument. In such case, confessing Jesus is of the Godhead and believing that God raised him from the dead are essentially the same thing, for to believe in the resurrection is to believe in Jesus' proven

believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead then you will have righteousness [10:6-10], this being true for the Jew and the Gentile [10:11-13].

3. ISRAEL'S REBELLION: God sends some out to preach so others may hear and believe, and thus call on God to be saved [10:14-15], but while Israel heard, she did not believe [10:16-21].

C. Israel's unbelief led to salvation for Gentiles, leading to salvation for Jews.

Paul reveals God's plan to bring salvation to both Jews and Gentiles, and uses the discussion to remind Gentile believers they should not be arrogant about their acceptance of grace [i.e. this is not a "work of faith," but a "gift of faith"].

1. THE FAITHFUL REMNANT: God has not rejected his people, Israel [11:1]. Rather, there has always been a remnant of Jews who are faithful and in God's grace [as would be Paul himself; 11:3-10].

2. GOD'S PLAN: God has used this rejection by Israel to bring salvation to the Gentiles, but will then use the salvation of the Gentiles to cause jealousy in the Jews and lead them to their salvation [11:11-12]. With this process in mind – though it is to the Gentiles – Paul's ministry would be magnified if it led to the salvation of some Jews [11:13-15].

3. UNDERSTANDING EXCLUDES ARROGANCE: God chooses whom he will, so Gentiles should not be arrogant that they have Christ while some Jews do not, but rather they should fear God [11:16-24]. While a partial hardening of Israel is happening until the fullness of the Gentiles has come, Israel will be saved [11:25-27], as God will show mercy to them even though they are presently enemies of the gospel [as the Gentiles were; 11:28-36].

VI. We should give the same love as we received [12:1-15:13].

Paul says the Romans should learn to love others as God has loved them. He builds on the previous discussion about sanctification with the encouragement to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we can become one who can walk in love as Christ does. Then he turns to the primary problem and says it is not right to judge one another, rather we should be supporting one another.

A. Be transformed into one who can walk in love as Christ does.

Paul says we can resist conformity to the world and be transformed by the renewing of our minds, leading us to realize our integral role within the body of Christ and how to have proper relationships, motivated by Christ's pending return.

1. WORSHIP THROUGH TRANSFORMATION: We are to respond to God's mercy, and present our bodies as living and holy sacrifices of worship [12:1]. We can

identity, and faith in action would lead to confession of that belief. Thus, this becomes one thought stressed by Paul by being written twice, not two parts with righteousness separated from salvation [answering a long-held question for me].

do this by not being conformed to this world [the culture described in 1:18-32], but rather [building on arguments in chapters 6-8] we should be transformed by the renewing of our minds to do the will of God [12:2⁸].

2. MEMBERSHIP IN THE BODY OF CHRIST: We should think of ourselves as an integral part of the body of Christ, not thinking too highly of ourselves but rather as belonging to each other [12:3-5], and fulfilling our role according to our spiritual gifting [12:6-8].

3. PROPER RELATIONSHIPS: We should be at peace when we can, put others before ourselves, and overcome evil with good [12:9-21]. We should be subject to all authority, knowing it is from God [13:1-6], pay what is due and owe nothing but love to anyone [13:7-8], but truly love our neighbor, for this will fulfill the Law [13:9-10].

4. MOTIVATION: Christ is returning soon [13:11-12], and this is motivation for us to make no provision for the flesh and its lusts, but rather to put on Christ [13:13-14].

B. Support, not judge, each other.

Paul addresses the dissention in the church by admonishing both sides to not judge each other for differences in understanding, but rather to realize that if they are strong in faith then they should be helping and supporting the other, weaker, ones.

1. JUDGING EACH OTHER: We should not hold each other in contempt for what each believes is right [14:1-10], for each will give an account of himself to God [14:11-12]. Rather, we should strive to not present an obstacle to faith for a brother [14:13-16], and – even though our brother might be weaker in faith and understanding, not able to see that the Kingdom of God is not about these petty matters – we should act on the fact that the Kingdom of God is about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit [14:17-18], and therefore pursue

⁸ In our seminary class, Baylis said that this renewal of the mind is progressive understanding of the Spirit illuminated scriptures, which allows us to realize how badly we need a savior and what God did for us, which leads us to operate more on the concept of imputed righteousness, putting to death our concept of self-righteousness. He elaborated that this renewing does not reduce the sin nature within us, but it increases our understanding of grace which motivates us to do good works operating on what God has provided for us. I understand what he is saying, but I do not fully agree. First, as mentioned in an earlier note, if this renewal and transformation do not actually strengthen us in character, then I do not believe we will be motivated to do what we ought. Second, I disagree with the theology behind this assumption, believing instead that as God has given me a new spirit [heart] when I was born again, and as he will purify my body in resurrection, presently he is renewing my mind to be as he created it to be, more like Christ. Experientially, I can say that I have progressed greatly over the past ten years in my ability to live biblically. Baylis stresses that all that is good in us comes from God, that whether we are discussing justification or sanctification, it is all imputed or given to us, and I agree with that. He once mentioned that he metaphorically views us as at a banquet table, chewing on the napkin, and it is not that we ever learn to go and get our own food, but rather that we learn how much more we can get from God at this table. I agree with that too. But I think some of what we can take from that table is this transformation: we cannot transform or renew ourselves, God must do it; but it involves his instillation of progressive sanctification, progressive improvement in our character which leads to progressive improvement in our walk.

the things of peace and edification [14:19-21]. On matters of confusion in doctrine, we should act on our own convictions [14:22-23].

2. CHRIST'S EXAMPLE: Those strong in the faith should bear the weaknesses of the others [15:1-2], remembering that Christ led by example that we should try to edify and please others [15:3]. The Old Testament scriptures were given so that we might have encouragement from them, and with that and perseverance we might have hope [15:4]. Paul prays that the God who gives such perseverance and encouragement would help us to live in unity to better glorify God and Christ [15:5-6]. We are to accept one another, as Christ accepted us [15:7], noting that Christ is a servant to the Jews to fulfill the promises of God and to the Gentiles that they will glorify him for his mercy [15:8-12]. Paul hopes that the God of hope will fill us with joy and peace in believing so that we will abound in hope ourselves by the power of the Holy Spirit [15:13].

VII. Put an end to dissention in the church [15:14-16:27].

Paul offers his example of boasting only of Christ's work, promises to visit Rome soon, and exhorts the Romans to avoid dissention.

A. Boast only in Christ's work:

Paul deals with two issues of contention: boasting of self-righteousness and accusations that he does not wish to visit Rome. He lays out plans to visit and requests prayer support.

1. BOASTING: Paul is confident in the goodness of the Romans [15:14], but has written to them about these issues because he is a priest of the gospel of God to the Gentiles [15:14-16]. Paul is a good example for all, boasting only of Christ's work [15:17-19].

2. VISITING ROME: Paul has not visited Rome previously because his duty was to preach the gospel where it had not been preached [15:20-22], but promises to visit on his way to Spain [15:23-29]. Paul requests prayer support for his protection, mission, and visit to Rome [15:30-33].

B. Turn away from dissention and seek to be wise in what is good.

Paul extends greetings from himself and others, using the occasion to reiterate the need for an end to the dissention in the church.

1. GREETINGS FROM PAUL: The Romans should welcome Phoebe [16:1-2]. Paul sends greetings to several people in Rome [perhaps further establishing his credibility; 16:3-15].

2. GREET EACH OTHER IN PEACE: We should greet each other enthusiastically [16:16]. We must watch out for and turn away from those who are causing dissentions and hindrances contrary to apostolic teaching [16:17-19]. God's grace and provision will prevail over evil [16:20].

3. GREETINGS FROM OTHERS: Various people with Paul send greetings [16:21-24]. All glory is to God [16:25-27].

Application of Message

Historical Application

- Be sanctified⁹: Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, presenting yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness, resisting sin in the power of, and by the leading of, the Holy Spirit, finding humility, clinging to what is good, living out what you believe, suffering with Christ, praying devotedly, rejoicing in hope, and acting on your convictions [6:12-13, 19; 12:1-3, 9, 11-12; 13:1, 13-14; 14:22].
- Avoid dissent: Turn away from those causing dissent [15:6; 16:17].
- Accept others: Accept those who are weaker in the faith or even non-believers, not judging them, but edifying them [11:18-22; 12:16; 14:1-3, 13, 16, 19-20; 15:1-2].
- Love brothers: Love fellow believers as Christ loves, be devoted to each other, use your spiritual gifts to help others, be charitable and hospitable, share their lives, owe nothing, and greet each other enthusiastically [12:6-8, 10, 13, 15; 13:7-9; 16:16].
- Bless enemies: Bless those who persecute you, do not take revenge, care for your enemies, overcome evil with good, be at peace when you can [12:14, 17, 19-21].
- Pray for Paul: Pray that Paul's mission to Jerusalem will be successful, that he will conclude it safely, and that he will be able to arrive in Rome afterward. This implies ceasing to accuse Paul of preaching a false gospel and of avoiding Rome due to shame about that gospel [15:30-32].

Preaching Application (Present day)

- Be sanctified: Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, presenting yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness, resisting sin in the power of, and by the leading of, the Holy Spirit, finding humility, clinging to what is good, living out what you believe, suffering with Christ, praying devotedly, rejoicing in hope, and acting on your convictions.
- Avoid dissent: Promote unity in your church.

⁹ The differences between my views on sanctification and those of Baylis are detailed in earlier notes.

Accept others: Accept those who are weaker in the faith or even non-believers, not judging them, but edifying them.

Love brothers: Love fellow believers as Christ loves, be devoted to each other, use your spiritual gifts to help others, be charitable and hospitable, share their lives, owe nothing, and greet each other enthusiastically.

Bless enemies: Bless those who persecute you, do not take revenge, care for your enemies, overcome evil with good, be at peace when you can.

Serve the Gospel: Do what you can to further the gospel of Christ.

Specific Implementation (Present day)

Be sanctified:

1. Have daily time studying the Word of God and praying.
2. Choose to submit to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.
3. Realize your value comes from God, not anything of yourself.
4. Seek to apply what you learn and live as a Christian example.
5. Be willing to do what is right, even if it brings suffering.
6. Develop a perspective on life based on God's promises.

Avoid dissention:

1. Avoid gossip.
2. Go to an elder or pastor with disagreements about policy.
3. Go to an elder or pastor with disagreements about teachings.
4. Resolve all conflicts in a biblical manner.

Accept others:

1. Realize the only reason you are faithful is God's grace.
2. Seek to love the unlovable.
3. Even when correcting others, do so lovingly and edifyingly.

Love brothers:

1. Discover your spiritual gifts and find ways to serve the body.
2. Actively think of ways to bless others in the church.
3. Give generously of your time, talent, and other resources.
4. Be active in community, sharing lives in small groups.
5. Strive to be enthusiastic and encouraging with others.
6. Meet all obligations.

Bless enemies:

1. Resist the urge to get back at those who spite you.
2. Seek to win over antagonists with kindness.
3. Refuse the fight, whenever possible.
4. Pray for those who hurt you.
5. Learn to forgive and let go, trusting God for justice.

Serve the Gospel:

1. Pray for non-believers.
2. Build relationships with non-believers.
3. Always live to represent Christ well.
4. Be prepared to explain your faith.
5. Support missionaries with prayer and money.

6. Serve at outreach events of the church.
7. Invite non-believers to church functions.

IDENTIFICATION AND INTERACTION

Characters

Antagonist(s)

Physical Traits: There are two sets of antagonists [who are antagonistic to each other]¹⁰:

Jewish Roman Believers: Paul was careful to refute the theology that righteousness could be attained by obedience to the Law [3:1-27] or by heritage as a Jew [2:17-29; 4:13-14], indicating Jewish involvement in the problem. That they were believers is indicated by the second person address to these issues [2:17] in a letter written to the Roman believers [1:7].

2:17, 23-24, 28-29: ¹⁷But if *you* bear the name “*Jew*” and rely upon the Law and boast in God... ²³*You who boast in the Law*, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? ²⁴For “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” just as it is written... ²⁸For he is not *a Jew* who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

3:19-20: ¹⁹Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; ²⁰*because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified* in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Gentile Roman Believers: Paul addressed the arrogance of Gentile believers [11:16-24], and also dealt with issues which suggest Gentiles were scorning Jewish believers who still celebrated Jewish customs [14:1-16]. That they were believers is indicated by the inferred second person address to these issues in a letter written to the Roman believers [1:7].

11:17-18: ¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸*do not be arrogant toward the branches*; but if you are

¹⁰ In our seminary class, Baylis indicated that the nation Israel could be considered an antagonist, because it was a likely source of influence on the Roman Jewish Antagonists to distrust Paul and his theology, to consider suffering as God’s wrath, and to continue relying on the Law. I do not see any reason to doubt this, but as the issue in Rome is internal, I would consider this influence of the nation Israel to be a source of theology for the Roman Jewish Antagonists, rather than including them as a separate antagonist in themselves.

arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

14:1-3: ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³*The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.*

Theological Positions:

Beliefs:

Jews: As believers, the Jewish antagonists had accepted Christ [1:7], but they believed obedience was still necessary for righteousness [3:1-27], and even that heritage as a Jew was a factor [2:17-29; 4:13-14]. Because of their adherence to Jewish customs, they thought they had the right to scorn Gentiles who did not adhere to these customs [14:1-13; 16:17-18], and they had spoken out against Paul, saying he preached breaking the Law would bring about goodness [3:8] and that he was ashamed to travel to Rome to preach such a gospel [1:15-16]. They also viewed suffering as the wrath of God against those who had deviated from the Law or Israel [8:17-39].

3:20, 27: ²⁰*because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin...* ²⁷*Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.*

2:17: ¹⁷But if you bear the name “Jew” and *rely upon the Law* and boast in God...

4:13: ¹³For the promise to Abraham or to his *descendants* that he would be heir of the world *was not through the Law*, but through the righteousness of faith.

14:1-3: ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and *the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats*, for God has accepted him.

3:8: ⁸And why not say (*as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say*), “*Let us do evil that good may come*”? Their condemnation is just.

1:15-16: ¹⁵So, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome*. ¹⁶For *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

8:33-39: ³³Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? *Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* ³⁶Just as it is written, "For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God*, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gentiles: As non-Jews who had never adhered to the Law, the Gentiles had accepted God's grace as the only means to righteousness, but they took this as license to be unloving [13:13-14], scorning those who do still followed the Law [14:1-13; 16:17-18] and being arrogant about the grace extended to them [11:17-19].

13:13-14: ¹³Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, *not in strife and jealousy*. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh* in regard to its lusts.

11:17-18: ¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸*do not be arrogant toward the branches*; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

14:1-3: ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³*The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat*, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

Positions: Paul did not indicate that any of the antagonists held a position in the church.

Summary: Thus, the conflict in Rome was internal to the church, with two groups who possessed mutually exclusive theologies that resulted in judgment of each other. Both groups possessed theologies of righteousness that were divergent from Paul's, as expressed in this letter.

Reader(s)

Physical Traits: The readers were Roman believers [1:7]. They were mostly gentile [1:5-7; 11:13], but also included Jews [2:17].

1:5-7: ⁵...we received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the *Gentiles* for His name's sake, ⁶*among whom you also* are the called of Jesus Christ; ⁷*to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints*: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2:17: ¹⁷*But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God...*

Theological Positions:

Beliefs: The readers were believers [1:7].

1:7: ⁷*to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints*: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Positions: Paul greeted Prisca and Aquila, who hosted a church in their house [16:3-5]; Andronicus and Junias, whom he called apostles [16:7]; and several other believers whom he identified as hard workers for Christ [16:5-6, 8-16].

16:3-7: ³*Greet Prisca and Aquila*, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; ⁵also *greet the church that is in their house*. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia. ⁶Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. ⁷*Greet Andronicus and Junias*, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, *who are outstanding among the apostles*, who also were in Christ before me.

Author(s)

Physical Traits: The author was Paul [1:1], an apostle of Christ [1:1], by heritage a Jew [9:3-5].

1:1: ¹*Paul*, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, *called as an apostle*, set apart for the gospel of God...

9:3-5: ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of *my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh*, ⁴*who are Israelites*, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, ⁵whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Theological Positions:

Beliefs: Paul preached the gospel of God, of Jesus Christ [1:1-3], which is righteousness by grace, through faith [3:21-30]. [A fuller version of Paul's theology follows, in the "Content of the Author's Theology" section.]

1:1: ¹Paul, a *bond-servant of Christ Jesus*, called as an apostle, *set apart for the gospel of God...*

3:21-26: ²¹But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²²*even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ* for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*; ²⁵whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that *He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

Positions: Paul was an apostle. He considered himself a slave to Christ [1:1] who had been sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles [1:5; 15:15-16].

1:1-5: ¹Paul, a *bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle*, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, ⁴who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and *apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles* for His name's sake...

15:15-16: ¹⁵But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, ¹⁶to be a *minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles*, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Problem

Problem Physical Activities

Antagonist Action Toward Reader: The two groups of antagonists were causing dissention in the church and encouraging judgment of each other [14:1-13; 16:17-18].

14:13: ¹³Therefore let us *not judge one another anymore*, but rather determine this – not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

16:17-18: ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those *who cause dissensions* and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are *slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites*; and by their smooth and flattering speech *they deceive* the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Reader's Actions resulting from accepting errant theology

Self: Both groups of antagonists effectively encouraged the readers to be conformed to this world's way of thinking, to sin and lust, which primarily manifested itself through thinking highly of oneself and pursuing strife and jealousy, though other general fleshly lusts received some mention [6:12-13; 12:1-3; 13:13-14].

6:12-13: ¹²Therefore *do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts*, ¹³and *do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness*; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

12:1-3: ¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And *do not be conformed to this world*, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you *not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think*; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

13:13-14: ¹³Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, *not in strife and jealousy*. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts*.

Brothers: Both groups of antagonists encouraged the readers to judge fellow believers and their opinions, to be proud and haughty, to willingly put obstacles in a brother's way to faith strengthening, thus to allow a good thing to be used for bad [12:16; 14:1-3, 13-16].

12:16: ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another; *do not be haughty in mind*, but associate with the lowly. *Do not be wise in your own estimation*.

14:1-3, 13-16: ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³*The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats*, for God has accepted him... ¹³Therefore *let us not judge one another anymore*, but rather determine this—*not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way*. ¹⁴I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. ¹⁵For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. ¹⁶Therefore *do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil*...

Unsaved: The antagonists [particularly the Gentile antagonists] encouraged the readers to be arrogant and conceited toward non-believers [11:18-22].

11:18-22: ¹⁸*do not be arrogant toward the branches*; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. *Do not be conceited*, but fear; ²¹for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. ²²Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Antagonist: As mentioned above, both groups of antagonists were causing dissention [14:1-13; 16:17-18], thereby advocating resistance and judgment toward each other. They also encouraged the reader to take revenge and be overcome with evil [12:17-21].

16:17-18: ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those *who cause dissensions* and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are *slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites*; and by their smooth and flattering speech *they deceive* the hearts of the unsuspecting.

12:17-21: ¹⁷*Never pay back evil for evil to anyone*. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. ¹⁹*Never take your own revenge*, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. ²⁰“But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹*Do not be overcome by evil*, but overcome evil with good.

Author: As mentioned above, the antagonists [particularly the Jewish antagonists] had accused Paul of preaching it was good to break the Law [3:8] and had accused him of being too ashamed of this gospel to preach it in Rome [1:15-16]; they thereby encouraged the readers to doubt Paul and his ministry.

3:8: ⁸And why not say (*as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say*), “*Let us do evil that good may come*”? Their condemnation is just.

1:15-16: ¹⁵So, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.* ¹⁶For *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Problem Theology

Source of Antagonist's Theology:

Jews: As believers [1:7], the Jewish antagonists had received apostolic teaching about the gospel. They also depended on the Old Testament Law [2:17-29], though according to Paul they misunderstood that righteousness was always by faith [3:31-4:25]. They also were driven by their flesh [human reasoning], resulting in their judgmental attitudes [16:17-18] and distortions in theology [deviations from the true Word of God]. As Paul addresses the issues of Israel so extensively in this epistle [10:16-11:36], the Jewish antagonists must have been getting some motivation and theology from Israel.

2:17: ¹⁷But if you bear the name "Jew" and *rely upon the Law* and boast in God...

4:13: ¹³For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was *not through the Law*, but through the righteousness of faith.

16:17-18: ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those *who cause dissensions* and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are *slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites*; and by their smooth and flattering speech *they deceive* the hearts of the unsuspecting.

11:7, 28: ⁷What then? What *Israel* is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened... ²⁸*From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake*, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers...

Gentiles: As believers [1:7], the Gentile antagonists had received apostolic teaching about the gospel. They also were driven by their flesh [human reasoning], resulting in their judgmental attitudes [16:17-18] and distortions in theology [deviations from the true Word of God].

16:17-18: ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those *who cause dissensions* and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are *slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites*; and by their smooth and flattering speech *they deceive* the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Content of Antagonist's Theology:

Jews: As believers, the Jewish antagonists had accepted Christ [1:7], but they believed obedience was still necessary for righteousness [3:1-27], and even that heritage as a Jew was a factor [2:17-29; 4:13-14]. Because of their adherence to Jewish customs, they thought they had the right to scorn Gentiles who did not adhere to these customs [14:1-13; 16:17-18], and they had spoken out against Paul, saying he preached breaking the Law would bring about goodness [3:8] and that he was ashamed to travel to Rome to preach such a gospel [1:15-16]. They also viewed suffering as the wrath of God against those who had deviated from the Law or Israel [8:17-39].

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3:8: ⁸And why not say (*as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say*), “*Let us do evil that good may come*”? Their condemnation is just.

1:15-16: ¹⁵So, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome*. ¹⁶For *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

8:33-39: ³³Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? *Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* ³⁶Just as it is written, “For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God*, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gentiles: As non-Jews who had never adhered to the Law, the Gentiles had accepted God's grace as the only means to righteousness, but they took this as license to be unloving [13:13-14], scorning those who do still followed the Law [14:1-13; 16:17-18] and being arrogant about the grace extended to them [11:17-19].

13:13-14: ¹³Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, *not in strife and jealousy*.
¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh* in regard to its lusts.

11:17-18: ¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸*do not be arrogant toward the branches*; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

14:1-3: ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³*The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat*, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

Problem Summary Statement

Based on the belief that righteousness required obedience to the Law and that heritage as a Jew aided in attaining righteousness, the Jewish antagonists were encouraging the readers to follow the Law, to judge those who did not follow the Law, and to scorn Paul, whom they characterized as ashamed for preaching a gospel encouraging the breaking of the Law, all of which led to dissention in the Roman church. Based on the belief that their faith was something of which to be proud and that grace provided license, the Gentile antagonists were encouraging readers to follow them into a fleshly way of thinking, including arrogance and conceit toward non-believers, and scorn toward those believers who adhered to the Law, all of which led to dissention in the Roman church.

Solution

Physical Activities

Author's Action Toward Reader: Paul wrote to teach correct theology and to warn against false teachings [1:1; 15:15], while he also prayed unceasingly for the readers [1:8-10] and planned a visit to Rome [1:10-15; 15:23-24, 28-29, 32].

1:8-10, 15: ⁸First, *I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all*, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. ⁹For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how *unceasingly I make mention of you*, ¹⁰*always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you...* ¹⁵So, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome*.

15:15a: ¹⁵But *I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again...*

15:23-24, 28-32: ²²For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; ²³but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you ²⁴whenever I go to Spain—for *I hope to see you in passing*, and to be helped on my way there by you, when *I have first enjoyed your company for a while...*²⁸Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, *I will go on by way of you to Spain.* ²⁹I know that *when I come to you*, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. ³⁰Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, ³¹that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; ³²*so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.*

Reader's Actions resulting from accepting author's theology

Self: Paul advocated the readers be transformed to righteousness by the renewing of their minds¹¹ [accepting imputed righteousness by grace through faith in Christ and allowing the renewal by the Holy Spirit; 12:1-2], which would include resisting all sin and presenting themselves as tools of righteousness for God [6:12-13, 19; 12:1-2], being humble [12:3], living without hypocrisy or judgment [12:9], clinging to what was good and abhorring what was evil [12:9], being diligent, fervent, and serving [12:11], rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, and praying devotedly [12:12], obeying civil authority [13:1], making no provision for fleshly lusts [13:14], and acting on their convictions from God [14:22].

6:12-13, 19: ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, ¹³and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but *present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God...* ¹⁹I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now *present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.*

12:1-3: ¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to *present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.* ²And do not be conformed to this world, but *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to *think so as to have sound judgment*, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

12:9-12: ⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; *cling to what is good.* ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one

¹¹ In our seminary class, Baylis stressed Paul's advocacy of humility through realizing the need for imputed righteousness and the lack of any self-merit or self-righteousness, in contrast to the antagonists' view of seeking self-righteousness and being haughty. While I see Paul's emphasis on this issue, I also see him addressing other fleshly attitudes.

another in honor; ¹¹*not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*; ¹²*rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer...*

13:14: ¹⁴*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*

Brothers: Paul advocated a loving approach to fellow believers [13:9], including using spiritual gifts to help them [12:6-8], honoring them above oneself [12:10], giving preference to them [12:10], being devoted to their care [12:13], being charitable and hospitable [12:13], rejoicing and weeping with them [12:15], being humble [12:16], being at peace with them [12:18; 14:19-20], rendering what is due to them [13:7], owing nothing but love [13:8], accepting those weaker in faith without judgment [14:1-3; 15:7], avoiding putting obstacles in the way to the strengthening of their faith [14:13, 16], edifying them [14:19-20], glorifying God in unity with them [15:6], and greeting them heartily [16:16].

12:6-18: ⁶Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. ⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor*; ¹¹not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, ¹³*contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality*. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*. ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another; *do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly*. Do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, *be at peace with all men*.

13:8-9: ⁸Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for *he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law*. ⁹For this, “You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*.”

14:19-20: ¹⁹So then we *pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another*. ²⁰*Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food*. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.

Unsaved: Paul advocated the readers accept those who did not believe, avoiding arrogance or conceitedness [11:18-22].

11:18-22: ¹⁸*do not be arrogant toward the branches*; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Quite right, *they were broken off for their unbelief*, but you stand by your faith. *Do not be conceited, but fear*; ²¹for if God did not spare the natural branches, He

will not spare you, either. ²²Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Antagonist: Paul advocated the readers watch out for and turn away from those who caused dissention and hindrances contrary to apostolic teaching [16:17]. However, he also advocated an attitude of blessing and caring for one's enemies [12:14, 20], allowing God to judge and exact justice [12:19], overcoming evil with good [12:17, 19, 21].

16:17: ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, *keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.*

12:14-21: ¹⁴*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.* ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷*Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.* Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. ¹⁹*Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay,"* says the Lord. ²⁰*"But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."* ²¹*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Author: Paul advocated the readers pray for his safety, successful service, and arrival in Rome [15:30-32]. In refuting the charges brought against him by the Jewish antagonists [1:15-16; 3:8; 9:1-2], in building the credibility of his gospel [1:1-5; 15:15-16], and in thoroughly explaining his theology throughout the letter, he encouraged the readers to believe in his teachings.

15:30-32: ³⁰Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to *strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,* ³¹that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; ³²so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

1:1-5: ¹Paul, a *bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,* ²*which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,* ³*concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,* ⁴*who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,* ⁵*through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake...*

15:15-16: ¹⁵But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, *because of the grace that was given me from God,* ¹⁶*to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God,* so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

3:8: ⁸And why not say (*as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say*), “*Let us do evil that good may come*”? Their condemnation is just.

1:15-16: ¹⁵So, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome*. ¹⁶For *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

9:1-2: ¹I am telling the truth in Christ, *I am not lying*, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ²that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart.

Theology

Source of Author's Theology: Paul got his theology from the gospel of Christ [1:1; 15:16], God's direct revelation [grace; 15:15-16], Christ [15:18], and the Old Testament scriptures [evidenced by direct quotation; 1:17; 2:6, 24; 3:4, 10-18; 4:3, 7-9, 17, 22; 7:7, 36; 9:7, 9, 12-13, 15, 25-29, 33; 10:6-8, 11, 13, 15-16, 18-21; 11:3-4, 8-10, 26-27, 34-35; 12:19-20; 13:9; 14:11; 15:3, 9-12, 21].

1:1: ¹Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for *the gospel of God*...

15:15-18: ¹⁵But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of *the grace that was given me from God*, ¹⁶*to be a minister of Christ Jesus* to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest *the gospel of God*, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸For I will not presume to speak of anything except what *Christ has accomplished through me*, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed...

Content of Author's Theology: Paul defended the gospel of Christ and his willingness to preach it to the Romans [1:5-17; 15:22-32]. He then laid out a proof of the need for grace to attain righteousness [1:18-3:20], and stated that this grace was appropriated through faith in Christ [3:21-5:11]. Paul explained that as a result of this reconciliation with God by grace through faith, believers should identify with Christ and be Spirit led [5:12-8:39]. He went on to say that, as even faith is by God's decree, believers cannot boast about any self-merit, while explaining that God has not abandoned Israel [9:1-11:36; 15:14-21], and argued that believers should therefore show others the same kind of love they had received from God [12:1-15:13].

1:1-6; 10-16: ¹Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, *called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God*, ²*which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures*, ³*concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh*, ⁴*who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord*, ⁵*through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake*, ⁶*among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ*... ¹⁰*always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you*. ¹¹*For I long to see you* so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; ¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you

while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that *often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far)* so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵So, *for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.* ¹⁶*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

3:9: ⁹What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that *both Jews and Greeks are all under sin...*

3:23-26: ²³*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,* ²⁴*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;* ²⁵*whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.* This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He *passed over the sins previously committed;* ²⁶*for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

6:11-13: ¹¹Even so *consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* ¹²*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,* ¹³*and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

11:7: ⁷What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but *those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened...*

15:7: ⁷Therefore, *accept one another,* just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.

Solution Summary Statement

Based on the theology that Christ's gospel is the proven method of God to bring salvation and righteousness to man through faith, and that God's grace through Christ and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit can deliver man from bondage to the sin to which all are vulnerable, Paul advocates the Romans be transformed to righteous behavior by the renewing of their minds, thus loving their fellow believers like themselves, accepting those who are without faith, blessing and caring for enemies, and praying for the success of Paul's endeavors.