

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

## Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

---

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

---

5-1-1946

### The Relation Between Justification and Sanctification in Romans

Albert A. Behnke

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir\_behnkea@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Behnke, Albert A., "The Relation Between Justification and Sanctification in Romans" (1946). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 168.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/168>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bachelor of Divinity by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

**THE RELATION BETWEEN  
JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION  
IN ROMANS**

---

**A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary  
Department of New Testament Theology**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity**

---

**by  
Albert A. Behnke**

**May, 1946**

Approved by:

J. E. Meyer  
W. Audi.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
CHAPTER I. In Romans Paul Teaches The Fundamental Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Christ the Redeemer . . . . .	5
CHAPTER II. Does Paul in Romans Relate Justifica- tion to Christian Living? . . . . .	15
CHAPTER III. Various Fruits of Justification and their Relation to Life. . . . .	25
CHAPTER IV. Justification in its Various Phases has Correspondingly Various Effects Upon Christian life. . . . .	30
CHAPTER V. Various Departments and Phases of Christian Life as they are Affected by Justification. . . . .	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	58

\* \* \* \* \*

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to present the relationship which exists in St. Paul's Letter to the Romans between Justification and Sanctification. From time to time this "mother and her child" have fared differently from various groups of religious minded people. In their devotion to the "mother" some have forgotten "her child" or at the most given it scant attention, resulting in cold formalism and dead orthodoxy until finally even the mother herself died. Others beholding this devotion to the "mother" to the utter neglect of the "child" began to espouse the cause of the child until finally the child was elevated to occupy the throne of the mother. Luther once declared that the ability to distinguish rightly between the Law and the Gospel, and to relate them correctly to each other, was indeed a "very high" art for the Christian theologian. To maintain the proper relation between sanctification and justification is no less an art for the Christian theologian.

Speaking of the difficulty men have of keeping these two truths of Christian revelation properly related and of the

everpresent temptation and tendency to give unequal emphasis to both or either one of these doctrines, the following pertinent paragraph applies:

Luther on occasion compared the world with a drunken peasant who when he was shoved into the saddle on the one side toppled out of it on the other, so that it was impossible to help him, do what one would. The history of theology tempts one to use the same comparison. What venturesome statements have men permitted themselves to make, statements that ultimately had to lead to disaster because the attempt was made to present a truth that was correct enough in itself but which was taught in a one-sided, undialectic form, with complete contempt and disapproval of its antithesis. We recall that Swedish tendency of the first half of the nineteenth century which has its parallels in the present day. Bornholmeriens who in contending against a new life found special gratification in seeking out the sins and weaknesses of the saints that are related in Scripture; the Hedbergians and the followers of Rosenius, who taught "the justification of the whole world" and regarded every admonition to amendment as a "hindrance to salvation," as "an outgrowth of an evil doctrine of works" because God is "just as gracious as when men go a-whoring, are drunken and steal, as when they pour out their prayers on their knees in fervent devotion." So here the balance of the moral side of the preaching of Jesus was lost in the interests of an exaggerated teaching of amnesty, so the same mistakes were made in the other direction, for example in the Pentecostal movement, where the sanctifying fanaticism of these enthusiasts derided the deadly seriousness of a teaching of the atonement as a "traditional conviction that daily sinning is inevitable. (Jellinghaus.) 1.

---

1. Adolph Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, p. 259-260

These "parallels in the present day" to which Koeberle refers already had their counterpart in the days of St. Paul. Paul's preaching of "the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith", (Rom. 1,17); his emphasis on "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus", (Rom. 1,24); and the conclusion he draws from it "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," met with the bitterest opposition in the Pharisaic heart which could conceive of salvation only on the basis of a man's character. To the sincere Pharisee sanctification was the only bridge to communion with God. On the other hand, many among them could only conclude that such a doctrine could only result in increased immorality and lawlessness among the people. Moreover, from St. Paul's attack of the problem, it is reasonable to assume that at least some of Paul's adherents gave these moralists some justification for their misgivings. Surely there were some among the "converts" to Paul's Gospel who by their manner of living put the taunt into the mouths of the moralists, "Let us do evil, that good may come". (Rom. 3,8).

And human nature being what it is, remaining quite unchangeable, the observation which James Denney makes in his Introduction to Romans, is quite in order:

This criticism was not so much Jewish as human. It is not the Jewish-Christian

or Jewish consciousness in particular - it is the consciousness of the natural man at a certain stage of moral development - which thinks that forgiveness is an immoral doctrine, and is shocked at the idea of a God who justifies the ungodly, or on the other hand, indulges the idea that pardon procures license to sin. 2.

With these considerations, then, in mind, coming not so much from any specific group of people, as for example, the Romans, but from his knowledge of human nature gained by long experience in preaching the Gospel, Paul writes his letter to the Romans and relates justification to sanctification and sanctification to justification. To set forth this relationship as we find it in Romans will now under God's blessing become our purpose.

---

2. James Denney, D.D. The Expositors Greek Testament, p. 572

I

IN HIS LETTER TO THE ROMANS PAUL TEACHES THE  
FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH  
IN JESUS CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

A. PAUL'S FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS PROBLEM

The purpose of the Apostle Paul in writing his letter reference to the Romans no doubt was in substance to impart some spiritual gift. Through this epistle he would at the least make a beginning and lay the foundation for further work among them if God would grant his prayer to visit in Rome. Even though the Roman Christian were addressed by Paul as brethren and even though their faith was quite generally a topic of conversation, Paul apparently was of the opinion that the Romans only imperfectly understood the real breadth and bearings of the Christian religion. At the same time Paul has in mind that vast Gentile world consisting of cultured and uncultured, educated and uneducated, whose ears had not yet heard the Gospel of Christ. Paul felt himself under divine obligation and compulsion towards these masses of heathen. One way of attacking this problem would

be by broadening the spiritual understanding of the Christians at Rome, by deepening their conviction, by kindling their love and fervor, and by answering some of the questions which must have occupied their minds.

Therefore, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who brought Paul to a knowledge of the Gospel of Christ and who now also directly inspires him, Paul begins his literary discourse to the Romans with a rather detailed discussion of man's fundamental religious problem. This fundamental problem revolves about the attainment of a righteousness which avails before God. Righteousness is something without which sinful man cannot gain communion with God. How can this sinful man become righteous before God? - this is the fundamental religious problem Paul deals with in the opening chapters of his epistle.

Immediately Paul accentuates the problem and reveals the full depth of man's religious dilemma by a detailed and thorough discussion of man's sin and guilt. (1,19-2,19). In his description of men's ungodliness and unrighteousness, Paul makes no difference among them. He draws into his discussion various groups and categories of men - Gentiles and Jews, Greeks and Barbarians, wise and unwise - those who have the law written on scrolls for their continual instruction and who therefore may feel themselves qualified to teach others the form of knowledge and the principles of the law - and those whose only law are those indistinct remnants of morality retained in men's

heart's after the fall and whose only external manual of instruction is the book of nature - Paul speaks of all of them in his opening chapters, and irrespective of race, class, category, irrespective of social and intellectual development, irrespective of previous religious background, they all have one common problem. All are sinners and weighted down with guilt. The whole tree of mankind is diseased, root, trunk and all its branches.

Nor is this universal and individual guilt of man a matter of indifference with God. There is a clash with God's righteousness and justice, and holiness. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men". (1,19). This wrath of God against sin is revealed to men already in the present time, in the written Word, in men's consciences, in the complete abandonment to sin which God permits to happen. In this latter sense, conscienceless and utterly barbarian regimes like Nazism may be regarded as judgments of God. Then finally comes the final judgment of God with its tribulation and anguish of which the various revelations of God's wrath in time are but predictions and warnings. Men under guilt are men under wrath - this is the conviction Paul seeks to inculcate into consciences.

Then, also in this connection Paul discourses on the utter inadequacy and insufficiency of any righteousness which men might offer unto God out of their own achieving. The righteousness which men perform, even when it is according to the letter of the law, does not off-set and write off their unrighteousness.

Addressing the Jews in particular Paul tells them that "circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision". (2,25). Therefore Paul confronts them with the question, "Are we better than they (the Gentiles)? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin", as it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one". (3, 9-10). With this argument and truth in mind Paul then drives home the conclusion, "therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight". (3,20). Paul has no intention of condemning the deeds of the law, no intention whatever of advocating disrespect for morality and decency. His point is simply this - whatever righteousness which we possess even when it outwardly coincides with the requirement of the law, cannot balance our account with God, cannot gain for us a verdict of justification from God.

Furthermore, any righteousness which men might achieve through an external observance of the law is in itself corrupted by imperfections and falls far short of the glory of God. Luther has a very applicable paragraph on this subject in his preface to the Epistle to the Romans, "The little word 'law', you must not take here in human fashion, as a teaching about what works are to be done or not done. That is the way it is with human laws, - the law is fulfilled by works, even though there is no heart in them. But God judges according to what is at the bottom of the heart, and for this reason, His law

makes its demands on the inmost heart and cannot be satisfied with works, but rather punishes works that are done otherwise than from the bottom of the heart, as hypocrisy and lies. Hence all men are called liars, in Psalm 116, for the reason that no one keeps or can keep God's law from the bottom of the heart, for everyone finds in himself displeasure in what is good and pleasure in what is bad. If then, there is no willing pleasure in the good, then the inmost heart is not set on the law of God, then there is surely sin, and God's wrath is deserved, even though outwardly there seem to be many good works and an honorable life". 3.

#### B. THE ANSWER TO MAN'S FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS PROBLEM

It is to the everlasting glory of the Lord and to the praise of St. Paul, the servant of the Lord, that mankind is not left without an answer to its chief religious problem. Even though men cannot come before God with any righteousness of their own achievement, there is nevertheless a righteousness which avails before God, there is the possibility for the individual sinner to become righteous in God's sight. Paul speaks of it in 1, 18 as a "righteousness of God" revealed from faith to faith". The righteousness which Paul has in mind originates outside of the sinner; it originates with God; it is God's solution to man's problem; it is a gift of God's infinite wisdom and boundless love, and it is a righteousness

---

3. Martin Luther, Works of Martin Luther, Vol.VI. p.447-448.

which requires only our appropriation through faith.

It therefore becomes evident that the solution of man's problem is purely judicial, involving an act of gracious judgment on God's part toward the guilty sinner. The sinner believes, God pronounces him just. This is more than evident from two pertinent passages, viz. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested ... even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, (3, 21-23). (The context must be maintained to bring out the full thought). And, "but to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness". (4, 5). In this passage all works on man's part are excluded. Even faith is not to be reckoned as a good work which merits justification, but simply as man's spiritual equipment whereby he comes to enjoy God's gracious judicial verdict of the remission of his sins.

But what is the basis upon which God justifies? What is it that man believes? Surely Paul does not have in mind just any kind of believing which may have for its object the wildest theological speculation? Nor could the holy God set aside His own justice and without regard to justice and righteousness justify ungodly men. The answers to these questions are contained in the Gospel, the message, the truth, which Paul had received for transmission among all nations. It was "the

gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead". (1, 3).

"Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus", whom God hath set forth as a propitiation, God justifies freely by his grace". (3, 24-25). This redemption includes both what Christ did in the sinner's stead (active obedience) and what Christ suffered for the sinner (passive obedience). (See 5, 12-21 and 5, 6-11). We are correct therefore in drawing the following threefold conclusions, 1. that Christ did for the sinner what the sinner could not do for himself, fulfilling the righteousness of the law and suffering the penalty of the law; 2. that this truth concerning Christ is the chief message of the Gospel proclaimed to the sinner to invite his faith and trust in this accomplished redemption; 3. that such faith in the Gospel justifies the sinner, is reckoned to him for righteousness, and changes the sinner's status from utter accursedness to ineffable blessedness.

In Chapter 3 v 21 Paul declares that the righteousness of God is "witnessed by the Law and the Prophets", the Old Testament Scriptures. Such an Old Testament witness Paul also introduces into his discussion of the righteousness of faith in the person of Abraham. (Ch. 4). He considers the faith and experience of Abraham parallel to his great theme of

justification. Abraham was held in highest esteem, especially in Jewish circles. He was looked up to as an example in matters of religion. It was considered a special honor among the Hebrews to refer to themselves as "Sons of Abraham". How appropriate then in this discussion which was also addressed to Jewish readers to bring up the question, how Abraham was justified. The answer which Paul found in Scriptures would also impress his non-Jewish readers. What was this answer? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness". (4,3). But what did Abraham believe? Scriptures say that he believed God. But what about the Gospel of Christ? It was contained in the promise which God made to Abraham and which promised him to become the father of the seed which would not only bring blessing to him, but to all nations. In substance Abraham's faith was identical with the faith of the New Testament which looks only to Christ for the blessing of salvation. But what about Abraham's submission to the rite of circumcision? Was not this obedience of his to God's law reckoned as righteousness? No; for before Abraham is circumcised the Scriptures say of him that he believed God and that his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. (Cf. Gen. 15,6 and Gen. 17, 10). His circumcision which followed afterwards Paul calls "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised". Consequently, Abraham too was justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Enlightening in this connection in which Abraham is set forth as an illustration of justification by faith and the honor accorded to him as being the true spiritual father of all them that believe is the following observation:

These "steps of faith" of the uncircumcised Abraham would embrace all Abraham's story from his "call" in Genesis 12 to his circumcision in Genesis 17, - when he was 99 years old. 4.

As an essential part of his discussion of the doctrine of justification by faith St. Paul also brings into it frequent references to the means of grace, namely "the Gospel of Christ" (1,16), "the word of faith, which we preach" (10,8), "the Gospel of peace and glad tidings of good things" (10,15), and also baptism (6,3). Paul regards the Gospel of Christ as the very power of God because of its contents, because therein is revealed the righteousness of God, because it is the story and message of the redemption Christ has accomplished for us. The power of the Gospel is not that it contains holy words or sacred ideas, but simply because it tells a most blessed story of what God has done in Christ to save us from our sin and guilt. This message is to be broadcast, proclaimed, and preached in the world. It is to receive the widest publicity. In Romans 10 Paul places great emphasis on this point. People cannot call on the name of the Lord who is rich in mercy unless they believe in Him. Nor can they believe in Him unless the message of His great grace in Christ has been heard by them. Nor can they

have opportunity to hear this message unless a messenger comes and brings it to them. Therefore, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Therefore also the conclusion which Paul draws is in order, namely, that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing (what is heard, the message) by the word of God". (Rom. 10, 12-17).

A more detailed discussion of baptism in its relation to justification by faith and to the believer's sanctification will be reserved for a later chapter.

The final goal of the believer is only a point of departure, whether the process of justification can be seen only in the life beyond the grave. The question therefore is intensely practical, for the question really asks whether the believer's changed status before God can be ascribed to his act in him to leave him from the power of sin and to transfer him into grace conditions. And if so, what is the relation between the act of justification, it is a most serious question. In his book, "Christ and Man's Silence," Dr. Schiller has this paragraph:

We shall ask if the gospel of Christ meets the soul and breaths it such that both, and though it may go beyond both, to be a genuine gospel. We shall ask about our human responses, we are in a narrow line, and a gospel comes, to be gospel which it invites and requires, our response it must not cease. It.

Dr. George de Witt Schiller, Christ and Man's Silence, p. 27.

## II

### DOES PAUL IN ROMANS RELATE JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE, ESPECIALLY TO WHAT WE CALL CHRISTIAN LIVING?

Our interest in the second portion of this thesis will center around the inquiry whether Paul teaches justification for justification's sake only, whether justification is the final goal of the believer or only a point of departure, whether the results of justification can be seen only in the world beyond the grave. The question therefore is intensely practical, for the question really asks whether the believer's changed status before God can do something to him and in him to loose him from the power of sin and to transform him into a new creature. And if it does, what is the relation between the two? Moreover, it is a most modern question. In his book, "Christ And Man's Dilemma," Dr. Buttrick has this paragraph:

We shall ask if the gospel of Christ meets the mind and heart: it must meet both, even though it may go beyond both, to be a genuine gospel. We shall ask about our human response: we are in a measure free, and a gospel ceases to be gospel unless it invites and requires our response: it must not coerce. 5.

---

5. George A. Buttrick, Christ and Man's Dilemma, p. 29.

The writer does not share Dr. Buttrick's confused theology so apparent in the paragraph, but he does share his interest in the problem whether the gospel of Christ meets the mind and the heart, whether it can do something for us in our moral and social dilemma.

Our chief concern therefore in this chapter will be to discover and to report such connections between justification and sanctification as may appear from a study of Paul's letter to the Romans. Gradually one is impressed, not by the paucity of such links, but by their abundance. It appears that St. Paul cannot at all think of justification by faith as an academic question, but as a sort of leaven which touches and influences the life of the believer in Christ at all points. Certainly no charge of "dead orthodoxy," "cold formalism," "irrelevant theologizing" can be hurled against St. Paul. Every chapter of his epistle in which justification by faith in Christ is the heart and core, breathes life, is linked with life, is aimed at life, and produces new life.

To begin with, it was related to Paul's own life. Who will question the high motives and the lovely fruits in Paul's own life? His Christian character stands out as a jewel in the midst of a crooked and perverse world. Facets of this jewel shine forth from the epistle. In one of the opening sections he finds it needful to refer to his manner of life. He serves God in the spirit. He does not forget the Romans in his

prayers. He desires to make a long and tedious journey to Rome in their behalf. He has in mind their spiritual welfare and purposes to impart to them some spiritual gifts. If any man questions his sincerity, God is his witness. (1, 9-11). Surely a wholesome attitude for any man to have. What may have been the dynamo which generated these currents of a new life into the apostle's personality? He serves God with his spirit in the gospel of His Son. (1,9). He is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. His heart's desire and prayer to God for the people whose blood flows through his own veins is that they might be saved. He could wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, if it were to attain the desired end. What was the source of such matchless brotherliness? It was the conviction permeating his whole life and thinking, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth". (10, 1-4). Other instances could be adduced from the epistle of the marvelous renewing affect of justification on Paul's own life, but we shall let these suffice.

Moreover, the purpose Paul had in preparing his letter reveals a link between "the righteousness of faith" and the "righteousness of life". Paul writes "to the end ye may be established." No sound exegete would think of narrowing this down to mean only a strengthening of their faith with no regard whatever for their Christian behavior. Paul's letter is it's own interpreter. It is the whole Christian man Paul

aims to strengthen throughout his epistle. How can it be done? Again Paul's own presentation furnishes us the answer. What other reason could he have for first thoroughly reviewing with the Romans the precious truth of their justification through the merits and mediation of Christ their Savior? Doing the one he could also accomplish the other. They belong together and Paul brings them together as much as God has ordained that trees and bearing fruit belong together. Imparting spiritual gifts, broadening and deepening the understanding and appreciation of justification, can have but one result according to Paul's presentation - a stronger Christian faith and a stronger Christian life.

Most interesting also in this connection is Paul's Old Testament reference illustrating justification by faith and its results upon the believer. He quotes the reply once given to the Prophet Habbakuk, "The just shall live by faith." (Cf. 1,17 with Hab. 2,4). The context in which Paul uses this quotation from the Old Testament certainly makes us conclude that Paul's thought is that "the just one", the person whom God regards as righteous, is such a person by faith, and this person righteous through faith lives. He will live in an eternal sense; he will never see real death as is the case with those who reject the Gospel of Christ. But to think of this glorious experience of the believer as being postponed until eternity is unthinkable. When does

such a believer begin to experience life? Surely the moment the light of justification by faith shines into his heart. Habbakuk, to whom the words were first addressed, had a real life-situation, with a long period of living on earth, before the glory of eternity would remove the problems which confronted him. God's answer to his problem in a real life situation was, as it is to us, "The just shall live by faith".

Lenski very aptly summarizes this idea by saying:

Some restrict "shall live" to the attainment of life at the time of the final judgment or to the heavenly life at the moment of death. They interpret that as the final outcome of his faith, the righteous shall get life and thus live. Are the righteous man and his faith dead until that time? Such a thought is impossible. In John 3, 15-16 Jesus twice says: πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν ἑμοί, 'everyone believing has (has all along, present subjunctive) life eternal', has it as and while he is believing. This is the so-called logical future: ἔσονται, 'shall live'; right out of his faith, in the very first instant of its existence springs life. Reborn in faith, he lives spiritually with the life that is to last eternally. 6.

Furthermore, a link between justification and sanctification may be seen from Paul's answer to the critics of his doctrine. These critics, whether sincerely, or to find a point of argument, expressed the fear that Paul's doctrine would undermine the law, decency and order, righteousness and mortality. Their argument went like this, "If God justifies a person freely, purely through grace, without consideration of works and merits, why the whole structure of law and order will collapse!

It is like wiping all law off the books and handing men license to sin!" Paul is unafraid of their objection. He knows what justification is and what it can do. He considers their objection. "Do we then make void the law through faith?" God forbid! "We establish the law". (3, 31.)

On this point we desire to quote Dr. Denney's "Introduction to Romans":

There can be only one fundamental doctrine, and that doctrine for Paul is the doctrine of justification by faith. That is not part of his Gospel, it is the whole of it: there Luther is his true interpreter. If legalists or moralists object, Paul's answer is that justification regenerates, and that nothing else does. By its consistency with this fundamental doctrine, we test everything else that is put forward as Christian. It is only as we told this, on principle, with the clearness with which Paul held it, that we can know what Christian liberty is in the sense of the New Testament - that liberty in which the will of God is done from the heart, and in which no commandments, or ordinances of men, no definitions or traditions, no customs or 'orders' have any legal authority for the conscience. And in the only legitimate sense of the word this liberty does not make void, but establishes the law. 7.

As our search for connections between justification and Christian behavior progresses, we are impressed by the most natural and effective transition found between Chapters 5 and 6 with its bearing upon our present consideration. Paul had been singing high the praises of grace in its relation to our guilt. God's grace in any case and in every case exceeds the measure of our sin and guilt. "where sin abounded,

---

7. Dr. James Denney, The Expositors Greek New Testament, Vol. II, p. 575.

grace did much more abound". (5, 21). Immediately we find Paul tying it up with the believer's behavior. His immediate subsequent question, addressed to Christians, is, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound"? His answer follows immediately, "God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein"? (6, 1-2).

In his classroom lectures Dr. Arndt points out this relation between Chapter V and Chapter VI to the students of Concordia Seminary. The following appears in his mimeographed notes on Romans:

Paul now wishes to show that righteousness by faith does not lead to a life of sin. Why not? Briefly the answer is that Christians in baptism have died to sin and have been freed of its dominion. Paul says, connecting this section closely with the foregoing, "What conclusion are we to draw from the preceding discussion"? He asks, "Shall we remain in sin"? The subjunctive is deliberate. The thought now arises: Let us sin; the grace of God abounds more than sin; the more sin, the more grace; that principle grants us unlimited permission to transgress. Transgression might even be looked upon as a pious act because it will make grace more abundant. The apostle denies emphatically that such a view may be taken". 8.

Another instance of how Paul relates his central doctrine with sin's overthrow in the life of the Christian is to be found in Ch. 8, 3-4. In substance Paul's thought is as follows: The law, because of the utter corruption of our flesh, was deficient. It was unable to accomplish our willing obedience. It was impossible for the law to transform us

into lawful and godly people. Therefore God decided upon other means. God sent in His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh on a mission in regard to sin. The mission was to condemn sin in its very seat of power - in the flesh. By Christ's life, death and resurrection, a verdict was gained against sin. Sin lost its right of securing our condemnation because Christ took the sin and the condemnation upon himself. Thus it was further condemned; it also lost its right and its power to rule over us. And the purpose of this condemnation of sin in the flesh on the part of Christ? The end that God desires and designs to achieve? What happens in the one appropriating this truth? "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

Dr. Arndt's notes are again worthy of quotation in this connection. Referring to Chapter VIII, v 4, he says:

We have a purpose clause here: in order that the demands of the law be fulfilled in us. The question arises after one has read verse 3, why did God condemn sin in Christ and rob it of its authority and power? Paul answers, that we might fulfill the demands of the law. The demands of the law set forth what is good and right. Christ's work has taken place that we might do that which is right and good. We have been redeemed not for a life of sin, but for a life of holy obedience, not merely for salvation in heaven but for holy life on earth. We see how far removed Paul is from teaching license with respect to sin. 9.

We bring this chapter of our discussion to a close now by referring briefly to 12, 1-2. Even the most casual reader cannot miss discovering the link which Paul has here forged between God's great gift of righteousness to the believer and the effect it is intended to have and will have upon the every-day life of the believer. On the one hand, Paul pours the fulness of all of God's gracious acts and gifts towards us sinners into a few brief words - "the mercies of God" - and on the other, he mentions the response which is awaited and will occur in appreciative recipients of these mercies - the presentation of their bodies a living sacrifice to God. Paul is making a request of them which is bound to affect their whole manner of living. This request is to be received and to be acted upon through the remembrance and consideration of the compassions of God. Action is asked; a bold step is encouraged. But before the Romans answer pro or con, let them review and re-appraise the immeasurable mercies God had exhibited and evidenced in their behalf. Thus will they be motivated not to hold back anything from the Lord, but to give themselves unto Him, even their whole body.

Thus we have seen that in Paul's theology as it is contained in Romans justification by faith in Christ is not an isolated island in Christian thinking and living to which he may occasionally repair when he becomes conscious of an inner

restlessness, but it is the Christian's world, the Christian's life, his Weltanschauung, the source of all spiritual life from which he proceeds forth at the dawn of day to meet the contest of life and to which he returns again at evening when his soul feels tired and in need of renewal. For Paul these two were never separate. Justification for him was not the Christian's "House of Retreat" or his "Week-end Cottage on the Meremac", but it was the home in which he daily lived his life, where he daily found comfort, encouragement and strength to fight the good fight of faith against every enemy of the soul.

### III

#### VARIOUS FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION AND THEIR RELATION TO LIFE

We proceed now to discuss some of the results which occur in a believing person and the bearing these have on changing the believer's mode of living. We are conscious that here we are entering the field of psychology as well as the field of theology. The human being is no machine. Pour gasoline into the tank of a gasoline engine and nothing happens in or to the engine excepting that the tank and the line leading to the tank are filled with gasoline. But no response results, no action takes place. But bring the meaning of the Gospel into the soul of a human being and thus set up ideas in his heart which say, "I have peace now where before I had fear and restlessness! I have hope now where before I was without hope towards God! I have joy now for the gloom I once experienced!" and something has been brought into the man which immediately goes to work and begins to do something in the man. Thus, for example, we find a Christian psychologist saying:

Having analyzed the chief experimental contents of Christian conversion, we

call attention to its transforming effects upon the life. The experience does not end with conversion, but continues to produce joy, peace and comfort. It changes the morale of the life, and affords grace and help in time of temptation. Contentment of the right kind is another result. It also begets love for God and for mankind. Thus we read as follows: "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." (Gal. 2, 22-23). 1.

Turning our attention again to Romans we discover that Paul mentions any number of these products which have their source in the believer's knowledge of his justification and which seek and find expression in Christian behavior. Justification, for example, brings peace to the justified person, 5, 1. "Having been pronounced righteous by God means that God established peace for us objectively, the condition of peace, shalom, Heil, by removing all our sin and guilt; all of His wrath is turned from us, all of His grace rests upon us. God is at peace with all the righteous the justified. 2.

This objective truth then, when believed, brings us peace. The disquietude of the soul disturbed by its guilt disappears, our guilty fears have been cast out, peace reigns within.

Similarly justification also brings hope into our hearts, 5, 2. Before conversion, in his natural state, man is absolutely without hope in reference to God and to God's

- 
1. Dr. Leander S. Keyser, A Handbook of Christian Psychology, p. 59.
  2. Lenski, Interpretation of Romans, p. 332.

eternal glory. He finds his expectation in the things of this life and when they slip through his fingers through disease or adversity he is bereft of any further hope. But the Christian "rejoices in hope of the glory of God" because God no longer imputes sin to him. This expectation has the long view, it looks forward to a complete vision and to the full enjoyment of the glory of God.

Another fruit of the Christian's faith is his "joy in God", (5,11). On the unconverted level of human thinking religion is dull, the worship of God, is drab, church-going and church activity monotonous. The unbeliever simply cannot see what satisfaction and enjoyment the Christian derives from his constancy in faith. To him indeed religion is "drier than dust". But the true Christian not only regularly worships, but his communion with God and his worship of God is the joy of his heart. Where a person has fully realized the meaning of justification to himself and to his entire life and future, there is no dullness, drabness, monotony in religion, but the song of St. Paul, "not only so (not just being saved) but we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ".

Pertinent to this passage in Romans, the following certainly arrests our attention:

He (Paul) says, We exult in God. How great a change! Three chapters back, we were sitting in the Divine Judge's Court, guilty -

our mouths stopped, and all our works rejected! Now, 'through our Lord Jesus Christ' and His work for us, we are rejoicing, exulting, in Him who was our Judge! This is what grace can do and does! 10.

Surely this is an approach to God which is exclusively Christian and nowhere to be found in any heathen religion. The heathen cringes before God; the Christian exults in His presence. Adam hid himself from God; the believer in Christ draws near and sings praises unto God. Such are the glorious effects of justification.

But is it always so? What about the "evil days" when adversity and affliction come? Tribulations test us severely. They can undermine our hope and turn our joy into the night of weeping. They can be the point of departure from God and from Christian living. But Paul views it somewhat differently. He of course does not deny the presence of tribulation in the world. Did he not suffer enough of it in his day? Nor does he disregard the strain adversity can exert upon us. Corinthians I, for example, was written "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart with many tears". But out of treasured experience he writes to the Romans that he does not only rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, but he exults in tribulations also, (5, 2-3). Because he had the Christian view, because he lived his life under the sun of justification, Paul had a most sane and sustaining view of the trial and tribula-

tions of this life. Tribulation has most blessed results. It makes better men and women. It equips the Christian with endurance; it trains a Christian soldier who is tried and not wanting; it adds depth and stability and constancy to our hope. Therefore the Christian maintains a high morale even in difficult days. When questions come and doubts dismay, the Christian knows what to say to these things. God is for him, who or what can be really and essentially against him? The God who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will not disappoint.

Such, then, are some of the patterns of thinking set up in the Christian mind by justification, some of the things he feels as he contemplates this great truth, - peace, joy, hope, comfort, patience, morale.

Can these now be separated from the believer's behavior? Not according to the thinking of the great Apostle. Towards the end of his book, as a kind of conclusion to a long series of practical instructions concerning Christian attitudes and Christian behavior, Paul breathes a prayer in behalf of his readers. What are the contents of that prayer? "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost". (15,13.) What is the point of this prayer? Paul knew the secret of Christian living. People with hearts filled and running over with Christian hope, joy, and peace will out of their blessedness reflect, partial and imperfect as it may be, the image of God.

#### IV

### JUSTIFICATION IN ITS VARIOUS EFFECTS HAS CORRESPONDINGLY VARIOUS EFFECTS UPON CHRISTIAN LIFE

Introducing Part II of his Interpretation of Romans, Dr. Lenski writes, "When he announced his great theme: The Righteousness of God from Faith to Faith (in 1,17) Paul added from Habbakuk: 'The righteous shall live from faith'. From 3, 21 to the end of chapter 4 he describes and illustrates this faith and its righteousness; now in chapters 5 to 8 he describes the life that results. He who by grace is led through the golden portal of faith, God's declaration of righteousness descending upon him as he enters, thereby passes into the divine city of life, and Paul now leads all of us through this wonderful city and shows us all the riches of this blessed life. It is all ours by justification through faith." 11.

One cannot help but add that as Paul step by step leads us through "this wonderful city" one gets vision after vision of the blessed effects of justification at work in

the life of the Christian producing the wonderful fruits of righteousness, thus, instead of voiding the law, establishing it. Even as justification itself is not an "island" apart from the mainland of life, so also the blessedness which the Christian inherits through justification has its constant meaning and application to the life of the Christian as he must live it in the world in daily contest with the world, his flesh, and the devil.

#### A. JUSTIFICATION SAVES

One of the first visions of blessedness which greet our eyes as we enter Paul's city is the condition of absolute security which the Christian enjoys. Being justified we are absolutely safe and secure from God's wrath, judgment, and condemnation. God reconciled us while we were yet enemies. God took the initiative. He reconciled us to himself while we were yet ruled by animosity towards him. Then the gospel came to us, we believed, were justified, and are now safe from all wrath. (5, 9-10). On Judgment Day the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven in all its fury upon them who despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, but this fearful condemnation will not come nigh our dwelling. We dwell in safety. Salvation has come to our house. We await the day of God expectantly and confidently.

52

Has this blessedness any relation to our present life, any effect upon it? We have already made mention of the peace, hope, joy, confidence, courage, morale, which a Christian enjoys as a product of his justification, blessings which abide even under severe trial. The point we wish to make now is that all these many blessings appear in connection with Paul's discussion concerning our security from God's wrath. Because the Christian bears in his heart the conviction that the reign of his most formidable and bitterest enemies, the reign of sin and of death is ended, because he has the marvelous hope that he will conquer even death and reign in life, (5, 12-21), therefore there flows into his life a whole stream of blessings, confidence, courage, etc.

Luther's comment on this matter deserves quotation.

He writes:

In chapter 5, he comes to the fruits and works of faith, such as peace, joy, love to God and to every man, and confidence, boldness, joy, courage, and hope in tribulation and suffering. For all this follows, if faith be true, because of the over-abundant goodness that God shows us in Christ, so that He caused Him to die for us before we could ask, nay while we were still His enemies. Thus we have it that faith justifies without any works; and yet it does not follow that men are, therefore to do no good works, but rather that the true works will not be absent. Of these the work-righteous saints know nothing, but feign works of their own in which there is no peace, joy, confidence,

love, hope, boldness, nor any of the qualities of true Christian works and faith. 12.

**B. JUSTIFICATION TRANSFORMS**

In chapter 5 St. Paul soars high in his spirit, reaches the mountain peak of the doctrine of justification, and writes of the glorious privileges which belong to the Christian through his justification. Phrase after phrase of the glorious blessedness of the justified person accumulate until finally the climax is reached in the words, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." This superabundance and immeasurable richness of God's grace manifested in the fruits of the redemption in Christ is the one theme of the chapter. Let us catalogue these phrases which constitute abounding grace:

- a. "Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"
- b. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God"
- c. "We glory in tribulations also"
- d. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts"
- e. "Being now justified by His blood"
- f. "We shall be saved from wrath through him"
- g. "Reconciled to God by the death of His Son"
- h. "We shall be saved by His life"
- i. "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ"
- j. "The free gift is of many offenses unto justification"
- k. "They which receive of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life"
- l. "By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous"
- m. "Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ"

There is purpose in mind why we have paused to reflect again upon the boundlessness of God's grace. As the Christians in Rome read Paul's letter and as this superabundance of grace

---

12. Martin Luther, Works of Martin Luther, Vol. VI p. 456.

with all its promise of glory for them would dawn upon their minds and hearts, they would respond by saying: "Oh, the glory of it!" But then on second thought, after the mind and reason had a chance to catch up with their emotions, there might come to them a very practical question which Paul then also introduces into the letter, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace might abound?"

The answer which Paul gives to this question constitutes another blessed effect of the believer's justification. The fears of the legalist and formalist that all morality and virtue would collapse if Paul's doctrine took root are unfounded. The faith which justifies has the very opposite effect. It transforms the justified person: it affects deliverance from the power of sin; it produces newness of life. Continuing in sin, consciously and deliberately repeating the sin for which he has forgiveness, finding license and liberty in his justification, according to the theology of Romans, is unthinkable and impossible. The charge of the adversaries is a figment of their own mind. It is their theorization about the doctrine. It is their rationalization of justification. It is not so in real life with real Christians. Justification transforms. It is a tree of life unto sanctification. It is the mother of the child called sanctification. "Faith, however, is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1); it

kills the old Adam, and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Ghost. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith; and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question arises; it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them. 13.

Paul then proceeds in chapter 6 to show that this is what actually happens in a person believing the redemption of Christ. "We continue in sin? Can it be? Is it possible? is it reasonable? We died to sin. How shall we still be living in it?" - such is Paul's inspired logic and sound deduction. To speak otherwise, would be double-talk. It would be as if a man having died were still planning the things of this life. Likewise, to speak of the Christian who by grace dies to sin as living in sin. A little later in chapter 6 Paul expresses the same idea somewhat differently and with increased force. He employs Christ's crucifixion as a symbol of what happens in us through faith in Christ - "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed". This of course is rich symbolic language in reference to effects occurring in the spiritual and moral realm of man's being. The Christian of course does not die in conversion, in the sense that there would be a funeral and burial after every conversion. But what

---

13. Martin Luther, Works of Martin Luther, Vol. VI pp. 451-452.

dies is the "old man", the old out-look, the old interests, the old disposition. the old desires, the old manner of thinking and living, the old Weltanschauung, all of which have their direction away from God - this is what dies in the person justified by faith. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away". (2 Cor.5,17).

There is also the positive side. Not only is the old man crucified, but there is also a resurrection in the Christian's spiritual and moral nature, a resurrection analogous to and symbolized by Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead. (6,4). This resurrection then, this quickening, this regeneration, does not remain dormant, does not hibernate, but it becomes active, it walks, it walks in newness of life. (1,4). "To be alive is to walk, to move, to show all the evidences of being alive. Remaining in sin is to be without spiritual life and thus without spiritual activity of any kind. Life itself, both physical and spiritual, is invisible, intangible, but it shows its presence by a thousand activities, all of which are absent in death." 14.

What are these "thousand activities" in the case of the life under discussion? It will suffice for our purpose simply to quote two statements taken out of the context in which "walking in newness of life occurs", viz. (6,13)

---

14. Lenski, Interpretation of Romans, p. 395.

"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God", and (6,22) "But now being made free (through the death of the old man and the quickening of the new man) from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness". "They (the Christians) have become alive, and as such should now given themselves to God, with body and soul, with heart, mind and thoughts commend themselves unto God. This they should do continually. This happens, above all, in daily prayer. At the same time, they should present their members as tools of the righteousness of life. Hands, feet, eyes, ears, tongues, etc. should be continually active in the service and praise of God". 15.

Dr. Stoeckhardt's "should" of course is not a "legal should," but an "evangelical should". It is like saying to a tree that has been well planted, well cultivated, well nourished, "This tree should bring forth leaves and buds and blossoms and fruit". It should; it will, because it is the very nature of the tree to do so. Thus also a Christian should and will bring forth the fruits of holiness, because it is the nature of this newness of life to do so.

So far we have said nothing about the causal side of this death and resurrection of the Christian. Here again appears the link between sanctification and justification.

---

15. Dr. Stoeckhardt, Roemerbrief, (Translation by E. E. Koehlinger) p. 83.

In this instance, however, the Apostle does not mention the Christian's faith, but the Christian's union with Christ through baptism, (1,3). We "were baptized into Jesus Christ", and thereby also "baptized into His death". Baptism introduces no new bond of union with Christ, no connective other than faith. Faith is the only bond between a believer and His Lord, between a Christian and the benefits our Lord has obtained for us by His life, death, and resurrection. Baptism, like the Gospel, like the Word of Truth, is the means to affect this faith, is the means also to seal this faith. "Faith in the Word preceded the baptism of adults, but this faith ever desires baptism as sealing the connection with Christ and His death. So baptism is the full guarantee of this connection". 16.

Let us also quote Dr. Stoeckhardt in this connection:

Previously the Apostle spoke of the Gospel as the means whereby God offered and imparted to men Christ, forgiveness of sins and righteousness. In the present passage he states that through baptism we partake of Christ and the fruit of His death. The one does not exclude the other. God has established both means of grace, Word and Sacrament. And the mention of baptism is in place where Christians are reminded of the beginning of their Christian life. The preaching of the Gospel precedes the baptism of adults. (Math. 28, 18-20; Acts 2, 2-4). Adults, those of age, who understand human speech and teaching, are brought into fellowship with Christ and His merits through the word. For them baptism is a seal and confirmation of the gracious promise of the Gospel. However, since the

teaching preceding baptism aims at baptism and since Christ expressly instituted baptism as the sacramentum initiationis, the Apostle with full right considers baptism the beginning of Christian life and the means of the union with Christ, in that he considers instruction in baptism and baptism as one. 17.

Thus both the Gospel and baptism through faith, through inviting faith, encouraging faith, working faith, strengthening faith, confirming faith, sealing faith, affect our union with Christ and make us partakers of all the gifts and blessings won for us by His death, entombment, and resurrection. And again, out of this faith the justified person lives, is dead to sin, alive to God, and walks in newness of life, yielding his members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

C. JUSTIFICATION AFFECTS OUR FREEDOM  
FROM THE LAW

In 6, 15 Paul had made a most startling assertion, one that would certainly arrest the attention of Jew, legalist, and moralist. There Paul had declared, "We are not under the law". It is still a difficult diet for religiously minded people.

In the moral discipline of the teachings of Confucius, in the self-discipline of Stoic morals, in the desperate efforts of the Buddhist monk to destroy all enjoyment of sin, in the Pharisee, 'the pious churchman', who conscientiously torments himself about the keeping of fasts and

---

17. Dr. Stoeckhardt, Roemerbrief, (Translation by W. W. Koehlinger) p. 79.

tithing, in the ethical humanist and idealist, who is proudly conscious of his autonomous personality that 'takes up divinity into his will', in the lodge brother who by moral effort out of the raw material of his nature makes himself free - masoned, all alike are sure that the communion with God may be attained by the fulfilment of ethical duties. 18.

"Fulfilment of ethical duties" of course implies law and implies being subject to the law and in bondage to it. Paul, however, parts company with all of these, and out of the wisdom and revelation of God, takes an entirely opposite view, constantly asserts the Christians absolute freedom from the law. Our interest in this subject primarily relates itself to sanctification. Legalism in all forms, all bondage to the law, in spite of its ambitions and promises, does not sanctify, does not affect a death to sin and a walking in newness of life. It can claim certain achievements like curbing the coarse out-breaks of sin; by legalized prohibition it can reduce the amount of liquor consumed; by threat or by appeal to pride it can on occasion make the church's cash register ring, but it cannot in the spirit of the New Testament make a new man who consecrates his members unto God as implements of good works.

In chapter 7 Paul develops this idea and employs a forceful illustration to make his point, (7, 2-3). This illustration pertains to a woman whose freedom from her

---

18. Dr. Koeberle, Quest for Holiness, p. 3.

marriage vows is brought about by the death of her husband. As long as her husband lives, she lives under the marriage contract, is bound by it, and would become an adulteress by over-stepping the laws which apply to marriage. However, if and when her husband dies, her whole status under the laws of the land and of the Bible changes. The law which once bound her to her husband no longer binds her. Her husband's death releases her from the contract once made with him and frees her from the legal status which once applied. An identical situation occurs in the case of the believer in Christ. Christ died. This death was supremely effectual. It did something to our relation to the law. It dissolved it; it affected our escape from the law; it brought us freedom from the law.

Glorious truth! Glorious result! We escape the law's condemnation; its power to indict and condemn us is broken, (8,1). We escape the authority of the law which can only say, "Do this and thou shalt live!" We escape its damning voice, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things of the law to do them". No longer can the law point out to us its difficult and impossible road to salvation and insist that this is the only way to obtain it. No longer can the law set itself before us and say, "I am the ladder to heaven; see how long it is; see how many steps there are; climb this ladder and watch out that you never miss a step

and never loose your grip, and be warned beforehand that the higher you get the harder it gets; otherwise heaven will be lost to you forever. No; no; a thousand times no; the law has lost its authority over us. Through our faith in the atoning merit of the death of Christ we are not under the law.

Again such preaching, as Paul sets forth in Romans 7, not only does something for us, but also to us and in us. Surely it broadens the base of our Christian assurance and hope and increases our Christian peace and joy in God. Surely it refreshes us and invigorates our spirit. Is it not the God's answer to David's prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a right spirit within me ... restore unto me the joy of thy salvation?" Who can still languish in gloom with such glorious knowledge? Having comprehended this freedom from the law in its full scope and purpose, as few men have, this free man exults, "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit," (7,6). Cold formalism! Dead orthodoxy! No, never! But newness of spirit!

And out of this refreshed and invigorated spirit there is service, (7,6) there is fruit brought forth unto God, (7,4). Verse 4 is pregnant with meaning on this point. Law ... body of Christ ... dead to the law ... married to another who is raised from the dead bringing forth fruit

unto God. It contains the whole Gospel. In it there is both justification and sanctification. We were all under the law, under its obligations, its authority, its curse. Then came the incarnation under the law to fulfil its righteousness for us and finally the offering of the body of Christ on the cross to redeem us from the curse of the law. As a result the one believing in Christ is dead as far as the law is concerned. The law's reign over him is ended. Freedom has come. Through our faith our union is now with the resurrected and living Christ. Result? As trees and field bear fruit for their tillers, so the Christian bears fruit for God.

Therefore all legalism must go, all coercive methods, all un-evangelical systems, not only because we are no longer under the law, but again, thinking of the theme of our thesis, because legalism actually stands in the way of sanctification. Legalism is not productive of a new life, but it actually destroys it. This again is a difficult diet for us, because by nature we are all legalists. But Paul keeps straight our thinking and our practice. The law produces "motions of sin" instead of killing our passions; it works in our members the fruit unto death, (7,5). Because the law works in and through the weakness of the flesh, it can't renew, it can only antagonize, anger, burden, discourage, and defeat. A retreat then from the Gospel; a return to legalism, where

it occurs, can only mean a return to the condition Paul outlines in the words, "when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death". (7,5).

Consequently a question arises concerning the validity, the spirituality, and the present purpose of the law. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin?" What about this question? What constitutes its validity and purpose in New Testament thinking and teaching?

Lenski's summary of Paul's discussion of this problem certainly is to the point. "Paul might have written in calm, didactic style: "Now the law is not sin but helps to make the sinner conscious of his sin". 19.

For this is truly what Paul teaches, (7, 7-12). The purpose of the law is really aside or apart from our justification and sanctification. It pertains to the old Adam which remains under the law. Through the law the gravity and depth of sin is constantly revealed to us. (7,7). The law slays us; it slays any carnal hope which we may entertain, any self-righteousness which might attach itself to us, (7,11), so that daily and constantly we seek our righteousness in Christ. In the sphere of our sanctification, it not only gives direction and guidance, but also reveals how helpless we really are, how far short we fall of perfection, so that ever and again we return to

---

19. Lenski, Interpretation of Romans, p. 459.

the sustaining and energizing article of justification by faith in Christ. It brings the confession to our lips, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord". (7, 24-25). In this sense "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good". (7,12). But when I come to the question; How can I be justified? its mission is accomplished. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth". (10,4). In this sense I am absolutely and truly free from the law.

D. JUSTIFICATION BRINGS THE IN-DWELLING  
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Another blessedness which comes into the heart and life of the believer in Christ in conjunction with and as a result of justification is the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit with His mighty power and precious gifts. Chapter 8 might be correctly labeled "The Chapter of the Holy Spirit".

The following statements relative to the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian appear in the Chapter:

- a. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you". (8, 9-11).
- b. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God", (8,14)
- c. "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption", (8,15)

Once more it serves the purpose of our thesis to trace the source of the in-dwelling and guidance of the Holy Spirit

which the Christian has received. Obviously there was a time when he was not in the Spirit and the Spirit was not in him. But there came a time when he received the Spirit and began to be led by the Spirit. When and how did this occur? Again Paul remains consistent in his theology, because it is God's theology. Once more the whole Gospel appears in his discussion. Significant are the two statements: "What the law could not do, ... God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh", (8,3) and "There is therefore now no condemnation which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit". (8,1). We are back again on the foundation of the whole Christian structure. The law stood helplessly by while we languished under condemnation ... God sent His Son into the world in regard to sin ... as a result sin lost its right to secure our condemnation ... by the telling of this message to us we came into union with Christ (by faith) ... the blessed result is that God utters no verdict of condemnation upon us ... the next blessed result (no separation in time is intended) is that we walk after the Spirit who has set up his reign in our hearts. Thus Paul relates the gift of the Holy Spirit to justification through faith in Christ.

We are ready now to proceed a step forward. Sanctification, spiritual mindedness, spiritual activity, come into the picture. The in-dwelling of the Spirit of God

begins to manifest Himself in the Christian's life.

- a. "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit". (8,1).
- b. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," (8,2).
- c. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit", (8,4).
- d. "They that are after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit," (8,5).

But even more is ours because the Holy Spirit has His residence within us. Looking at our imperfect state of sanctification, we are inclined to entertain doubts about our adoption as God's children. We indeed have communion with God. In our prayers we address God as our Father, and in our distress even cry to him. But other voices mingle with ours. The voice of the law and the voice of sin and the voice of the devil combine to put fears and doubt into our hearts concerning our sonship. Such fears and doubts, if permitted to reign, seriously cripple spiritual life, and finally strangle it altogether. Therefore the Spirit of God comes to our rescue and bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, (8,15). "Here there is double testimony for our relation to God: that of our own spirit when it cries, 'Abba, Father,' and thus furnishes us with a sample of our attitude toward God; secondly, that of the Spirit himself when He speaks in a thousand places of the written Word which apply to us as believers in Jesus Christ. Here again we should not think

of immediate testimony apart from, outside of, or above the written Word. All such supposed testimony is *Schwaermerei*, the evidence of not only a spiritual but also a mental pathological condition. The spirit, indeed, puts the Word into our heart and in this way testifies in us; but we can ever verify that Word and testimony by the *sc/riptures*". 20.

One more blessing of the in-dwelling Spirit must be mentioned before we bring this chapter to a close. The longer the Christian lives in this world as a Christian the more deeply is he impressed and distressed by the infirmities which confront him on every hand in himself and in this sin-sick world. Physical infirmities, spiritual infirmities, moral infirmities, social infirmities, sufferings of this present time, cause the Christian to groan within, together with the whole creation, as he waits for the final and glorious redemption of the body. Sometimes these groanings within are so deep, so intense, that we hardly know which way to turn, hardly know what to ask or how to ask. Then it is that the Holy Spirit helps us in weakness and helplessness even to the spirit of interceding for us. Thus we are again saved from doubt and despair and are encouraged and strengthened to permit ourselves to be led by the Spirit until finally He shall quicken our mortal bodies and glorify them in all eternity. (8, 18-27).

---

20. Lenski, Interpretation of Romans, p. 524.

V

VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND PHASES OF CHRISTIAN  
LIFE AS THEY ARE AFFECTED BY  
JUSTIFICATION

The Apostle Paul was a man who kept his head in the sky and his feet on the ground. He could never be accused of being a mere theorist, an expounder of purely academic questions. In his discussion and continual relating of justification and sanctification, Paul remains intensely practical. The truth which he is chosen of God to proclaim is not only a heavenly truth, having its source in heaven, in the infinite wisdom and love of God, but also intensely practical because it is intended for, and suited to, and mightily effective in man's earthly dilemma. Neither is Paul's Christian a theoretical person. Paul's Christian is a man who lives in the world, among people, in various life situations. Paul's Christian is not a man who withdraws himself from the world to enter some hidden-away monastery there to reflect from himself on the glory of the grace in Christ Jesus. Paul's Christian is a social being and in the concluding chapters of Romans 12-16 he goes with the Christian into his world and relates the meaning and power of justification to every-day living.

This final practical section of the letter begins with a primary application. It is really the foundation of all that follows. It is the mainspring of all the wheels in the watch. It is the main-bearing of the Christian man. It is the Christian's automatic pilot. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the opening words and sentences of chapter 12 which opens and introduces the practical section of the letter.

Paul begins it with the admonition to the Christian to "present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God". Our body is the organ of all our thinking, speaking, and doing, and when we set it apart for God, it means that God will have the whole of us. All our thoughts, our plans, our purposes, our ambitions, all our words and conversation, all our decisions and actions will be hallowed, will be initiated and performed under God's direction, in His employ for His purpose and to His eternal Glory. It is also the body which is the "invasion coast" of sin and of the devil. It is through the body, through our eyes, ears, and all our members, that the enemy without seeks to link up his forces with the fifth columnists within our being. Even as the Lord gains entrance to us through sensory channels, so the devil and the world seek entrance through the same channels. Our security from sin therefore, as well as positive action along the paths of righteousness, depend on presenting our

bodies to God. The Christian, because he is still in the body, must live with the body in the world. His conduct also in this respect, as distinguished from his inner life, will be sanctified, if he proceeds from the premise that God shall have his body. Therefore also the apostle injects the idea of a sacrifice in reference to the body. Stoeckhardt's summary of the thought is to the point:

The offering is not to be taken especially as a thank or burnt offering, occasioned by the sin and guilt offering of Christ, but only comes into consideration here according to its general meaning, inasmuch as the sacrificer gives up all claim to what is his own and gives the same to God. Christians offer their bodies since they do not consider them their own, which they can govern absolutely as they will, but which they give God and place in His service. 21.

With this as his premise and basis, - my body shall belong to God and shall be devoted to God's purpose - the Christian is prepared to live in the world in various relationships "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work."

But the Apostle asks a great deal of his readers! "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Ask a person to contribute five dollars for a new bell in the church tower or ask him to attend the voter's assembly, and you ask a small thing of him. But ask him to give himself, to forego all claims upon himself, to regard himself as a

---

21. Stoeckhardt's Roemerbrief, Translation by E. E. Koehlinger, p. 168.

possession of God, and you ask a great thing. How does Paul hope to enforce this request? How can we be motivated and energized cheerfully and willingly to go this second mile? "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." This had been his secondary purpose in writing his letter, in reviewing once more in much detail the mercies of God, not only to broaden and deepen their knowledge of God's infinite mercies, not only to confirm and establish their faith in these great mercies, but also to let them serve as the motivation and energizing for renewal, for transforming, for action, for Christian living, in brief, for the laying of their bodies on God's altar. These mercies of God in their boundlessness, in their source, in their purpose, in their power, in their effects, in their blessed results, in their ultimate plan, had been the theme of his letter. Paul had taken the Romans on a tour of inspection of these mercies of God and one by one they had surveyed them in all their beauty and meaning. Christ's incarnation ... redemption ... the Gospel ... justification by faith ... security from God's wrath ... freedom from the curse of the law ... newness of life ... guidance of the Holy Spirit ... consolation of hope ... election ... final and eternal redemption of the body ... grace upon grace and mercy upon mercy, all flowing out of God's boundless mercy - this was the contents of his message. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living

sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God". No wonder then that the apostle inaugurated a new society which even the Roman Empire and the paganism of that day could not altogether resist, and the Christians began to shine as lights in a crooked and perverse world.

Our purpose has really been served - from Paul's epistle to the Romans we have seen justification related to sanctification and sanctification related to justification. But let us yet briefly see how Paul still further relates his theme to concrete phases of Christian living.

Paul follows the Christian with the message of justification into the community of Christians, into their fellowship with one another, and into what we today would call church-life. His admonition to offer their bodies unto God is immediately tied in with an admonition regarding the mystical body of Christ, the Church (12, 3-13). Each Christian is a member of this mystical body. As each member in the physical body does not have the same function, so also the individual Christian does not have the same function in the Church, the same office, the same gifts, the same calling, the same talents. The gifts differ among us according to the grace that is given to us. (12,6). Paul then lists a number of opportunities for service in the Church and encourages each one to meet these opportunities according to his calling

and ability. At the same time he outlines the attitudes which should prevail - service and not self - lowliness of mind instead of ambition - the welfare of the whole Christian community rather than the welfare of an ambitious individual. (12,16). Paul especially takes the "weak Christian" under his wing and directs the Christian congregation to exercise charity towards him. Because of the transition which was in progress in those days from Old Testament ceremonialism, this admonition was very much in place. It was the "touchy subject" of Paul's churches. For example, one Christianized Jew might have advanced farther in knowledge of Christian liberty than another. Both were asked to exercise charity towards each other, because both could be right. The one who did not observe the food regulations of the Old Testament was right because he was exercising New Testament liberty. The other who abided by the custom was right too as long as he did it for custom's sake, and not as a work meriting righteousness. God had received them both, Paul insists, since both had received Christ Jesus the Savior. Christian charity, the utmost regard for one another, the eternal welfare of souls, should guide them in their relationships to each other. Why? Justification comes to the fore again. We don't live unto ourselves. We can't die unto ourselves. We are the Lord's. "To this end Christ both died, and rose and revived, that He might be the Lord both of the dead and the living." (Ch. 14).

However, Paul follows his Christian too as he lives his life in the community in general. The Christian indeed is a citizen of heaven, but he is also a citizen of Rome, a citizen of the city and state and country in which he resides. It is not within the scope of this thesis to enter into various ramifications of this dual citizenship of the Christian. Nor is it within the scope of this paper to discuss the merit or demerits of the various forms of government, nor whether one or another form of government is more conducive to Christianity. In Romans 13 Paul lays down only the great positive principles. Briefly, these principles are:

- a. God has ordained that there shall be government,
- b. Government is ordained for maintenance of law and order and for the common good,
- c. Government is to be respected and obeyed by the Christian,
- d. Such respect is to come, not out of fear of punishment, but out of conscience, out of a Christian conscience.

In this case Paul includes no specific evangelical motivation. Nor is it necessary. The foundation had been laid; the basis and motivation for Christian thinking and behavior had been thoroughly expounded and applied. We can hardly conceive it necessary for Paul to make a deliberate tie-up between each specific admonition and the root and ground of all Christian action. The body presented unto God out of consideration of the mercies of God will remain a body presented unto God also in its relationship to

government. Do the one and the other will be done too. Where once the body is dedicated unto God, the hands which pay taxes, the ears which listen to the law, and the will which obeys the law, and the feet which serve the secular community, will be dedicated unto God to do His will towards government.

Finally, Paul follows the Christian with the article of justification among his neighbors and associates, into the secular community, so to speak. Two principles are laid down. (13, 8-14). We are to accord them our love. We are not to copy their manner of life and indulge in the excesses of which they are guilty. Certainly both are principles of sound practical value. Christians live among fellow-Christians; they live under government; but they also live in a secular community and daily come into contact with unbelieving and worldly neighbors, associates, and colleagues. The Apostle had been discussing what we owe government. The debt of taxes can be disposed of by a dollar and cents payment. But the debt of love comes in never-ending installments. The obligation to love is new every morning like the light of another day. But to imitate the world in its "rioting and drunkenness, in its chambering and wantonness, and in its strife and envying", we are under no obligation. The salvation Paul had been writing about was ever getting nearer. Time marches on! We have a great and glorious hope through the mercies of God. It hardly behooves us to pause along the way and become entangled in the sinful

excesses of this world. Thus Paul again comments their thinking and living to the one great article of faith which to him had become the beginning and the middle and the end of all his theological thinking.

If in conclusion, a final summing up and tying together be in order, none more fitting words come to mind than these:

Justification through faith alone brings with it the certainty that I may be God's dear child. But that also implies that henceforth I do not belong to myself but to Another, who has established His kingly rule over my life. So the ability to live a new life and the desire to render a new obedience grow out of the gift of the forgiveness of sins. The new life of faith is fully conscious of that fact and consequently there is no place in it for self-admiration, nor does it cherish delusions of perfection, but yet, in spite of all its weaknesses and failures, it is a real deliverance from the bondage and dominion of sin. 22.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARNDT, W. A., Classroom Notes on Romans, n.d.
- BUTTERICK, GEORGE A., Christ and Man's Dilemma,  
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946.
- HENRY, MATTHEW, Commentary on the Whole Bible, VI.  
Fleming H. Revell Co., 1934.
- JOHNSON, PAUL E., The Psychology of Religion,  
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, n.d.
- KEYSER, LEANDER S., A Handbook of Christian Psychology,  
The Lutheran Literary Board, 1928.
- KOEBERLE, ADOLPH, The Quest for Holiness,  
Augsburg Pub. House, 1938.
- LENSKI, R. C. H., Interpretation of Romans,  
Wartburg Press, 1948.
- LENSKI, R. C. H., Epistle Selections of the Ancient Church.  
Wartburg Press, 1935.
- LUTHER, MARTIN, Works of Martin Luther, Vol. VI,  
A. J. Holman Co., 1932.
- MAC LAREN, ALEXANDER, Exposition of Holy Scriptures, Vol. XIII,  
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1944.
- NEWELL, WM. H., Romans, Verse by Verse,  
Grace Publications, Inc., 1938.
- NICOLL, W. ROBERTSON, The Expositor's Greek New Testament  
Vol. II., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.
- STORCKHART, GEORGE, Romerbrief, (Translation by  
E. W. Kochlinger, 1943).