

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v92

Romans

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Romans

1 *I,* Paul, *am writing this letter*. I serve the Messiah Jesus.
He called me to represent him and specially chose me
to proclaim God's good news. 2 God previously promised
this good news by means of his spokesmen who prophesied
about it *and wrote it down* in the sacred writings. 3 *This good*
news is about God's Son. He was born a natural descendant of
David. 4 In accordance with the Holy Spirit, God powerfully
demonstrated that Jesus is his Son by causing him to live
again after he had died. *God's Son is* Jesus the Messiah,
who is our Lord. 5 Jesus favored us who represent him and
authorized us to represent him on his behalf in order that all
the nations would obey *God* by trusting *in Jesus the Messiah*.
6 Jesus the Messiah has also called you who are *living* among
the nations. 7 *I am writing this letter* to all of you *believers* who
dwell in the city of Rome. God loves you and has called you
to be people who belong to him. *May* God our Father and
the Lord Jesus the Messiah *continue to* be kind to you and
make you peaceful.

8 Now, *the* first *thing I want to tell you, is that* I am constantly
thanking my God through Jesus the Messiah for all of you
believers in the Messiah. *I thank him* because *people* throughout
the known world are proclaiming how you trust *in Jesus*.
9 *I can say this truthfully* because God testifies for me that I
frequently pray for you. I serve him devotedly by proclaiming
the good news about his Son*, Jesus*. 10 *When* I pray, I very
often request that I might finally succeed in coming to *visit*
you because God wants *me to*. 11 *I pray for this* because I
deeply desire to see you *in person* in order to share some
kind of gracious gift with you from the Holy Spirit in order
to help you become spiritually stronger. 12 In other words,
I want to share some gracious gift with you in order that we
may mutually encourage one other. Both you and I can help
each other by sharing how we mutually trust in God. 13 My
fellow believers, I certainly want you to know that I planned
to visit you many times. But *God* has prevented me from
visiting you until the present time. *I planned to visit you* in
order to lead some people to believe in Christ among you
as well, just like *how I have* also *done so* among the other
nations. 14 I am obligated *to proclaim the good news* to all
non-Jewish people, whether or not they are *culturally* Greek
and whether or not they are educated. 15 So then, if it were
my choice, I would gladly proclaim the good news to you
who dwell in Rome.

16 *I would gladly do this* because I am deeply honored to
proclaim the good news because it is the powerful way that
God uses to save anyone who believes *it*. *This is true for* both
the Jews *who* first *heard the good news* and then everyone
else. 17 *This is true* because whenever *people proclaim* the good
news, they reveal how God makes people righteous, which
is entirely through trusting *in the Messiah*. This is what *the*
prophet Habakkuk meant when he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "But
the person whom God makes righteous will live forever by
trusting *in God*."

18 *This is true* because from where God dwells he is
revealing how he is furious toward *and will judge* every
person who does ungodly and unrighteous things. These
people suppress the things that God says are true by living
in an unrighteous manner.

19 *God will judge them* because what anyone can know
about God is obvious to these people since God has made
it obvious to them. 20 *This is true* because people can clearly
perceive those things about God that they cannot see *with*
their eyes. *These things are* how powerful God is and the
fact that he is God. *People could perceive these things* since
the time God created the universe. The things that God has
made have understood *these things*. For this reason, people
cannot excuse themselves *from acknowledging that God exists*.
21 *People cannot excuse themselves* because they do not honor
him as God, even though they know that he exists. They also
refuse to thank him. In contrast, they think about worthless
things, and they are unable to understand spiritual things.
22 *Although* they assert that they are wise, they are *actually*
fools. 23 They stop glorifying the God who is immortal, and
instead they glorify idols that resemble mortal people, birds,
four-legged animals, and animals that crawl *on the ground*.

24 Consequently, God lets these people do the lustful things
that they desire to do, so that they become *spiritually* impure
and they disgrace their bodies with one another *by doing*
sexually immoral acts. 25 These people stop believing what
is true about God and instead believe what is false *about*
idols. They reverently worship things that God has created,
instead of *worshiping the God* who created those things. *He*
is the one whom people should bless forever! May it be so!

26 Because *these people do that*, God lets them do the
dishonorable things they strongly desire *to do*. For example,
their women stop doing natural *sexual* acts *with men* and
instead do unnatural *sexual* acts *with women*. 27 Similarly, the
men also stopped doing natural *sexual* acts with women *and*
lusted intensely after other men. These men do shameless
sexual acts with each other. They experience God penalizing
them in their own bodies. *God must penalize them* because
they pervert *God's natural sexual acts*.

28 As these people thought that acknowledging God was
worthless, God let their minds become worthless. As a result,
they do inappropriate things. 29 *These people* are completely
controlled by all kinds of unrighteous, wicked, covetous, and
malicious *thoughts*. They are completely willing to be jealous,
take another's life, argue, deceive, and commit evil deeds
against others. They reveal secrets *about others*. 30 They speak
badly of *other people*. They hate God. They act violently.
They think too highly of themselves. They boast *about themselves*.
They think of *new kinds of* evil things *to do*. They do not
obey their parents. 31 These people are *morally* foolish. They
do not do what they promise to do. They do not care *about*
other people. They do not show mercy *to others*. 32 These
people fully understand that God has righteously declared
that people who keep doing such *inappropriate* things deserve
to die *spiritually*. *Nevertheless,* they not only keep on doing
those *inappropriate* things, but they even happily approve of
people who do such things!

2 Consequently, any one of you who judges another person
cannot excuse yourself *at all when God condemns you*.
This is because you are actually condemning yourself when
you judge someone else, since you who judge someone
else do the exact same things *that they do*! 2 Certainly, we
acknowledge that God will correctly judge those people who
continue doing such *inappropriate* things. 3 You who judge
the people who continue to do such *inappropriate* things
while you do the exact same things yourself should certainly

not think that you can escape when God judges you! 4 You who despise *how* abundantly kind, tolerant, and patient God is must certainly know that God's kind acts *are meant to* cause you to repent. 5 Instead, because you are stubborn and refuse to repent, you are causing God to punish you even more severely. *This will happen* when God punishes *sinners* and reveals how justly he judges.

6 God will *justly* reward or punish everyone for whatever they do. 7 Living eternally *is how God repays* those people who keep striving for God to glorify, honor, and preserve them *forever*. *They do this* by persisting in doing what is good. 8 By contrast, God will fiercely punish those people who refuse to do what he says is true and right because they are selfishly ambitious. 9 *God will cause* every human being who does what is evil to become distressed and troubled. *This will happen* especially to the Jew *who does what is evil* and also to everyone else *who does so*. 10 By contrast, God will glorify, honor, and reconcile every person who does what is good. *This will happen* especially to the Jew *who does what is good* and also to everyone else *who does so*. 11 *These things are true* because God is impartial.

12 *We know this about God,* because he will punish forever all people who sin without *knowing* the laws *that God gave the Jews even though* they do not know those laws. At the same time, God will judge according to his laws whoever sins while knowing those laws. 13 *God will judge everyone who sins* because God does not make righteous those people who *only* hear his laws. Rather, God will make righteous those people who obey his laws. 14 *God will judge everyone who sins* because whenever nations which do not know the laws *that God gave the Jews* naturally obey rules from those laws, *they prove that* they know laws within their minds even though they do not know God's laws. 15 *By naturally following some laws that God gave through Moses,* these people demonstrate that God has made each person aware of how to obey his laws. What they think shows that this is true, in that what each of them thinks will either accuse or even defend their actions. 16 *This will happen* at the time when God *finally* judges the hidden thoughts that people think. *God's* good news that I proclaim teaches that he will judge *mankind* through the Messiah Jesus.

17 Now, *I am addressing* you who identify yourselves as Jews: You depend on the laws *God gave you to avoid God's judgment*. You brag that you know God. 18 You know what God wants. Also, since *some people* have taught you *God's law*, you approve of what is superior. 19 You have even convinced yourselves that you *Jews* are the only ones who can teach those *non-Jewish people* who do not know *about God*. *You are convinced that* only you can enable ignorant people to understand *who God is*. 20 *You have convinced yourself that* you should instruct people who are foolish. *You have convinced yourself that* you should teach *people who are as ignorant as* infants. *You think this way* because you know the laws *God gave the Jews*, which fully contain what we can know and what is true. 21 So *even though you Jews have convinced yourself that these things are true*, you should teach yourselves to do what you teach others to do *because you do not do those things*! You keep telling others that they should not steal, but you steal! 22 You keep telling *people* not to have sexual relations with people whom they did not marry, *but* you do so! You *supposedly* detest idols, *but* you ransack temples *that contain idols*! 23 You brag about *how well you understand* the laws *God gave you*, *but* you disgrace God by disobeying those laws! 24 *These things are true* because it is what *the prophet Isaiah meant when* he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "The nations say bad things about God because of *how wickedly* you *Jews act*."

25 *You Jews who have sinned will be judged* because, being circumcised *only* benefits you if you obey the laws *God gave you*. However, if you disobey those laws, being circumcised does not benefit you at all. 26 So then, if uncircumcised people obey what God requires in the laws *he gave the Jews*, God will regard those uncircumcised people as being circumcised. 27 And people who are physically uncircumcised yet fully obey the laws *from God* will judge you *Jews*! Although *you know* the written rules *God gave the Jews* and you are circumcised, you have disobeyed those laws! 28 *This is true* because a *true* Jew is not someone who does Jewish rituals that people can see. *Similarly,* people cannot see *true* circumcision on a person's body. 29 Rather, a *true* Jew is one *by means of something* that people cannot see. *True* circumcision *happens* in a person's mind *and* the *Holy* Spirit does it. *Obeying* the written rules *God gave the Jews* cannot do it. God commends a true Jew, but other people do not.

3 *You Jews might say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then surely being a Jew is not advantageous! Surely being circumcised is not beneficial at all!" 2 *Then I would say,* "*Being a Jew benefits a person* in many ways!" *This is* certainly *true* because, first of all, God trusted the Jews with preserving what he had said *in the Scriptures*. 3 *So you might say,* "Some of these *Jews* were certainly unfaithful *to God*! How unfaithful those people are certainly cannot invalidate how faithful God is!" 4 *Then I would say,* "Of course not!" On the contrary, God *is always* truthful, but everyone else is not. This is what *David meant when* he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "The result *of my sin* is that people will acknowledge that you*, God,* are right when you speak and victorious when people *try to* judge you."

5 But *you might say,* "Suppose *this is true and* how unrighteous we *Jews* are *actually* confirms how righteous God is. *That* could not *possibly mean* that God is unrighteous because he punishes *us*!" (When I talk like this, I am expressing how human beings think.) 6 *Then I would say,* "Of course not! If God were unrighteous when he punishes us, then he could not *possibly* judge *anyone in* the world!" 7 But *then you might say,* "Suppose *this is true, and* my lying further glorifies God *and* how truthful he is. *If that is so,* then *surely* God should not still judge me as if I were sinning! 8 And *if this is true, then* you should *just* tell us to act wickedly in order that good things can happen!" (This is exactly what some people say falsely about me and claim that I say. It is right *for God* to condemn people *who speak and act* this way!)

9 *You Jews might then say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then we are surely not superior *to non-Jewish people*!" *And I would say that* indeed we are not. *I say this* because I have previously charged that all Jews and non-Jewish people cannot stop being sinful. 10 This is what *the prophets meant when* they wrote *in the Scriptures*, "No one is righteous, no one at all!"

11 "No one thinks wisely. No one is even trying to know God!

12 Everyone has refused to obey *God*. As a whole, they are worthless *for doing what God wants*. No one is kind, no one at all!"

13 "What people say is morally corrupt *like the smell of rotten corpses in* a grave! They constantly

deceive *people* by what they say!” “What
they say hurts people, like the venom of
venomous snakes!” 14 “They constantly
curse *others* and speak harshly *against them*.”
15 “They rush eagerly to murder people.
16 Wherever they go, they destroy lives
and make people suffer. 17 They do not
understand how to live peacefully *with*
others.” 18 “They do not fear God *at all*!”

19 Certainly, we Jews know all that God says in his laws applies to *the Jews,* to whom God gave his laws. This is in order that no one can excuse themselves *from being judged by God. This is* also in order that God can justly punish everyone in the world as guilty. 20 *This is true* because God will not make anyone righteous with himself *simply* because they obey the laws *he gave the Jews*. *This is so* because those laws *only* make people aware of how sinful they are.

21 But now God has revealed how he makes people righteous. *Becoming righteous* is not related to obeying the laws *God gave the Jews*. *Yet,* in what they wrote *in the Scriptures* Moses and the prophets testify *about how God makes people righteous*. 22 How God makes people righteous is by trusting in Jesus the Messiah. *God will make* all *types of* people *righteous* if they trust in *Jesus*. *This is* because God does not distinguish *between different types of people*. 23 *This is* because all *types of* people sin and fail to acquire the glorious status from God. 24 God makes *these sinful people* righteous as a gift because he is so kind. *People receive this gift from God* when God unites them to Jesus the Messiah, who redeemed them *from being punished for being sinful*. 25 God offered Jesus as the one who atones *for everyone’s sins*. *People are rescued from being punished for being sinful* by trusting in his *sacrificial* death. *God did this* in order to show how God makes people righteous. *This happened* because God disregarded people’s sinful acts that they had previously done. 26 *God did this* because he is so tolerant. *God also did this* in order to show how he makes people righteous during our time. *This is* for the purpose of showing that God is righteous and that he makes people righteous *if* they trust in Jesus.

27 *You Jews might say,* “*If what you have said is true,* then surely no one can boast!” *Then I would say,* “Indeed, no one can!” *Then you might say,* “Surely *we can become righteous* by obeying the laws *God gave the Jews*! Surely doing *those things will make us righteous*!” *Then I would say,* “Absolutely not! On the contrary, *people become righteous* by trusting *in Jesus the Messiah*. 28 Indeed, we *Jewish Christians* consider people to become righteous by trusting *in Jesus the Messiah*. *Being righteous* is not related to doing those things *that God commanded* in the laws *he gave the Jews*.” 29 *Or you might say,* “Surely God is not only the God of the Jews. Surely he is the God of *all* the nations too!” *So I would say,* “Absolutely! He is the God of *all* the nations too. 30 *This is true* because there is certainly *only* one God *for all people*. He will make righteous *both* the Jews who trust *in Jesus* and the non-Jewish people who trust in *Jesus*.” 31 *You Jews might say,* “Then surely we make the laws *God gave us* invalid by trusting in *Jesus*!” *So I would say,* “Of course not! On the contrary, we confirm that *what God said in* those laws is valid.”

4 *You Jews might say,* “*If what you have said is true,* then surely our physical ancestor Abraham found out *about it*. 2 *This must be true* because if Abraham became righteous based on doing the things *that God commanded in his laws*, then he could brag *about it*.” On the contrary, *I would say that Abraham could* not possibly *boast about it* to God! 3 *I say this* because, *Moses* surely tells *us* in the Scriptures, “Abraham trusted in God, and God considered Abraham to be righteous because he trusted in him.” 4 Indeed, when a person works, he does not consider the wage *he earns* to be a gracious gift. On the contrary, *that person considers the wage he earns* to be what his employer owes him. 5 By contrast, when a person does not obey *the laws God gave the Jews*, but trusts in the God who can make unrighteous people righteous, God considers him to be righteous because he trusted in him. 6 This is also the same thing that David wrote *in the Scriptures* about how blessed people are when God considers them to be righteous, even though they do not do those things *that God commanded*. *David wrote:*

7 “People are so happy when God forgives their lawless
acts! People are so happy when God no
longer acknowledges their sinful acts!
8 Any person whom the Lord never again
considers to be sinful is so happy!”

9 Therefore, these happy people are not only circumcised *Jews* but even uncircumcised people *who are not Jews*! *This must be true* because we *Jews* quote *the scripture that states,* “God considers Abraham to be righteous because he trusted *in him*.” 10 So then, *you surely know* when Abraham trusted in God and God considered *him to be righteous*! *You surely know whether this happened* before he was circumcised or afterward! *Indeed,* it was not while Abraham was circumcised, but while he was still uncircumcised *that God considered him to be righteous*. 11 Abraham was circumcised as a mark *in his body* to prove that God had made him righteous because Abraham trusted *in him* before he was circumcised. *This happened* in order for him to become the *spiritual* ancestor for every non-Jewish person who trusts in God in order that God would consider them to be righteous *because they trust in him*. 12 *This* also *happened in order for Abraham to become* the *spiritual* ancestor of those people who are circumcised, that is, those circumcised *Jews who are not only circumcised in their bodies*, but who also trust in God the same way that our ancestor Abraham did even before he was circumcised.

13 *This is true* because *when* God promised Abraham and those who descend from him that the *whole* world would belong to him, *God did not promise this* because *Abraham obeyed* the laws *God gave the Jews*. Rather, *God promised this* because God had made *Abraham* righteous because Abraham trusted *in him*. 14 *This is true* because, if people could inherit *what God promised Abraham* by obeying the laws *he gave the Jews*, *then* trusting *in God* would become useless! What God promised would also become invalid. 15 *This is* because the laws *God gave the Jews* are intended to punish *those who disobey them*. However, where God’s laws do not exist, no one can disobey *them*. 16 This is why what God promised comes by trusting in him in order to show how kind he is. *God was so kind* in order that he could secure what he promised to everyone who has *spiritually* descended *from Abraham*. *Those who have spiritually descended from Abraham* are not only those *Jews* who obey the laws *God gave them*, but also those who trust *in God* as Abraham did. Abraham is the *spiritual* ancestor of all of us *who trust in God*. 17 (This is exactly what *God* said in the Scriptures *about Abraham*: “I have chosen you to be a *spiritual* ancestor for numerous people groups.”) God considers *Abraham to be our spiritual*

ancestor. Abraham trusted God. *God is the one* who causes dead people to become alive *again*. He also commands things that do not exist *to exist*, then they exist. 18 Abraham trusted *in God* by hoping *in God* despite what seemed hopeless. As a result, he became the *spiritual* ancestor for numerous people groups. *This happened* just as God had promised *him in the Scriptures*: "The people who descend from you will become as numerous *as the stars in the sky*." 19 Abraham thought that his body was too old to produce children. (He was almost 100 years old!) *He also thought* that *his wife* Sarah was unable to become pregnant *because she never had been able to do so before*. *Nevertheless,* Abraham kept on trusting *God*. 20 Indeed, Abraham did not faithlessly doubt what God had promised. On the contrary, God empowered Abraham to continue trusting *in him* while Abraham was glorifying God. 21 God also totally assured Abraham that he is able to do what he had promised *to do*. 22 And this is why, "God considered Abraham to be righteous because he trusted in him."

23 Yet, when *Moses* wrote *in the Scriptures*, "God considered how Abraham trusted *him*," *these words* not only refer to Abraham. 24 On the contrary, *these words* also refer to us *who trust in Jesus*. God is going to consider how we *believers* trust *him*. *We are* the people who trust him. *He is* the one who caused our Lord Jesus to become alive again after he had died. 25 God allowed people to kill Jesus because we sinned *against God*. *God* also caused Jesus to become alive again in order to make us righteous.

5 Consequently, we should live peacefully with God by means of *what* our Lord Jesus the Messiah *did for us* because we have become righteous by trusting *in Jesus*. 2 Our Lord Jesus the Messiah also allows us to continually experience how kind God is by trusting in Jesus. We can confidently boast that we will share in God's glorious status. 3 This is not the only thing *about which we can confidently boast*. Rather, we can also confidently boast about the painful things *that we have experienced*. *We can do this* because we know that a painful thing *that we experience* causes us to endure *hardships better than before*. 4 And being able to endure *hardships* results in *God* approving *us*. And *when God* approves *us, we become more* confident. 5 And when we become confident, we will not be disappointed. *This is* because the Holy Spirit has enabled us to deeply understand *how much* God loves us. God has given us this Holy Spirit.

6 In fact, while we were still helpless, *Jesus* the Messiah died for the sake of *us* impious people. *God caused this to happen* at just the right time. 7 Indeed, someone would rarely consider dying for the sake of a person who is righteous, although someone might possibly even bravely consider dying for the sake of a good person. 8 However, God shows his own love towards we *believers* by this fact: while we were still sinful, *Jesus* the Messiah died for our benefit! 9 Consequently, since the Messiah's *sacrificial* death has already made us righteous, it is even more certain that he will rescue us when God *finally* punishes *sinners*! 10 Indeed, God's Son *Jesus* died to reconcile us to God while we were *still his* enemies. Therefore, since Jesus has *already* reconciled us to God, it is even more certain that he will rescue us *when God punishes sinners* because he is alive *again*! 11 Now these are not the only things *God does for us*. Rather, we also boast about God by means of *what* our Lord Jesus the Messiah *has done for us*. Jesus has already reconciled us *with God*!

12 So then, sin started existing in the world because one man sinned, and *living things started* to die because he sinned. In the same way, everyone started dying as well, because everyone sins. 13 Indeed, people throughout the world sinned before *God gave his* laws *to the Jews*. However, God did not legally regard what they did as sinning, since those laws did not yet exist *to identify what it means to sin*. 14 However, everyone died from *the time of the first man* Adam until *the time of* Moses. Even those people died who did not sin by violating the same command God gave to Adam. Adam is like the person who would come *later*. 15 But what God has kindly given *us* is not the same as how Adam rejected *God's command*. In fact, it is true that many people died because the one man *Adam* rejected *God's command*. *But* how kind God is and that which God kindly gives through the one man Jesus the Messiah extend to many people *and are* much greater! 16 Yet, what God gives is not like *what happened* because the one man *Adam* sinned. *This is true* because, in fact, God judged *everyone* after the sinful thing *that Adam did*, which resulted in God condemning *everyone*. By contrast, what God kindly gave *people* after they rejected *his commands* many *times* resulted in God making them righteous. 17 Indeed, since everyone died because the one man *Adam* rejected *God's command*, it is even more certain that those *people* who accept how abundantly kind God is and *are those people whom* he makes righteous will live in control *of themselves*. *This will happen* because of *what* Jesus the Messiah *has done*.

18 Therefore, in the way that God condemned everyone because *Adam* rejected *God's command*, in the same way, God makes everyone righteous, which results in *them* living eternally, because of the righteous act that *Jesus* did. 19 Indeed, in the same way that people became sinful because the one man *Adam* disobeyed *God*, in the same way many people will become righteous because the one man *Jesus* obeyed *God*. 20 Yet *God* added *his* laws in order that people might reject *his commands* even more. Nevertheless, whenever people began to sin even more, then even more God showed how kind he is! 21 *This happened* so that God could be gracious to people by making them righteous. Just as being sinful controlled people by making them die, in the same way, when God makes people righteous, they live forever. *This is* because of *what* our Lord Jesus the Messiah *has done*.

6 *Someone might say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then surely we *believers* should keep on sinning in order that, even more, God might show how kind he is even more!" 2 *Then I would say,* "Of course not!" We who are no longer controlled by sinning surely must not continue living sinfully! 3 You surely know that God unites to the Messiah Jesus whomever someone baptizes, and it is as if that baptized person also died with the Messiah! 4 So, by being baptized as if we died with *the Messiah*, it is like God buried us *in the tomb* with *Jesus*. *This is so* in order that, just as God the Father's glorious power caused the Messiah to become alive again after he had died, in the same way, we too can live a new way of living. 5 Indeed, since we share in what resembles Jesus dying, we will surely also share in God making us alive again. 6 We know that God *also* did away with our former *sinful* way of living when people crucified Jesus. *He did this* in order to totally remove the way sin controls us, so that we no longer have to live sinfully. 7 *This is* because, when people *who live sinfully* share in *Jesus'* death, God frees them from having to live sinfully. 8 Now since *it is as if* we died with the Messiah, we trust that we will also live with him *eternally*. 9 We know

that the Messiah can never die again, because God caused him to become alive again after he had died. Nothing can ever cause the Messiah to die again! 10 *This is* because when Jesus died, he only had to die that one time only in order to remove *the way* sin *controls people*. Now that he is alive *again*, he lives in order to glorify God. 11 Similarly, you too regard yourselves as no longer controlled by sinning. Indeed, *regard yourselves* as alive in order to glorify God because God has united you to the Messiah Jesus. 12 Since this is true, do not allow your sinful desires to control you. *This would* result in you doing *the sinful things* that you want to do. 13 Do not use your body parts in order to do unrighteous things *or* to sin. Instead, live in order to do what God wants you to do, like people whom God caused to live again after they had died. Also, use your body parts in order to do righteous things to glorify God. 14 Indeed, do not allow your desire to sin to control you because the laws *God gave the Jews* do not control you. Instead, how kind God is controls you.

15 *Someone might say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then surely we *believers* should keep on sinning because the laws *God gave the Jews* do not control us. Instead, how kind God is controls us!" *Then I would say,* "Of course not!" 16 You surely know that if you submit yourselves to be controlled by a thing or person, you become like slaves to that thing or person you submit to! *This is true* whether you submit yourselves to living sinfully, which will kill you *eternally*, or you submit yourselves to God, which will make you righteous. 17 Although you used to submit yourselves to living sinfully, *now* you are sincerely submissive to the type of teaching to which God has submitted you. Thank God! 18 Indeed, since God liberated you from living sinfully, you are *now* serving *God* righteously. 19 (I *Paul* am speaking in human terms, because you are spiritually immature.) Indeed, just as you *previously* used your body parts to live impurely and to increasingly break God's laws, in the same way, now use your body parts to live righteously. *This will cause you* to live like God's people should live. 20 *This is* because when you used to submit yourselves to living sinfully, you were not living righteously. 21 So, formerly you did not benefit from those *sinful* things *you did* that now embarrass you. *This is because* those things will eventually kill *you eternally*. 22 But now *that you trust in Jesus*, God has freed you from living sinfully and has caused you to serve him the way slaves would serve him. Therefore, you receive what is beneficial, which results in you living like God's people should live. Indeed, *living in that way* will eventually result in you living eternally. 23 *I say this* because living sinfully causes those who do so to die *eternally*, but God graciously causes those who are united to our Lord, the Messiah Jesus, to live eternally.

7 My fellow *Jewish* believers, you are well-aware that the laws *God gave the Jews* must be obeyed by *Jewish* people throughout their whole lives. (*I know that you are well-aware of this fact*, because I am speaking to people who are familiar with the laws *God gave the Jews*.) 2 For instance, according to the laws *God gave the Jews*, a married woman must remain married to her husband as long as he lives. However, if her husband dies, *God's* law no longer requires her to remain married to him. 3 Therefore, if she marries another man while her husband is alive, *according to God's law* she will be an adulterous woman. However, if her husband dies, she no longer has to obey *what* God's law *requires of those who are married*. As a result, she would not be an adulterous woman if she married another man. 4 So, my fellow *Jewish* believers, by means of the Messiah dying *on the cross* the laws *God gave the Jews* no longer control you. *God did this* in order to unite you to the Messiah, *as if you were marrying a new husband*. He is the person whom God made alive again after he had died. *God did this* in order that we may do things that please him. 5 Indeed, when living sinfully used to control us, the laws *God gave us* caused us to want to sin even more. *Our living sinfully* controlled what we did with our body parts. As a result, we would *eventually* die *eternally*. 6 But now *that we trust in Jesus*, God cancels what his laws require *us to do*. The laws *God gave the Jews* no longer control us as if we were prisoners. As a result, we now serve God in the new way that comes from the *Holy* Spirit. *We* no longer *serve God* in the old way that the written rules *God gave the Jews* require.

7 *Someone might say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then surely the laws *God gave the Jews* are sinful!" *Then I would say,* "Of course not!" On the contrary, without the laws *God gave the Jews*, I would never have become aware of *what it means to* sin. For instance, if God did not say in his laws, "You must not covet," I would never have become aware of *what it means to* covet. 8 However, since I am sinful, I wanted to covet in many ways because I knew that *God* commanded *us not to covet*. *This is* because if the laws *God gave the Jews* did not exist, living sinfully would cease. 9 There was a time when I was living without being aware of the laws *God gave the Jews*. But, when I became aware of those commandments, I wanted to sin even more. 10 I became *spiritually* dead. God's command was supposed to result in me living *eternally*. But God's command actually will result in me dying *eternally*. 11 *This is so* because *I* wanted to sin even more because I knew what God had commanded. When I sinned, I tricked myself. Then *disobeying* what God had commanded killed me *spiritually*. 12 So the laws *God gave the Jews* are worthy of God and what God has commanded is worthy of God, just, and good.

13 So, *God's laws*, which are good, surely did not cause me to die *spiritually*! Of course not! Rather, living sinfully did so. *This happened* so that *God's* good *laws* would reveal how sinful it is to live sinfully. *This also happened* so that what God commands would reveal that living sinfully is utterly sinful.

14 *This is true* because we are *all* aware that the laws *God gave the Jews* are from God's Spirit. But as for me, I am *spiritually* weak. *It is as if* I must serve as a slave to living sinfully. 15 *This is true* because I do not comprehend what I do! Indeed, I keep on doing what I do not want to do. But I do what I hate *that I do*. 16 Now because I do what I do not want *to do*, *this proves that* I agree with the laws *God gave the Jews*. *I also testify* that they are good *laws*. 17 This means that now I am no longer the one who causes me to do *these sinful things*. Rather, my wanting to live sinfully causes me *to do them*. 18 Indeed, I am aware that I am not good *at all*. In other words, my sinful self *is not good at all*. *This is true* because, even though I really want to do *what is good*, I am unable to do so. 19 Indeed, I do not do the good things I want *to do*. Rather, I keep on doing evil things that I do not want *to do*. 20 Now because I do what I do not want *to do*, I am no longer the one who causes me to do *these sinful things*. Rather, my wanting to live sinfully causes me *to do them*. 21 Consequently, I realized that a principle exists: I keep on doing evil things, *even though* I really want to do good things. 22 *This is true* because the laws God gave *the Jews* make my mind rejoice. 23 Yet, I notice another principle that controls what I do with my body parts. *This principle* conflicts with

the *other* principle that my mind *accepts*. It also controls me, making me its prisoner by means of the principle that I tend to live sinfully. *Living sinfully* controls what I do with my body parts. 24 I am truly a wretched person! *I feel as though there is no one* who could *possibly* rescue me from this body that kills me! 25 I thank God *who rescued me* by means of our Lord Jesus the Messiah! Therefore, I actually do obey with my mind the laws God gave *the Jews*. Yet *at the same time* with my sinful self *I obey* the principle that I tend to live sinfully.

8 So now, God absolutely does not condemn anyone whom he has united with the Messiah Jesus. 2 *This is true* because the principle that pertains to the life-giving Holy Spirit has caused you *believers* to no longer be controlled by the principle that causes people to sin and die *eternally*. *It did this* by uniting you with the Messiah Jesus. 3 Indeed, God *accomplished* what the laws *he gave the Jews* could not accomplish, because they could not prevent people from living sinfully. Through *the crucifying of his Son's* body, God removed *how* sinning *controls people*. *He did this* by sending his own Son *Jesus to the world* in a human body *that was* like the bodies of sinful people. *God sent his Son* in order to *remove* that which causes man to sin. 4 *God did these things* so that we *believers* could do the righteous acts that the laws *he gave the Jews* required. We can live as people whom living sinfully does not control. Rather, *we can live as people* whom the *Holy* Spirit controls. 5 *This is true* because those *people* whom living sinfully controls think about those things that are related to living sinfully. However, those people whom the *Holy* Spirit controls think about those things that are related to the *Holy* Spirit. 6 Indeed, focusing on living sinfully will cause *a person* to die *eternally*. However, focusing on the *Holy* Spirit will cause *a person* to live *eternally and* peacefully. 7 *This is true* because *people* who focus on living sinfully are God's enemies. *This is* because they do not voluntarily obey the laws God gave *the Jews*; they are incapable *of doing so*. 8 But those whom living sinfully controls are incapable of pleasing God. 9 By contrast, you *believers* are not those whom living sinfully controls. Rather, you are those whom the *Holy* Spirit controls because God's Spirit really does reside within you. But if some person does not possess Jesus the Messiah's Spirit, this person does not belong to the Messiah. 10 Now, since the Messiah resides within you *believers*, the *Holy* Spirit gives *you eternal* life because he has made you righteous. *This is true* even though your bodies will die because you sin. 11 The *Holy* Spirit does indeed reside within you. *He came* from God, who caused Jesus to become alive again after he had died. *Since this is true,* God, who caused the Messiah Jesus to become alive again after he had died, will also cause your physical bodies to become alive *again* by his Spirit. This *Spirit* resides within you.

12 Therefore, *my* fellow believers, we are obligated. *But we are not obligated* to live sinfully, *which means* to live like those whom living sinfully controls. 13 Indeed, if you live like those whom living sinfully controls, you will die *eternally*. However, if the *Holy* Spirit enables you to stop doing what is sinful with your bodies, you will live *eternally*.

14 *This is* because those people whom God's Spirit guides are God's *spiritual* children. 15 Indeed, God has not given you *believers* an enslaved mind to terrify you, such as you had before. Rather, God has given you the Holy Spirit to *spiritually* adopt you *as his children*. *It is* the Holy Spirit who enables us to cry out, "Abba, my Father!" 16 The *Holy* Spirit personally testifies, along with our own minds, that we are God's *spiritual* children. 17 Since we are *God's spiritual* children, we are also those who will inherit *blessings from God*. We inherit *blessings from God himself* and also together with the Messiah *Jesus*. *This is true* only if we keep suffering together with the Messiah in order for God to also glorify us together with the Messiah.

18 Indeed, I regard what we *believers in the Messiah* suffer at this time as being incomparable to what glorious things God will reveal to us *in the future*. 19 Indeed, what God created is very eagerly waiting for *the time* when God reveals whom his *spiritual* children are. 20 *This is* because God subjugated what he created so that it became useless. *What God created* did not want this to happen. Rather, *God subjugated what he created* because he wanted to *do so*. *He did this* to keep *the creation* confidently expecting 21 that God would also enable what he created to stop decaying and let it freely experience the same glorious status that belongs to his *spiritual* children. 22 Indeed, we are aware that, *even* at the present time, everything God has created keeps groaning and suffering together *like a mother experiencing pain before bearing a child*. 23 *It is* not only *what God created that groans*! On the contrary, even we ourselves who possess the *Holy* Spirit as the first portion *from God* feel suffering. *We feel this way* while we eagerly wait for God to *spiritually* adopt us, which will be when God redeems our bodies. 24 *This is so* because God rescued us while we confidently expect this. If we *already* had what we have been confidently expecting, then we would have nothing to confidently expect. *This is* because surely nobody confidently expects something that he *already* has. 25 Yet, if we keep on confidently expecting what we do not yet have, then we will keep on eagerly waiting for it while persevering.

26 The *Holy* Spirit similarly also assists us because we are weak. *This is* because we are not aware for what we should pray. However, the *Holy* Spirit personally pleads on our behalf by groaning without speaking words. 27 Now God is the one who investigates what we think and feel. He is aware of what the *Holy* Spirit intends, because the Spirit pleads for the sake of God's people according to *what* God *wants*.

28 We are certain that God makes all things that happen to benefit those who love him. *They are* the people whom God called because he previously planned *to do so*. 29 *This is* because those whom God chose in advance, he also decided in advance to make resemble his Son *Jesus*. *God did these things* in order for his Son *Jesus* to have first place among many *spiritual* siblings. 30 Certainly, the people whom God chose in advance *to become his people*, he also summoned to become his people. And those people whom God summoned *to become his people*, he also made righteous. And those people whom God made righteous, he will also make glorious.

31 *Since these things are true,* then we should say this about them: since God supports us, surely no one *is powerful enough* to oppose us! 32 God did not even spare his own Son, *Jesus*. On the contrary, God handed him over *to die* for the sake of us all. So God surely will also graciously give us, along with Jesus, every *blessing*! 33 Surely no one can *rightly* accuse those whom God chose *to become his people*! *This is because* God is the one who makes people righteous. 34 Surely no one can condemn *God's people*! *This is because* the Messiah Jesus is the one who died. Furthermore, he is the one whom God made alive again. He is also at the place of highest honor next to God, and he even pleads for our sake. 35 Surely no one can make Jesus stop loving us! If people trouble us or

distress us or persecute us, or if we are hungry or naked or in danger, or if people kill us with swords, surely none of those things can make Jesus stop loving us! 36 This is what *God meant when* he said *in the Scriptures*, "They constantly kill us because of you*, God*. They consider us to be like sheep for them to slaughter." 37 However, he who loved us enables us to completely overcome all of these things *that might happen to us*. 38 In fact, God has persuaded me that *none of these things*—whether being dead, or what happens while we are alive, or angels, or demons who rule, or things that are happening to us, or things that will happen to us, or powerful demons, 39 or what is above *us*, or what is below *us*, or anything else that God created—can stop God from loving us! *God loves us* because we are united to the Messiah Jesus, our Lord!

9 I speak what is true as one whom God has united with the Messiah. I do not speak what is false. The Holy Spirit confirms what my conscience testifies within myself *when I say* 2 that I grieve very greatly and constantly! 3 *I do so* because I truly wish that God would curse me and completely alienate me from *Jesus* the Messiah for my fellow *kinsmen to be saved*! They are physically related to me. 4 These *kinsmen of mine* are the Israelites. *They are those* whom God *spiritually* adopted. God allowed them to experience how glorious he is. God made covenants with them. God gave them his laws. God gave them the way to worship him. God also made promises to them. 5 *Our Jewish* forefathers *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* were Israelites. The Messiah is also one of them, as someone physically related to them. The Messiah rules over everything. *He is* the blessed God forever. May it be so!

6 Yet God has not failed to do what he promised *to the Israelites*. *This is true* because not all people who have physically descended from Israel are *true* Israelites. 7 *It is* also not *true* that all those who physically descended *from Abraham* are Abraham's *true* offspring. Rather, *as God says to Abraham in the Scriptures,* "I will identify your *true* offspring through *those who descend from* Isaac." 8 In other words, the people who *only* physically descended *from Abraham* are not God's *spiritual* children. Rather, those *who became God's spiritual* children as a result of what God promised are regarded as *Abraham's true spiritual* offspring. 9 Indeed, this is what God promised *would happen when he said in the Scriptures*, "At a set time, I will come. As a result, Sarah will give birth to a son." 10 This is not the only *promise God made*. But *God made a promise* also when Rebekah became pregnant by this same man, Isaac. *He is* the ancestor of us *Israelites*. 11 Indeed, *God chose only one of her two sons* even though she had not yet born them and they had not yet done anything right or wrong. *God did this* in order that what he had previously planned with regard to choosing *people* would happen. 12 *God did not choose only one of her sons* because of what he did. Rather, it was because God summons *those whom he chooses*. *This is why* God told Rebekah *in the Scriptures*, "Your older son will become a slave to your younger son." 13 This is what *God meant when* he said *in the Scriptures*, "I love *the younger son* Jacob, but I emphatically reject *the older son* Esau."

14 *Someone might say,* "*If what you have said is true,* then surely God must be unrighteous!" *Then I would say,* "Of course not!" 15 *We know that God is truly righteous* because God told Moses *in the Scriptures*, "I will be merciful to whomever I want to be merciful. I will be compassionate to whomever I want to be compassionate." 16 Therefore, *who receives God's mercy does* not *depend* on *how much* someone desires *to receive it*. *Who receives God's mercy* also does not depend on *how much* effort someone exerts. Rather, *it depends on* what God wants. *He is* the one who is merciful. 17 Indeed, this is what God told Pharaoh in the Scriptures, "I allowed you *to become king in Egypt* for this exact reason: in order that I could use you to exhibit how powerful I am. I also *allowed you to become king* in order that I will be famous all over the world." 18 Therefore, God is merciful to whomever he wants *to be merciful*. But he makes stubborn whomever he wants *to become stubborn*.

19 As a result *of what I have said,* one of you may tell me, "*If what you have said is true,* then surely God should not blame people *for doing what they do*! *God should not do that* because no one can ever stop him from doing whatever he wants *to do*!" 20 *Then I would say,* "You *mere* human! You who argue with God are truly not worthy *to do so*! Who God has made surely must not say to God who made him, 'You should not have made me to be like this!'" 21 *God can surely do whatever he wants to do with what he has made. In the same way,* someone who makes containers can do whatever he wants to do with his materials. From the same material he can make both containers for special use and containers for ordinary use. 22 Now, *you should surely not argue with God* because he very patiently endured those people whom he would punish *and* had prepared to destroy *eternally*. *He endured them* because he wanted to show how angry he is and to reveal how powerful he is. 23 *God* also *endures those whom he will punish* in order to reveal how abundantly glorious he is to those people to whom he will be merciful. God has previously arranged to glorify these people *eternally*. 24 We are also *among those people to whom God is merciful and* whom God has summoned. *God summons people* from *among* Jewish people and even from *among* non-Jewish people. 25 In the same way, God also told Hosea *in the Scriptures*, "I will give the name 'My people' to people who were not my people. I will also give the name 'Loved one' to the person whom I did not love."

26 *God also told Hosea,* "Then it will happen, in the *exact* same location where I previously told them, 'You are not my people,' I will give them the name, 'Children of God who lives.'"

27 Indeed, *elsewhere in the Scriptures* Isaiah shouts out about *the people* of Israel, "Even though there were as many Israelites as there are grains of sand along the seashore, God will refrain from punishing *only* a few of them. 28 *This is* because the Lord will fully and swiftly accomplish what he promised *to do* on the earth."

29 *It is* also just like Isaiah previously said *in the Scriptures*, "Unless the Lord, who rules over angel armies, had preserved offspring for us *Israelites*, he would have utterly destroyed us like he destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah."

30 *Since these things are true*, we should surely say that *although* the nations are not trying to be righteous, *they* became righteous. *However,* they became righteous by trusting *God*. 31 By contrast, *the people of* Israel tried to obey the laws *God gave them* in order to become righteous. *But* they could not become righteous by *obeying* those laws. 32 The reason why *the people of Israel could not become righteous* is that they did not *try to become righteous* by trusting *God*. Instead, they tried to become righteous by working *for it*. *Because of this the Messiah offended them when he came. It is as if the Messiah is* a stone that causes them to trip. 33 This is what *God meant when* he had *Isaiah* write *in the Scriptures*, "Pay attention! I am placing in Jerusalem *someone who is like* a stone that

trips *people* and a rock that offends *people*. But God will not humiliate *anyone* who trusts in that person."

10 My fellow believers, I strongly desire *that God will save the Israelites*. I also pray for him *to save* them!
2 *This is* because I personally confirm that they are zealous about God. However, *they are* not *zealous* based on fully knowing *God*. 3 *This is* because they are not aware of how God makes people righteous, and they try to make themselves righteous. *This is why* they refuse to subject themselves to the way God makes people righteous. 4 *They were wrong to try to make themselves righteous*, because *Jesus* the Messiah has ended the laws *that God gave the Jews*. *Christ did this* in order for God to make righteous anyone who trusts *in Jesus*.

5 Indeed, this is what Moses wrote *in the Scriptures* about being righteous by *obeying* the laws *God gave the Jews*: "The person who obeys *all God's* laws *perfectly* will live *eternally* by doing so." 6 However, this is what *Moses* said *in the Scriptures* about people becoming righteous by trusting *in God*, "Do not say to yourselves, 'Surely no one can go up to heaven!'" (This refers to trying to make the Messiah come down *to the earth*.) 7 *Moses* also *said not to say,* "Surely no one can go down into the bottomless pit!" (This refers to trying to make the Messiah become alive again after he had died.)
8 However, *Moses also* said this *in the Scriptures about people becoming righteous by trusting in God*, "You can easily know what God said. You can proclaim it and know it personally." This refers to what God said about trusting *in him*. *This is what* we *believers in the Messiah* keep announcing. 9 *What we keep announcing is* that God will save *any of* you who verbally acknowledges that Jesus is the Lord *over all things* and *personally* trusts that God made Jesus become alive again after he had died. 10 *This is true* because God makes righteous anyone who personally trusts *in Jesus*, and he saves anyone who verbally acknowledges *that Jesus is the Lord*.
11 Indeed, this is *what God* said in the Scriptures, "God will not humiliate *anyone* who trusts in that person." 12 Indeed, the Lord *Jesus* does not discriminate between Jewish people and non-Jewish people. *This is* because *Jesus* is the same Lord *who rules* over everyone. He generously blesses all people who call out to him *to save them*. 13 Indeed, *Joel wrote in the Scriptures,* "God will save all people who call out to the Lord *to save them*."

14 So, people certainly will not call out *for the Lord Jesus to save them if* they do not trust *in him*. And people certainly will not trust *in Jesus if* they have not heard *about him*. And people certainly will not hear *about Jesus if* someone does not proclaim *to them who he is*. 15 And certainly people would not proclaim *to other people who Jesus is* unless someone sends them out! This is what *Isaiah meant when* he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "It is a beautiful thing when people go and declare *to other people* the good news about good things!"
16 However, not all *Jews* accepted the good news *about Jesus*. Indeed, this is what Isaiah *meant when* he said *in the Scriptures*, "Lord, no one trusts what we say!" 17 So then, *a person can only* trust *in Jesus* by hearing *about him*. And *a person can only* hear *about Jesus* through *hearing* the message *that is about* the Messiah. 18 However, this is what I say, "The Jews most definitely heard *the message*!" It is a fact. *As David wrote in the Scriptures,* "*The heavenly bodies are like witnesses and* everyone throughout the entire world could hear what they said."

19 This is also what I say, "*The people of* Israel most definitely understood *the message*!" *God* first said through Moses *in the Scriptures*, "I will *personally* make you envious and angry by *using* a nation that does not *belong to me* and does not *even* know *me*." 20 Moreover, *God* quite boldly declared through Isaiah *in the Scriptures*, "I revealed myself to those *non-Jewish people* who were not interested in knowing me and did not *even* ask about me."

21 However, *God* told *the people of* Israel *in the Scriptures*, "I am always inviting *you* to know me, *but you constantly* disobey and oppose *me*!"

11 Since *these things are true*, this is what I say, "God certainly has not rejected his people, the Israelites!" Of course not! *I know this is true* because I too am one of the Israelites. I descended from Abraham. *More specifically, I descended* from the tribe that descended from Benjamin.
2 God did not discard his people. *They are the people* whom he chose in advance. You certainly are aware of what the Prophet Elijah said in the Scriptures when he appealed to God against the people of Israel! 3 *Elijah said,* "Lord, the people of Israel murdered *all of* your prophets *except for me*! They demolished *all of* your altars! I am the very last *prophet* who is still alive! Now, they are trying to kill me *too*!" 4 However, this is how God replied to Elijah, "I have kept alive 7,000 men for my purposes. These men have not worshipped *the false god* Baal." 5 So, similarly, at this time some faithful Israelites also remain. *This is* because God has graciously chosen them *to remain*. 6 Yet because *God chooses his people* based on how gracious he is, *God* does not *choose his people* based on what they do. *If God chose people based on what they do,* then how gracious he is would not *really* be gracious.

7 So this is what we should conclude: Although *the people of* Israel keep trying to make themselves righteous, they cannot do so. Instead, those whom God *graciously* chose *from them* became righteous. But God made stubborn those people of Israel whom he did not *graciously* choose. 8 This is exactly *what God meant when he wrote* in the Scriptures, "God caused the people of Israel to not think properly. Until this present day, God has made them completely unable to understand *how to become righteous*." 9 David also stated *in the Scriptures*, "*O God*, make the luxurious way they live punish them completely *like a hunter catches an animal* in a net or trap! *Make the luxurious way they live* cause them to sin and pay them back *for sinning*!

10 Make them unable to understand! Make them
suffer like slaves forever!"

11 Since *these things are true*, this is what I say, "The Jewish people were certainly not offended in order that God would completely reject them!" Of course not! Rather, God saves non-Jewish people because the Jewish people disobeyed *him*. This happened in order for God to make the Jewish people envious *of non-Jewish people who know him*. 12 Indeed, God used how the Jewish people disobeyed *him and* failed *to make themselves righteous* to abundantly bless people from all the nations in the whole world. So, *when* the complete amount of *faithful* Jewish people *become righteous*, there will be even greater blessings!

13 But now I am speaking to you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus*. God indeed made me his representative to non-Jewish people. Therefore, I show how glorious is what I do to minister *to non-Jewish people*. 14 If possible, I want to make those who I am physically related to, the Jews,

envious *of the non-Jewish people who know God*, so that God will save some of them. 15 Indeed, God is reconciling with *people in* the world as a result of him rejecting the Jewish people. So, when God accepts the Jewish people, it will result in God making alive those who are dead. 16 Indeed, because *the ancestors of the Jewish people belong to God, just like* the first portion *of a lump of dough* belongs to God, *all the Jewish people belong to God, just like* that whole lump of dough *belongs to God*. Also, because *the ancestors of the Jewish people belonged to God, just like* the root *of an olive tree* belongs to God, *all the Jewish people belong to God, just like* the branches of that *same* tree *belong to God*.

17 Indeed, *God has removed some of the Jewish people from his people, as* a farmer breaks *unfruitful* branches off *of an olive tree*. But, *God has made* you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus part of his people, as* a farmer grafts wild olive branches into *a cultivated tree*. *You* also *share together in benefitting from being part of God's people, as* grafted branches share in the nutrition in the olive tree root. 18 Therefore, you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus* must not boast against the *Jewish people whom God removed, even though they are like* broken off branches! If you do boast, *you must realize that* you indeed do not sustain the Jewish people. Rather, *they sustain* you, as the root sustains *the branches*! 19 So then, you might say, "*God removed some of the Jewish people from his people, as* a farmer breaks *unfruitful* branches off *of a tree*. *God did this* in order that *he could join* me *to his people, as* a farmer grafts a branch into *a tree*." 20 *I would reply by saying that* what you said is correct. *God removed* some of the Jewish people *from being his people, as* a farmer breaks off *unfruitful* branches because they were unfaithful. However, you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus* remain *part of God's people* by trusting *in him*. Do not arrogantly think *that you are better than unbelieving Jewish people*! Rather, fear *God!* 21 *You should fear God* because he did not show pity to the *faithless Jewish people, who are like* natural branches. So, he will not show pity to you *non-Jewish people if you stop trusting in Jesus*!

22 Since *this is true*, pay attention to how kind and severe God can be! God acts severely toward those who stop trusting in him. However, God will act kindly toward you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus* if you continue accepting how kind he is. But, if you do not *do this*, *God will reject you, like* a farmer cuts an *unfruitful* branch off of a tree! 23 However, if those faithless Jewish people believe *in Jesus*, God will allow them to *rejoin his people, just as* a farmer grafts *branches* into *a tree*. *This is* because God is powerful enough to rejoin the Jewish people *to his people*. 24 Indeed, *God removed* you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus from the nations and joined you to his people, as* a farmer cuts off a branch from a naturally wild olive tree and grafts it into a cultivated olive tree, *even though doing so is* not natural. Since *this is true*, *God* will certainly *join Israelites back into his people, just as* a farmer grafts a naturally cultivated olive branch back into its own tree.

25 *I say this* because I really want you, my *non-Jewish* fellow believers, to know what God had previously hidden *from people*, so that you do not become arrogant. *God had previously hidden from people the fact* that some of *the people of* Israel will stubbornly oppose *him* until all the non-Jewish people God has chosen have joined his people. 26 Then, in the same way, God will save all *of the people of* Israel. This is what *Isaiah meant when* he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "God will send from Jerusalem someone to rescue *his people*. *That man* will make *the descendants of* Jacob stop being ungodly."

27 *God says,* "This is the agreement that I will make with the descendants of Jacob, when I forgive *them for the* sinful things *that they have done*."

28 With regard to *Jewish people rejecting* the good news, they are enemies *of God* for your benefit. However, with regard to *God* choosing *Jewish people*, God loves them for the sake of *what he promised* their ancestors. 29 *This is true* because God does not revoke the things he graciously gives. *He* also *does not revoke the people whom* he summons *to be his people*. 30 Indeed, *it is* just as you *non-Jewish people who trust in Jesus* used to disobey God, but now God has been merciful to you because the Jewish people disobeyed *him*. 31 In the same way, the Jewish people also are now disobeying *God* because God has been merciful to you *non-Jewish people*. *This happened* in order for God to now also be merciful to them. 32 Indeed, God allowed everyone to disobey him in order to be merciful to them.

33 God is so very wealthy, wise, and knowledgeable! No one can fully understand what he does! 34 Indeed, *as Isaiah wrote,* "*No one* could *ever* comprehend what the Lord thinks or advise him!" 35 Furthermore, "No one could *ever* give God *anything* that would cause God to owe him *something*!"

36 *No one can do these things*, because everything *came* from God, *exists* by God, and *exists* for God. *I pray that* everyone will glorify him forever. May this truly be so!

12 So then, *considering everything that I have told you,* I exhort you fellow believers, based on how compassionate God is: Devote yourselves *to God*, as if you were living animals someone offers to God. Be holy and please God. Doing so is the reasonable way for you to serve *God*. 2 Do not change yourselves to be like the *sinful people who live at* the current time. Rather, let God change the way you behave by changing the way you think in order that you can test and prove what God wants *you to do*. *God wants you to do* what is good, pleasing, and flawless.

3 Indeed, based on *how* God has kindly authorized me *to represent him,* I am telling every one of you to not think you are better than you really are. Rather, think properly *about yourselves*, according to the amount of trusting *in God* that God has apportioned to each one *of you*. 4 *You must think properly about yourselves* because, in the same way that a *human* body has many parts that all function for different purposes, 5 so also, we many *believers in the Messiah* are united to the Messiah as one group. *Each one of us is united to each other like* the individual parts *of a human body* are united. 6 Yet we *believers in the Messiah* have received different spiritual abilities in accordance with what God has kindly given to us. If *God has enabled you* to prophesy, *then prophesy* in accordance with the amount of trusting *in God* that God has apportioned to you. 7 If *God has enabled you* to serve, *then you should* serve *others*. *If God has enabled you* to teach *others*, *then you should* teach *others*. 8 If *God has enabled you* to encourage *others*, *then* you should encourage *others. If God has enabled you* to give *what you have to others*, *then* you should generously give *what you have to others*. *If God has enabled you* to lead *others*, *then* you should lead *others* diligently. *If God has enabled you* to be merciful, *then* you should cheerfully be merciful.

9 Love *each other* genuinely. Detest what is wicked. Fervently retain what is good. 10 Be affectionate toward each other in regard to loving fellow believers. Be the first to honor other *fellow believers*. 11 Do not be lazy, *but* be diligent. Be sincerely enthusiastic. Serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice because

you are confident *in the Lord*. Be patient when you suffer. Pray persistently. 13 Share *what you have to provide* what God's people need. Find opportunities to welcome *others into your home*. 14 *Ask God to* bless the people who mistreat you. *Ask God to* bless them rather than curse them. 15 Rejoice along with those people who are rejoicing. Cry along with those who are crying. 16 Be as concerned for each other as you are for yourselves. Do not think arrogantly *about yourselves*. Rather, associate with humble people. Do not be arrogant. 17 Do not do something evil to someone who has done something evil to you. Think carefully about *doing* things that everyone considers to be good. 18 Live peacefully with everyone whenever it is possible for you to do so. 19 *Fellow believers* whom I love, do not retaliate *when people do something evil against you*. Rather, let God punish *them*. *I say this* because Moses wrote *in the Scriptures*, "The Lord says, 'I will retaliate *when people do something evil against you*. I will punish *them according to what they have done*.'" 20 Rather *than permitting us to retaliate, God instructed us in the Scriptures*, "Feed your enemy if that person is hungry. Give your enemy something to drink if that person is thirsty. *Do this* because when you do so, *your enemy will feel ashamed, as if* you were piling up burning coals on top of that person's head." 21 *In other words,* do not let what is evil defeat you *by causing you to do what is evil*. Rather, defeat what is evil by *doing* what is good.

13 Every one of you must submit yourselves to those whom God has authorized to govern you. *This is* because no one *can govern* unless God authorizes them *to do so*. God has instituted the existing governments. 2 So people who resist those whom God has authorized *to govern* are opposing what God has commanded. God will punish those people who oppose *those whom he has authorized to govern*. 3 Indeed, the people who rule are *not supposed* to terrify *those people who do* what is good. Rather, *they are supposed to terrify those people who do* what is evil. If you do not want to fear those whom God authorizes to rule, *then* do what is good and those who rule will commend you for doing so. 4 *This is* because the people *whom God authorizes to rule* serve God for your benefit. But if you do what is evil, you should be afraid, because God has authorized those people who rule to punish *people* for a good reason. Indeed, those people who rule serve God by avenging *what is evil* in order to punish anyone who practices what is evil. 5 Consequently, you must submit yourselves *to those people whom God authorizes to rule*. *You must do this* not only because they can punish you, but also because you know *that to disobey them is to disobey God*! 6 Indeed, you also pay taxes because of these things. *You also pay taxes* because those people *whom God authorizes to rule* serve God. They devote themselves to serving *by governing*. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay taxes to whom you owe taxes. Pay fees to whom you owe fees. Fear those people whom you should fear. Honor those people whom you should honor.

8 Do not owe anything to anyone. Rather, continue to love other *people who believe in the Messiah as if you owe it to them*. *Do this* because someone who loves another person accomplishes *what God required in* the laws *he gave the Jews*. 9 *This is true* because *God commanded* these things *in his laws when he said*, "Do not have sexual relations with someone whom you did not marry. Do not murder. Do not rob people. Do not lust for what belongs to other people." You could summarize anything else that God commands *in the laws he gave the Jews* with this *other* thing *God commanded*: "Love other people in the same way you love yourself." 10 *When you* love other people, *you* do not do evil things *to them*. This is why loving *other people* accomplishes *what God required in* the laws *he gave the Jews*.

11 *Do* these things because you know what time it is. It is already the time for you to be spiritually alert because *the time when Jesus will return* to *finally* save us is now closer than when we began trusting *in him*. 12 *In the same way that* the night ends just before the day begins*, the time of this sinful world is almost over, and Jesus will return soon*. So, we must stop doing *what is evil, which is like* what people do when it is dark. Instead, we must *oppose what is evil by doing what is good, which is like* a soldier puts on his armor *to fight the enemy* during the day. 13 We must behave appropriately, as if it were daytime *and people could see what we do*. We must not celebrate drunkenly or get drunk *at all*. We must not do any unrestrained sexually immoral acts *at all*. We must not quarrel *with others* or be jealous *of others*. 14 Rather *than doing those things*, act like the Lord Jesus the Messiah would act. Do not concern yourselves with *anything that is related to* what your *sinful* self wants to do.

14 Welcome any fellow *believer in the Messiah* who is immature in how they believe. *Do* not *welcome them* in order to argue with them about matters of opinion. 2 *There are some people* who are convinced that they can eat any *kind of food*. But the immature *believer in the Messiah thinks that they can only* eat vegetables. 3 *The believer in the Messiah* who eats *every kind of food* must not scorn *his fellow believer* who does not eat *every kind of food. The believer in the Messiah* who does not eat *every kind of food* also must not judge *his fellow believer* who eats *every kind of food*. *This is* because God has welcomed *both of* them. 4 You should not judge *your fellow believer, who is like* a slave belonging to another *master*. He either pleases or does not please his master, *according to how the master judges*. Yet God will make him pleasing *to himself* because the Lord can do so.

5 Some people consider certain days to be special, while other people consider all days *to be the same*. Each person must be completely certain *that what they do honors God*. 6 The person who thinks certain days are special does so in order to *honor* the Lord. The person who eats *every kind of food* does so in order to *honor* the Lord. *This is* because that person is thankful to God. The person who refuses to eat *certain foods* does so in order to *honor* the Lord. That person is thankful to God as well. 7 *This is true* because not one of us *believers in the Messiah* lives *only* to *please* himself, and not one of us dies *only* to *please* himself. 8 Indeed, while we *believers in the Messiah* live, we live to *please* the Lord. When we die, we die to *please* the Lord. So then, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. 9 Indeed, this is why the Messiah *Jesus* died and *became* alive *again*: in order to become Lord over those who are dead and those who are alive.

10 As for you, those of you who judge your fellow believers must not do so! You also must not scorn your fellow believers! *Do not do these things* because *one day* God will judge all of us *who believe in the Messiah*. 11 Indeed, Isaiah wrote in the Scriptures, "The Lord says *this oath*, 'As certainly as I am alive, *it is just as certain that* everyone will worship me. And everyone will acknowledge to me *that I am God*.'"

12 Therefore, each one of us *who believes in the Messiah* will certainly answer to God for whatever we do *while we are alive*.

13 So we must stop judging other believers. Instead, we
must resolve not to do anything that could tempt our fellow
believers to sin. 14 I am absolutely convinced by the Lord
Jesus that no *food* is inherently sinful *for believers in the
Messiah to eat*. If someone regards some *food* as sinful to
eat, then it is *only* sinful for that person to eat it. 15 *Do not
tempt fellow believers to sin* because, if you grieve your fellow
believer by eating what that person considers to be sinful to
eat, you are not acting in a loving manner anymore. Do not
cause a fellow believer to *stop trusting in God and* become
ruined *eternally* because of what you *want to* eat! The Messiah
died to save that person! 16 So then, do not do anything that
will cause anyone to slander the good things that God has
given you. 17 *Do not do this*, because eating and drinking do
not characterize God's kingdom. Rather, being righteous,
peaceful, and joyful through the Holy Spirit *characterizes
God's kingdom*. 18 Indeed, *any* believer who serves the Messiah
by doing these things greatly pleases God, and *other* people
will *also* approve of that person.

19 Therefore, we must eagerly try to live peacefully *with
other believers* and help each other become *spiritually* mature.
20 Do not ruin what God has done because *you want to eat
certain* foods! God permits us to eat all *kinds of food*. However,
it is sinful for someone to eat *certain foods* if doing so tempts
your fellow believer to sin. 21 It is better not to eat *any* meat,
or drink *any* wine, or *do* anything that could tempt your
fellow believer to sin, [or that could offend that person or
cause that person to remain spiritually immature]. 22 Keep
what you believe *that God permits you to do* between you
and God. The person who does not feel guilty concerning
what he believes to be right is blessed. 23 By contrast, God
judges someone who considers *eating certain foods to be sinful*
and eats *those foods*. *This is* because that person did not act
according to what that person believes *is right*. A person
who does anything that is not according to what that person
believes *is right* is sinning.

15 Indeed, we *spiritually* mature *believers in the Messiah*
must support *our* fellow believers in the Messiah who
are *spiritually* immature. We must not *only* do what pleases
us. 2 Each one of us believers in the Messiah must do what
pleases his fellow believers in order to do what is good *for
them, and* in order to help them become *spiritually* mature.
3 For instance, not even the Messiah *Jesus* pleased himself!
Rather, *he lived to please others*. This is what *David meant
when* he wrote *in the Scriptures about the Messiah saying to
God*, "When people insult you, they *also* insult me!" 4 Indeed,
the prophets previously wrote everything *in the Scriptures*
in order to teach us. *They also wrote the Scriptures* in order
to make us confident through what the Scriptures say that
helps us endure and encourages us.

5 I pray that *our* patient and encouraging God will allow
you to live harmoniously with each other the way the Messiah
Jesus did. 6 *I pray that you will live harmoniously with each
other* in order that you might be united when you glorify
God. *He is* the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

7 Consequently, welcome your fellow believers *in the
Messiah* in the same way that the Messiah *Jesus* also welcomed
you in order to glorify God! 8 Indeed, I*, Paul,* am telling *you*
that the Messiah *Jesus* serves the circumcised *Jews* because
of how trustworthy God is. *He did this* in order to secure
what God had promised to the *Jewish* forefathers *Abraham,
Isaac, and Jacob*. 9 *Jesus also did this* in order for the nations
to glorify God because he is so merciful. This is what *David
meant when* he wrote *in the Scriptures*, "So I will proclaim
who you *are when I am* among the nations, and I will praise
you by singing songs." 10 Again, *Moses* said in the Scriptures,
"*All you* nations, celebrate along with God's people!" 11 And
also *in the Scriptures someone said*, "All *you* nations, praise the
Lord! All *you* people groups, commend him!" 12 *The Prophet*
Isaiah also said *in the Scriptures*, "The one who descends from
David's father Jesse will come. He will begin to rule over the
nations. The nations will become confident because of him."

13 I pray that the God who makes *people* confident will
cause you to feel exceedingly joyful and peaceful by trusting
in him! *I pray that God will do this* in order for you to be
exceedingly confident by the Holy Spirit enabling you.

14 My fellow believers, God has also persuaded me
personally that each of you are exceedingly good, exceedingly
knowledgeable of many things, and even able to teach other
people. 15 *In this letter* I have written to you *believers in the
Messiah* in a bold manner about some things in order to
remind you *of them*. *I have done this* because God has kindly
authorized me *to do so*. 16 *God did this* in order for me to serve
the Messiah Jesus among non-Jewish people *by preaching*
the good news from God as if I were a priest. *I do this* in
order for the non-Jewish people *who trust in Jesus* to be *like*
something offered *to God that* pleases *him, and that* the Holy
Spirit has set apart *for him*.

17 So, as someone who is united with the Messiah Jesus,
I have *good reasons* to boast about what God is doing
through me! 18 Indeed, I will only be so bold as to speak
about what the Messiah has done through me *that has led*
to the nations obediently *trusting in God's good news*! *The
Messiah did this* through what I said and did. 19 *The Messiah
also did this* through powerful and wonderful miracles as
God's *Holy* Spirit powerfully *enabled me*! As a result, I have
completed proclaiming the good news about the Messiah all
the way around from Jerusalem to the *province of* Illyricum.
20 And so, I aspire to preach the good news where people
have never heard about the Messiah *Jesus*. *I desire this* in
order to not *interfere with someone else's work, as if I were*
building something where another person had already laid
the foundation. 21 Rather, *I preach the good news to those who
have never heard it.* This is what *Isaiah meant when* he wrote
in the Scriptures, "Those people whom no one told about him
will perceive *who he is*. Those people who have not heard
about him will comprehend *who he is*."

22 That also hindered me over and over again from visiting
all of you *at Rome*. 23 Yet at the present time I have nowhere
left to go in these areas *to proclaim the good news*. I also have
deeply desired to visit you for many years. 24 *So* whenever I
go to *the province of* Spain, I truly expect to visit you while
passing through *Rome*. *I* also *expect* you to help me continue
my journey to Spain after I first enjoy being with you for
some time. 25 Yet, at the present time I am going to Jerusalem
in order to serve God's people *there*. 26 *I am doing this* because
the believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia were
glad to give money to help the poor people of God *who live*
in Jerusalem. 27 In fact, those believers were glad, and they
should *help* the poor believers in Jerusalem. *This is* because
the non-Jewish believers have spiritually benefited from the
Jewish believers. *So,* the non-Jewish believers should also
serve the Jewish believers by providing what they physically
need. 28 So then, after I finish this task and safely deliver
this money to the poor believers in Jerusalem, I will pass
through *your city* on my way to Spain. 29 I am certain that
the Messiah will fully bless *us* when I visit you!

30 Fellow believers, I appeal to you based on our Lord
Jesus the Messiah and how the *Holy* Spirit has enabled us
to love *each other*: Fervently pray to God with me *and* for
me! 31 *Pray* that God will rescue me from the Jews in the
province of Judea who do not believe *in Jesus*. *Pray* also
that God's people in Jerusalem will accept the money that I
give them for *the poor believers there*. 32 *Pray also* that I can
joyfully visit you as God wants, *and* we may refresh each
other. 33 Finally, *I pray that* the God who makes *us* peaceful
will be with all of you. May it be so!

16 I, *Paul,* recommend to you our fellow believer whose
name is Phoebe. She also serves the group of believers
that meets in the city of Cenchrea. 2 *I recommend Phoebe to*
you in order for you to accept her *as a fellow believer* in the
Lord *Jesus*. *Accept her* in a way that is appropriate for God's
people. *I* also *recommend her to you in order for you* to help
her in whatever way and with anything she might need from
you. *Do this* because she has helped many people, including
me personally.

3 Say hello to Priscilla and *her husband* Aquila. They have
worked with me *to tell people* about the Messiah Jesus. 4 They
risked *the Romans* executing them in order to save my life.
Both I and all the groups of believers among the nations are
thankful for them. 5 Also, *say hello to* the group of believers
that meets in the home of Priscilla and Aquila. Say hello
to Epaenetus, whom I love. He is the first person from the
province of Asia *Minor* to believe in the Messiah *Jesus*. 6 Say
hello to Mary. She has labored a lot for your sake. 7 Say hello
to Andronicus and Junia. They are my fellow Jews, and we
were in prison together. Those whom Jesus sent to represent
him know them very well. God united them to the Messiah
before *he did so to* me. 8 Say hello to Ampliatus. I love him *as*
a fellow believer in the Lord *Jesus*. 9 Say hello to Urbanus. He
works with us *to tell people* about the Messiah *Jesus*. Also say
hello to Stachys, whom I love. 10 Say hello to Apelles. The
Messiah *Jesus* has approved him. Say hello to those *believers*
who live in the household of Aristobulus. 11 Say hello to my
fellow Jew Herodion. Say hello to those whom God united
to the Lord *Jesus* who live in the household of Narcissus.
12 Say hello to Tryphaena and Tryphosa. These ladies labor
to tell people about the Lord *Jesus*. Say hello to Persis, whom
I love. She has labored a lot *to tell people* about the Lord
Jesus. 13 Say hello to Rufus. The Lord *Jesus* chose him. Also
say hello to his mother. She has been like a mother to me as
well. 14 Say hello to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas,
Hermas, and our fellow believers who *meet* together with
them. 15 Say hello to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his
sister, and Olympas. Also *say hello to* all God's people who
meet together with them. 16 Say hello to each other in a
loving way. All of the groups of believers who belong to the
Messiah *in this area* say hello to you!

17 My fellow believers, I exhort you to look out for the
people who are causing *believers* to argue *with each other*
and tempting *them* to sin, which contradicts what we have
taught you. Stay away from them! 18 Indeed, people like
this are not serving our Lord *Jesus* the Messiah! Rather, *they*
only serve their own appetites. By speaking so eloquently
and flatteringly, they trick the minds of people who do not
suspect *them of teaching what is false*. 19 *I tell you these things*
because *believers* in many places have heard about how you
obey *God*. As a result, I am overjoyed because of you! But I
also desire that you act wisely with regard to what is good
and remain innocent with regard to what is bad. 20 The God
who makes *us* peaceful will quickly *make you victorious over*
Satan, as if you were trampling*him* under your feet! *I pray*
that our Lord Jesus the Messiah *will* be gracious to you!

21 Timothy, who works with me *to tell people about Jesus*,
says hello to you. My fellow Jews, Lucius, Jason, and
Sosipater, also *say hello to you*. 22 I *am* Tertius, *and I am*
writing this letter *as Paul dictates it to me*. I say hello to you *as*
a fellow believer in the Lord *Jesus*. 23 Gaius says hello to you.
He hosts me and the whole group of believers *who meet here*.
Erastus controls the money for this city. *He* and Quartus, *our*
fellow believer, say hello to you. 24 [a] [*I pray that* our Lord
Jesus the Messiah *will* be gracious to all of you! May it be
so!]

25 *I pray that everyone will glorify God.* He is the one who
can strengthen you *spiritually* based on the good news that I
proclaim about Jesus the Messiah. *What I proclaim is* based
on the mysterious *plan* that God revealed but *previously*
concealed *from people* for a very long time. 26 However, now
God has revealed *that mysterious plan*. He has made it known
through his prophets who wrote about it *in the Scriptures*.
They did this according to what the God who lives forever
commanded in order that all the nations would obey *God* by
trusting *in Jesus the Messiah*. 27 God alone is wise. *I pray that*
everyone will glorify him through Jesus the Messiah forever!
May it be so!

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[a] The best ancient manuscripts do not include verse 24. (See: Romans 16:20).