**Roman Road to Service**

Romans 5:1-11 begins to teach us who we are in Christ. In the book of Romans there is a progression of logic. We see this set forth through the use of the word "therefore". The word "therefore" sets forth a conclusion based on the truth that has already been set forth. There are 4 times "therefore" is mentioned in the first five chapters of the book of Romans which deal with our salvation.

As we continue reading we see that there is a series of "therefore" in connection with our service. We need to understand our justification and our right standing with God before we can move on into our service.

Remember, "therefore" is a word of logic; it carries forward meaning. *Therefore* is a way of saying, "Here is the conclusion based on the facts that have been presented."

**Therefore For Our Service**

(Romans 6:3-4 KJV)  Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*{4}***Therefore** we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

The first "therefore" in regard to our service is proclaimed on the basis of the fact that we were baptized into Christ and into His death; we are identified with Christ and His death.

The religious systems of this world have indoctrinated us so whenever we hear or see the words baptize or baptism we immediately think of water. However, there are at least 12 kinds of baptisms in the Bible; and they do not all refer to a water baptism.

Often if one does not think of a water baptism then one will think of the baptism of the Holy Spirit fire of the Pentecostal era. Those that think of baptism in that fashion not only have you baptized in water but also have you seeking "another" baptism.

(Romans 6:3 KJV)  Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

When we were baptized into Christ we were baptized into His death; there is no mention of water in this verse. Do some actually think it takes water to be put into Christ? No, of course not! It takes something supernatural to place you in Christ; water baptism is a natural occurrence.

(1 Corinthians 12:13 KJV)  For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be*Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be*bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

It is the Spirit of God that baptizes believers into Jesus Christ. It is God that does the baptizing, not the pastor of your church you attend.

(Galatians 3:27-28 KJV)  For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*{28}*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

When we are baptized into Christ by the Spirit of God we put on Christ and the distinctions of our former identification (male and female, bond or free, Jew or Greek) no longer exist. We are identified as being in Christ Jesus.

(Colossians 2:11-12 KJV)  In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*{12}*Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him*through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

This baptism is through the faith of the operation of God. God is the one that performs it, not a priest or a pastor.

If you are in Christ then you are a new creature. You have a new identification. We do not have to seek something else, such as a second baptism to make us complete in Him.

Romans 6:4 tells us why were we made a new creature:

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life**."

It says, "therefore." Whenever you see "therefore" you need to ask your self, "What is it ‘there for’?" Romans 6:1-2 tells us that we are no longer to continue in sin.

(Romans 6:1-2 KJV) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*{2}*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

As a new Creature we can now walk in newness of life.

(2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV)  Therefore if any man *be*in Christ, *he is*a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The old things have passed away. This does not mean behavior, but who we were in Adam. We receive a new identification in Christ, a new position. It is our life, who we are, that has been radically changed.

As a new creature our identification in Christ creates new behavior.

(Romans 6:12 KJV)  Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Although our behavior comes out of our identification, it is possible to change one’s behavior without changing one’s identification. A lot of people attempt to do this every New Year with "a new year’s resolution" but often fail.

It is through the Spirit baptism that our new identification takes place. When you trust Jesus Christ as Savior, it is at that instant the Spirit gives you a new identification. It is at that moment, we are taken out of Adam and placed into Christ.

**Therefore**

(Romans 8:1-2 KJV)  *There is*therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*{2}*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

In Romans 6, we learn our position in Christ. Then in Romans 7,  we learn the struggle to do what is right. Next in Romans 8, we learn the power of our walk is because of our identity in Christ: "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

Romans 8:1 is commonly misunderstood because it is often thought of a **salvation**verse. Many will connect John 5:24 with Romans 8:1 to make it an issue of salvation.

(John 5:24 KJV)  Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

If you think salvation is the issue in Romans 8:1 then you are not understanding what the passage is about. Paul is talking about service not salvation.  The salvation issue was already settled in Romans 5. Paul is referring to someone under the law system, a performance based system, and he calls that one "a wretched man"...

(Romans 7:24-25 KJV)  O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*{25}*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul says, "O wretched man that I am!" This implies that he is miserable, unhappy. It sounds like he is defeated since he asks, "Who shall deliver me?" But then we read, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." At last, Paul understands the answer: "I SERVE". So from these verses we can conclude that that the beginning of chapter 8 is about **service** not salvation.

Paul tells us that with the flesh we serve the law of sin and with the mind we serve the law of God. Now we know the Law condemns us and works death. We need to understand that death means to make one functionally dead, not able to serve. The Law does the same to us as a saved person as it does to us as an unsaved person. The Law condemns us; it will work death, making one incapable to serve God. If you live and walk after your own efforts, your own thinking, your own way of doing things you will not be effective in your service to God. We need to learn to live who we are in Christ then we can live godly.

When we read Romans 8:1, we see a change from the wretchedness to thankfulness. Dead means to be living in the condition when your conscience condemns you (Romans 7:23) and the answer to it is walking in the Spirit not the flesh. Then Paul goes on to tell us why it is the answer.

Paul tells us that the law will have dominion over us as long as we live. The law will condemn the saved just as well as it condemns the unsaved. But Paul tells us that there is no condemnation when we walk in the Spirit that is, in our new identification in Christ.

The law will always condemn us because the law points out our sin. Paul writes in Romans 7:14 that the law is spiritual; but we are carnal, sold under sin. This would mean that we are slaves, helpless. But this is our old identification; it is not who we are now in Christ. The law says that we are slaves, worthless and helpless and this is what happens when we have a performance-based acceptance before God. As we try to live a performance based system we will always find that we do not have the ability and will always see ourselves as guilty. As we try to perform, the Law will always scream, "You’re guilty! You’re guilty!" The Christian life is impossible as long as it is for you to earn. Only Christ can save you and only Christ can live through you.

The issue is our identity in Christ not what we do. In Romans 8:1, the issue is then that of those who are not walking in a law performance system that the flesh seeks after but are standing in the grace of God given to us in Christ.

Colossians 1:27 says that it is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is not what we do but what Christ does. The victory is through Jesus Christ our lord. The law brings condemnation to us. Romans 7:4 says that we are dead to the law through the body of Christ. This means that we are dead to the performance-based system.

(Romans 7:4-6 KJV)  Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even*to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*{5}*For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*{6}*But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in*the oldness of the letter.

We are no longer under the law’s jurisdiction, that is, we are not under any performance-based system to gain acceptance and blessing. If that is what you are doing then you will fail. Why will you fail? You will fail because you are a sinner and cannot perform to be accepted unto God. This is why we need a Savior and is what is needed so that we can walk in Christ. What the law could not do Christ did so the law could be fulfilled in us.

(Romans 8:3-4 KJV)  For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*{4}*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The law is weak through the flesh means that I cannot perform in a satisfactorily manner. Christ was made to be sin so that we can be righteous. Now our lives can be filled with fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ. This is accomplished when we walk in line with what the Spirit of God is doing.

**Therefore**

(Romans 8:12-13 KJV) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*{13}*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Therefore, we are not debtors to the flesh. We do not owe the flesh anything, the law tried to kill us. Our obligation is now to who we are in Christ.

(Galatians 5:18 KJV)  But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

The Spirit of God will never lead anyone to live under a performance based system, the system that of the Law.

(Romans 7:25 KJV)  I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul writes that when we serve God with the mind it is because we make a faith choice, a faith response to who we are in Christ, to our identity in Christ. We make a choice to serve Him based upon who we are in Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul writes that the love of Christ constrains us. An example of the love of someone constraining one would be that of a parent that has been rescued from a burning building only to discover that the baby is still inside. In spite the efforts of the crowd to hold him back that parent breaks free and rushes into the burning building to save the baby. That parent acts out of the love he has for that baby and nothing can stop him from saving  that baby.

As we live according to our new identity it is the love of Christ that constrains and causes us to live a Christ live through us.

This is the obligation of the Roman Road to service; it is the life of Christ living through us. It is not us *trying* to life a good life but it is allowing Christ to live His life through us.

**Therefore**

(Romans 12:1 KJV)  I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is*your reasonable service.

You do not reach the practical application of service until you get to Romans 12. This means there are things you need to learn before you can serve.

**Reasonable Service**

Religion will tell you that you must perform in order to be accepted by God. Romans 12 is different from what you will get in the religious system that demands you to perform!

We are to serve God for a reason. We are new creatures, we have been given a new identification for a reason.

(Ephesians 2:10 KJV)  For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In Romans 12:1, Paul writes "therefore, by the mercies of God". God has provisions that He has made for us in Christ. Because of who He has made us in Christ and what God is doing in this dispensation of grace, forming the body of Christ. We are to present our bodies as a sacrifice. What is a sacrifice? Something that has died. Paul tells us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, that is to live in the identity God has given you in Christ, wholly and acceptable unto God. In Christ we are righteous and holy. The only thing that can stop sin is the cross of Christ.

(Colossians 1:22 KJV)  In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:

We have His righteousness; we are holy and blameless. We are acceptable unto God in Christ. The only reasonable thing you can do is to live in the identification you have been given in Christ. Only in Christ are we acceptable unto God.

In Christ we are set apart for God’s purpose for which God created us, acceptable unto God. How is this done? Only in Christ.

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. How are we to do this? We accomplish this by living in the identification God gave us in Christ. This is the only reasonable thing we can do. It is the faith choice to live in the reality of our present identity in Christ. We don’t have to seek to gain something from God that He gave us in His Son. It is not a struggle to bring our state up to our standing when we accept as true our place in Christ Jesus. We ought to recognize who we are and not allow in our lives anything inconsistent with who we are in Christ.  This is what Paul is saying in Titus 2:11-12 the grace of God ... has appeared to all men, teaching us how we should live in this present world. Grace teaches us to deny ungodly lusts because it is the logical thing to do. In other words, Graces teaches us to live like who we are in Christ.

(Romans 12:2 KJV) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is*that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Paul tells us not to be conformed to this world; that is do not be conformed to the world’s way of thinking. We are not to be pressed into the world’s mold, system of beliefs, values, morals and atmosphere of current thinking but to be transformed, to have a new way of thinking.

As we begin to think God's way our outward behavior will be transformed; we will have an outward manifestation of what is on the inside of us. Just as the "Transformation of Christ on the Mount" where the flesh was pulled away and the glory inside shone out, we too, will be transformed. We will live consistent with who we are in Christ.

(2 Corinthians 3:18 KJV)  But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even*as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We are transformed by the renewing of our mind as we allow the word of God to change our thinking and we make a faith choice to stand in the reality of who God has made us in Christ.