

INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

ROMANS: OUR DOCTRINAL CONSTITUTION

SELECTIONS FROM ROMANS



The Heart of the Matter

The letter to the Romans is a premier document of Christian truth. What the Constitution is to the United States—the foundational rule of law for the country—the letter to the Romans is to the Christian faith. Those of us who hope to grow deeply in our understanding of God's truth must ultimately anchor our minds in the letter to the Romans. So, as we approach this book for the first time in this series, let's get a handle on some of its basic features and consider how we might apply its principles to our own relationships with Christ.



Discovering the Way

1. Five Questions: An Overview of Romans

To begin our study of Romans, we need to answer five fundamental questions.

2. Five Sections: Putting Romans Together

When we see how Romans fits together as a whole, we can begin to get a sense of Paul's overall aims in the letter.

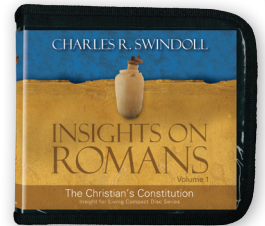


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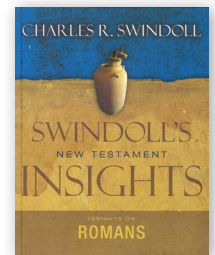
It's important that we view Romans not only as a letter to the Roman church or as a doctrinal document but also as a relevant and personal letter to believers like us.



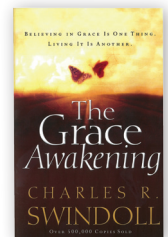
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ROMANS: OUR DOCTRINAL CONSTITUTION

SELECTIONS FROM ROMANS

ROMANS					
THE GOSPEL . . .					
Introduction—Personal (1:1–17)	Saving the Sinner		Concerning Israel		Concerning Christian Conduct
	Depravity of humanity		Divine sovereignty and human will		Social
	Grace of God		Past, present, and future of the nation		Civil
	Justification by faith				Personal
	Sanctification through the Spirit				
	Security of the saint				
	CHAPTERS 1:18–8:39		CHAPTERS 9–11		CHAPTERS 12:1–15:13
Emphasis	Doctrinal		National		Practical
Response	Faith		Hope		Love
Doctrine of God	Wrath		Righteousness		Glory Grace
Doctrine of Humanity	Fallen Dead		Saved Struggling		Freed
Doctrine of Sin	Exposed		Conquered		Explained Forgiven
Scope	Dead in sin		Dead to sin		Peace with God Love for others
Main Theme	God’s righteousness is given to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.				
Key Verses	1:16–17				
Christ in Romans	Jesus is the focus of the gospel and the means of salvation by God’s grace apart from works (1:1–4, 16–17).				
Conclusion—Relational (15:14–16:27)					

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GETTING A GRASP OF THE GOSPEL

ROMANS 1:1-13



The Heart of the Matter

Familiar terms sometimes carry unfamiliar meanings. Take the term *gospel*. We Christians have heard (and used) this term often. We refer to loving the gospel, giving the gospel, spreading the gospel, and believing the gospel. We have gospel churches, gospel messages, gospel hymns, gospel ministries, and gospel crusades. Pastors are officially known as ministers of the gospel, and missionaries take the gospel abroad. But can you define the word? And where does it come from? How could Paul say he was “set apart for the gospel” (Romans 1:1)? Are all Christians “set apart” or just a few spiritual leaders? As we get underway in our study of the letter to the Romans, let’s get a good grasp of this term as well as its importance to our faith.



Discovering the Way

1. Paul and the Gospel (Romans 1:1–6)

Paul clarified four important elements of the gospel for his readers: its origin, its revelation, its content, and its purpose.

2. Paul and the Romans (Romans 1:7–13)

Paul expressed gratitude for the Romans, he prayed for them, and he longed to be with them at some point in the future.

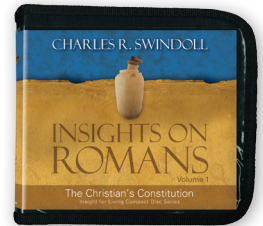


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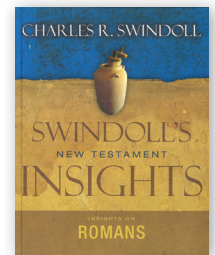
Just like every other person to whom God has granted life, you must answer three questions for yourself: Will you accept the gospel? Will you apply Romans to your life? And will you share the truth with others?



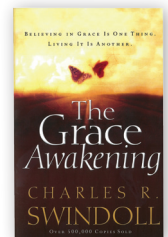
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THE GOOD NEWS FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

ROMANS 1:14–17



The Heart of the Matter

Thanks to newscasts that flood the media, all of us are accustomed to bad news. We witness it every day of our lives. If it's news from abroad, it invariably includes reports of death and tragedy. If it's about life at home, we can count on one story after another to trouble our minds. Not even the weather report makes us smile! Maybe this is why many of us find such delight in reading the Bible. While it doesn't skip past life's dark side or ignore painful realities, the Word of God offers hope beyond all this . . . reasons to go on in spite of disappointments and disease, headaches and heartaches, suffering, shame, and sin. Why? Because at the core of the message, when everything in life seems sad and bad, there is always the good news. And as we'll learn in this message—it's good news not for just a few special, select individuals but for the whole world.



Discovering the Way

1. Paul's Testimony Regarding the Good News

Paul made three statements about his life after accepting the gospel.

2. Our Response to the Good News

We can see in this passage four responses we should have when we accept the good news of God's love for us.

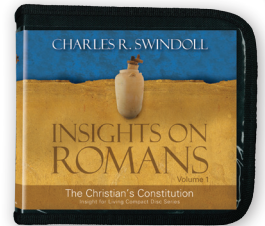


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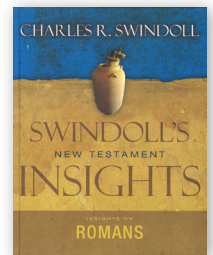
Living by faith requires us to trust in God, expecting Him to follow through with His promises and resting in the knowledge of His love and grace.



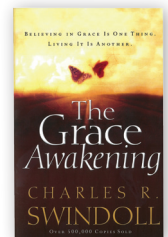
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THE BAD NEWS ABOUT THE WHOLE WORLD

ROMANS 1:18–25



The Heart of the Matter

After giving the good news that God's righteousness is available to all who believe, the apostle Paul turned his attention to the bad news: the sinfulness of humanity sets in motion God's wrath, which leads to His response of judgment. The sinner sinks ever deeper into a life of idolatry, immorality, and iniquity. Sadly, this is not simply the response of a few people, guilty and shameful in their thoughts and actions. Instead, it characterizes the whole world—we are all guilty, all lost, and all equally evil down to the core of our beings. The vivid examples Paul used in these verses represent the most extensive statement in all of Holy Scripture describing the totality of depravity.



Discovering the Way

1. God's Wrath (Romans 1:18–20)

God continuously reveals His wrath because humankind continually suppresses the truth about Him, leaving human beings responsible before God and without excuse.

2. Humanity's Wrong (Romans 1:21–25)

Once captured in sin, human beings throughout time have given themselves over to idolatry, immorality, and iniquity.

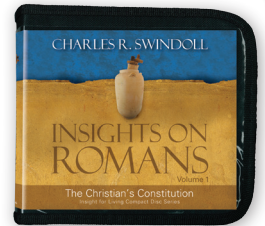


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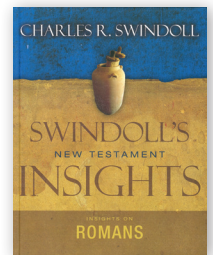
We stand with only two viable choices before us: unbelief that leads to death or belief that leads to life.



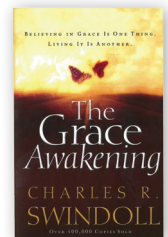
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SINNERAMA IN PANORAMA

ROMANS 1:24–32



The Heart of the Matter

Paul pulled no punches as he exposed human depravity in the last half of Romans 1—it's ugly, dark, scandalous, and sometimes downright shocking. As we read, we feel as if we've entered a courtroom with Paul as he, the prosecuting attorney, builds his case against godless humankind. The strokes of his pen scratch heavily across the papyrus. He introduces damaging evidence. He presents accurate, even shocking, information. He describes the lowest levels of religious practices, sexual activities, and criminal acts. Here, depravity parades before us; here we witness sinnerama in panorama.



Discovering the Way

1. God's Wrath (Romans 1:18–23)

God is revealing His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness in the world.

2. Humanity's Wrong (Romans 1:24–32)

God has given over human beings to idolatry, immorality, and iniquity.

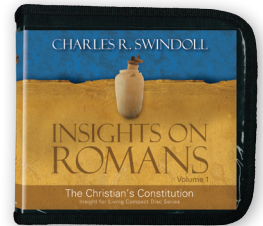


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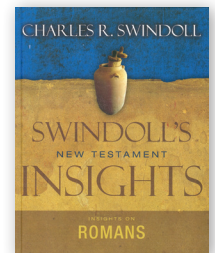
As we read this passage, it's imperative that we remember one warning and one exhortation.



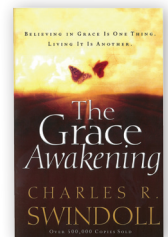
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JUDGMENT FOR THE JUDGMENTAL

ROMANS 2:1–16



The Heart of the Matter

We learned in Romans 1 of God's judgment against those who are guilty of more obvious sins—idolatry, immorality, and other blatant forms of iniquity. God has declared that the guilty are “without excuse” (1:20) and “worthy of death” (1:32). But there is another segment of depraved humanity that is equally guilty, who also “have no excuse” (2:1), yet they look on “sinners” in a judgmental and self-righteous way. These are the clean-living, morally upright, sweet-smelling, law-abiding, legalistic, and conceited sinners who boast of their ethical values and wrap themselves in pride. As we will see, this group is just as bankrupt before God and no less guilty than the overt, shameless sinners who openly despise God.



Discovering the Way

1. Judging: What Christ Said (Matthew 7:1–5)

Jesus told us to stop judging people without mercy, to stop putting others down while elevating ourselves.

2. Judges: What Paul Wrote (Romans 2:1–16)

Too often we judge others from a self-righteous point of view, where obstinance and ambition direct our actions.

3. Judgment: What God Declares

God promises that we will all face judgment in the future.

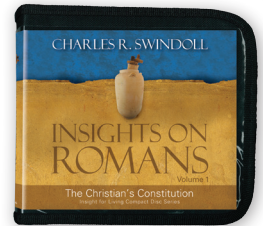


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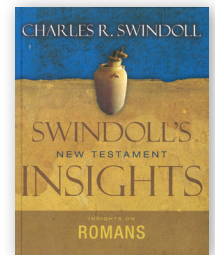
We can either accept the truth and change or reject the truth and suffer the consequences.



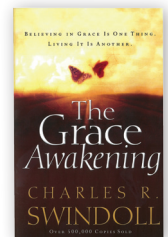
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THE DARK SIDE OF BEING SUPER-RELIGIOUS

ROMANS 2:17–29



The Heart of the Matter

Paul didn't beat around the bush. When he sat down to write the book of Romans, a letter about the gospel, he decided to take the gloves off, to call a spade a spade, and to say it straight. He wasted no time getting to the core of our problem: SIN. Of course, he didn't stop there, because the gospel provides incredible hope. But in order to get to the good part, he knew it was necessary that everybody understand, accept, and identify with the bad part: we are sinners, totally and completely separated from inner goodness. Whether we're out-and-out vile and shameless or we're pious and self-righteous, we're still sinners—still as bad off as we can be before a righteous, holy God. But Paul wasn't through! Next he addressed the super-religious Jew, who believes that his or her traditions, works, and privileged position before God put him or her on a higher plane than all others on the planet. "Not so," said Paul—even the super-religious are sinners!



Discovering the Way

1. Understanding What Being "Religious" Means

Being religious means utilizing self-effort in hopes of reaching God and pleasing Him through one's own effort.

2. Analyzing the "Religious Jew" (Romans 2:17–29)

To understand religious Jews, we must first analyze their traditional claims against the actual facts.

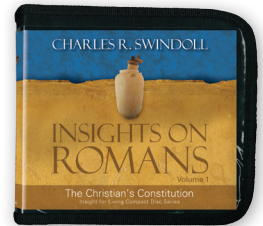


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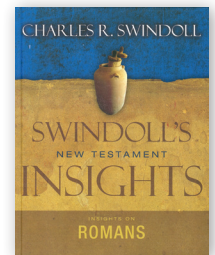
Relationship with God outpaces mere religion in three particular ways.



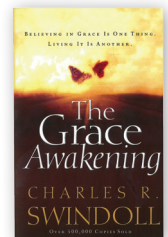
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AN AUTOPSY OF DEPRAVITY

ROMANS 3:1-20



The Heart of the Matter

By now, it's impossible to miss Paul's point: we are sinful people! The blatantly immoral, the self-righteous, and the overly religious are all equally under God's wrath. Apart from the supernatural work of Christ in our hearts, we have no hope for change and no possibility of relief. To further elaborate, Paul switched roles from that of a prosecuting attorney in a courtroom to that of a medical examiner in a morgue, analyzing his way through the evidence within every human being that "there is none righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10). From a spiritual perspective, humanity is in a state of total wipeout. Apart from God's redeeming grace, every person who has ever lived is without everlasting hope.



Discovering the Way

1. Some Objections to Paul from Religious Jews (Romans 3:1-8)

Paul first offered answers to some possible objections to the idea that religious Jews might also be sinners.

2. An Evaluation of Humanity from the Lord (Romans 3:9-18)

Apart from God's grace, all people are dead, depraved, and in the dark about our sinful state.

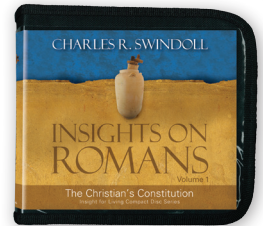


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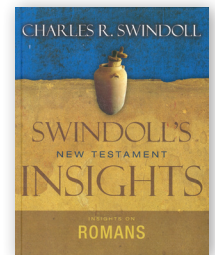
The only solution to sin is a relationship with Christ.



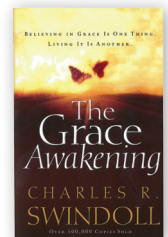
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UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF GRACE

ROMANS 3:21–31



The Heart of the Matter

“But now . . .” (Romans 3:21). What a difference these two small words make! They mark a major transition in the book of Romans. Before, we lived under God’s wrath (1:18), but now we live under God’s grace (3:24). Then, we were spiritually dead and proven guilty in ourselves, but now we are spiritually alive and declared righteous in Christ. Then, we lived condemned by the Law and in need of rescue from ourselves, but now we have received forgiveness by Jesus’s blood and have been provided with salvation through faith. What brings about such radical changes? Hard work? Religious activity? Personal sacrifice? No, none of the above. Rather, it’s all due to God’s gift of grace.



Discovering the Way

1. Our Spiritually Bad Condition

Paul spent the better part of three chapters clarifying the depraved state of humanity.

2. God’s Wonderfully Good News (Romans 3:21–26)

Paul articulated four important facts to help us understand the gospel.

3. Some Unusually Probing Questions (Romans 3:27–31)

Paul then asked—and answered—three questions to clarify his point.

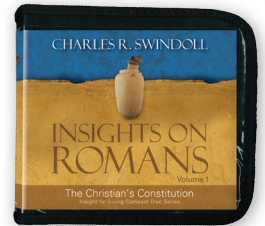


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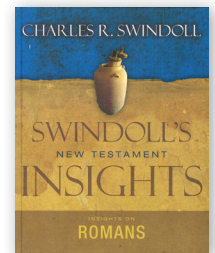
This passage teaches us two important truths that should change the way we think about salvation.



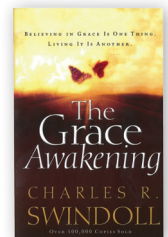
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RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A FIVE-LETTER WORD

ROMANS 4:1-13



The Heart of the Matter

After dedicating almost three chapters of his letter to the Romans to setting forth humanity's need for the gospel (1:18–3:20), Paul moved on with the words, “But now . . .” (3:21). In the rest of the third chapter, he presented the great truths regarding how one can have right standing before God—how a sinner can be “justified.” Having made it clear that righteousness is a matter of faith, not works, Paul chose to illustrate his point with a flesh-and-blood example: Abraham. By showing the reader that “the father of the Jews” was declared righteous by faith and not by works, Paul made a compelling argument that all can understand.



Discovering the Way

1. Let's Take Abraham (Romans 4:1–3)

Abraham's good works were the result of, not the means to, his good standing before God.

2. Let's Be Clear (Romans 4:4–8)

Paul clarified justification, observing that working earns a wage, while believing brings a gift.

3. Let's Probe Deeper (Romans 4:9–13)

None of our deeds help make us right with God—not even circumcision or following the Law.

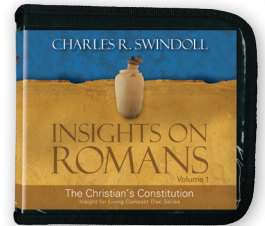


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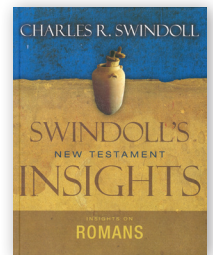
Righteousness is indeed a five-letter word—*faith*.



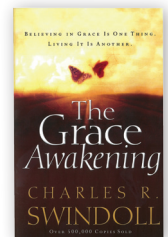
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

THE MAN WHO HOPED AGAINST HOPE

ROMANS 4:16–25



The Heart of the Matter

Having stated the grand doctrine of justification by faith (Romans 3:28) and having illustrated it through Abraham in chapter 4, Paul continued to affirm Abraham's steadfastness in faith. Today's message calls to mind the occasion when aging Abraham resisted the persuasion of logic, ignored the human limitations of physical impossibility, and even denied the urgings of his own common sense as he deliberately and decisively believed the promise of God—regardless of the possible consequences. Instead of waffling in unbelief, Abraham stood strong in faith, absolutely confident in God. Let's review God's promise to Abraham and rediscover its relevant implications for us today.



Discovering the Way

1. The Reason: *Why Must It Be "by Faith"?* (Romans 4:16–17)

Salvation must be by faith because of the principle of grace and the promise of God.

2. The Person: *Who Illustrates This Best?* (Romans 4:18–22)

Abraham believed God's promise and embraced His grace.

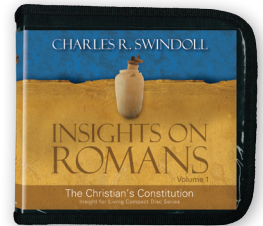


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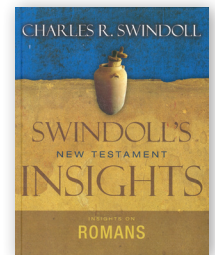
Our faith is strengthened by waiting and is supported by our knowledge of God's promises.



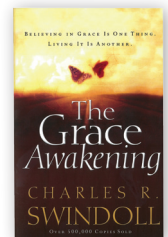
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

TRIUMPHANT JOY

ROMANS 5:1-11



The Heart of the Matter

What a magnificent section of Scripture we have before us in this message! Now that we have examined a raw, realistic portrait of human depravity and gotten a firm grip on God's grace—which prompts Him, because of His love, to justify the ungodly—it's time to rejoice! What better way for us to respond to our being declared righteous than rejoicing? To use Paul's term, when this triumphant joy takes hold of us, "we exult" (Romans 5:2, 3, 11). We have reached the place in this letter where we are made aware of some of the blessings for the believer that follow our being "justified by faith" (5:1). These blessings create within us an attitude of unparalleled joy.



Discovering the Way

1. Two General Observations

This passage covers past, present, and future while clarifying the benefits of being justified.

2. Three Levels of Rejoicing (Romans 5:1-11)

Because we've been justified, we rejoice in hope, in tribulation, and in God Himself.

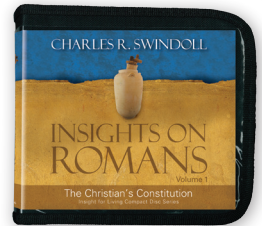


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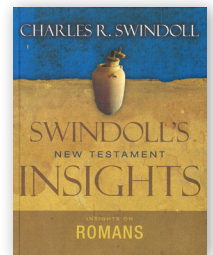
We can begin to experience the joy of the Christian life when we remember four truths. First, the key to rejoicing is having the right focus. Second, being willing to focus means having the right attitude. Third, the by-product of a right attitude is triumphant joy. And fourth, the result of triumphant joy is living above our circumstances.



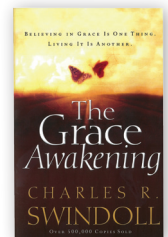
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

GUILT VS. GRACE

ROMANS 5:12–21



The Heart of the Matter

Perhaps the apostle Peter had Romans 5:12–21 in mind when he wrote regarding Paul's letters that "some things [are] hard to understand" (2 Peter 3:16). But the complications that surround these verses are minimized if we keep two thoughts in mind. First, Paul was concluding this initial major section of the letter by summing up the first five chapters. That explains why he mentioned condemnation in Adam (Romans 1–3) and justification in Christ (Romans 3–5). Second, the main idea in 5:12–21 is restated in 5:16. Paul's overarching point is clear: the grace brought to us by justification through Christ is far superior to the guilt brought to us by condemnation through Adam.



Discovering the Way

1. Adam: Cause of Guilt (Romans 5:12–14)

Adam's act of disobedience in the garden of Eden brought sin and death into the world. From him, it spread to all humanity, leaving us all scarred by guilt.

2. Adam and Christ (Romans 5:15–19)

Paul both contrasted and compared these two pivotal figures in history.

3. Christ: Source of Grace (Romans 5:20–21)

Because of Christ's unblemished sacrifice, grace abounded and reigned throughout the world.

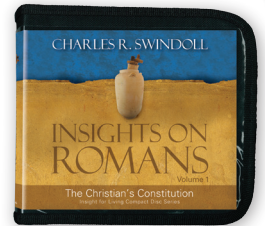


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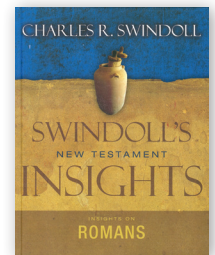
As we come to understand our fallen position in the world, we must remember two things. First, there is no way to overcome the devastation of the fall of Adam except through Christ. And second, there is no way to handle the damage of the fall except through grace.



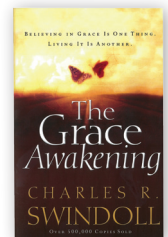
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DYING TO LIVE

ROMANS 6:1-14



The Heart of the Matter

In the first five chapters of Romans, Paul laid the groundwork for the rest of his letter. He established that, though all humanity has fallen short of God's holiness and deserves death, God has offered us rescue through our faith in Jesus's death and resurrection. Once Paul had explained the way from the penalty of sin to the free gift of salvation, he approached an equally important question: how can salvation from the power of sin become a reality? Being saved by grace apart from works is one thing, but being able to walk by grace . . . well, that's quite another. How can we now live victoriously in our salvation? What must take place in order for us to live free from sin's control?



Discovering the Way

1. A Vital Change in Management (Romans 6:1-2)

When we come to Jesus Christ in faith, we take on a new management of victory.

2. Some Essential Changes in Operation (Romans 6:3-13)

When we become Christians, we stop operating as those who follow after sin and start operating as those who follow after Christ.

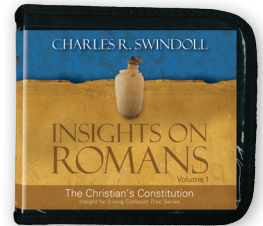


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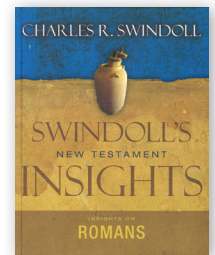
We must each train our wills to accept the fact that we are free.



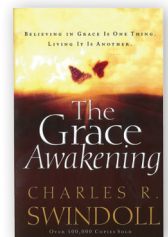
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WHOSE SLAVE ARE YOU?

ROMANS 6:15–23



The Heart of the Matter

The sixth chapter of Romans includes two questions that look alike, but they are not. In fact, each is directed to a different kind of individual.

- **First:** “Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase” (Romans 6:1)? This question is directed to *those who fail to claim their liberty* and go on living like slaves. Such a lifestyle nullifies grace, suggesting there are no benefits derived from being liberated from sin’s power.
- **Second:** “Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace” (6:15)? This question is directed to *those who take their liberty too far* and miss the whole point of grace. Such a lifestyle abuses grace, suggesting that there are no restraints with grace.

For the first half of Romans 6, we focused on our theoretical position in Christ as we addressed what it means to be “dead to sin.” Now, let’s turn our attention to the practical outworking of living by grace as we understand what it means to be freed from slavery to sin.



Discovering the Way

1. Review and Transition (Romans 6:1–14)

Believers in Christ are freed from slavery to sin. Knowing our position, we are to present ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness.

2. Question and Answer (Romans 6:15–23)

As believers under grace, we should not go on sinning—we can now choose to obey.

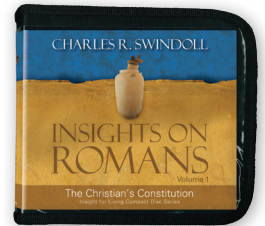


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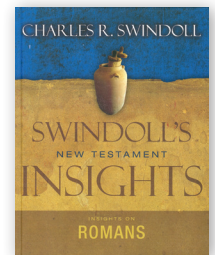
Remember these two conclusions: it’s possible to be free and yet choose slavery, and it’s also possible to be enslaved and yet think you’re free.



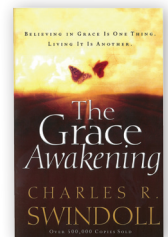
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

PORTRAIT OF A STRUGGLING CHRISTIAN

ROMANS 7



The Heart of the Matter

Let's face it: every one of us who knows Christ as Savior has been torn within while fighting battles of the flesh. We feel frustrated and are occasionally defeated in that struggle. We realize we have God's power within us, and we know that His Spirit is at work, prompting us to do what is right—but we still do wrong. Knowing we should obey, we disobey. Wanting to think, say, and do what is best, we covertly rebel. We're not short on desire to do what is best, but when it comes to pulling it off, *we blow it!* Paul, speaking for all of us, brought this truth out of the closet and exposed it for what it is: SIN. In this message, we'll face that monster head-on.



Discovering the Way

1. Theoretically, Here's Where We Stand (Romans 6:1–7:13)

Christians have been freed from sin's dominion, and so we are relieved from the rules and regulations of the Mosaic Law.

2. Experientially, Here's Why We Struggle (Romans 7:14–25)

As Christians, we must acknowledge the presence of our sinful desires, admit the presence of a battle raging within us, and accept the inevitable failure that comes with living in our fleshly desires.

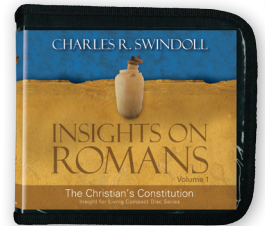


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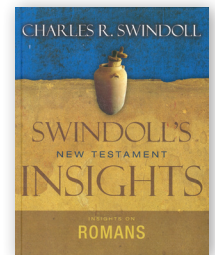
In response to the truth of our sinfulness, we must freely say we don't understand everything, fully accept that nothing good dwells in our flesh, always leave room for imperfection in ourselves and others, and openly admit our true feelings of frustration.



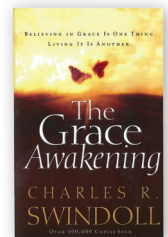
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FROM AGONY TO ECSTASY

ROMANS 7:24–8:4



The Heart of the Matter

The old saying goes, “It’s always darkest before the dawn.” Those who have been Christians long enough would agree that this statement reflects something true about the spiritual life. In fact, those words summarize the flow of Paul’s writing as he transitioned from the darkness of Romans 7 and approached the light of Romans 8. By the end of chapter 7, he was at the bottom, discouraged and groaning. He exclaimed, “Wretched man that I am!” (Romans 7:24). It doesn’t get much darker than that, does it? But then the dawn breaks in chapter 8, bringing supernatural help and bright hope to all of us. In this message, we discover how God rescues us from sin, giving promises of assurance and affirmation.



Discovering the Way

1. A Quick Review of the Struggle (Romans 7:14–25)

A constant struggle with sin rages in all of us, often resulting in weariness, hopelessness, and feelings of being trapped and condemned. However, Romans 7:25 reveals that God can bring relief from this wretched condition.

2. A Helpful Preview of Purpose (Romans 8:1–4)

Believers in Christ are no longer under condemnation. In fact, God’s Spirit does for believers what we could not do for ourselves. Believers are eternally secure in Christ, we are internally free from sin’s dominion and the fear of death, and we are righteous in our position before God.

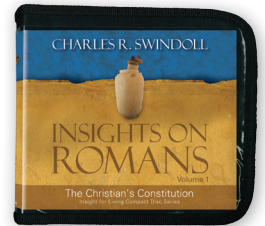


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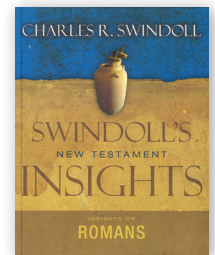
As believers, we must always remind ourselves of two powerful truths about reality. First, a life without struggles is impossible. And second, a struggle without surrender is miserable to endure.



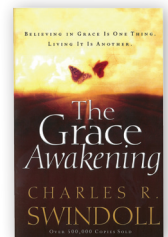
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR WALK

ROMANS 8:1-13



The Heart of the Matter

Everybody desires a fulfilled life. We long to be less frustrated and more faithful in our walk with the Lord. But is this even possible? God's answer is yes! The changes necessary to live an abundant life are humanly impossible; we simply *cannot* pull them off no matter how hard we try! But Romans 8 offers good news: the victorious Christian life is possible through the power of Him who lives within us. The secret lies in allowing God's Spirit to take control and change our spiritual walk.



Discovering the Way

1. The Believer before God (Romans 8:1-4)

Three magnificent truths help us to see clearly our relationship with God: we are eternally secure in Christ, we are internally free from sin's domination and the fear of death, and we are positionally righteous.

2. The Contrast between Lifestyles (Romans 8:5-11)

Walking according to the flesh results in a fleshly mind-set, while walking according to the Spirit leads to a spiritual mind-set.

3. Two Obligations We Must Face (Romans 8:12-13)

First, we must not walk according to the fleshly nature. Second, we must not rely on our own strength—but on the Spirit of God.

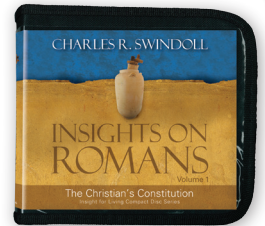


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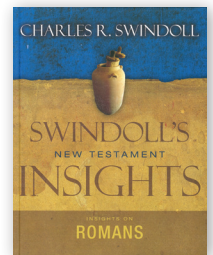
We must all answer two significant questions. First, am I absolutely certain that I am a believer in Jesus Christ? And second, is my mind firmly set on my own flesh or on God's Spirit?



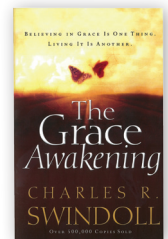
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

CULTIVATING A SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE

ROMANS 8:12-17



The Heart of the Matter

Difficult as it may be to admit, most of us have been “programmed” incorrectly. Instead of being taught and encouraged to claim God’s power within us—to live above the drag of our lower nature (“the flesh”)—we have merely been instructed how to conduct our lives *after* we have sinned. Our mind-set has been shaped by “corrective theology” instead of “preventative theology.” And so we begin each day expecting to fall short . . . to disobey . . . to resist . . . and that focus has resulted in our cultivating a flesh-controlled mentality. This misapplication of the truth has led most Christians to settle for a low-level focus on the constant confession of sin. We endure a negative lifestyle, instead of cultivating a Spirit-controlled mentality that leads to an abundant lifestyle. Hopefully, the six verses we examine in this message will awaken us to a whole new focus and perspective.



Discovering the Way

1. Initial Question

Each of us must ask and answer the following question: whose responsibility is my sanctification?

2. Personal Obligation (Romans 8:12–13)

We must live not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

3. Internal Changes (Romans 8:14–17)

Four internal changes must take place as we embrace a life of walking by the Spirit: practical, everyday leading from God; free, fearless intimacy with God; confident assurance of belonging to God; and clear realization of our value before God.

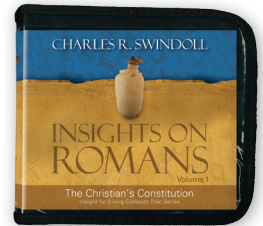


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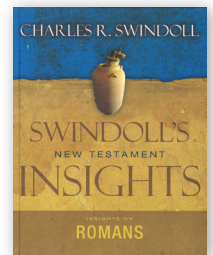
Our response? We must let God lead, releasing our grip on our own lives and trusting Him to guide us.



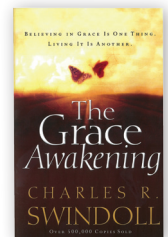
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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

GLORYING AND GROANING

ROMANS 8:18–27



The Heart of the Matter

Some Christians expect a “cloud nine” experience of uninterrupted peace, pleasure, and prosperity. But to keep things real, Paul introduced the other side of life: “groaning” (Romans 8:18–23). As long as we dwell in this world, believers will discover that suffering is a vital part of the spiritual journey toward maturity. And just as believers long for the day when our suffering in this world will come to an end, all creation itself waits to burst forth someday into a glory not experienced since the garden of Eden.



Discovering the Way

1. Timeless Principle for All to Remember (Romans 8:18; Philippians 3:10)

Suffering is a vital part of growth on the path to glory (2 Corinthians 4:16–18; 1 Peter 5:10).

2. The Glorifying and Groaning of God's Creation and Creatures (Romans 8:19–27)

All creation groans in its current state of yearning for God's final act of redemption. Though often excruciatingly painful, our temporary suffering in this fallen world pales in comparison with the future glory.

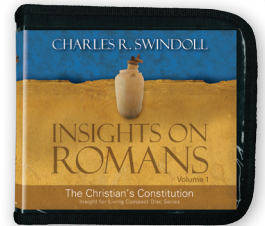


Starting Your Journey

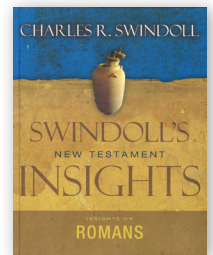
Believers should acknowledge the sovereignty and goodness of God in the midst of our current sufferings; we should surrender to the working of God in our lives.



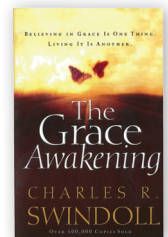
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

PROVIDENCE MADE PRACTICAL

ROMANS 8:26–30



The Heart of the Matter

In the second half of Romans 8, the apostle Paul offered some of the most powerful and comforting words in all his writings, reminding us of God's magnificent providence. For those who believe in both the goodness and greatness of God, His providence over all things becomes a comfort and encouragement. God attends to every detail, is never caught off guard by tragedies, and works all things out for our ultimate good and His greatest glory. This truth has not only profound implications for our salvation but also practical implications for our daily walk.



Discovering the Way

1. Wrestling with God's Providence (Isaiah 55:8–9)

The reason we as finite human beings wrestle with God's providence is twofold. First, we tend to focus on the immediate, while God focuses on the ultimate. Second, we forget our knowledge is limited, while God's is unlimited.

2. Thinking through God's Providence (Romans 8:26–30)

Romans 8:28 contains an unconditional promise: God's guarantee of what He will do for us. When we know His promise to work all things together for good, we can rest in His sovereignty and goodness, which have a particular purpose and providential goal: our conformity to the image of Christ.

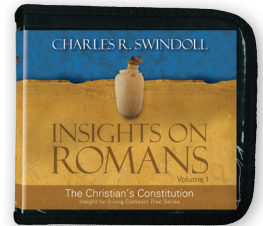


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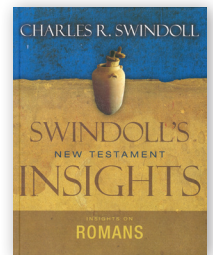
Initially, we reject God's providence. Progressively, we begin to tolerate God's providence. And ultimately, we can come to completely accept God's providence.



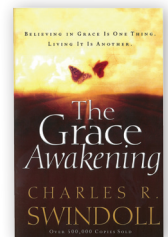
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INSIGHTS ON ROMANS: THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

WE OVERWHELMINGLY CONQUER

ROMANS 8:31–39



The Heart of the Matter

For all who claim Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, there isn't a more significant biblical passage to embrace than Romans 8:31–39. It is, indeed, the Mount Everest of the sacred writings. Its doctrine lifts us high above all other literary scenes. As we stand and gaze across the snow-capped peaks, we are enraptured by the majestic hymn of triumph that envelops us. It quiets our troubled hearts. It calms our fears. It reaches out to the fallen, comforts the grieving, encourages the broken, and inspires the defeated as its mighty truths echo through the ages, bringing hope and reassurance to all God's people.



Discovering the Way

1. Clarification: Who Helps Whom?

Since God gives dead people life, He also takes the responsibility for helping us live the life He desires for us.

2. Investigation: Who Supports Whom? (Romans 8:31–39)

When God is for us, no one can oppose us, no one can accuse us, no one can condemn us, and no one can separate us from His love.

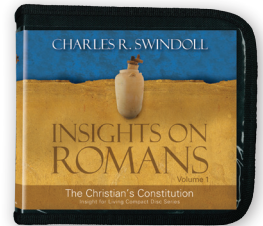


Starting Your Journey

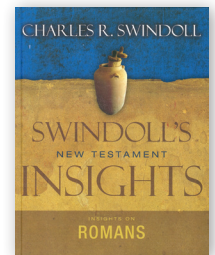
We need to remember two practical truths in light of this passage of Scripture. First, when we lose what we expected, we receive something far better. And second, when God removes what we considered valuable, He replaces it with something invaluable.



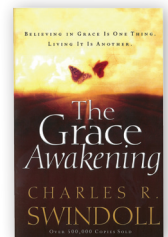
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