

Chapter 1 : Sermons from Seattle - Sermons - Series C

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Those who do set themselves against authority will receive condemnation upon themselves. For the man who does good has nothing to fear from rulers, but the man who does evil has. Do you wish to be free of fear of authority? Do good and you will enjoy praise from authority, for any servant of God exists for your good. If you do evil, then you must fear. For it is not for nothing that the man set in authority bears the sword, for he is the servant of God, and his function is to vent wrath and vengeance on the man who does evil. So, then, it is necessary for you to submit yourself, not because of the wrath, but for the sake of your own conscience. For this same reason you must pay your taxes too; for those set in authority are the servants of God, and continue to work for that very end. Give to all men what is due to them. Give tribute to those to whom tribute is due; pay taxes to those to whom taxes are due. Give fear to those to whom fear is due. Give honour to those to whom honour is due. At first reading this is an extremely surprising passage, for it seems to counsel absolute obedience on the part of the Christian to the civil power. But, in point of fact, this is a commandment which runs through the whole New Testament. In 1 Timothy 2: For it is Gods will that by doing right you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men We know, for instance, in the Book of Acts that frequently, as Gibbon had it, the tribunal of the pagan magistrate was often the safest refuge against the fury of the Jewish mob. Time and again we see Paul receiving protection at the hands of impartial Roman justice. But the interesting and the significant thing is that many years, and even centuries later, when persecution had begun to rage and Christians were regarded as outlaws, the Christian leaders were saying exactly the same thing. Justin Martyr Apology 1: We worship only God, but in other things we will gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that, with your kingly power, you may be found to possess also sound judgment. Without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection for the imperial house; for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest--whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish. What is the thought and belief at the back of this? The Jews were notoriously rebellious. Palestine, especially Galilee, was constantly seething with insurrection. Above all there were the Zealots; they were convinced that there was no king for the Jews but God; and that no tribute must be paid to anyone except to God. Nor were they content with anything like a passive resistance. They believed that God would not be helping them unless they embarked on violent action to help themselves. Their aim was to make any civil government impossible. They were known as the dagger-bearers. They were fanatical nationalists sworn to terrorist methods. Not only did they use terrorism towards the Roman government; they also wrecked the houses and burned the crops and assassinated the families of their own fellow-Jews who paid tribute to the Roman government. In this Paul saw no point at all. It was, in fact, the direct negation of all Christian conduct. And yet, at least in one part of the nation, it was normal Jewish conduct. It may well be that Paul writes here with such inclusive definiteness because he wished to dissociate Christianity altogether from insurrectionist Judaism, and to make it clear that Christianity and good citizenship went necessarily hand in hand. First and foremost, there is this--no man can entirely dissociate himself from the society in which he lives and has a part. No man can, in conscience, opt out of the nation. As a part of it, he enjoys certain benefits which he could not have as an individual; but he cannot reasonably claim all the privileges and refuse all the duties. As he is part of the body of the Church. A man has a duty to the state and must discharge it even if a Nero is on the throne. It was the Platonic idea that the state existed for the sake of justice and safety and secured for a man security against wild beasts and savage men. Without these laws and the mutual agreement to observe them, the bad and selfish strong man would be supreme; the weaker would go to the wall; life would become ruled by the law of the jungle. Every ordinary man owes his security to the state, and is therefore under a responsibility to it. It would be impossible for every man to have his own water, light, sewage, transport system. These things are obtainable only when men agree to live together. And it would be quite wrong for a man to enjoy everything the state provides and to

refuse all responsibility to it. That is one compelling reason why the Christian is bound in honour to be a good citizen and to take his part in all the duties of citizenship. Take away that Empire and the world would disintegrate into flying fragments. It was in fact the pax Romana, the Roman peace, which gave the Christian missionary the chance to do his work. Ideally men should be bound together by Christian love; but they are not; and the cement which keeps them together is the state. Paul saw in the state an instrument in the hand of God, preserving the world from chaos. Those who administered the state were playing their part in that great task. The commandments, You must not commit adultery, You must not kill, You must not steal, You must not covet, and any other commandment there may be, are all summed up in this saying--You must love your neighbour as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbour. Love is, therefore, the complete fulfilment of the law. There is what Paul calls tribute, and what he calls taxes. By tribute he means the tribute that must be paid by those who are members of a subject nation. The standard contributions that the Roman government levied on its subject nations were three. There was a ground tax by which a man had to pay, either in cash or in kind, one-tenth of all the grain, and one fifth of the wine and fruit produced by his ground. There was a poll tax, which had to be paid by everyone between the ages of fourteen and sixty five. By taxes Paul means the local taxes that had to be paid. There were customs duties, import and export taxes, taxes for the use of main roads, for crossing bridges, for entry into markets and harbours, for the right to possess an animal, or to drive a cart or wagon. Paul insists that the Christian must pay his tribute and his taxes to state and to local authority, however galling it may be. Then he turns to private debts. He says, "Owe no man anything. Paul had to remind his people that Christianity is not an excuse for refusing our obligations to our fellow men; it is a reason for fulfilling them to the utmost. He goes on to speak of the one debt that a man must pay every day, and yet, at the same time, must go on owing every day, the debt to love each other. He will not commit adultery, for when two people allow their physical passions to sweep them away, the reason is, not that they love each other too much, but that they love each other too little; in real love there is at once respect and restraint which saves from sin. He will not kill, for love never seeks to destroy, but always to build up; it is always kind and will ever seek to destroy an enemy not by killing him, but by seeking to make him a friend. He will never steal, for love is always more concerned with giving than with getting. He will not covet, for covetousness epithumia, Greek is the uncontrolled desire for the forbidden thing, and love cleanses the heart, until that desire is gone. There is a famous saying, "Love God--and do what you like. The night is far gone; the day is near. So, then, let us put away the works of darkness, and let us clothe ourselves with the weapons of light. Let us walk in loveliness of life, as those who walk in the day, and let us not walk in revelry or drunkenness, in immorality and in shamelessness, in contention and in strife. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a man puts on a garment, and stop living a life in which your first thought is to gratify the desires of Christless human nature. Like so many great men, Paul was haunted by the shortness of time. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote: But now I pause at whiles in what I do And count the bell, and tremble lest I hear My work untrimmed the sunset gun too soon. He expected the Second Coming of Christ. The Early Church expected it at any moment, and therefore it had the urgency to be ready. That expectancy has grown dim and faint; but one permanent fact remains--no man knows when God will rise and bid him go. The time grows ever shorter, for we are every day one day nearer that time. We, too, must have all things ready. The last verses of this passage must be forever famous, for it was through them Augustine found conversion. He tells the story in his Confessions. He was walking in the garden. His heart was in distress, because of his failure to live the good life. He kept exclaiming miserably, "How long? Tomorrow and tomorrow--why not now? Why not this hour an end to my depravity? But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as a man puts on a garment, and stop living a life in which your first thought is to gratify the desires of Christless human nature. With the end of that sentence, as though the light of assurance had poured into my heart, all the shades of doubt were scattered. I put my finger in the page and closed the book: I turned to Alypius with a calm countenance and told him. Out of his word God had spoken to Augustine. It was Coleridge who said that he believed the Bible to be inspired because, as he puts it, "It finds me.

Chapter 3 : ABOUT IN HOPE! – A Sermon on Romans | Adrian Warnock

First, verses are not only Paul's conclusion to his teaching on love and liberty in chapters 14 and 15, they are the conclusion of his argument in this Epistle to the Romans. Second, note the strong emphasis on the Scriptures; a substantial portion of this passage is made up of Old Testament Scriptures which Paul cites.

Print It is perhaps a conventional American aspiration to be debt-free in every way, because it marks autonomy and self-sufficiency. Pop culture even replicates the idea. There, he calls believers to live according to the principle that one obligation can never be settled: Paul unfolds his gospel of grace in chapters The rest of chapters begin to show the practical outworking of sacrificial living. In other words, this sacrifice is not accomplished independently, but in and through community. This sets the tone for the exhortations of chapters , in which Paul calls stronger and weaker believers to live together in mutual love His audience is to have no outstanding debts except to love one another. Paul clearly means the Mosaic law, because he lists four of the Ten Commandments: It may seem that he contradicts what he went to great lengths to establish earlier in the letter, that through Christ, believers have died to the law to live anew in the Spirit 7: Paradoxically, however, believers have died to the law so that the law may be fulfilled in them. The solution, then, is not to dispose of the law altogether, but to deal with sin. This is what Jesus said: All the law and the prophets hang on two commands, love God and love your neighbor Matthew It is also what Jesus himself did. In light of an instance of failure to love neighbor chapter 14 , Paul presents Christ himself as the example to follow: Jesus acted for the sake of others, making his love for others genuine at the cross. Those who are in Christ belong to a new age with new values. Paul uses typical eschatological language, building a contrast between this age and the new age by opposing darkness and light, night and day. Since believers belong to the age of light and day, they are to put on the armor of light verse This is synonymous with putting on the Lord Jesus Christ verse The love that believers express is a weapon against the darkness and the flesh as the community moves together towards the day of salvation. The debt of love can never be settled because we grow up into the salvation that is ours in Christ by loving our neighbor through the work of the Spirit. The working out of our salvation is a community undertaking, making impossible for us to live as free agents.

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Print We are tempted to skip a passage like this in preaching. Verse 9 has no logical connection to what precedes. Then in verses Paul discharges a series of rapid-fire exhortations that whiz by without much connection or clarification. But a closer look shows that the passage is not arbitrary, but loosely tied to what precedes it in Paul continues to call for the kind of behavior produced by a renewed mind and that is the proper response to the mercies of God. Jesus had said that all the law and the prophets hang on two commands: Paul echoes something similar in Romans Paul begins this section of Generally, true love is summed up like this: Hate what is evil and cling to what is good verse 9b. Those who have offered their bodies as a living sacrifice and renewed their minds may discern what is good verses Now Paul gives examples of how to cling to the good verses He uses the word agape for love in v. The images are powerful: True love is fervent, relentless, and practical. The result is a pattern of anti-social behaviors that bring disorder to community verses -- quite the opposite of true love. Humility and empathy are required for living alongside others in such a way as to bless those who persecute, to rejoice with those who rejoice, to weep with those who weep, and to associate with the lowly. Paul addresses how to love those outside the Christian community, by living in such a way that fosters peace. This could mean that Christians choose not to avenge themselves when they are wronged because they know that God will repay their opponents one day. But this interpretation works against the shape of the passage. Their job is to show love, not to act as judge. Paul showed what happens when people pass judgment on others: By treating opponents like family, opponents are shamed Proverbs Notice that Paul is not asking his audience simply to practice self-control when provoked. They are to do more than refrain from repaying evil; they are to initiate doing good to opponents. This is much harder. Moreover, we come full circle back to This kind of engagement is a challenge since technology and social media make us feel that we can maintain virtual relationships inside and outside the Christian community. We may be able to maintain some connections, but we cannot express genuine love. True love requires us to live alongside and engage with others in a full-bodied way.

Chapter 5 : Philippa Wingate Books & Textbooks - theinnatdunvilla.com

If for no other reason, men ought to obey the government out of fear, knowing the power which it has to punish evil-doers (Romans). But obedience based on fear is the "low road." Love is the "high road," and it is the relationship of love to law which Paul discusses in Romans

Love, Law, and the Last Days Romans You might try to cram a lifetime into those last days. You might travel to places you have always wanted to see. You might do things for which you had never found the time before. It would not be difficult to understand why you would want to spend your last days indulging yourself. In the light of this reality, he calls upon him to deny his fleshly lusts and to live for God. He challenges the Christian not to indulge himself, but to give himself sacrificially in serving others and in seeking their good. In this way, the Christian fulfills the Old Testament Law and its standards for godly conduct. Our text in Romans is particularly significant in that, at the moment, our future is dominated by a deadline—January 15, This is the date which the United Nations has set for Iraq to retreat from Kuwait or face the threat of attack. The Middle East crisis draws our attention to the deadlines in life. This crisis could play a significant role in the final events which pave the way for the coming of our Lord to judge the earth and to establish His kingdom. The important thing is to be found faithful when our Lord returns. We are to watch, wait, and work until He comes, whenever that might be. We can accomplish this by adopting the mindset which Paul explains in our text. It is a mindset that denies fleshly lusts and refuses to make provision for them. It casts off the evil attitudes and actions which characterized us before our salvation and which are typical of the unbelieving world in which we live. It applies to us all and demands the careful attention of each of us. The Text in Context In Romans 12, Paul turns from laying a doctrinal foundation in chapters to challenging the saints to action based on the truth he has been teaching. Out of gratitude for the grace of God in our salvation, we should present our bodies as living sacrifices in worshipful service. This will entail a whole new way of thinking and acting—a transformed life—which is the outflow of a constantly renewed mind. Our obligation to God as expressed in It is not new, but it is easily forgotten, and so the need for another reminder. The verses which follow Romans In Old Testament terms, once again reiterated and confirmed in the New, this obligation is: Love for our neighbor is a dominant and cohesive theme in Romans Love must inspire and govern our ministry to one another within the body of Christ as we exercise our spiritual gifts Romans In these verses, Paul speaks of the good which love inspires—even if the recipients persecute the Christians who practice such love. Beginning in our current passage, Romans He directs our attention to what love will not do. Verses again turn our attention God-ward, providing both the motivation and the means for living in love. Paul directs us to think both of our initial salvation and of our final salvation, and of the limited time which we have to offer to Him our service of worship in this life. Later when Paul turns to the strong and the weak in Romans 14 and 15 This can be seen by his words in Romans Loving God and loving men is therefore to be the outgrowth of salvation and of sound doctrine. These themes give unity to the entire section which we are studying. But how, you may wonder, does Romans How does our obligation to obey government relate to the themes which Paul has been developing in this section? Let me suggest three ways in which verses fit into the overall argument so as to pave the way for the words we are about to consider in this study. Judgment should be left to God rather than taken into our own hands. One is His future day of judgment when all injustices will be rectified, all evildoers will be punished, and the righteous will be rewarded see Romans 2: There is also a present form of divine wrath in which men are turned over to their sin see Romans 1: Just as we are to abhor evil and cling to what is good, government is to reward those who do good and to punish those who do evil. If for no other reason, men ought to obey the government out of fear, knowing the power which it has to punish evil-doers Romans Of course, we can refrain from doing harm to our neighbor because we will get in trouble with the law. But those who love their neighbor need not fear the law. Much more than this, love inspires us to do good to our neighbor, thus both fulfilling and surpassing the minimum standards set by the law. It is love, therefore, and not law which should motivate and guide us in our dealings with our neighbor. When we walk in love, we also keep the law. Love and the Law Phillips, in his usually excellent paraphrase of the New Testament, renders

this phrase: Most often, it is not employed in the sense of a financial debt or obligation. We are obligated not to live according to the flesh Romans 8: We are obligated to honor those in authority There are other obligations which we will always have toward men, but these obligations are to be subordinate to our obligation of love. Loving God is our first level of priority. Loving others is second. All other obligations in their own levels of priority are subordinate. Let me play out the implications of this truth for just a moment. If I understand Paul correctly, my obligation to government is subordinate to my obligation to love others. If, however, the government orders me to do to others that which is contrary to love, I would have to disobey government. For example, a German citizen who was ordered to betray known Jews so that they could be exterminated would have had difficulty doing so in a way that could be viewed as loving his neighbor. When I love others, I fulfill the law. Fulfilling my higher duty assures that I will obey my other duties. Loving God will not hinder me from loving others, and loving others will not keep me from my obligation to obey the law. This is no new revelation. Jesus taught the same thing see Matthew Love would never permit the things the Old Testament Law forbade. Love would not commit adultery or murder, nor would it steal or covet. Why is the emphasis of these verses so negative? Why does Paul speak of what love will not do, rather than of what it will do? In the first place, Paul has already spoken a great deal about the positive outworking of love in Romans Paul is now speaking of love in its relationship to the law. The law tends to prohibit men from those actions which would harm their fellowman. The law focuses more on the prevention of evil than it does on the promotion of good. Today in America, adultery is hardly considered immoral, let alone illegal. In fact, adultery is often justified by asserting that there was not love in the marital union but there is love in the extra-marital one. Our world accepts and sometimes commends adultery because it believes it is the expression of love. The Bible condemns adultery as a violation of love. How do we explain the difference? We must begin by affirming that adultery is sin simply because God says so, forbidding it in His Holy Law. We must also agree with Paul that some sins he specifically names coveting would never be recognized as sin unless God divinely forbade them as such see Romans 7: But adultery is considered sin in our text because it harms our neighbor. Adultery involves our neighbor in sin, which carries with it divine condemnation see 1 Corinthians 6: It does great damage to the individuals and families involved. It destroys the intimacy of the marital union. It ultimately produces no good and brings much evil. Because of this, adultery is condemned as sin and contrary to love. You do not commit adultery because you are in love; you commit adultery as a sin against love. Coveting is also harmful to my neighbor. But how can coveting the possessions of my neighbor harm him in any way? In the Sermon on the Mount see Matthew 5: Anger is forbidden because it leads to murder. Lust is forbidden because it leads to adultery. Coveting, too, is evil because it leads me to wish that my neighbor were deprived of something he owns so that I could possess it. Coveting anything which belongs to my neighbor is wishing he did not possess what God has given him. This attitude is that which will hinder me from seeking or contributing to his good. To illustrate this, suppose my neighbor has an antique which I want badly. I covet this antique and wish I had it rather than my neighbor.

Chapter 6 : Romans 1, King James Version (KJV) | The Bible App

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Pleasing Others and Praising God Romans If I were to look in my high school annual for a picture of our band marching, I could almost guarantee that one of our band membersâ€™ a trombone player named Peteâ€™ would be out of step. Almost every picture of our band caught Pete out of step. I can still see Pete shuffling his feet, trying to get back in step with the rest of the band. Marching requires unityâ€™ people doing the same thing at the same time. Although a band or an orchestra has many instruments and many different parts, it must have a central unity for a harmonious end result. The same is true of a choir. Our text in Romans 15 finds Paul speaking of the church of our Lord as though it were similar to a choir. The great task and privilege of this unique choir is singing praises to the glory of God. For this to be accomplished, there must be both unity and harmony. This vitally important text is like the last chapter of a mystery, for this chapter tells us where Paul has been heading since his first introductory words in chapter 1. Paul is addressing the conflict which differing convictions have brought into the church. The strong tend to look down on the weak, and the weak often condemn the strong because of their liberty. Paul forbids all such judging, whether by the strong or the weak. If they are walking in love, the strong will gladly surrender the exercise of their liberties for the good of the weak. The benefits which our liberties offer are so small, and the blessings for limiting our liberties are so great that this should not be an agonizing decision. Christian love is not just negative. It requires much more than the giving up of judging and certain liberties. He urges us not to judge one another regarding our differences in convictions verses He also exhorts strong believers not to offend a weaker brother by exercising any liberty which might cause him to stumble by doing likewise, against his convictions verses Two major topics dominate verses Another shift of emphasis in our text is not readily apparent. Pleasing Others and Not Ourselves Such thinking and behavior may wear the garments of social respectability, but it is evil. The Bible turns this mindset inside-out. It requires a transformed mind regarding the strong and the weak. Those who are strong have an obligation to the weak. They are not to victimize the weak but to come to their aid. This mindset is evident in the Old Testament Law where the widows, the orphans, and the aliens were given special consideration, protection, and benefits. Not only were these helpless people not to be taken advantage of, they were to be helped. Jesus taught the same truth. The leaders of the nation Israel were to serve the people and to protect the helpless. They did not do so. He taught His disciples that while the Gentile leaders misused their power, causing the weak to serve them, His disciples were to use their power as leaders to serve others just as He Himself did see Mark Both Peter and Paul taught this same perspective on power. Paul instructed those who had once been thieves to steal no longer, but to work with their hands so that they could give to others in need Ephesians 4: The strong should not prey upon the weak to prevail over them, but instead should come to their aid. We see this same principle evident in the exercise of spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are given to each believer so that each may minister out of his strength to those who are weak in this area see Romans The strong, Paul tells his Roman readers, are not to harm the weak by judging them and causing them to stumbleâ€™chapter 14 but to help them. The strong are to bear the weaknesses of those who lack strength. Rather than putting the weak down, the strong are to bear up the weak, in their areas of weakness. Such service must be sacrificial, a denial of self-interest and of self-serving. This should come as no surprise see Romans Whether, then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved 1 Corinthians We could please ourselves by avoiding those whose convictions differ from our own, even to the point of excluding them. We could also please ourselves by accepting them, but only for the opportunity to judge, to criticize, and to try to change their convictions. For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God, Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ Galatians 1: But just as we have been

approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts 1 Thess. How do we resolve this tension? When is it right to please men, and when is it wrong? The solution to this problem is very simple; it is found in the alternative to pleasing men. When we must choose between pleasing others or pleasing ourselves, it is right to please others. But when the choice is between pleasing others and pleasing God, pleasing others is wrong. Here, Paul instructs us to please others and not ourselves. Before considering what Paul does say about pleasing others, let us note what he has not said. He has not said we should please our neighbor in any way our neighbor dictates. We are to please our neighbor as God dictates. We are not instructed to make our neighbor feel good about himself, to make him comfortable, and to fulfill his desires or expectations. God is the One who defines what is pleasing to our neighborâ€”not our neighbor. Paul is speaking of pleasing in a long-term, eternal senseâ€”not in a short-term way. Our text provides that clarification as Paul defines what pleasing others means by setting down three qualifications in verses 2 and 3. We please others by 1 â€” working toward the good of others 2 â€” working toward the edification of others 3 â€” pleasing others as Christ Himself pleased men. The first qualification for pleasing men is that we must please our neighbor for his good. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. In order to enter into all the goodness of God, we must endure suffering and tribulation see Romans 5: We must cease and desist from every attitude and action which would tear down our neighbor, pressing on with those things which will build him up in his faith verse 2; see also Paul turns our attention to the example of our Lord in verse 3. We are not to please ourselves, but to please others just as Christ has done. He did not please Himself, but instead sacrificed Himself so that He might bring about both our good and our edification. The text which Paul chooses to prove his point is most interesting: Two things are striking about this Old Testament quotation. First, it is an Old Testament quotation. Why does Paul prove his point from prophecy rather than from history? Because inspired prophecy is as good as history. When God said something would happen, it was as good as done. One can rely on prophecy as though it were history. His work was done to please God and men, but only those who trust in Him by faith find His work of atonement pleasing. Thus many responded to His grace with reproaches rather than with praise and gratitude. When we seek to please men, we must do so as our Lord did. We must begin by giving up any effort to please ourselves. We must further seek to do that which will lead to the salvation and building up of believers in Christ. But in so doing, let us not fool ourselves by thinking that most men will be pleased by our efforts to please them. Pleasing others includes putting up with the grief others bring to our lives. This surely was true of our Lord who endured the reproaches of men and pressed on to bear our burdens on the cross of Calvary. From the example of our Lord, we see that pleasing our neighbor is not easy nor is it immediately rewarding. Co-dependency is the topic of great discussion these days. Consequently, they are constantly trying to please those whose approval they feel they desperately need. Pleasing others as Paul teaches is nothing like the man-pleasing which is really selfish and self-serving co-dependency. Strengthened by Scripture, Sustained by Hope Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. Before beginning our exposition of verses , some preliminary observations on these verses as a whole may be helpful. Third, there is a strong emphasis on Jews and Gentiles, and especially on the unity of their combined praise of God. Finally, there is a strong emphasis on hope. Verse 4 speaks of the hope which comes from perseverance and from the Scriptures. Hope is found also in verses 12 and

Chapter 7 : Romans 6 NIVUK - Dead to sin, alive in Christ - What - Bible Gateway

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From the Apostle Paul and Romans I used to play on our local high school basketball team called the Jackson Blue Jays. Now, our team had a fabulous record the year that I was a senior. I thought that I could play defense like nobody else. If there was a hotshot on the other team, I was the one who guarded him. I thought that I was the defensive star of our team, at least, so my girlfriend would tell me. Well, full of such shallow confidence, after our fabulous record that year, I went onto college and decided to go out for freshman basketball. I made all the cuts and I was doing pretty well, and I got to play occasionally on the freshman team. But something started to happen inside of me. I am not good enough. But I do remember telling my older brother Lee, my hero, that I quit. You are a quitter because you could have made the team. His words stung because down deep inside I thought his words were true. Those words, instantly spoken in one moment, stayed with me for the rest of my life. I sensed inside that I could have made the team, but I had given up hope. You see, I quit too soon. There is a book by Victor Frankl, the Viennese psychiatrist, from the last generation. For those prisoners in those death camps, it was awful. The only hope for the prisoners, according to Victor Frankl, was for the Allied forces to come and set them free. And for some unknown reason, that hope became connected with Christmas. The prisoners in one particular camp started to believe that freedom was going to come on Christmas. And so these prisoners clung to life. They struggled with their freezing feet and freezing toes and freezing hands. They struggled with their frost bitten bodies. Because they had hope. They were waiting for Christmas. They were waiting for freedom. They were waiting for release. And finally, Christmas Day came. There were no Allies. There was no release. There was no freedom. And there was no hope fulfilled. Immediately, on the days afterwards, before the New Year came around, slowly, one at a time, there was first one suicide. Pretty soon, people were sleeping through meals and sleeping through exercises and many people were slipping into their deaths. Six months later, when the Allied forces finally did come to bring freedom to this concentration camp, half of the prisoners had died. Most of them died during that Christmas season, after Christmas Day. Many of them had died because of the loss of hope. They had given up too soon. Like many of us, we quit too soon. Like me on a basketball team, we quit too soon. Many people today are talking about a new era in Western civilization, a new era of despair, giving up, of hopelessness. A large segment of the human race has begun to give up hope. Prior to this time, that is, from the 1940s to the 1960s, that was the century of hope. Those were the decades of hope. We built the steam engine, the railroad, the car, the airplane, the rocket, and medicines were created and hopes were high and the frontiers of America were being broken. Those were the good years of progress, the good years of self confidence, the good years of the future. Those were the years that we knew that we could solve the problems of the future. We live in a new era, with a new sense of despair, a new sense of hopelessness, where we are not so sure that we can solve those major global problems. Tell me, how are we going to feed eight billion people? And many people feel hopeless. There will be billions of starving bodies in twenty years. Who can feed them? Do you feel confident that you can stop the arms race that is spiraling into nuclear proliferation? Israel has the bomb. China has the bomb. India has the bomb. Pakistan has the bomb. People are selling bomb equipment on the black market. So many nations have the bomb, and although the fears have lessened of nuclear incineration of much of the globe, we sense that the world has a date with nuclear destruction. Albert Einstein said that we have a date with our nuclear destiny. There is that sinking feeling that we can do nothing about it. What can you do to stop the sale of all those arms to Third World countries who do not have enough money to feed their own people but enough money to buy expensive military equipment? Do you feel that you can stop the spiraling of weapons throughout the globe? The number one killer of teenagers today in the Western world is suicide. Teenage suicide is growing at an alarming rate. Teenagers, of all people, being filled with hopelessness. Teenagers, of all people, having the feeling that the future is not worth living for. We have a new teenage disease abroad today and it is called hopelessness. It translates into suicide among teenagers, a group of youth who are supposed to be imbued with

hope. How do you feel about the tide of divorces that are sweeping our nation? How do you feel about this national epidemic of divorce? So many of our friends and your friends are getting divorces after ten, twenty, thirty, and forty years of marriage, and couples feel that there is a hopelessness for them. That there is nothing that they can do to improve their relationship. That there is not hope for change. That there is no hope for significant change. What can we do to stop the tide of divorces in our society? Is ours an age of unbridled optimism? Do people sense that they have within themselves the abilities and resources to solve the problems facing the world? Do we have powers within us to stop the population bomb, the escalation of militarism, the spiraling divorce rate? Do you feel real confident about stopping these issues? Is ours the age of the god of Prometheus, the god of progress? Enter hell and give up hope. That is what it is to enter hell. To enter hell is to give up hope. What does it mean for you to be abounding in hope? Flowing over with hope? Being filled with hope for the future? What does that mean for you? To realize that God is in control of all of future history and is in control of your personal history. To realize that God will not desert us in the decades, the centuries and the millenniums ahead of us. That whether our future means death or divorce, separation, moving or joblessness, or whether our future means marriage, babies, new homes and new jobs, no matter what, our future belongs to God. That God in his power and purpose will not desert us in the days that lie ahead. I ask you all a question: Has God taken care of you in the past? When life has been really crummy? When life has been very difficult? Every one of you has had very difficult experiences in the past. Has God taken care of you today?

Chapter 8 : Sermons from Romans Â» Keep Believing Ministries

A measure of self-respect may come from living according to the twin principles, "owe nothing to anyone," and "no one owes me anything." The catchy line "don't believe the world owes you a living," quipped by American clergyman and humorist Robert Jones Burdette (), has become axiomatic.

Chapter 9 : Homeschool History/Geography/Social studies: General Curriculum For Sale

The Remnant of Israel. 11 I ask, then, h has God rejected his people? By no means! For i I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, 1 a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 j God has not rejected his people whom he k foreknew.